

Youth in the workshops discussed alternatives, including the need for regional standards, access to flexible education by employers. Unionizing of workers was also an important issue.

In the child labour workshop guest facilitated by Larry Kuehn on Saturday, delegates reached similar conclusions. Sandi Chih, a 17-year-old from Richmond, BC said "Abolishing child labour was our first solution for the problem, but we found the problem can only be solved step by step.

"Instead of forcing those countries that permit child labour to stop, we should respect the fact that working children need the wages to survive," said Chih. "But it is possible for us to persuade our governments to help through economic and political means."

American Friends Service Committee: racism in our schools and society

by Jorge Tenreiro, 16, Monterrey, Mexico

After attending the American Friends Service Committee workshop, delegate had a good idea of how racism affects their societies. Racial discrimination examples came from around the world, including Canada, the U.S., Mexico, Chile, and the Philippines.

Some conclusions pointed to the idea that the lack of education and cultural knowledge led to the stereotyping and general ignorance of people, thus leading to racism. The workshop coordinators illustrated the negative effects of this problem through a video on racial problems in a high school. After being familiarized with all the facts, solutions were easily obtained.

Youth delegates determined to ask leaders to eliminate barriers in schools that prevent students from learning about other cultures; for example, to implement ethnic studies courses in schools. The delegates also called for the integration of minorities and social groups into the same schools to eliminate different education levels, something made much more difficult if education is commercialized through APEC and other agreements.

LICDAT workshop: self-determination in Papua New Guinea

by Rachael Greenland, 17, Port Coquitlam

The Native people of Papua New Guinea, and other Melanesians, face the possibility of their cultures' extinction. "In traditional times, life was school, school was life," said Catherine Sasa, who, along with her husband Ngene, co-founded LICDAT – the Lou Island Community Development and Awareness Team. The two facilitators, who came to the Youth Forum to raise awareness of their region's struggles, outlined how schooling has changed in Papua, New Guinea, including communities being forced to educate their children in the language of the colonial countries that have taken them over.

Youth delegates heard how colonizing countries and multinational corporations, with the help of the World Bank and now APEC, have forced Natives from their land and caused the breakdown in traditional cultures and schooling, together with an alarming rate of environmental and social destruction.

Delegates to the LICDAT workshop also made the connection of the struggles of the people of Papua New Guinea with those of First Nations people in Canada.

Youth for Social Justice workshop: youth learning about trade

by Jana Hanova, 17, Burnaby

Youth for Social Justice, a Maritime-based youth organization, came to day three of the Youth Forum to empower youth to have a voice in fighting for social justice. Participants discussed the history of APEC, the MAI, and some of their consequences: loss of natural resources, pollution, economic powerlessness, unemployment, environmental catastrophe and the loss of human rights.

Workshop leader Arciris Garay, who is an activist