

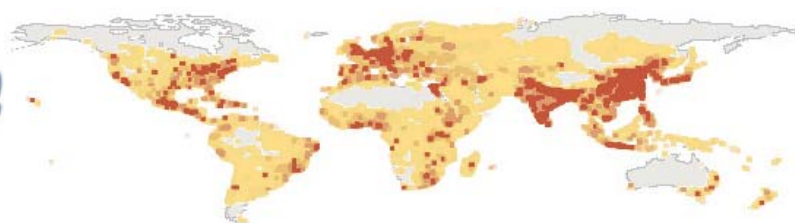
## **UN invites universities to sign *Academic Impact* statement**

The United Nations is inviting Canadian universities to join *Academic Impact*, a global initiative that aims to align universities with the UN in support of 10 principles in areas such as human rights, global citizenship, sustainability and conflict resolution. The principles are directly related to higher education and include a commitment to freedom of inquiry, opinion and speech; educational opportunities for all people regardless of gender, race, religion or ethnicity; building capacity in higher education systems; and developing intercultural dialogue and understanding through education.

The UN is asking university presidents to sign the *Academic Impact* statement on behalf of their institutions. A number of Canadian universities have already signed, including McMaster University and Saint Paul University. The Conference of Rectors and Principals of Quebec Universities (or CREPUQ) has signed on behalf of all Quebec institutions.

Universities that sign on to the statement are asked to actively demonstrate their support by undertaking at least one new activity that addresses at least one of the 10 principles each year. Examples of such initiatives suggested by the UN include research projects, conferences, or lectures; financing of students' participation in UN activities; or fellowships for doctoral and graduate students to work with the UN in particular areas of study and research.

For more information on *Academic Impact*, visit <http://www.academicimpact.org>, or contact Ramu Damodaran, chief, Academic Impact, United Nations Department of Public Information at (212) 963-6173 or <damodaran@un.org>.

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# Academic Impact

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## Introduction

Academic Impact is a global initiative that aligns institutions of higher education with the United Nations in actively supporting [ten universally accepted principles](#) in the areas of human rights, literacy, sustainability and conflict resolution. The Academic Impact also asks each participating college or university to actively demonstrate support of at least one of those principles each year.

The critical role of higher education in economic and social development and as a foundation for world peace is widely acknowledged. Only lacking is the resolve and action of academic leaders around the world. By formally endorsing the ten principles in the Academic Impact, institutions make a commitment to use education as an engine for addressing global problems.



**"It is often said that if the United Nations did not exist, we would have to invent it. I fully agree. And that is why we have to strengthen its capacities on each of the three pillars of the United Nations' work: peace, development and protection of human rights. Part of that effort means continuing to open our doors to new partners. The academic community is surely at the top of that list. My colleagues and I have been discussing an initiative called 'Academic Impact.' We hope to build stronger ties with institutions of higher learning; ... we hope to benefit from your ideas and scholarship."**

**[UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon,](#)  
in his address at Fairleigh Dickinson University,  
10 September 2008.**

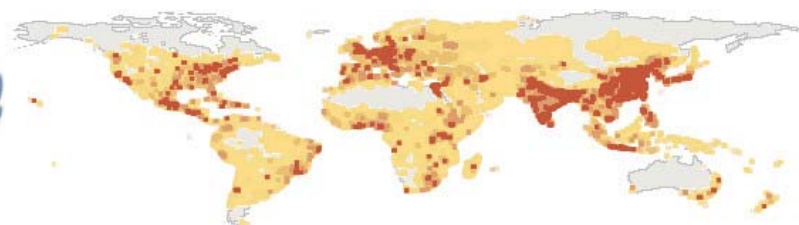
## About this Site

This website has three purposes:

- To provide a source of information that can be referenced in common from the websites of both its sponsoring organizations, the [United Nations](#) and the [International Association of University Presidents](#).
- To allow heads of colleges and universities to join the Academic Impact project quickly and easily, by utilizing the online [Participation Form](#).
- To provide visibility for some of the successes of the project over the coming months and years.

Please use the [Comments and Questions](#) form to comment or inquire about the site.

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*The following message was directed to the chief executive officers of all institutions of higher education around the world.*

*Academic Impact* is a global initiative that aligns institutions of higher education with the United Nations in actively supporting ten universally accepted principles in the areas of human rights, literacy, sustainability and conflict resolution. *The Academic Impact* also asks each participating college or university to actively demonstrate support of at least one of those principles each year.

The critical role of higher education in economic and social development as well as foundation for world peace is widely acknowledged. Only lacking is the resolve and action of academic leaders around the world. By formally endorsing the ten principles in the *Academic Impact*, institutions make a commitment to use education as an engine for addressing global problems.

You are the person responsible and accountable for your institution. You have the power to cause or prevent action. Together, we have the power to create a better future for the next generation.

We ask that you carefully review and personally endorse the [Academic Impact Principles](#).

The formal launch event of this world-wide initiative will take place at the United Nations headquarters. We hope to include your name and that of your institution on the list that will be presented to Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, with international press coverage and distribution. We also look forward to your presence at that event.

Please confirm your willingness to participate in this important initiative by completing the [Enrollment Form](#) at this website or by mail to The United Nations, One United Nations Plaza, S-1027 A, New York, NY 10017, or by fax to 973-443-8985.

## At the United Nations

[Kiyo Akasaka](#)  
Under Secretary-General for  
Communications and Public  
Information

Eric Falt  
Director, Outreach Division, DPI

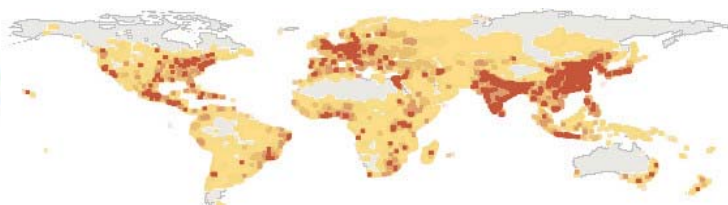
UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon  
provided the charter for this  
UN/IAUP initiative in his [message](#)  
[to the IAUP](#), September 2008.

See also Under Secretary-General  
Akasaka's [letter of invitation to the](#)  
[IAUP](#).

## At the IAUP

For more information about the  
IAUP and its membership, please  
visit the [IAUP website](#).

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# Academic Impact

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*Academic Impact* is a program of the Outreach Division of the Department of Public Information. It is open to all institutions of higher education granting degrees or their equivalent, as well as bodies whose substantive responsibilities relate to the conduct of research. Its essential frame of reference is:

- i) To bring into association with the United Nations, and with each other, institutions of higher learning throughout the world.
- ii) To provide a mechanism for such institutions to commit themselves to the fundamental precepts driving the United Nations mandate, in particular the realization of the universally determined Millennium Development Goals
- iii) To serve as a viable point of contact for ideas and proposals relevant to the United Nations mandate.
- iv) To promote the direct engagement of institutions of higher education in programs, projects and initiatives relevant to this mandate.

**Academic Impact** is informed by a commitment to support and advance ten basic principles:

1. A commitment to the principles inherent in the United Nations Charter as values that education seeks to promote and help fulfil;
2. A commitment to human rights, among them freedom of inquiry, opinion, and speech;
3. A commitment to educational opportunity for all people regardless of gender, race, religion or ethnicity;
4. A commitment to the opportunity for every interested individual to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary for the pursuit of higher education;
5. A commitment to building capacity in higher education systems across the world;
6. A commitment to encouraging global citizenship through education;
7. A commitment to advancing peace and conflict resolution through education;
8. A commitment to addressing issues of poverty through education;
9. A commitment to promoting sustainability through education;
10. A commitment to promoting inter-cultural dialogue and understanding, and the “unlearning” of intolerance, through education.

## The Millennium Development Goals

The [Millennium Development Goals](#) (MDGs) are eight goals to be achieved by 2015 that respond to the world's main development challenges. The MDGs are drawn from the actions and targets contained in the **Millennium Declaration** that was adopted by 189 nations -- and signed by 147 heads of state and governments during the **UN Millennium Summit** in September 2000.

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