

Foreword

This year's conference theme, *Environmental Leadership*, explores the challenge of **Water Scarcity**. With burgeoning populations and rapidly growing cities, the demand for water is increasing in agriculture, industry and households. Further, one in three people do not have access to clean water for daily use around the world and therefore it is not surprising to learn that polluted water kills more children than war. As the problem is critical, young leaders will need to find solutions to this issue in order to create a sustainable future. The dimensions of the water scarcity problem are varied as they are complex and involve: geopolitical conflicts over international waters, population growth and food production, climatic change and variability, water quality and demand, poverty and economic policy, legislation and water resource management, to name a few. In this year's conference, each delegation will be assigned a stakeholder group and are required to produce a two part **Action Plan** for their stakeholder group **to reduce water consumption by 20% and improve access to water significantly for one country, both by 2020**. In the process, delegates will need to review their stakeholder group's current policy and practice regarding water consumption and access and make recommendations to improve both.

The UN Millennium Development Goal 7 for ensuring environmental sustainability is "to reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water" by 2015. This suggests a two-fold target: *sustainable access* to *clean* water in developing countries and improved water usage *efficiency* (reduced) *consumption* in developed countries. By adopting both these possibilities in the "Presentation Task" section, delegates will also be able to consider Corporate Social Responsibility in for-profit businesses. This also provides an interesting contrast to the non-profit, private, and governmental organizations such as the Hong Kong Water Supplies Department. We are confident that the instructional sessions, the guest speakers and problem solving focus of the conference will provide the basis of a rigorous and academically challenging program which will extend our more able and high achieving students.

Finally, I do hope that delegates experience the sights and sounds of Hong Kong and take the opportunity to socialise with students from different countries and develop some ongoing friendships.

Joel NAINIE

Conference Convener

Gifted Leadership Services

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