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# Young People Focus on Globe's Problems

Young People From Around the World Focus on Globe's Demanding Problems

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By TRACEE HERBAUGH

**UNITED NATIONS Aug 17, 2006 (AP)**— Young leaders from around the globe are spending three days focusing on some of the world's most demanding problems ranging from world hunger to protecting the environment.

About 450 young people aged 16-28 from 50 different countries are taking part in the third annual Youth Assembly at the United Nations which ends Friday.

"I think it's our responsibility to empower young people and to show young people that ... change can happen because of their efforts," said Elaine Valdov, the assembly's secretary general.

"People are saying that we want to create a much better place and I think that there's a strong will of persistence to actively make change, and I think we can do it," said Valdov, a New York-based psychotherapist who represents voluntary organizations at the United Nations.

The conference is focusing on promoting the eight U.N.

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millennium goals: eradicating world hunger and poverty, universal education, gender equality, reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, combating disease, environmental sustainability and developing global partnerships for development.

The Friendship Ambassadors Foundation, a nonprofit organization promoting international ties, hosts the annual conference at the U.N. which attracts youth with an interest in international policy work.

Ozgur Madak, former president of the Intercollegiate Turkish Students Society which is a co-sponsor of the event, urged global support for the conference saying, "bringing young generations together is the long-term solution to reach the global peace."

Maria Mandova, program director for Friendship Ambassadors Foundation, said participants are encouraged to form lasting relationships with the professionals they meet, and carry the experience back to their communities all over the world.

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