



United States Embassy Singapore

Public Affairs Section 27 Napier Road Singapore 258508

<http://singapore.usembassy.gov>

Contact: Eric Watnik

Email: WatnikEA@state.gov

April 25, 2014

MEDIA ADVISORY

United States Opens Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative Workshop: “YSEALI Generation – Ideas Into Action”

Today, 103 young Southeast Asian leaders between the ages of 18 and 35 from ten ASEAN member countries attended the opening ceremony of the “YSEALI Generation-Ideas into Action” workshop held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The YSEALI workshop, funded by the U.S. Department of State and administered by StartupMalaysia.org, is the inaugural training program under President Obama’s Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI).

The focus of the YSEALI workshop is to build leadership skills among young Southeast Asians by giving them management tools to tackle what Southeast Asian youth have identified as their generation’s greatest challenges: civic engagement, education, economic development, and environmental protection. During the workshop, participants are developing ideas on how to improve social and economic conditions in their communities and will forge new partnerships with other young leaders from neighboring countries to jointly carry out community projects. The YSEALI workshop will also give participants the opportunity to learn about the U.S.-ASEAN partnership and develop skills in leadership, project management, marketing, and financial management.

Singapore is represented at the YSEALI workshop by five participants, ranging from student leaders to young professionals. They include a human rights lawyer; a student passionate about animal rights and who interns at a local law firm during her school vacations; and a community activist pushing for tolerance and pluralism through Muslim grassroots initiatives.

The young Southeast Asian Leaders participating in the workshop are guided by mentors with experience in rural and organizational development, civil society leadership, environmental engineering, economic empowerment through entrepreneurship, and youth empowerment. Among the many successful mentors, the group includes the Managing Director of Teach for Malaysia, the Executive Director of MyShelter Foundation, and the Co-Founder of GenYnot.

YSEALI is part of the United States’ continued commitment to the Asia-Pacific region, which is home to two-thirds of the world’s population and among the world’s fastest growing economies. President Obama made the strategic decision at the beginning of his Administration to rebalance U.S. foreign policy towards the Asia-Pacific, recognizing that the future prosperity and security of the nation is linked to that of the Asia-Pacific. The United States is building upon its active and enduring presence in the region as a Pacific nation. More information on the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI) can be found online at youngsoutheastasianleaders.state.gov.

Note to Editors:

The participants from Singapore are available for media interviews.