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Tharaka Appuhamy (Right) with Kusala Kumara Fernando – Regional Youth Caucus Representative of Sri Lanka

Tharaka Appuhamy of the Learning and Development team at Cinnamon Lakeside Colombo was the only Sri Lankan to represent the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) at the Commonwealth Youth Forum held in Hambantota.

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Tharaka has a long standing history of commitment to humanitarian work and has been a volunteer at the Sri Lanka Red Cross Society since 2004. His exemplary contribution to uplift the local community gained him recognition from the IFRC, based in Geneva.

Tharaka was an active member of the group of youth gathered from all countries of the Commonwealth, who led discussions and compiled a 'Development Agenda', which was presented to the Heads of State of the Commonwealth Nations. The topics of discussion included reconciliation, social cohesion, generating quality youth employment and gender equality.

Speaking of his experiences, Tharaka says, "young professionals should open their eyes to the opportunities for humanitarian work and strive to make volunteering a lifestyle." Tharaka commends the support he receives from the management and his peers at the hotel, which allows him to balance his work with his humanitarian efforts.