On Campus

World Leaders Come to Morningside

Winter 2004-05

The heads of state of Azerbaijan, Bolivia, India, Latvia, Liberia, Mozambique, and Romania, and foreign ministers of six other countries visited campus in September for the second annual World Leaders Forum at Columbia University. The WLF, timed to coincide with the fall meeting of the UN General Assembly, provides leaders with a public setting for informed discussion of some of the world's most pressing issues.

In one of the best-attended events this year, women leaders from six countries gathered on September 23 to discuss the global struggle for women's rights. Former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright '76GSAS chaired the panel, which was held in Low Library, and included presentations by Kristina Ojuland, Estonian foreign affairs minister; Ilinka Mitreva, minister of foreign affairs of the Republic of Macedonia; and Madame Dodo Aichatou Mindaoudou, minister of foreign affairs of the Republic of Niger. Leaders discussed other key economic, political, and social challenges as well, including the path toward peace, bilateral relations with the United States, economic development and stability, and the fight against international terrorism, at a total of 11 programs from September 20 to 29. Audiences made up of Columbia students and faculty and invited guests had opportunities to ask questions and offer their own views.

The WLF has grown out of a longstanding tradition at the School of International and Public Affairs of hosting leaders who come to New York for the fall General Assembly. Over the past two years, the program has gathered momentum and taken on a University-wide scope. Programs are developed in conjunction with SIPA and the Earth Institute. SIPA Dean Lisa Anderson and Earth Institute Director Jeffrey Sachs were among prominent members of the Columbia community on hand to introduce the speakers, along with President Lee C. Bollinger, Provost Alan Brinkley, Nobel laureate and University Professor of Economics Joseph Stiglitz, and other distinguished faculty in related fields.



Guide to school abbreviations