



Sun behind the storm

Ralph Bautista spoke on behalf of all youth delegates at the IDF Congress closing ceremony.

First, I would like to acknowledge the people who made this Congress possible and successful. I won't name individual people as I may forget someone and might not be invited back.

My name is Ralph Bautista and I am from the Philippines. I am honoured and humbled to be a part of this Congress and to speak in front of you all. I was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes at age nine, so now have been living with the disease for 12 years.

I am here on behalf of all young people with diabetes to give them a voice and allow their concerns to be heard. Youth is an important part of discussions relating to diabetes as we are living with it first-hand.

We are the future leaders of diabetes and therefore our thoughts and ideas will be carried on through this hard struggle with the disease.

All of us arrived here with our own experiences, own stories, but with a common outlook for the future of diabetes which is to improve the situation not only within our own communities and our own countries, but world-wide. It is only through sharing our own stories and experiences that we can help change the future of diabetes.

Sharing this outlook with different people has inspired all of us to further develop necessary skills to share when we return to our own countries. We will continue to work together with all who are involved or affected

by diabetes in an effort to create positive change for every person with diabetes.

For me, youth are the most important people with diabetes as we are the ones faced with the economic, social and human cost that diabetes can cause in the future, if left unchecked.

My dream for diabetes is to have diabetes care that is accessible and equitable for all, regardless of personal background. But I wouldn't stop dreaming just that. I would go on, a single step at a time, until we all see and achieve developments over every nation, every country and the whole world.

And now, this Congress is already part of history and I hope it wouldn't stop here. Let us all go on, don't be afraid to take a step, let us help each other to get the change. Do not forget that collectively, which means every one of us together, we are strong and we could make a change... a good change.

Anyway, I don't know what will happen next. We have difficult roads ahead of us, but I think it doesn't really matter. Let us all leave together tonight with greater awareness, knowledge and readiness. Let us all stand with better purpose and determination. Let us all move on through these struggles and I know that sooner or later, we will see the bright sun behind this storm.

Thank you very much and God bless us all. ●



Ralph and Christelle Bautista (left) from the Philippines with other Youth delegates Alisara Direkwutthikun and Boonyarit Anansilp from Thailand.