

# On a mission to change the world

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MUMBAI: "You are more powerful than you know. Each one of you brings with you knowledge and commitment. And together you can discover the depth of your power."

That's how Mumbai's new US consul-general Paul Folmsbee addressed 300 young people on Friday evening, who had gathered in Mumbai from around the globe, on a mission to change the world.

The youth were participating in the Global Millennium Development Goals Summit, India 2008, organised by the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA), Indian Federation of United Nations Associations and Jai Hind College.

Their aim to shoot a five-minute film on each of the eight UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which range from eradicating poverty to universalising primary education and promoting gender equality. At the end of the summit, the films will be screened by WFUNA at the UN headquarters.

Jai Hind College will host the four-day summit, inaugurated on Friday evening at the Turf Club, Mahalaxmi. Interestingly, the brain behind the summit is a 20-year-old Jai Hind College student Samyak Chakrabarty, who was appointed the co-coordinator for the United Nations Youth Associations in Maharashtra a year ago, and has been working on the project ever since.

The summit will involve panel discussions and workshops on the MDGs as well as practical training in film-making, project development and fund-raising. "The goal of the summit is for young people to use the medium of film as a platform to explore the MDGs," said Fruzsina Molnar Straus, director of WFUNA, New York.

"I applaud you for using new technology to solve old problems," said Folmsbee, who spoke of how US president-elect Barack Obama's campaign strategy, too, used technology such as the Internet and social networking sites to reach out to people who were not part of the political process.

Dilip Walse-Patil, minister for higher and technical education, Pheroza Godrej, president, Maharashtra United Nations Associations as well as Sundeep Bhutoria, secretary, youth task force, WFUNA, also attended the inaugural function.

"There are some interesting parallels between Jai Hind College and the United Nations. Both are post-war institutions," said N W Shivdasani, Jai Hind College director and former principal. "While the UN was formed after World War II as an instrument to spread peace, Jai Hind was set up by refugees from Pakistan who had fled partition. The founders of the college wanted to set up an institution for those displaced by partition," he added. The college was set up in 1948. The summit coincides with Jai Hind's diamond jubilee celebrations.