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CIPE Announces Youth Essay Competition Winners

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE) is pleased to announce the winners of its 2007 International Essay Competition, in which young people aged 18-30 shared their ideas about youth’s role in democratic and market-oriented reform. The 16 best papers were selected from 445 entries in three categories: (1) Citizenship in a Democratic Society, (2) Educational Reform and Employment Opportunity, or (3) Entrepreneurship and Leadership.

<i>Essay Competition Winners by Category</i>		
Citizenship in a Democratic Society	Educational Reform and Employment Opportunities	Entrepreneurship and Leadership
1 st – Mladen Joksic Serbia	1 st – Tirthajyoti Sarkar India	1 st – David Musiime Uganda
2 nd – Mito Mitov Bulgaria	2 nd – Caroline McDermott USA	2 nd – Chinwe Onwubiko Nigeria
3 rd – Gulmira Churakova Kyrgyzstan	3 rd – Roselyn Sekai Kapungu Zimbabwe	3 rd – Competition Participant Rwanda
	3 rd – Manilka Leanlage Sri Lanka	
HM – Pie-Pacifique Kabalira-Uwase Rwanda	HM – Kinley Rinchen Bhutan	HM – Obasogie Osamwonyi Nigeria
HM – Majed Bamyia Palestine	HM – Jason Gavina Philippines	HM – Thandazile S. Mpofo Zimbabwe

“Each winning essay demonstrates deep commitment to youth’s active participation in reform. I encourage policymakers to heed the recommendations in the winning essays and create greater space for young people in the governance process,” said Sarah Siegel, CIPE’s Program Officer for Global Programs.

CIPE received essays from 72 countries, including Afghanistan, Belarus, Egypt, Liberia, Uzbekistan, and Venezuela. Winners were selected by panels of judges comprising CIPE’s partners from think tanks around the world, as well as CIPE staff.

An equal number of males and females participated, and the most popular category was Educational Reform and Employment Opportunities. Participants from Indonesia sent in the highest percentage of essays (12%), and regionally, Africa was the top contributor (30%).

“I joined in this competition because citizenship and democracy are empty words until you fill them with ideas, experiences, hopes, and doubts,” reflected Majed Bamya. “This essay contest gave me the opportunity to explore these concepts deeper than before and begin thinking how can we provide ourselves, as youth, the tools allowing us to exercise our citizenship, as this is the only way to build a living democracy.”

The winning essays, information about winners, and competition statistics are available on CIPE’s essay competition website: www.cipe.org/essay. The essays will be published as *Economic Reform Feature Service* articles throughout 2007.

The Center for International Private Enterprise is a non-profit affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and one of the four core institutes of the National Endowment for Democracy. CIPE has supported more than 1,000 local initiatives in over 100 developing countries, involving the private sector in policy advocacy and institutional reform, improving governance and building understanding of market-based democratic systems. CIPE provides management assistance, practical experience and financial support to local organizations to strengtben their capacity to implement democratic and economic reforms. CIPE programs are also supported through the United States Agency for International Development.

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