

Youth events lead up to September DPI/NGO conference

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UN-affiliated nongovernmental organizations are seizing on the new momentum that has arisen across the disarmament agenda to put their voice behind the pressing issues of disarmament and non-proliferation in line with this year's **62nd annual DPI/NGO Conference** theme: "For Peace and Development: Disarm Now."

The main conference will be held in Mexico City from 9 to 11 September. As part of the run-up to that important meeting, youth-oriented events were held both in New York and Mexico City to explore the issues of disarmament with United Nations experts, educators and others from the NGO community.

The New York event which was at UNHQ held on 9 June, was titled "Disarm the World with Knowledge" and was organized by the co-chair of the DPI/NGO Youth Committee.

Co-sponsors of the event included the Executive Committee of NGO/DPI, the **United Nations University**, and the **United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs** (UNODA).

Young professionals, students and faculty from fourteen academic institutions attended, and via live webcast, colleagues from around the world participated as well.

A similar seminar was held in Mexico City on 23 June for youth in Latin America and the Caribbean at UNIC Mexico City with the DPI/NGO Youth Subcommittee.

More than 100 students from various universities from Mexico City participated, as did officials from the Mexican Foreign Ministry. Students from different states of Mexico and other countries in Latin America and the Caribbean were also able to take part through a webcast of the seminar.

A connection was also created with Lima (the **UN Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean**) and New York (UNODA) and the **UN Mine Action Service** (UNMAS), to enable speakers to contribute from both places by video conference.

Both the Mexico City and New York events heard from UN and other NGO experts in fields such as global efforts on weapons of mass destruction



disarmament and non-proliferation, peace education, small arms, landmines, and cluster munitions: all issues that will be the focus of the main DPI/NGO meeting in Mexico City later in September.

Youth participants at both meetings also heard how they can go back to their campuses, equipped with the latest information, and begin to develop disarmament coalitions and further mobilize civil society in this important area.