



UNIS-UN 2010

Bioethics: Striking a Balance

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PRESS RELEASE:

2010 UNIS-UN Conference “Bioethics: Striking a Balance”

The theme of the 34th annual UNIS-UN Conference (United Nations International School-United Nations) is “Bioethics: Striking a Balance”. The conference will be held on Thursday and Friday, March 4th and 5th, 2010, at the Trusteeship Council Chamber of the United Nations.

The rapid advancements in science and medicine have created an augmentation of new ethical concerns. The inevitable nature of these advancements makes it increasingly necessary to consider their effects on society and the economy. There are numerous benefits that accompany this progress, such as life-saving vaccinations, effective medications and greater insight into devastating diseases. However, with these benefits comes power, and with power comes responsibility. We are now capable of impacting not the human race alone, but all biomes on Earth. The dangers associated with taking this power too far, as well as the possibilities of improving the well-being of the planet, places bioethics in the forefront of issues facing us today.

This year’s conference will discuss a plethora of issues from new discoveries in the fields of nanomedicine and synthetic biology to age-old controversies in euthanasia and eugenics. By addressing these dilemmas, the conference seeks to investigate and present diverse viewpoints and simultaneously encourage the world’s youth to develop their own perspective.

The structure of the UNIS-UN Conference is designed to provide students with expert knowledge through the experience of provocative and inspiring guest speakers. This year, among the expected speakers are Christine Mitchell (Associate Director at Harvard Medical School Division of Medical Ethics), Kenneth Prager (Director of Clinical Ethics at the Columbia University Medical Center), Ana Lita (Director of Appignani Bioethics Center, New York), David Magnus (Director of Stanford Center for Biomedical Ethics), Joseph Fins (Chief of the Division of Medical Ethics at the New York Presbyterian Hospital and Will Cornell Medical Center) and Wesley Smith (Senior Fellow at the Discovery Institute and an attorney for the International Task Force on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide). The speakers will discuss topics relating to neuroethics, human egg markets, organ transplant, and many other fields. For the past two years, His Excellency, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary-General has opened or keynoted the conference. However, due to unforeseen circumstances he is unable to attend this year’s conference. We are honored to announce that Ms. Ban Soon-taek will grace us with her presence.

The conference also endeavors to give students a platform to express and debate their own opinions and views in arguably the most internationally significant gathering place on earth. More than eight hundred students hailing from six continents will attend and the conference will be web cast on both days. By outlining some of the issues that dominate discussions of bioethics, the UNIS-UN Committee hopes that this year’s conference will foster greater awareness of the controversies and complexities within bioethics.

Sincerely,
The UNIS-UN Student Organizing Committee

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