



February 10, 2026

EVENT REPORT

YOUTH IN DIPLOMACY AND DECISION-MAKING:

From Aspiration to Professional Pathways

📍 The Hotel Windsor, Melbourne, Australia



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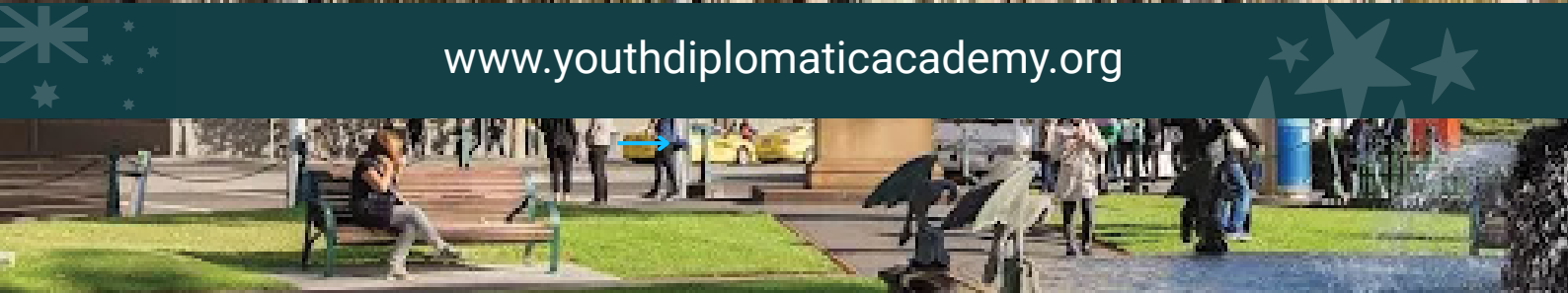


TABLE OF CONTENTS

- EVENT SUMMARY
- KEY AREAS OF DISCUSSION
- OBJECTIVES OF EVENT
- DETAILED PROCEEDINGS
- Q&A SESSION
- KEY TAKEAWAYS
- MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

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Event Summary

On 10 February 2026, the Youth Diplomatic Academy convened a high-level interactive panel discussion titled, “*Youth in Diplomacy and Decision-Making: From Aspiration to Professional Pathways.*” The session gathered 50 delegates representing 20 nationalities at The Hotel Windsor,



Melbourne. The discussion examined structural barriers limiting youth entry into diplomacy, institutional expectations within foreign service and policymaking bodies, and practical pathways enabling young professionals to transition from advocacy to formal diplomatic engagement.

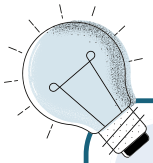
Key Areas of Discussion

- Essential competencies and ethical standards required in diplomatic service.
- Youth-led initiatives influencing regional and international policy decisions.
- Community engagement as preparation for international diplomacy.
- Cross-cultural communication in formal diplomatic contexts.
- Comparative diplomatic practices and lessons from national systems.
- Ethical leadership in shaping future diplomatic cadres.
- Youth participation in governmental advisory and policymaking processes.
- Digital diplomacy and the strategic use of technology.
- Structural and institutional barriers limiting youth inclusion.



Central Theme

“Institutional Access and Professional Pathways for **Youth in Diplomacy**”.



Objectives of the Event

- To assess structural and procedural barriers limiting youth participation in diplomatic and decision-making roles
- To examine professional pathways within foreign services, multilateral institutions, and governmental advisory structures
- To analyze cross-cultural and ethical competencies required in diplomatic engagement
- To explore the role of governments and academies in formalizing youth access to diplomacy



Detailed Proceedings

Opening Remarks by:

MUHAMMAD AHMAD

(CEO, Youth Diplomatic Academy)

The session commenced with opening remarks by the moderator, **Mr. Muhammad Ahmad** (CEO-Youth Diplomatic Academy) who introduced the organization, outlining its mandate to advance structured youth participation in diplomacy and global governance. He then contextualized the discussion within current global realities, noting the growing engagement of young people in international advocacy alongside their continued underrepresentation in formal diplomatic institutions. The topic framing emphasized the distinction between advocacy and institutional decision-making. Mr. Ahmad further highlighted that while youth engagement in global issues, ranging from climate governance to human rights, is increasing, formal diplomatic entry points remain procedurally complex and often inaccessible without institutional guidance and networks.



One of the honourable guests, **Mr. Jesus S. Domingo**, Consul-General of the Philippines in Melbourne, began by addressing the competencies required in diplomatic service. Drawing from his professional experience, he underscored discipline, analytical writing, cultural literacy, and policy precision as essential attributes. He emphasized that diplomacy requires not only public engagement skills but also technical expertise in negotiation and intergovernmental processes. In responding to questions on youth influence in diplomatic decision-making, Mr. Domingo referenced instances where youth-led consultations informed regional policy discussions, particularly in areas of development and education. He noted that structured engagement mechanisms, rather than ad hoc consultations, are critical for ensuring youth contributions reach formal deliberative platforms. In addition, he highlighted that local governance involvement and civil society work provide foundational experience in consensus-building and public accountability, skills directly transferable to international diplomacy.

JESUS S. DOMINGO

(Consul-General of the Philippines in Melbourne)

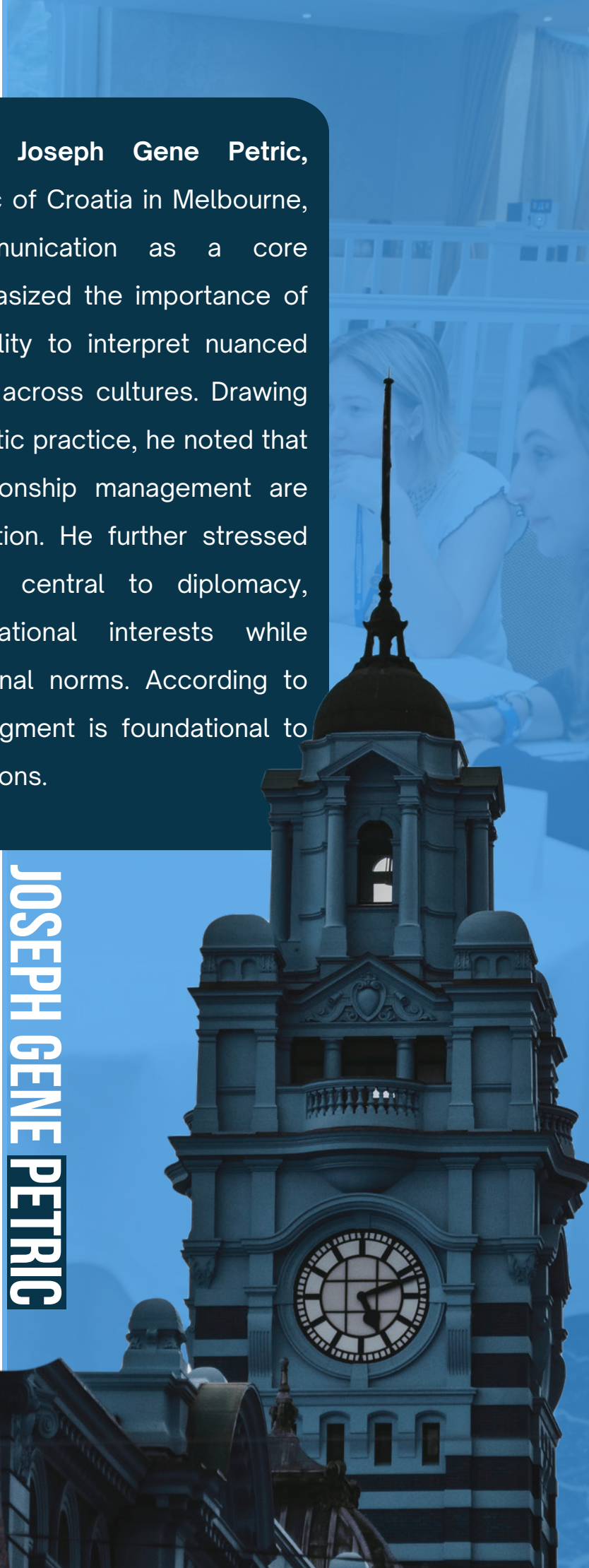


Following him, Consul-General **Joseph Gene Petric**, Consulate-General of the Republic of Croatia in Melbourne, addressed cross-cultural communication as a core diplomatic requirement. He emphasized the importance of historical awareness and the ability to interpret nuanced political contexts when engaging across cultures. Drawing comparative insights from diplomatic practice, he noted that consistency and long-term relationship management are essential to effective representation. He further stressed that ethical leadership remains central to diplomacy, particularly in safeguarding national interests while maintaining respect for international norms. According to Consul-General Petric, ethical judgment is foundational to the credibility of diplomatic institutions.



(Consul-General of the Republic of Croatia in Melbourne)

JOSEPH GENE PETRIC





TYLER STITT

(Ministerial Adviser in the Office of The Hon. Natalie Suleyman MP, Minister for Youth)

Following him, **Mr. Tyler Stitt**, Ministerial Adviser in the Office of The Hon. Natalie Suleyman MP, Minister for Youth, focused on youth participation within governmental advisory structures. He explained how youth councils and consultative forums can directly influence ministerial decision-making when integrated into formal policy cycles. Addressing digital diplomacy, Mr. Stitt noted that young professionals possess technological fluency that can enhance public engagement strategies, data-driven policymaking, and cross-border communication. However, he cautioned that digital platforms must be used responsibly, with attention to misinformation risks and institutional integrity. In discussing structural barriers, Mr. Stitt identified lack of mentorship and procedural opacity as key challenges facing young aspirants. He emphasized the responsibility of governmental authorities to provide transparent pathways, internship programs, and structured advisory roles to reduce these barriers.

Q&A Session

The moderated follow-up segment allowed panelists to expand on recruitment systems within foreign services, internship pathways in consulates, and academic preparation aligned with diplomatic careers. During the audience Q&A session, participants raised questions concerning equitable geographic representation, pathways for youth from developing regions, and the role of multilateral institutions in standardizing inclusive recruitment practices. Panelists collectively agreed that expanding access requires both institutional reform and proactive preparation by aspiring diplomats.

The session concluded with closing remarks summarizing the discussion's emphasis on competence, ethics, institutional literacy, and procedural clarity.

Appreciation was extended to the distinguished speakers and participating delegates.



Key Takeaways

- Diplomatic careers require technical policy competence alongside communication skills.
- Transparent recruitment and mentorship systems are necessary to reduce entry barriers.
- Ethical leadership underpins credibility in diplomatic representation.
- Cross-cultural literacy is essential in formal diplomatic engagement.
- Youth advisory mechanisms can influence governmental decisions when institutionally embedded.



Major Achievements

- Successfully bridging the gap between senior diplomatic representatives and youth delegates from 20+ nationalities within a single structured dialogue.
- Advancing substantive discussion on integrating youth into formal decision-making and diplomatic processes.
- Providing direct institutional insights into professional diplomatic pathways.





THANK YOU

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