

Vietnamese Students Introduce Folk Games to Their ASEAN Friends

From December 19 to 22, over 200 students from all ASEAN countries gathered at Singapore Polytechnic University for the Youth Model ASEAN Conference 2014 (YMAC).



Vietnamese students introduce their friends from other ASEAN countries to Vietnamese traditional culture. (Photo: Le Hai-Viet Hai/Vietnam+)

On the theme “Voices Today, Echoes Tomorrow”, this year’s YMAC focuses on the deepening of international ties and on promoting regional cooperation through the students communities of all ASEAN countries. This is furthermore the first time YMAC sees the participation of all 10 ASEAN member states.

The Vietnamese delegation to YMAC this year consisted of 12 members, outstanding students from the Hanoi University of Social Sciences and Humanities and from Duy Tan University (DTU) in Danang.

DTU delegation actively took the role of diplomats in the discussion sessions in order to solve difficult economic, environmental, security-related, and socio cultural issues of each country and of the ASEAN block as a whole.

Besides the discussions, they also took part in the program to introduce the popular and traditional culture of their country to their friends from other ASEAN countries, and to understand the unique culture of the other nations.

“For our participation in this conference, this time we are bringing a friendly and beautiful Vietnam with us,” Mai, a fourth-year student at the University of Social Sciences and Humanities, told a Vietnam News Agency reporter in Singapore. *“We introduced our international friend to Vietnamese folk games, such as Vietnamese ludo, bamboo jacks, and bamboo dancing. I feel it is very helpful and interesting, because it is not easy to gather over 200 students from the 10 ASEAN countries to discuss such issues together. Especially, participating in such a program, we can learn about the other countries. I didn’t only come here in the capacity of a Vietnamese student, but I have also become a veritable ASEAN student and I participated in the program to solve each other’s problems together.”*

At this year’s YMAC, the students from all ASEAN countries could discover about the ASEAN community, listening to experts expound on the opportunities and challenges of the upcoming establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community in 2015.

Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, Director of the Institute of Defense and Strategic Studies and Executive Deputy Chairman of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, said: *“This is actually the first time there are representatives of all ASEAN countries participating, so we hope that all participants may get to know about the ASEAN, about the ASEAN cooperation, about the meaning of the ASEAN Community. We hope that, after the conference, they can spread the word about ASEAN and talk to their compatriots about how the ASEAN Community is being built.”*

Meanwhile, when being asked about what students could do to contribute to the common development of ASEAN, Mr Shane Soh Shi Nan, Chairman of the YMAC 2014, said: *“First and foremost, we need to be deeply conscious about the issues ASEAN is currently facing. By this way we can discuss these issues with our friends. Even though you do not know how to solve them, you actually thought about them, and, as a participant of this or one of the next YMACs, what happens here today will impact on the future. Therefore I believe that the building of awareness has already been started. I believe this has great significance for the ASEAN youth.”*

(Media Center)