

PRESS RELEASE

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INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE SETS UP GLOBAL CENTRE IN SINGAPORE

Springboard to the Asia-Pacific region; strong demand for quality international education

Singapore – 16 December 2009 – The International Baccalaureate Organization (IB), the world's leading provider of international education, today announced that it has launched Singapore as one of its three global centres to respond to its next phase of growth and to offer on the ground service to its schools. The other centres are to be located in the Netherlands and the USA.

'Singapore scored on all fronts for us,' said Mr Jeffrey Beard, director general of the IB. 'Its strategic location, excellent infrastructure, business-friendly environment, significant investment in teacher training and status as a Global Schoolhouse in drawing international students and university alliances – these are all compelling reasons for our global centre here.'

'We would like to thank Singapore, and especially the Economic Development Board and the Singapore Tourism Board, for making us feel so welcome here,' added Mr Beard. 'We want to be an active and dynamic non-for-profit organization, contributing to Singapore's aims of being an education hub. Our experience in providing quality international education across almost 3,000 schools in 138 countries to 750,000 students will enable us to contribute positively and significantly.'

'We are very happy that International Baccalaureate has chosen Singapore to be their Asia Pacific Global Centre,' said Mr Jonathan Kua, Director of International Organisations Programme Office (IOPO) at the Singapore Economic Development Board. 'It joins the growing presence of the more than 80 international non-profits here that do good work in the region and around the world! IB is one of the leaders in the educational field for developing courses that prepare students to be internationally minded. We hope that their base in Singapore would widen their access to the Asia Pacific region and provide thought leadership for the region on best practices in the education of children and youths.'

Creating a better and more peaceful world

Founded over 40 years ago, the International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. The IB offers a continuum of programmes – Primary Years Programme, Middle Years Programme and Diploma Programme – for ages three to 19.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

Singapore houses the IB's Asia-Pacific operations which cover 27 countries, ranging from Singapore to Australia to Mongolia. The office is led by Dr Siva Kumari, Regional Director, and is supported by a highly experienced team of international educators. Currently there are 47 employees and this is likely to increase rapidly over the next few years with existing staff relocating to the global centre and new positions becoming available.

'Our aim is to deliver the best possible service to schools in the Asia Pacific region,' Dr Kumari said. 'We want to do everything we possibly can for our schools. A key to our success is the rich professional development offerings that equip teachers with innovative teaching strategies.' Currently there are 400 IB World Schools in the Asia Pacific region, offering 554 IB programmes in total. There are 17 IB World Schools in Singapore offering one or more of the three IB programmes¹:

- Eight schools offer the Primary Years Programme
- Five schools offer the Middle Years Programme and
- 14 schools offer the Diploma Programme

The first school was authorized in 1977.

For more information, please see <http://www.ibo.org/ibap/>

The Asia Pacific is a fast-growing region for the IB, with demand being particularly strong in India and China. The region has grown at a CAGR of about 20% per cent. 'Educators, students and parents recognise the value of an international education provided by an organization that has proven itself for 40 years. They know that the IB offers uncompromised and unparalleled quality education that is challenging and rigorous; that it creates students who can think critically and creatively and express themselves in multiple ways. Students acquire lifelong skills that take them from the classroom to wherever they may go in the world. These are the kind of students we all want taking care of our collective future,' said Dr Kumari.

¹ *Note to the Editor: We have often been asked why the number of schools and programmes are not the same. This is because the IB offers three programmes. Many schools choose to teach more than one programme. Therefore, the number of programmes available in IB World Schools is higher than the number of schools.*

Major IB events in Singapore in 2010

In March 2010, Singapore will host the 24th Annual Regional Conference. The conference – with keynotes by internationally renowned speakers including best-selling author Greg Mortenson – is expected to attract more than 800 educators, policy makers and IB practitioners from around the world. Entitled ‘Unlocking the Treasure Within’, the three-day conference will provide an opportunity for the members of the IB regional and global community to come together; to be challenged to examine ideas and assumptions; get informed about changes and developments within the IB; and allow participants to engage in meaningful conversations with colleagues, regional and global IB staff. The conference will be held at the Raffles City Convention Centre.

For more information on the Conference, please see
<http://www.ibo.org/ibap/conference/index.cfm>

In November 2010, IB’s Board of Governors will meet in Singapore for their bi-annual governance meetings. The 17-member Board, led by Carol Bellamy, former executive director of UNICEF, governs the IB, sets the strategic direction of the organization, makes policy, oversees the IB's financial management, and ensures the autonomy and integrity of IB diploma examinations and other student assessment.

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