

# Session to give students chance to see U.N. issues

**BYLINE:** STARITA SMITH

**DATE:** January 12, 1995

**PUBLICATION:** Austin American-Statesman

**EDITION:** FINAL

**SECTION:** CITY/STATE

**PAGE:** B7

University and high school students will assume the roles of delegates representing 43 countries in the first Central Texas Model United Nations beginning today at St. Edward's University.

The session will include debates on reforestation, food distribution, nuclear nonproliferation, AIDS in less-developed countries and terrorism.

In addition, there will be a surprise crisis thrown into the session at some point that the students will have to deal with, said Mary Jansen, chairwoman of the Central Texas Model U.N. committee.

"The main purpose is for the students to understand the workings of the United Nations. . . . The primary purpose (of the United Nations) is to build a foundation for peace, and so environmental concerns, human rights concerns, hunger, food distribution, health, all these things are very important issues," she said.

The session will be from 6 to 9 p.m. today and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday in Moody Hall on the St. Edward's campus at 3001 S. Congress Ave.

The meeting will be some students' first opportunity to ponder and study major international issues from the perspectives of people in other countries, organizers said.

"They will be representing their countries' views at the session," said Cynthia Reed, director of student activities at Austin Community College.

Using material about their countries provided by the U.N. Association and their own research, the students already have formulated and submitted resolutions they hope to debate in the session, said Jansen.

Among the countries students will represent are Russia, Rwanda, Bosnia, Haiti, Cuba, the United States, India, Israel, Colombia, Kuwait and Japan.

Most schools are sending members of their U.N. clubs, but ACC is taking part through its International Students Association, Reed said.

Noel Cheung, a 19-year-old freshman from Hong Kong and a member of the ACC group, has specific reasons for participating.

"I want to know more about American high school students and their viewpoints about world affairs," she said.

Students from the University of Texas, Southwest Texas State University, Southwestern University and ACC will be leaders in the session. They will join delegates from Austin, Reagan, Travis, LBJ, Johnston and Lanier high schools in the Austin Independent School District; Westlake High School in the Eanes district; and Westwood High in the Round Rock district.

In addition, students from Fulmore, O. Henry and Bailey middle schools in AISD will act as pages and the international press corps, said Sara Pietsch, Bailey librarian.

*Copyright, 1995, Austin American-Statesman*