SINGAPORE: The UN Secretary-General’s Special Advisor Ibrahim Gambari has been invited by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong to attend the East Asia Summit in Singapore on 21 November to brief the leaders on Myanmar.

This was revealed by Foreign Affairs Minister George Yeo on the sidelines of a dialogue with Singapore Management University (SMU) students.

The students raised many issues, and one that was discussed at length was the situation in Myanmar and where Singapore stands on the matter.

Foreign Affairs Minister George Yeo said there is no easy solution to the problems in Myanmar, but what Singapore can do is to continue to engage the Myanmar government.

Both Mr Yeo and Prime Minister Lee met Dr Gambari on Friday morning.

Dr Gambari arrived in Singapore late Thursday night, en route back to the UN Headquarters in New York, after making his second visit to Myanmar to broker peace.

He left Myanmar with a message from its opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi that she is ready to cooperate with the military government.

Mr Yeo said: "I think Gambari had a reasonable visit this time. It did not go as far as some of us would have hope, but there were some progress. He did not get to see all the people he wanted to see, but he did meet Aung San Suu Kyi.

"Prime Minister Lee invited special envoy Gambari to come brief the East Asian leaders at the coming East Asian Summit on 21 November, and I think it would be very good for the leaders of Asia to listen to him directly and then affirm their collective support for his good offices."

Mr Yeo added that ASEAN leaders hope to have a frank exchange with Myanmar at the grouping’s upcoming summit in Singapore.

But he pointed out that besides Myanmar’s ASEAN neighbours, Asian giants China and India are also important players in the peace process.

He said: "The Prime Minister of Myanmar will be coming to Singapore for the Summit, we will welcome him here as a member of the family and so too would the other members of ASEAN. And indeed this is the position taken by all the countries in the region.

"I’ve been very busy the last few weeks, coordinating with ASEAN counterparts, visiting China, India and Japan, and I am going to India on Monday to coordinate our position on Myanmar so that we support the good offices of UN special envoy Ibrahim Gambari."

Other issues raised at the SMU dialogue included the situation in the Middle East, Singapore’s relations with China and the sub-prime crisis in the United States.

On the topic of Singapore’s role in the global economy, Mr Yeo said the country is now riding on a continental wave as the region grows.

He also cited some examples of how cities in Vietnam, Indonesia and China are developing at a relentless pace, and Singapore has to continue to learn and be competitive in order to stay relevant.

- CNA/so