

Students from developing countries participate in the 54th International Astronautical Congress

At the International Astronautical Congress (IAC) 2003 in Bremen, Germany, the annual Student Participation Programme featured a novelty. For the first time, students from developing countries were given the opportunity to join the 300 European students in their trip to the IAC. They attended a specially-organised UN/IAF Workshop as well as the Congress itself to meet the experts and students of the space community.

Five of them were chosen in a world-wide competition. The winners were Paula Almeida from Ecuador, Nabila Ibrahim from Egypt, Nabin Paudel and Nabin Kumar Malakar from Nepal and Juliano Schirmbeck from Brazil. For the competition, all students were asked to submit a proposal on how space can be related to their country's environment. This first initiative was a great success! For the students it was a unique cultural and scientific experience, they enjoyed the exchange of information and were amazed that the experts in their field were willing to help.



Dorothea Czernik
ESA Education
Department

One student commented, "it has given me a lifetime vision to the space science and technology and I got really excited to see these all! I hope that I can do something for my country because in my country space technology is at ground state and ESA has told me to suggest some idea so that they can help me!" Another added "ESA and UNESCO have really contributed to my life and career." One event of particular interest to student from developing countries was the UN/IAF Workshop on "Education and Capacity Building in Space Technology for the Benefit of Developing Countries" with emphasis on remote sensing applications.

Feedback from both students and professionals underlined the benefits from students participating in the IAC. Preparations are already underway for next year's meeting in Vancouver, where 100 European students and eight students from developing countries will be given the opportunity to participate.



For more info on the 6th IAC Student Participation Programme, visit www.esa.int/education/iaf or email us at student.iaf@esa.int or dorothea.czernik@esa.int