

# The World We Want: Canadians making a difference

By Ruth Mathiang

This was the theme of the WUSC 57th Annual Assembly this year, on November 7th to 9th. WUSC (World University Service Of Canada), is a non governmental organization that has been active since the 1920s, and now being one of Canadian's leading development agencies. WUSC main mission is to promote human development and global understanding through education and training.

WUSC is based on all of Canadian campuses, and encourages students in taking part in programs and activities that promote international understanding and development. In every campus there is a WUSC local committee which is composed of students and administrators that are interested in development and international issues. Such as sponsoring refugee students from Africa, Afghanistan and Thailand.

On this year's annual assembly, where I attended in Ottawa, there were very interesting speakers that gave speeches on the importance of development and getting Canadians involved especially students. These speakers were:

- 1) Honourable Beverley McLachlin, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada.
- 2) Governor of the Bank of Canada, Mr. David Dodge.
- 3) His Excellency John Ralston Saul
- 4) Mr. Sail Shetty, United Nations MDG Campaign
- 5) Mr. Michael Perry, Formerly of the Dept. of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

There were other speakers as well, especially some of the staff and students that worked

overseas with WUSC. Honourable Beverley McLachlin, gave a speech on Canadians taking part on Development. She believes that Canadians can make a difference and many are, and stated that "the world we want comes through the formation of Canadians and Canada", and one way to do this is through Canadians meeting students from other countries, getting to know their culture and also spoke on the importance of traveling, which is the best key to learn about others, to gain experience in development and international issues. "Canadian must be inclusive and work for diversity", she stated, she also spoke about her experience with WUSC in Algeria in the year 1964, where a group of young Canadians went to work on development.

Her advice to students, was the importance of getting involved in politics, stating that there is a call for that, and also through personal views, such as art, music, writing and speaking out, on the issue of devel-

opment and international issues. One of the best quotes that I liked from her was that "Active listening is very important", this I liked, as I feel that most of us do a lot of talking but less listening, and we should really learn to listen more, and in that manner we can make a change.

Another good speaker that I admired was, Mr. Sali Shetty of the UN, that spoke about the millennium goals of the UN. The UN is aiming to work hard for this goals

to be completed by the year 2015, these goals are of great interest to me personally and I believe that we can all work hard toward this, and we should all start it from today onwards.

These goals are :

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop global partnership for development.

Mr. Michael Perry, now working for the International Criminal Court, gave his side of story about how Canadians can make a difference. Which is for

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Canadian students to consider careers in international relations, laws, industries, stay involved in

citizen society etc. And for Canada to fund approved projects, contact international outreach and help built capacity under the Rome Statue.

Ajmal Pashtonyhar, was a WUSC sponsored student from Afghanistan, is now a 4th Political Science student at Memorial University of Newfoundland. Ajmal is now the Canadian Youth Ambassador for landmines, he gave a very good speech too, on Canadians involvement on interna-

tional and development issues. His was a very unique one, for he was an Afghani Canadian talking on development in Canada instead of in Afghanistan but referring back to examples and the need for development in Afghanistan. An interesting thing that I learned from him, is that Canada has stopped producing landmines since the year 1996, this is a very good example that Canada is taking as one of the leading countries for peace and development, I am very proud of Canada.

WUSC, has a very special place in my heart, because in the year 2000, it opened a way for me to come to Canada. Where I was sponsored by it, through the local committee here on Campus in the year 2001. It gave me a chance, to further my studies and now, my future plans and goals will not only benefit my country Sudan, but Canada too. Although I am not a Canadian yet, I am one in heart, and I want to encourage every student here, to be a difference, to your family, society, Canada, and internationally too. Get involved internationally and let's all work for a difference, for more information on WUSC please log on to the website [www.wusc.ca](http://www.wusc.ca), or contact local WUSC committee here on campus, to Megan MacDonald at [megan\\_macd@hotmail.com](mailto:megan_macd@hotmail.com), or myself [rmathiang@yahoo.com](mailto:rmathiang@yahoo.com). Other sites such as [www.dangermines.ca](http://www.dangermines.ca) for information on landmines, [www.un.org](http://www.un.org) for the millennium goals. These are just a few of the website that one can check out, there more of them out there, and it is up to you as a Canadian, a youth to make the difference. Make a difference now while you are still young, for you will live to see it.