

Model United Nations Newsletter

THIMUN MATTERS



VOL I ISSUE I

AUGUST 2015

ONLINE EDITION

Model United Nations Conference Calendar

10-12 September 2015
THIMUN Latin America
Montevideo, Uruguay

Model United Nations Conference Calendar

10 October 2015
MINIMUM
Voorburg, Netherlands

Model United Nations Conference Calendar

15-17 October 2015
Qatar Leadership Conference
Doha, Qatar

Welcome to THIMUN Matters!



By Fran Laughlin, Co-Chair of the Board of Directors for THIMUN Foundation

I would like to extend a warm welcome to readers of the first page of THIMUN MATTERS, the forerunner of a new online magazine devoted to things MUN, and particularly to what is happening in the THIMUN world. If you are already a subscriber to the Olive Branch, our sister magazine focussing on the Middle East (is this the term they use in Olive Branch?) region, you will know what we are talking about. The first articles on this page are largely written by members of the THIMUN Foundation, and reflect to some extent how we feel about THIMUN and about you, delegates, MUN Directors, administrators and all those who make a THIMUN or THIMUN-affiliated

conference such a special thing. There is also an article about a subject which touches any writer or journalist very closely, written by Alain Meidinger, a member of the Board teaching in the Lycee Vincent van Gogh in the Hague. The Hague THIMUN Conference is about to get under way, and we would welcome any articles (with photos) about the conference, issues on the agenda, coming to the Hague – anything in fact that you think should appear in the next full issue of THIMUN MATTERS – and we’re talking to you, students, teachers, visitors, musicians, organisers!

Contact us: info@thimun.org

THIMUN Matters

By Peter Loy, Treasurer of the Board of Directors for the THIMUN Foundation

Yes, it does.

True, the title of this new online periodical is intentionally a double entendre – the articles are matters related to THIMUN. But perhaps more importantly, it is a declaration of what we believe: THIMUN Matters.

Each of you involved in THIMUN makes a contribution and a difference. Student delegates, student officers, administrative staff, MUN Advisors – you all have a part to play in

making THIMUN, not only a successful conference, but also a vehicle for positive change. In a world where the daily news and future forecasts are often filled with dismay, THIMUN serves to offer the youth of today a voice, the experience and the skills to make a better tomorrow. As such, THIMUN becomes more than a mere simulation – it becomes the internship for future careers. It is our hope that you have a wonderful THIMUN experience in The Hague – and that you leave with optimism and outlook for a brighter future.

Soundoff!

This is a somewhat controversial topic, but one that needs to be addressed. We've spoken to numerous delegates, both male and female on high school and college circuits all over the world, to get their opinion.



Gender Roles & Model UN

Do you believe there is a gender divide in Model UN?



"There is certainly a gender divide in MUN, yet I don't feel that it is one in which we see active, mean-spirited discrimination from MUNers based off of gender. Rather, I believe that we have created a MUN in which male and female delegates fall into roles that are felt to "suit" certain sexes. So, while delegates are not engaging in discrimination due to malice or personal prejudice, it is my opinion that we have allowed a system to flourish under which delegates fall too easily into the trap of 'that's a job for a girl', or 'I think that a guy would be more suited for that role.'"



"Yes, I do believe that, and unfortunately the more feminine the delegate dresses, the more this divide seems to appear."

Has your MUN experience been impacted by gender bias or stereotyping?



"As far as I know, my MUN experience has never been shaped positively or negatively by gender bias or stereotyping. Whether or not this is due to my gender, my personality, or any number of factors, I suppose that I might count myself as being one of the lucky ones."

"Sponsors (teacher advisors) many times are trying to control the way in which we (girls) dress. For example, my sponsor didn't allowed us to use skirts. Actually, she still doesn't allow girls to use skirts at conferences."



Do assertive female delegates face more criticism than assertive male delegates?



"In my experience, there is the occasional criticism of both assertive male and female delegates. As someone more often on the receiving end of this criticism than delivering it, it would be difficult to say whether or not the criticism these delegates receive is harsher solely based on their gender."

"I definitely think that assertive female delegates face more criticism than assertive male delegates. Having said this, however, I would also point out that this criticism does not come solely from male delegates. It is not infrequently that I hear a female delegate refer to another member of her sex as being 'bossy', meaning that these gender stereotypes are regrettably universal."

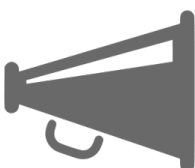


"Yes. Definitely yes. Female assertive delegates are more negatively viewed than male delegates with the same dispositions. It's sort of a cause for... ridicule or silent stigma on a female. Never on a male."



Do you believe gender stereotypes are prevalent in specific committees?

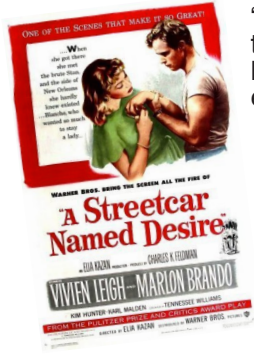
"Yes. Unfortunately, HRC in the models I joined was sometimes seen, and I quote, as a 'fluffy' council. However, with the correct strategy set by following generations' executive teams, this view changed. GA3 replaced HRC, and you soon discover it is the chairs that make up the reputation of a committee. That's just my opinion."



"I don't think so. I've staffed a lot of conferences as well, and in crisis is actually where I've seen almost the best 50/50 split gender-wise at MUN. If anything, I would say that the GAs actually have a tougher time recruiting female delegates, because it's already such a male-dominated room, and it gets very competitive and passive-aggressive amongst delegates, and for people who don't already compete in MUN and see their talents as lining up with the GA, they wouldn't want to participate there."

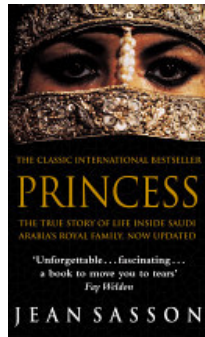
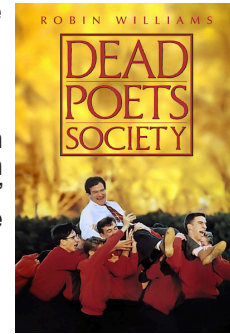


“What’s a book or movie that has inspired you?”



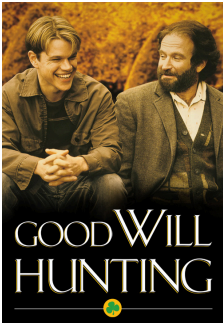
“Mine is actually a play called a Streetcar Named Desire, and I like the main character Blanche because she is a raw embodiment of human desire and how it leads to figurative death. It just captures everything natural and raw about humans.” -Ahana

“In English, I think it’s the Dead’s Poet Society. It’s an old film with Robin Williams and it inspires me because it’s a great reflection about life and the fact that you should think for yourself.” -Romane



“Princess of Arabia, it’s a true story about a princess in Saudi Arabia which talks about how oppressed her life is and tells her story.” -Salma

“Superfudge” -Aziz



“One of my favourite movies is Good Will Hunting, I really like it because of how it shows how someone can really build up these walls around themselves and how they are scared, prejudiced against and afraid to embrace who they are but in the end they break down and tell everyone about their troubled past and they follows their dreams and you can really see their growth as a person and it is inspiring.” -Gabriella

Global Growth in Inequality: A THIMUN Perspective

By: Mark Rock

We are living in a world fraught with inequality and poverty. There is no denying this fact; despite our best efforts to help those less fortunate. According to GlobalIssues.org, “almost half the world — over three billion people — live on less than \$2.50 a day.” Concentration of wealth lies in the hands of only a select few, while billions of people toil daily in a struggle for life.

As politically engaged individuals, many delegates at THIMUN are fully committed to tackling the most pressing Human Rights and Economic issues plaguing modern day society. In Thomas Piketty’s controversial commentary on economic inequality, Capital in the 21st Century, the author tracks the trend of inequality since the industrial revolution and asserts that, according to TheEconomist.com, “Only a burst of rapid growth... can be counted on to keep economies from returning to the ‘patrimonial capitalism’ that worried Karl Marx.”

Piketty’s opinion melded well with many of the economic and sociopolitical ideas provided by the rising diplomats at this THIMUN conference. As representatives of various countries from a variety of economic backgrounds, the students provided a vast contrast in both their experience with pov-

erty and what they thought could be done to help those suffering.

Daniel Cremer, delegate of Algeria in the Human Rights Commission, emphasized the importance of “utilizing non-governmental organizations and the military to help countries that won’t listen or accept outside aid,” implying that many governments would be opposed to foreign aid. He added that the use of the military “has helped in the past and can continue to help now.”

Ceylan Ersoy, President of the Human Rights Commission from Turkey, and Ilinca Briciu, delegate of the HRC from Romania both noted the mass poverty and government corruption rampant in their respective countries and supported foreign aid. Ceylan advocated the “taxation of the upper class... to use money to help the poor and hungry” while Ilinca asserted that the current situation was “difficult to solve” due to the “neglect of the lower class,” but remained optimistic in the guidance of NGOs to resolve these issues.

A group of students from London and Italy, representing Guyana and Guinea Bissau in the Human Rights Commission, on the other hand, dismissed the issue as frivolous, insisted that they “don’t believe it’s a problem” and that they were in favor of privatization. Roddy Bowlby, President of ECOSOC, after listing his experience in teaching underprivi-

Illustration by Rhea Goenka



leged children from China, summed up the issue thoroughly. He quoted Gandhi in that “The Earth provides enough to satisfy every man’s need, but not every man’s greed.” He continued to stress the importance of THIMUN, and the necessity of “education and understanding” in a cooperative effort to provide help for those in need. Regardless of one’s background before coming to THIMUN, one thing remains true. We, the next generation, have the power and ability to provide a better future for the rest of the world. The question is whether we can attain that ideal in time.

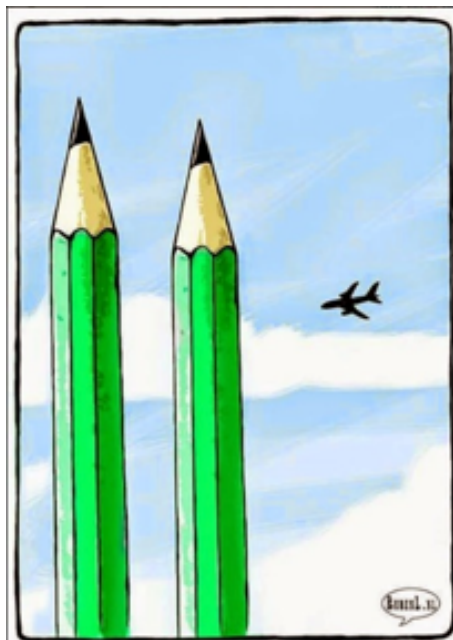
Je Suis THIMUN

By: Alain Meidinger, Co-Chair of the THIMUN Foundation



Yesterday, December 7th, 1941 – a date which will live in infamy – the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked’, US President Roosevelt said before the Congress after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Yesterday, January 7th, 2015, in Paris, the office of the French magazine Charlie Hebdo was suddenly and deliberately attacked. This date is and will live in infamy. Some cartoonists such as Dutch illustrationist Ruben compared the attack in Paris to 9/11 in New York. Behind this attack, behind the shock and furthermore, behind the mixed feeling that has developed between anger and sadness, I thought I had to address my fellow MUNers, students and teachers alike on this event.

Fundamental values were attacked: freedom



of expression is the foundation of our liberties. Freedom of thought and tolerance are principles that allow us to live together.

On the THIMUN website, one can read: ‘We hope to develop a global awareness among young people, focusing on the formulation of peaceful resolutions to world problems and practicing the communication skills which help foster this education in world citizenship... Our main aim is for future generations to practice tolerance and live together in peace... for the whole world’.

According to me, THIMUN and the MUN programme educate for liberty, encourage each MUNer to read the press, watch the news on any screen, develop in each MUNer a critical judgment.

According to me, THIMUN and the MUN programme educate for equality, to consider that amongst MUNers there is no difference between genders, there is no difference between believers and non-believers.

According to me, THIMUN and the MUN programme educate for fraternity, send to each MUNer a common message of mutual tolerance and respect, where discrimination, hatred, racism, and violence are no tools to debate.

On different social networks, in different capital cities around the world, people write, gather, mourn on what happened in Paris on January, 7th 2015. Most of them used these words ‘Je suis Charlie’ [I am Charlie]. Myself, ‘je suis Charlie’ and will always be Charlie, but ‘Je suis THIMUN’ also because I strongly believe in its values and because I am sure that our MUNers will be the leaders of a better tomorrow.

You might be a THIMUN kid if...

By: The Hague Munity

“You’re a natural at thinking and speaking in third person.”- Jordan Yoong, Anglo Chinese School

“You’re familiar with the word fruitful.” - Yoojung Lee, American International School of Bucharest

“You know and call your THIMUN buds their delegation name, and have no idea what their real name is.” - Fenia Sklika, British School of the Netherlands

“You ask for points of information after saying something in class.” Badshah Kazi, Royal Russell School

“You laugh at the name Djibouti during roll call.” - Antonio Mendes de Almeida, St Julian’s School

“You rely on the MUN’s unlimited funding for pretty much every clause.” - Hendrik Riemens, Escuela Campo Alegre

“You have more friends from around the world than your own school and/or country.” - Robin De Zeeuw, International School of Curaçao

“You say objection to your parents when they punish you.” - Unathi Shongwe, The British School of Paris

“You use “including but not limited to...” in school essays.” Josh Merchat, Kaiserlautern High School

“You have the daily debate of whether you are going to Seven or Magistrat.”- Marianna Lordou, The English School Cyprus

“You can figure out what country a delegate is from just by listening to their accented English.” - Nick Yeh, O-MUN

“You suffer from PTD (Post Thimun Depression).” - Alex Horin, International School of the Hague

“The terms and conditions of Apple on your phone suddenly become interesting during the opening speeches in the GA.” - Timo Maronna, Käthe-Kollwitz-Schule

“Lunchtime is a test of strength and determination.” - Nick Yeh, O-MUN

“You deliver your notes in origami so that admins can’t read them.”- Sara Roberts, St Julian’s School

THIMUN Singapore 2014

This post was provided by the Editor-in-Chief of MUNITY East, THIMUN Singapore's conference newspaper, Nicholas Wong



“May the house please come to order.” With those words said by Peak Sen Chua, the President of the General Assembly all participants knew that the 10th Anniversary Session of THIMUN Singapore had begun.

Though the conference has since come and gone, its memories will be forever cherished. Over the past ten years, THIMUN Singapore has grown into one of the largest Model UN conferences in South East Asia with more than 1200 participants this year.

The theme set this year was “Asia, transformations and the challenges ahead.” Various members of the THIMUN foundation, including Ms. Irene Crepin said that Asia, with a population of 4.3 billion, land covering 20% of the Earth's land area, and 49 independent economies is by far the most consequential continent on earth.

The conference went by with active participation and passion. Delegates could be seen enthusiastically giving opening speeches, actively lobbying, merging resolutions and vigorously debating. With ten committees filled with diversely different issues, participants could all agree that the issues set were vastly challenging; some topics included “International Year of Light and light based technologies, 2015,” “Territorial integrity of the former Soviet Republics,” and “Strengthening the legal clout of the United Nations.”

The Secretariat had spent the day maintaining order running from one committee to

another. Rarely were the four members Secretary-General Stephanie Tang, Deputy Secretary-Generals Sung Jang and Jeffrey Chang and President of the General Assembly Peak Sen Chua spotted all together in the student officer

room due to the fact that the respective DSGs were in charge of their committees while the PGA was in charge of day to day events such as the opening speeches and the plenary ses-

sion, which took place on the last day.

The conference as a whole was a success because it accomplished its vision – producing diplomatic delegates whom were able to “pose solutions to problems” as Ms. Fran Laughlin, Co-Chair of the THIMUN Foundations said during the opening ceremony.

As THIMUN Singapore X came to an end, everyone was reminded that Model UN is not a place for competition, but

rather a place for cooperation. THIMUN Singapore marked the beginning of an eye-opening experience for newer delegates and a continuation of an ever so productive journey for returning delegates.



Languages of THIMUN

By: Hendrik Riemens and
Giulia Camargo

THIMUN is a huge conference with 3,500 students and teachers, from approximately 200 schools, and one thing is certain about THIMUN: there are MANY languages. As you make your way through the World Forum, you're surrounded by thousands of people, all communicating, but not all speaking the same language. This has advantages and disadvantages; while language can be a great unifier, it also has the potential to be a barrier.

Laura Berger, from the French School in The Hague, speaks English, French, German, Portuguese, Spanish and Dutch, and is trying to learn Chinese. Laura explains that “sometimes I forget words while speaking English,” which in her opinion is the clearest disadvantage of speaking several languages. On the other hand, she states that speaking these languages helps her when travelling, and enables her to better “explain points of a

resolution.”

However, another THIMUN language guru has a different idea. Kai Sean Alleva, a delegate in GA1 from Zurich International School, speaks English, Italian, French, Slovak, German and Swiss-German. He thinks that speaking various languages has no effect on a delegate's success when working; however, he says that speaking many languages helps him “communicate on a personal level” with other delegates. He ultimately thinks it's neither an advantage nor a disadvantage to speak more than one language.

Even though Laura Berger believes that speaking many languages is advantageous for a delegate, when looking from a Chair's point of view, Kai Sean might be right. The President and Deputy President of the Security Council both state that



unless the delegates are lobbying, they try to “promote English” since it's the official language of the conference.

In the end, languages are very personal. Individuals utilize language as various means to meet various ends. Some believe it's crucial for lobbying, whilst others think it has no effect whatsoever. All that is certain though is that THIMUN is full of languages, and as one of the chairs of the Security Council states, “language creates strong bonds.” So, even if as delegates you choose not to utilize language as a tool for lobbying, use it to meet new people, and maybe you'll learn a word or two of a totally new language.

How-to Model UN Research: GA First Committee – DISEC

By Liza Bell and Katherine Bonner of the Best Delegate Global Media Secretariat

Committee History and Purview

The General Assembly (GA) was established under Chapter IV of the United Nations (UN) Charter. Since the General Assembly is the main organ of the United Nations and has representation from every UN member state, it is able to discuss a wide variety of world issues. As a result of the extensive spectrum of topics discussed by the UN, the General Assembly is made up of six different committees. These committees are the Disarmament and International Security (DISEC) committee, the Economics and Financial (ECOFIN) committee, the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural (SOCHUM) committee, the Special Political and Decolonization (SPECPOL) committee, the Administrative and Budgetary committee, and the Legal committee. DISEC, the First Committee of the General Assembly, is one of the most popular GA-style committees in Model United Nations.

DISEC deals with topics that center around disarmament, global issues, and threats to peace that jeopardize international security. Under Article 11 of Chapter IV of the UN Charter, “The General Assembly may consider the general principles of co-operation in the maintenance of international peace and security, including the principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armament.”

Current DISEC Topics

These topics are intended to act as a representative sample and are pulled directly from recent or upcoming high school MUN conferences around the globe. Criteria for included conferences: average of over 1,000 attendees; have the First Committee of the General Assembly as a committee at their Spring 2015 conference.

Global Classrooms Lebanese American

University Model United Nations (GC LAU MUN): Terrorist Groups in Sub-Saharan Africa; The Issue of Biological Weapons

Ivy League Model United Nations Conference (ILMUNC): Future of Cyber Security; Foreign Military Intervention in Internal Conflicts

North American Invitational Model United Nations (NAIMUN): Satellite Warfare; Global Small Arms Trade

The Hague International Model United Nations Qatar (THIMUN Qatar): Protracted Conflicts in the GUAM Area (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Moldova) and Their Implications for International Peace and Security; Establishing International Norms Regarding the Process of Recognition and Succession of Regime Change; The Question of Sudan and South Sudan; The Question of Limiting Arms Trade Between States That Are Not Participating in a

Conflict or That Are Not Situated in Crisis Areas

Harvard Model United Nations (HMUN): National Sovereignty and Asymmetric Warfare; Nuclear Weapons and Geopolitics in South Asia

Berkeley Model United Nations (BMUN): Cyber Warfare; Middle East Sectarian States

The Hague International Model United Nations (THIMUN): Strengthening the Role of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Asian-Based Drug Trafficking; Territorial Integrity of the Former Soviet Republics; The Question of Iran’s Right to Nuclear Power; Measures to Deal with Terrorist Groups in Sub-Saharan Africa

Model United Nations at the University of Chicago (MUNUC):

Preventing Spillover Violence in Civil Conflict; International Illicit Small Arms Production and Distribution

Common Themes and Objectives

As should be expected, the topics above are unified by their arms- and security-related subject matters. The following broad topical themes encompass a large majority of the topics listed above:

- *National, Regional, and Global Security
- *Biological, Chemical, Technological, and Nuclear Weapons
- *Arms Trade

Key considerations when researching the topics above include national capabilities and limitations, mitigation of conflict, and oversight and monitoring mechanisms. Because of the nature of these topics, delegate research and resolution writing must be very detailed in nature and focus on the operationalization of ideas. Additionally, because of the divisive nature of many of the themes listed above, the most effective ideas and delegates will be inclusive and focus on international cooperation.

Where and What to Research

General

The Best Delegate website has a large and helpful resource for more general research links: <http://bestdelegate.com/research/>. As with all permanent UN committees, DISEC has searchable press releases at: <http://www.un.org/press/en/content/first-committee>. This is an up-to-date database on what the committee has been discussing and its progress thus far. Similarly, the UN archives all past session reports and resolutions on the internet for easy access to documents: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/first/archives.shtml>.

The United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) has collaborated with the Netherlands to create a compilation of treat-

ties about disarmament and other topics that are discussed by DISEC: <http://www.un.org/disarmament/publications/more/treaties/disarmament-treaties.pdf>. These treaties will help you gain more background on existing steps taken with regards to DISEC-relevant topics.

If you go to the United Nations Bibliographic Information System (UNBISNET), you can find any session’s voting records to see how the country you are representing voted on past issues. This particularly helps when you are unable to find current information on your country’s position through news publications or their foreign ministry site: <http://unbisnet.un.org:8080/ipac20/ipac.jsp?profile=bib&menu=search#focus>.

Many security-related think tanks offer helpful solution-oriented scholarly articles on DISEC topics. The Council on Foreign Relations has an extensive database of these think tanks and other research-oriented organizations: <http://www.cfr.org/non-state-actors-and-nongovernmental-organizations/think-tanks-international-affairs/p32566>.

National, Regional, and Global Security
The Center for Systemic Peace has a list of all major political violence around the world from 1946 to 2014, as well as helpful sources about ongoing conflicts: <http://www.systemicpeace.org/warlist/warlist.htm>.

The Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) provides a breakdown of all nations’ present conflicts, both internal and external, as well as explanations of each conflict: <http://www.ucdp.uu.se/gpdatabase/search.php>.

Biological, Chemical, Technological, and Nuclear Weapons

GlobalSecurity.org offers a breakdown of existing Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), policies, and news: <http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/world/index.html>. It features recent press releases and reports, which will be helpful for current event research.

The Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI) provides a history of DISEC committee engagements on their website. The NTI also has country profiles on the past and present policies regarding nuclear, chemical, biological, and missile proliferation: <http://www.nti.org/treaties-and-regimes/un-first-committee/>; <http://www.nti.org/country-profiles/>.

Arms Trade

The UN Register of Conventional Arms has an interactive map of reported arms trade as well as annual reports from the UN Secretary-General regarding global arms trade: <http://www.un.org/disarmament/convarms/Register/>. Similarly, the Arms Trade Treaty page includes information on the Treaty, news, and facts: <http://www.un.org/disarmament/ATT/>.

The Small Arms Survey website has several links with extensive information on existing small arms definitions, data, and publications on the nuances of arms trade: <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/home.html>.