



THE OLIVE BRANCH

MODEL UNITED NATIONS NEWSLETTER



VOL. II ISSUE V

NOVEMBER 2014

ONLINE EDITION

Conference Calendar

MUN Conferences:

2/3-2/6, 2015
THIMUN Qatar

4/2-4/4, 2015
THIMUN Qatar Northwest
Film Festival

Online MUN:

12/6-12/7
Special Conference

12/13
Global Debate

12/14
Asia Regional

12/18-12/19
jr. O-MUN

12/21
Advisory Panel

12/29
Middle East and Africa
Regional

QLC-Afghanistan Initiative Launched



One development that came out of the Qatar Leadership Conference was a collaborative initiative, using the O-MUN platform to connect MUN students in Qatar and around the world to students in Afghanistan. *Continued on page 5*

MISMUN: From THIMUN Delegation to Conference Plans in Two Years

Mesaieed International School is an isolated school set in the heart of Qatar Petroleum's residential area. The skyline is filled with high-tech factories for the extraction and processing of petroleum products and by-products. All the while, tall flames from the highest oil drills constantly burn in the background.

Our Model United Nations club in Mesaieed International School was founded by Miss Annette Falck in 2010 with the hopes of fostering students who were eager, hardworking, and critically-minded. In 2013, 14 members from the club attended THIMUN Qatar — among them, myself. In retrospect, it is clear that we started our journey as students bound by the fear of the unknown. However, our limits gradually dissolved as we ventured into the deep and explored the permutation of possibilities that THIMUN offered. Eventually,

MUN beckoned personal development in our student community to the point where we felt so empowered that we addressed the need to host our own conference.

Fast forward to two years later. We once again find ourselves preparing for THIMUN Qatar — this time, for the 2015 conference. However, these similar situations deceive, as there have been many unforeseen changes filling the past two years.

In 2013, Miss Fatima Al-Mahdi joined the team of directors of Mesaieed International School, and she enhanced our MUN program greatly. Students started going to more conferences and having even more hands-on participation in MUN. We found that attending other conferences had a great impact on our student body on both personal and academic levels. However, we realized that in order to obtain the fullest MUN experience and develop collaborative leadership, we had

to host our own conference. We also hoped hosting a conference would transform Mesaieed into a center for student leadership. We devised a plan and established a leadership team under Secretary-General Jennifer Kwao. I took up the role of Head of Press.

Mesaieed International School Model UN Club, or MISMUN club, experienced a skyrocketing increase in popularity shortly after establishing the leadership team. MISMUN expanded to over 100 students in the club from a school of 500 — an encouraging statistic that amazed the organization! We decided to have an additional KS3, or middle school club, to teach MUN skills as early as possible to our younger peers. We then turned our attentions back to the prospect of hosting a conference. At first we found this daunting but, under the expertise of Miss Al-Mahdi and

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Overcoming My Fears at the QLC

As a student, and, more importantly, as a teenager, we all enter conferences and school-related events, never really expecting them to benefit us in our personal lives, or even in anything in which we are usually interested. It was my third time, and my honor, to attend the Qatar Leadership Conference a few weeks ago, a conference that has majorly impacted a lot of my views, interests, and fears. When I first attended the QLC, I was an administrator, and I remember even then, in the first the QLC ever, I was intrigued by some of the guest speakers.

By the time the next conference came around, I was enrolled as a participant and as a student presenter. I was extremely excited to take on such a large leadership role, but to my disappointment, it was not as big a success as I had hoped. Due to my public speaking issues, I felt very awkward during my workshop with my fellow presenters, and I went on to standing at the side and letting them take control. Coincidentally, that same day, I attended a workshop as a participant about setting action plans to overcome your fears.

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From the Techie's Desk...

Hello everyone! It's QLC time, and as I write this edition, I'm actually in a mad-rush of events leading up to the Qatar Leadership Conference 2014. We look forward to seeing you at this year's conference.

While working on the technology and other logistics for QLC, I am also working on a few other projects that are really interesting and fun. I'd like to mention one of them right now. As many of you know, THIMUN Qatar, in partnership with Northwestern University in Qatar, organizes the annual Film Festival. High school students from virtually any location on earth can participate in this festival and submit their short films. It's been an ongoing annual tradition ever since its inception in 2010. Several successful short films have emerged as a result of this and have gained recognition internationally. The project that I am working on is an online film submission system through which students can seamlessly upload their application forms, films, posters and all other materials needed onto our databases. We have the privilege of working with seniors from the Information Systems program at Carnegie Mellon University Qatar on this project, and we hope to come up with a new system in time for our upcoming festival.

Previously, film submissions were accepted via physical CDs and flash disks. Moreover, the registration forms were all hand-written and then converted to digital format manually for processing. Recently, the THIMUN Qatar office implemented online submissions for films alone and received about one-half of the submissions through a temporary online platform. The variable file upload speeds in different countries is perhaps the biggest challenge that the project has faced. Using secure file upload systems and ensuring data integrity, we hope to come up with an effective film submission system by the end of the year.

On that note, I'd also like to share with you my tech application find for the month. The process of film submission has now been made easier through several applications as well. During my research for products, I came across FilmFreeWay, which is a great tool for organizing small film festivals or even academic competitions. It provides great tools that are essential for Film Festivals and delivers high quality service as well.

Why build a system when we have this at our fingertips? The reason we are working on a separate system is so that we can integrate the submissions directly into our THIMUN IT Services platform



without having to rely on a third-party product. By no means are other platforms incapable or weak — in fact, they are much more established. But we at THIMUN Qatar believe in taking the lead in promoting leadership and service, and it is always great to have in-built products which can be used long term.

That's it from me at the moment; hope you all have a great fall. If you have any tech-related questions or would like to know more about anything in MUN Tech, feel free to email me at avaliyaveettil@qf.org.qa!

- *Abhay Valiyaveettil*

Sustainable Development in the UAE at O-MUN: O-MUN UAE's September National Debate

The concept of sustainable development implies the integration of environmental issues with the imperatives of economic development in order to meet the immediate needs of populations today without undermining the aspirations of future generations. Such was the matter of discussion at the First National Debate of the UAE at O-MUN 2014-2015. A total of 11 delegates from the UAE came together to debate on the topic of Sustainable Development in the UAE. The National Program of UAE facilitated a means to cultivate, enhance and develop debating and public speaking skills amongst delegates in the UAE. Its mission was to create a platform where delegates could engage in concerns of local or national concern.

Although the National Program was comprised of some newcomers to not only O-MUN but also to Model United Nations, it saw delegates begin to gain confidence and present strong points. With statements such as, "Social, cultural, economic and natural environments, whose harmonious development is essential to the welfare of humanity and of nature, are also included in the solutions for Sustainable Development in the UAE," delegates were taking this topic to the next level. Additionally, they sought robust resolutions and submitted numerous amendments to create the best documents possible. At the end of the debate, the delegates seemed extremely satisfied and were looking forward to the next UAE National Debate. This was a true moment of "Engaging today's youth, connecting tomorrow's leaders."

The UAE Team is comprised of Sparsh Jain (National Liaison), Karan Wadhvani (Executive Administrative Officer), Ashish Tharoor (DSG Middle East) and Ananya Saxena (Social Media Officer).

- *Sparsh Jain*



MISMUN: From THIMUN Delegation to Conference Plans in Two Years, cont.

our Secretary General Jennifer Kwao, the idea became more and more exciting. As a leadership team, we discovered that it was a fear of fear itself that crippled our thoughts, sapped our spirits, and drained our strength. We hope to overcome that and challenge ourselves to act outside of our areas of comfort in order to truly make an impact. Today, we look forward to planting the seed of a small conference that we hope will bloom into an annual MISMUN Conference. We want to create an environment for future leaders from our student body to dream big and aim high. MUN teaches all of us the power of communication and the magic that happens when many minds begin to collaborate as one. The movement from 14 club members to over 100 — from a small delegation in the Qatar Model United Nations Conference to over

20% of Mesaieed's student body — is a testament to the thrilling and exciting qualities of MUN.

However, in the middle of our ambitious plans, we suffered, as a club, as a school, and as the Mesaieed community, as we received the tragic news of the loss of one of our own, Nikhar Rooplal. Nikhar was charismatic and witty, a much-loved friend and fellow delegate of the MUN community in Qatar. We keep him in our

"The movement from 14 club members to over 100 — from a small delegation in the Qatar Model United Nations Conference to over 20% of Mesaieed's student body — is a testament to the thrilling and exciting qualities of MUN."

thoughts and prayers and offer our heartfelt condolences to his family.

Just recently, our student officers participated in the Qatar Leadership Conference (QLC) 2014, where our dear Nikhar's memory was honored with a moment of silence in the opening ceremony. Our team experienced a bittersweet weekend, learning more about MUN and becoming newly inspired, all the while conscious of our missing comrade. Most of us had had no prior

experience in holding a leadership position, and so the workshops and seminars we attended boosted our officers' confidence. Following QLC, our team is even more ready to host, expand and improve MISMUN. This time, we feel, there is no more turning back. There are no reasons to not host our own conference. This conference must happen.

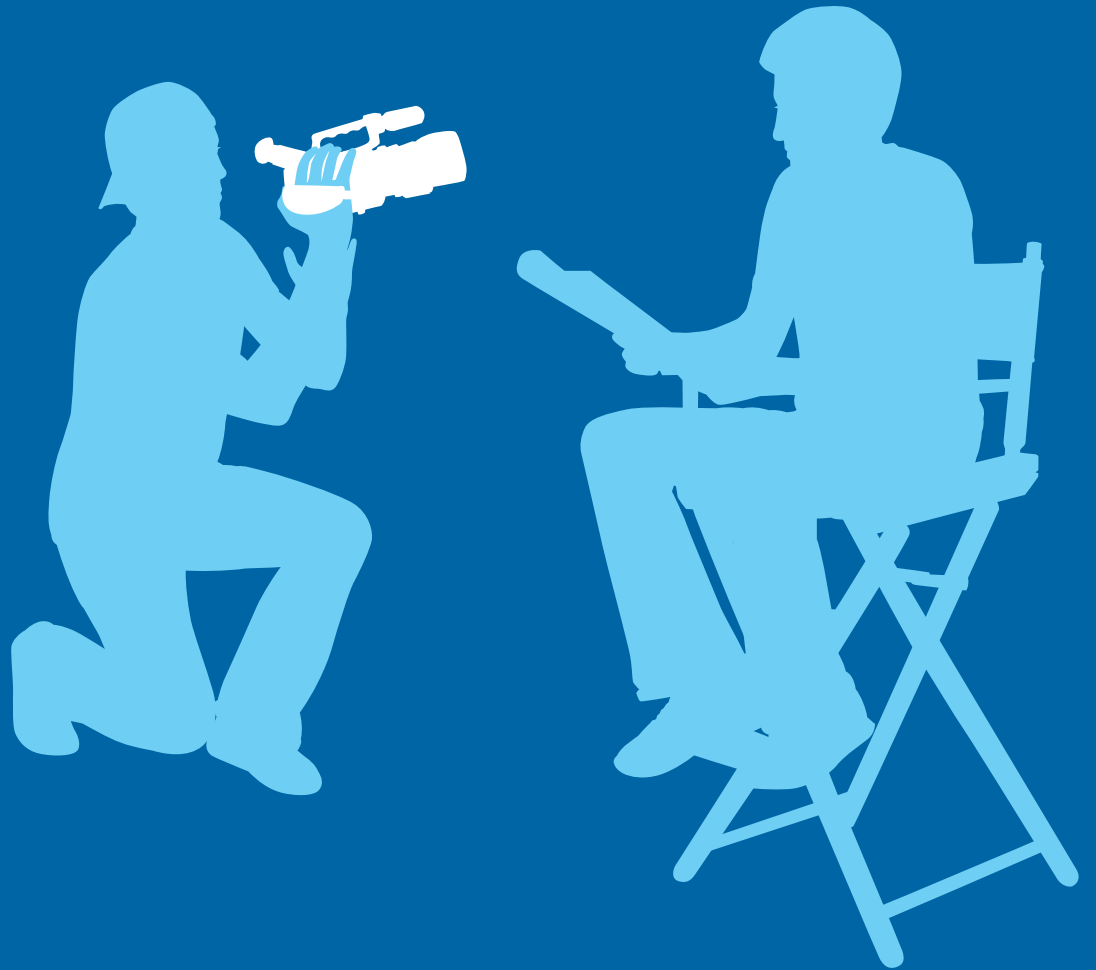
In spite of all the events that have transpired, we are still eager and enthusiastic, not only to host our first ever conference in Mesaieed, but also to make it the first of many conferences Mesaieed will host.

With that said, we hope to see you all at our conference this December 5-7!

- *Anadya Soempono*

THIMUN
QATAR
NORTHWESTERN
FILM
FESTIVAL

2015 THIMUN QATAR NORTHWESTERN FILM FESTIVAL



THIMUN Qatar and Northwestern University in Qatar are encouraging high school student films through a documentary film festival from April 2-4, 2015 in Doha, Qatar.

Educational opportunities and prize money are offered for winning entries.

The film submission deadline is February 14, 2015.

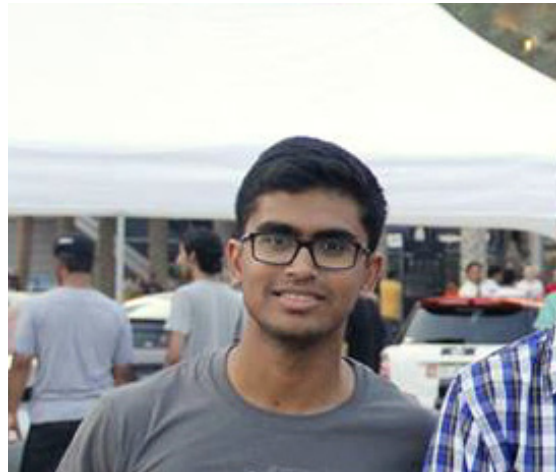
Details can be found online at
<http://qatar.thimun.org/film-festival>



NORTHWESTERN
UNIVERSITY
IN QATAR

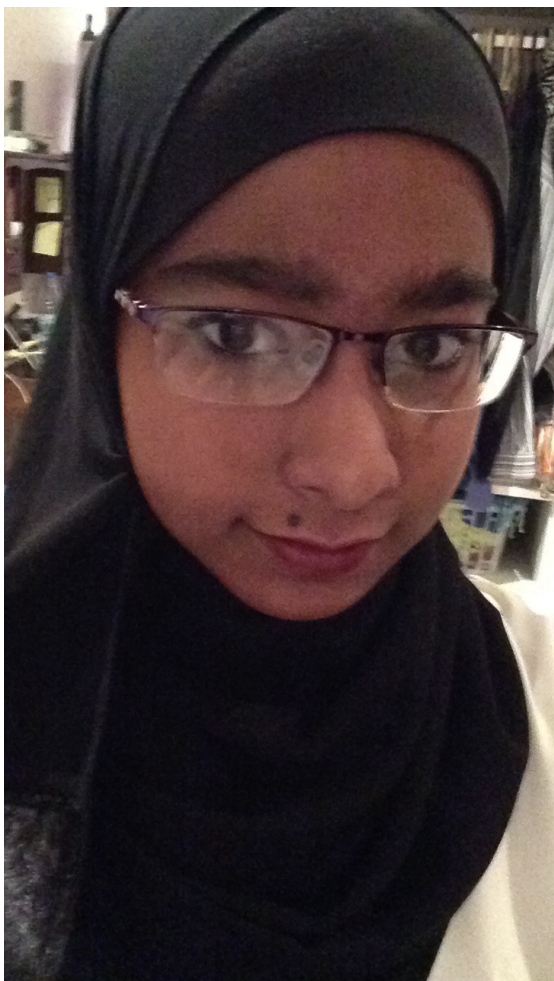
Student Spotlight: Around the Region

Name: Karan Wadhvani
Grade: 11
School/Country: Delhi Private School, Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Current MUN Leadership Positions: Executive Administrative Officer of the UAE
Three words that describe you as a delegate: Ardent, mindful, concise



Favorite Comfort Food: Bhel Puri, an Indian comfort food
Favorite thing to do when you don't have homework: Watch movies or play some sport
Dream vacation: A cruise around the world with no technology or gadgets

One major improvement you'd like to see in Model UN: Longer conference timings for committees like the General Assemblies where there are as many as 180 people and many delegates don't get enough opportunities to speak.



Name: Aadeba Ahmad
Grade: Grade 11
School/Country: Qatar Academy (Doha, Qatar)
Current MUN Leadership Positions: jrMUN Coordinator for Qatar Academy, Deputy Secretary-General for jrO-MUN
Three words that describe you as a delegate: Passionate, empowered, enthusiastic

Favorite thing to do when you don't have homework: When I don't have homework? What? (I just sleep, ahah).
Dream vacation: Venice, Italy. Soooooo pretty

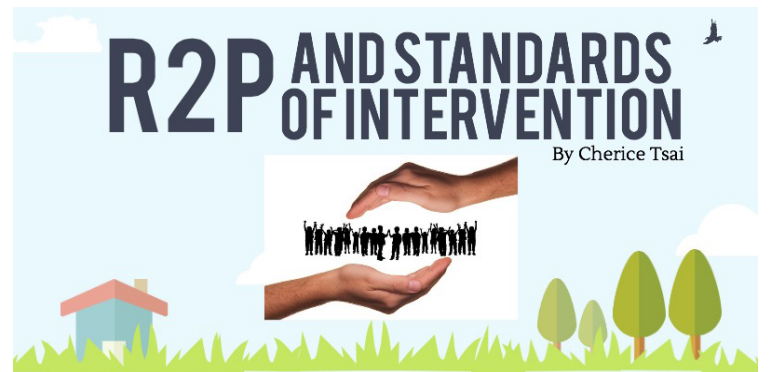
Personal MUN Goal for the year: Since this is the first year I have had a chair position, I just want to work on improving myself and my skills.
One major improvement you'd like to see in Model UN: I feel like one of MUN's largest selling points is that it looks good for college. And, of course, it is. But knowing that the main reason most people join is for college makes me feel...unsatisfied. There's so much more to MUN that we don't advertise, even if most people learn eventually just how satisfying it is to be here. The social and international aspects, the way we are forced to look at things from someone else's perspective, the skills that we learn, and the personal satisfaction that comes from this accomplishment are so much better than just knowing our college applications will look good.

Name: Jennifer Akpene Kwao
Grade: Year 13
School/Country: Mesaieed International School, Qatar
Current MUN Leadership Positions: Secretary General of Mesaieed International School MUN (MISMUN)
Three words that describe you as a delegate: Friendly, hard-working, committed



Favorite Comfort Food: Chocolate Cake
Favorite thing to do when you don't have homework: Watch television. At the moment my favorite shows are Suits and Teen Wolf, but my all-time favorite is Gossip Girl.

Personal MUN Goal for the year: Run MISMUN successfully and be the best Secretary-General that I can possibly be despite being in my final year.
One major improvement you'd like to see in Model UN: I would like it to be held everywhere in the world, especially in West Africa.



DEFINITIONS

What is R2P?

R2P stand for "Responsibility to Protect," and it supports the idea that "sovereignty no longer exclusively protects States from foreign interference; it is a charge of responsibility that holds States accountable for the welfare of their people." -UN

What does "Intervention" mean?

The Oxford dictionary defines intervention as "the action or process of intervening" and "the interference...in another's affairs." The term "intervention" in IR can be interpreted in multiple ways. It can include areas such as the use of humanitarian interventions, sanctions, or peacekeeping as methods of intervention. Here, we will be primarily discussing the use of humanitarian intervention.

More information about R2P: <http://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/adviser/responsibility.shtml>
 To understand more about how Sovereignty plays a role in Intervention see: <https://magic.pikochart.com/output/2097185-sovereignty-copy>

Why is the topic of intervention so controversial?

The topic of humanitarian intervention is strongly debated and controversial because the actions taken and decisions made now sets precedents for the future. The future of global order will be profoundly shaped by these decisions. Below are some areas of intervention that are often discussed.

WHOCANINTERVENE?

Authorised humanitarian intervention requires SC authorisation. Chapter VII of the UN Charter provides the legal-basis for the UN's collective security role and for enforcement decisions that bind all UN members, specifying actions the UN can take with respect to threats to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression. Therefore, most of the time, when states wish to intervene in another state experiencing severe humanitarian crisis, they go through the UN. However, when the Security Council does not give authorisation to intervention, sometimes states or organisations (e.g. NATO).

Despite this, a highly debated question is whether international law should permit states to carry out humanitarian intervention without SC intervention. Should unilateral or multilateral (but not UN authorised) humanitarian intervention be legalised? If it were to be legalised, would states abuse this power by using the pretext of humanitarian intervention to enter other states for other motives? These are questions commonly posed.



THINGS THAT MAKE INTERVENTION CONTROVERSIAL

WHEN

The question of under what types of circumstances the SC should intervene to alleviate humanitarian crisis is another controversial one. It is difficult to measure when to intervene because of the various factors and different moving variables that change the situation in every humanitarian crisis. Sometimes the question is whether to intervene at all. Other times, the question is when intervention should happen in a given crisis. Intervening in a crisis too early in time may exacerbate the problem. However, waiting too long for the right time to intervene, may allow a crisis to worsen and continue to complex, which will make intervention later a more difficult task. Again, actions taken always carry influences and implications for the future; thus the international community is always faced with a difficult task, responding to humanitarian crisis.

LEGAL OR ILLEGAL?

The debate on humanitarian intervention suggests that "humanitarian intervention is either legal or illegal depending on one's understanding of how international law is constructed, changed and represented. Since these questions cannot be answered definitively, the uncertainty remains fundamental, and the legality of humanitarian intervention is essentially indeterminate. No amount of debate over the law or recent cases will resolve its status; it is both legal and illegal at the same time." -Ethics & International Affairs, 25, no. 3, by Northwestern Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs

LEGITIMACY OF INTERVENTIONS

There is debate on the legitimacy of international armed intervention under UN auspices to protect human beings-that is, humanitarian intervention, or R2P. Traditionally, security meant state security - the security of borders, control over population, and freedom from interference in the government's sovereignty. With the body of internationally recognised human rights norms steadily expanding, the balance between the rights of sovereign states and the rights of people began to shift. Increasing shift in emphasis on human security's importance over security of governments or states. This shift has provided support for the new norm of a responsibility to protect populations at risk and legitimacy for armed intervention to protect human beings against the violence of governments, paramilitary forces, militias, and police.



Citations, and read more here:
http://faculty.wcas.northwestern.edu/~ihu355/Home_files/is%20hi%20legal.pdf
<http://www.law.harvard.edu/faculty/rgoodman/pdfs/RGoodmanHumanitarianInterventionPretextsforWar.pdf>
<http://www.unis.unvienna.org/unis/en/topics/peace-and-security.htm>
http://www.operationspaix.net/DATA/DOCUMENT/4094-v-Maintaining_International_Peace_and_Security_-_A_Summit_Meeting_of_the_UN_Security_Council.pdf



QLC-Afghanistan Initiative Launched, cont.

In a joint statement by QLC Secretary-General Arsalaan Muhammad and THIMUN Qatar 2015 Secretary-General Osama Ghani, the initiative was announced to thunderous applause. The statement read:

Arsalaan: One of the primary aims of the Qatar Leadership Conference is to forge connections among potential leaders in the region. In 2012, the QLC served as the hub for Directors who integrated Online-MUN under the THIMUN banner. This year, the QLC continues with this tradition.

Osama: This year, as a result of networking at the QLC, THIMUN Qatar is proud to

announce that its first delegation from Kabul, Afghanistan, will be attending the 2015 conference. The delegation will comprise four talented students, 2 boys and 2 girls.

Arsalaan: This group of people will be trained by existing MUN students on an online platform. I am proud to announce that Peter Dalglish, who by now is quite the renowned presented here at the QLC, will be leading this delegation as its Director.

Osama: This development affirms the role of THIMUN Qatar. We work as a hub for future leaders in the region. Our outreach manages to touch areas where the issues discussed in the conference are extremely relevant. The theme of this year's conference is Middle East and North Africa.

The inclusion of these Afghan delegates makes our work much more meaningful.

Arsalaan: Recently, THIMUN expanded to include a regional officer in Uruguay. One day, hopefully, we will expect a regional conference and an office in Afghanistan.

Osama: We would like to thank Peter Dalglish for making this possible. I also have the honour of announcing that Mr. Dalglish will be presenting as the opening keynote speaker at THIMUN Qatar 2015. Thank you.

Congratulations to the following Qatar schools for having members on the inaugural QLC-Afghanistan Initiative:

- QLC Press Corps



JrO-MUN How it Works

When I was first introduced to the Online Model United Nations (O-MUN) program, it had already begun to take root in the high school MUN scene. However, expanding it to middle school posed a few new challenges. It was one thing to simulate a debate online. But debate is only one component of the traditional conference: the processes of preparation, lobbying and socializing are equally as important and integral to the MUN experience. More-

over, many prospective middle school participants would be completely new to Model UN, unfamiliar with the complexities of procedure and probably feeling a little lost. There had to be a way for them to learn the ropes, work together, and feel welcome — even in the absence of face-to-face interaction.

Enter Edmodo.com, the online platform which has formed the cornerstone of the Junior Online Model United Nations (jrO-MUN) program for two years and counting. The

founders of Edmodo have aptly described it as a "social learning network." Our jrO-MUN group on Edmodo is a safe and educational space for middle school delegates to interact outside of the 1.5 hour debate sessions that are organized monthly.

Typically, each 'debate cycle' is divided up into 4 weeks of preparation prior to debate, with suggested deadlines for completing issue and country research as well as policy statements. Each week of preparation has an accompa-

nying Edmodo component: for instance, during weeks 1-2, middle school delegates are encouraged to share research links with each other as they familiarize themselves with their stances on the topic. Week 3 is dedicated to policy statements, and this is where jrO-MUN's tradition of "paying it forward" really kicks in. Each student who posts a policy statement receives feedback from experienced high school mentors, as well as their own peers.

In the week preceding debate, the draft resolution is posted on Edmodo (courtesy of one or two middle school delegates who have courageously volunteered to main-submit), and students are once again given the opportunity to collaborate. Not only do they get to view the resolution in advance, they also simulate the lobbying process by suggesting amendments in the comment section beneath the post. If the main-submitter approves, the appropriate changes will be made to the resolution prior to debate; if not, delegates hold on to their amendments and submit them on debate day. In our most recent jrO-MUN debate on September 27 and 29, the chairs received more than 20 amendments within the space of half an hour. I suspect that the constructive atmosphere

on Edmodo had, in some ways, carried over to Blackboard Collaborate.

As much as I've come to appreciate Edmodo for its educational value, my favorite aspect is one that is a little less serious. Of course, it is always a welcome sight to log on and browse through the self-introduction posts, the links to interactive websites, and the eloquent policy statements that testify to the remarkable capacity of a middle school student. Still, what brings a smile to my face most is neither research nor resolution, but rather, the simplest of interactions — sometimes in the form of a comment under someone's post: "Thank you! This link really helps!" or "Austria would love to be allies with you." And quite frankly, there are few things more heartwarming than reading a post by a novice delegate who just wants to thank everyone for making his or her first debate a memorable one. It's little things like this that characterize the jrO-MUN community, and I am thankful that I get to be a part of it.

- Sheyna Cruz, Deputy Secretary-General for jrO-MUN

The AMMUN team hopes that every step taken is a step down the path towards a dream realized, a dream of continuous success, uninterrupted growth, and a spark, which lights the beacons.

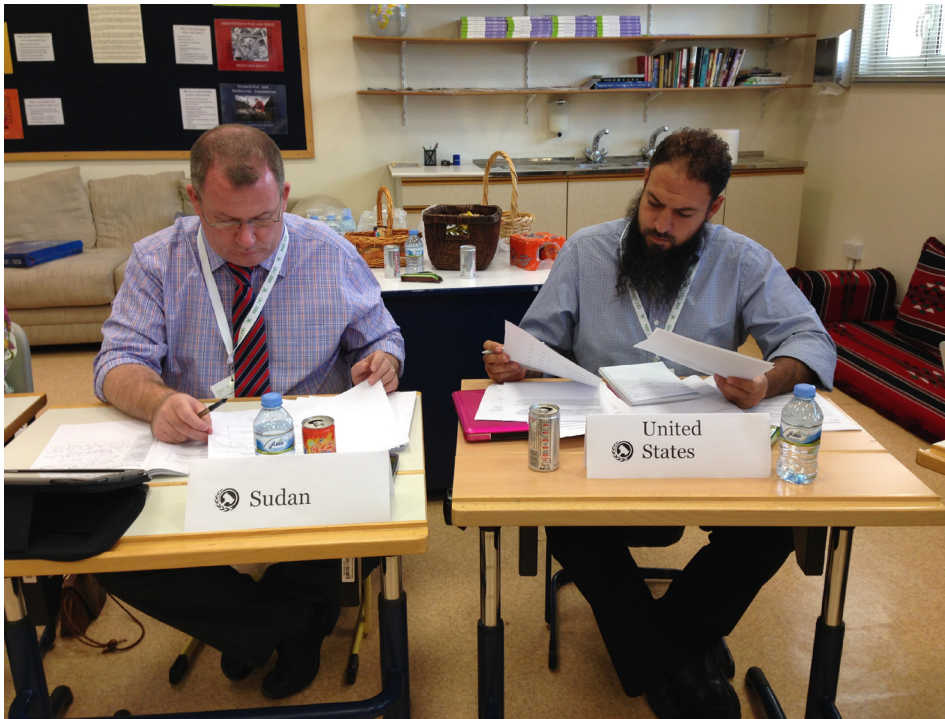
The Annual Amman Model United Nations is a THIMUN affiliated MUN conference hosted by the Amman Baccalaureate School in Amman, Jordan.

29th of October to the 3rd of November 2014

AMMUN XIII
LIGHTING THE BEACONS

AMMUN encourages delegates to adopt different points of view, debate and create an environment where all views are accepted equally and friendships forged.

It has become AMMUN's vision to provide a platform for youth in the Middle East and from all corners of the globe to hear student delegates speak their minds and continue the call for reform reform.



“Best Delegate is the leading expert in Model United Nations around the world and has taught Model United Nations trainings in more than twenty countries.”



Model United Nations Director’s Institute

At the Qatar Leadership Conference, Best Delegate ran a one-day Director’s Institute for twenty educators. Best Delegate is the leading expert in Model United Nations around the world and has taught Model United Nations trainings in more than twenty countries. The Director’s Institute was taught by Best Delegate co-founder Ryan Villanueva and Program Manager Laurabeth Goldsmith. The Institute featured simulations for teachers to learn about Model United Nations. Teachers were also provided with handouts, educational videos, and training on how to run a Model United Nations simulation and program.

Teachers who attended the one-day Director’s Institute earned a Level One Best Delegate Certification to teach Model United Nations. The training covered public speaking, the United Nations, resolution writing, research, training activities, and more. In the future, Best Delegate plans to teach more beginner trainings, along with providing intermediate and advanced certifications for teachers.

Ibrahim EL Kazaz, a participant in the training, stated, “The Director’s Institute is a great way to standardize MUN training so that there will be a larger number of quality debates at MUN conferences. I recommend it for anyone trying to figure out just how to teach MUN.”

The Best Delegate video resources on Opening Speeches, THIMUN Procedure, The UN At A Glance, Topic Research, Opening Activity, and Resolution Writing can be found at <http://qatar.thimun.org/index.php/education/bestdelegate>.

-Laurabeth Goldsmith



The Journeys We Take...

One of the reasons I love the QLC is because I personally am not immune to the energy and messaging that seems to surge through the event. This year's opening keynote by Northwestern Assistant Professor of Journalism Andrew Mills was particularly relevant for me. Mills outlined the reasons why it is important and life-changing to move in the direction of your fears. His message was so close to the mark that I found myself shifting uncomfortably in my chair a few times. This guy had read my mind. This was my story!

People who know me are surprised when I say that I used to be one of the most shy people on the planet. I am in awe of most of the students I work with because I was so not like them! The leaps of faith that I have taken at critical professional junctures of my life have all been uncomfortable. The risk taking, almost without exception, was never intuitive. I

have had to consciously weigh pros and cons, give myself pep talks, and, most significantly, work through a whole mental checklist of fears, like the fear of failure.

I believe a turning point in my own life-long journey towards leadership came in my mid-twenties. I was weighing the idea of going overseas to teach for the first time. I signed up for three recruiting fairs, and then I began to cancel them, one by one. With only one left, and wavering, I sat down and made a list of the reasons not to make this move. The only thing that I could think of was fear. At that moment, I had to make a choice: let fear drive my decisions, or have something more positive drive them instead. I kicked fear to the side, went to New Orleans to my first recruiting fair, and found myself on a plane to Abu Dhabi five months later. That was a decision that changed the course of my life, and had I not been willing to

move in the direction of my fear, I'd be teaching history at a public school in California, a lifetime of adventures never to be realized.

My own journey to Doha has been punctuated with bouts of mind-numbing fear and apprehension, and the QLC is intimately intertwined with many of them. There have been a half-dozen 'stare down the fear' moments in the last four years that have brought me to this place in time: giving up a job to save my dream, a conversation in the lobby of the Movenpick that would propel me to go for broke however unprepared I was at the time, fighting back ambivalence and apprehension to apply as the Head of THIMUN Qatar, agonizing over my changing relationship with OMUN, and fear over what I needed (and still need) to learn to do this job well. Fear, fear and more fear. It was there at every turn, and at times, it still is.



The point of this long-winded tale is this: none of this came naturally. I wasn't born a leader. The only way I became one was to take calculated risks. And that meant identifying my fear, taking a deep breath, and forging ahead. If there is just one thing that I hope people take away from the QLC, it is that hanging out on the edge of your comfort zone is an immensely enriching experience. It can be downright exhilarating, as some of our QLC participants found out this month. But you can only get there by taking on the fear factor, and it is at that very thin line between comfort and fear that leadership is born.

I had a blast at #qlc14; it

was one of the best weekends of my professional life! And I appreciate Mr Mills reminding me at the very beginning of this wonderful conference that yes, moving in the direction of my fear has indeed been one of the very best decisions I could have ever taken.

And now that I've shared my leadership story, I hope you will tell yours. Contact me at lmartin@qf.org.qa, and we'll share your story on the THIMUN Qatar blog. What inspired you at the QLC? What is your story?

- Lisa Martin

The Diplomatic lens...

In Nabila Elassar's monthly column delegates will have the opportunity to learn from her MUN experience and background.

"Honorable delegate, please maintain diplomatic decorum!"

Any MUNer would know that this phrase is as lethal in our world as Kryptonite is to Superman. The chair uses it to ensure delegates stay in check with the committee guidelines for diplomatic decorum. In Model United Nations, this traditionally revolves around the delegates' manner of speaking, appropriate speech content, adhering to council Rules of Procedure, raising motions correctly, and maintaining respect and formality at all times.

In reality, diplomacy is a much broader concept than its simple application in MUN. Diplomacy is technically defined as the art of communication between different parties, representatives of states, and individuals. In International Relations, however, diplomacy is the art of conducting negotiations, forming alliances, discussing treaties and reaching agreements. On a societal level, diplomacy simply refers to the art of managing and dealing with people successfully, employing tactfulness and skill to ensure there is no ill will.

Diplomacy is an art because of a core aspect that all diplomatic attempts have in common: maintaining personal interest. It may take skill to speak with formality, but the true art lies in ensuring that your state's interests are promoted while keeping an eye on common interest and speaking and acting in a manner that satisfies all parties. Diplomacy lies in finding the right balance, and it is a crucial aspect in international politics.

The shape of the international landscape today was carved by diplomatic dialogue. Diplomacy is what creates world order. It is what brings world leaders together in an attempt to agree on mutual interest or resolve international crisis. It is the common language of all United Nations Members. It is what forms or breaks intergovernmental alliances. It is how the world is run and how countries communicate together. Every international treaty, every Security Council or General Assembly resolution, every world summit, every law, and the United Nations Charter itself are all bound by the upholding and application of diplomacy.

So, what is diplomacy in Model United Nations? A seasoned delegate would tell you that it is much more than a manner of speaking or adherence to the rules of procedure. It is an ideology and collection of consistent choices. True diplomacy is a source of power, because it can influence the direction of the committee. That is why the best delegates are usually the best diplomats.

To successfully apply diplomacy as a delegate, here's what you should do:

1. Research thoroughly.

Before stepping into the conference, make sure you have researched the stances of other delegates as well as your own. What are your interests, and what are theirs? What commonalities do you share with some, and what differences do you have with others? These questions will help you look at the bigger picture and act or speak appropriately on different occasions throughout the conference.

2. Understand & appreciate all sides & points of view.

The only way to reach successful diplomatic dialogue is by truly understanding the opposing side's interests and concerns. From there, attempt to find mutually satisfactory solutions. Look at the committee from a neutral standpoint. What would be the solution that satisfies all? From there, attempt to sway all possible aspects in it that would favor the interests of your own delegation.

3. Understand and feel comfortable with the rules of procedure.

No diplomat is complete without knowing his tools. Do not risk compromising your position in debates or in the committee by getting frequent corrections from the chair. Look the part and act the part. Know your council's rules of procedure by heart.

4. Deliver your speeches with formality.

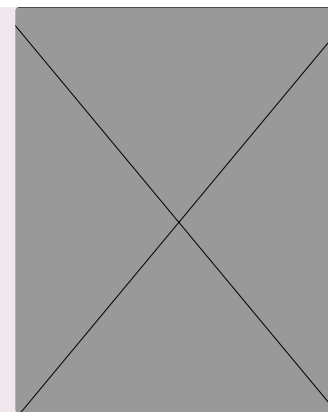
Every speech should begin with official thank you and direction to the chair: "Honorable chair, honorable delegates." Take every chance you can to act formally during speech time, even when it is optional. Those little gestures can make a big difference in your diplomatic influence.

5. Carefully craft your wording and speech content.

The way you phrase your speech, the way you express your delegation, and the content of your speeches are the pivotal anchors upon which your influence, as well as your overall performance as a delegate, stand. Use facts in your speech, mention other delegations frequently, practice some of your speeches beforehand, write and revise, and use eye contact and confident tone and body language.

6. Continually practice respect.

Respect is what defines diplomacy. Respecting all parties is respecting yourself. If any of your speeches are inappropriately directed toward a delegation, if you attempt to further your stance through ridicule or lack of respect, or if you ever undermine the authority of the chair, you are poisoning your own position as a delegate. Know that the more you respect others, in or out of committee, the more you succeed.



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7. Make allies.

Yes, speeches are important, but you must also focus on realistic mutual agreements and alliances in committee. During caucus and every chance you get, look for allies. Agree on common things. Offer your assistance and be a good ally to others, and you will have the purpose of diplomatic dialogue covered.

8. Listen, listen, listen.

The more you understand other delegations, the more you win, and the more successful of a diplomat you become. Do not waste the time of other delegates' speeches doing something else. Listen to every word and write down every argument. This is what you will use when you try to find common ground. Understanding and remembering other delegates' points of view will help make you the best delegate.

9. Remember your target.

Pursuing your own state's interest is your number one concern and target. Diplomacy is your tool, not your target. All points above are, in the end, designed to help you further your own state's interests. The committee should end with your delegation having gained the most possible benefits. Remember that. And, with that, comes the last point.

10. The resolution is your final grade.

The outcome of the conference is the resolution. Harness it. Use it. Do everything possible to put in as many words in it to serve the purpose of your own foreign policy. But, never fight for this fact or forget the points above. That is what differentiates a delegate from a true diplomat and a best delegate from every other individual in committee.

Remember, diplomacy is about true respect, understanding of other sides, and genuinely attempting to find mutually satisfactory solutions or courses of action. So, next time you apply diplomacy in MUN, know you are actually practicing the concept that has shaped humanity and world order. The world was built on diplomacy. Diplomacy is a part of everything we do, from everyday actions at school or work, to the dialogue between nations. This is why my blog is called, "The Diplomatic Lens," and it is from this perspective that all my future articles will come to you, dear reader.



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The Convoluted Enigma of Girls' Education



“I come to you from a different world- Afghanistan has never really known peace for the past 25 years; its education system is in tatters...”

The question of Girls' education is one of delicate concern; constantly debated globally, no real solution has yet been produced. Education has been recognized as a fundamental human right; despite this, there are a variety of issues affiliated with its implementation; particularly in the field of girl's education.

8:50 am, auditorium 3 found two eager journalists awaiting the commencement of Peter Dalglish's "From the Front lines of Girls Education". The atmosphere was one of anticipation as the room steadily began to fill with enthusiastic participants. Some of which, who had attended the previous session, could be heard gushing out phrases reminiscent of "you will not be disappointed" and "his words have inspired me so much!"

Time passed painstakingly slowly, until at last the lights were dimmed, the enthusiasts some what controlled their excitement, the reporters, set their pens and paper ready, and Dalglish proceeded to the podium. Peter began the session with the powerful message "There is no greater calling than invest-

ing in girls' education.' Girls' education was further detailed to have been an extremely yet sadly overlooked cause.

Peter Dalglish is a Canadian, and is also the humanitarian founder of the Street Kids international charity in addition to the Trails Youth initiative program. At the moment, he attains the position of the country representative for Afghanistan's UN habitat. Spending over 20 years working in the countries of Afghanistan, Sudan and Nepal; he has been exposed to a wide range of environments.

Each of which held extremely emotional memories for the passionate humanitarian speaker.

In particular, Dalglish touched upon Nepal; informing the intrigued room about the heart wrenching conditions of the existing so called "education system." In the minutes, which followed, the essence of raw humanity was prevalent in the atmosphere. Dalglish frequently made visits to the country, to observe the education system, which existed; focusing especially on how girls were accommodated.

"Children's minds are like

sponges, they absorb everything so quickly..."

With a melancholy tone, Peter detailed how the majority of the lower class girls were not permitted to attend school; as they had to work for their "owners". In contrast to this, the girls who were permitted to attend, had to negotiate with their owners, and could only do so for short periods of time, before returning to work.

Jokingly, he recalled a fond memory of a student "She would love to attend school, and she had no idea how to play chess, however over time she gradually improved until at one point she beat the son of her owner... it is safe to say he wasn't the brightest" This evoked laughter from the anticipating audience.

However, the laughter quickly was extinguished when Dalglish added; "But because she had won, and had embarrassed the owner's son, she was beaten up, and from that day onwards, lost purposely."

The majority of the teachers at the schools were young people in their teens. "People, young people no older than you and not very different to you, are spending their holidays in these schools, graciously offering to teach these young children."

Following this statement,

Dalglish moved on to speak about the bias nature of the British Council in Nepal. "There was a young boy, incredibly intelligent, who wished to go to school, but there were two problems; his caste and the fact that he was poor." Despite the development of the modern world, human beings are still disgracing themselves, looking to caste as a determining factor in society.

"The British Council responded and informed us that he was of the wrong caste, and therefore would not be accepted into one of their schools; but we didn't stop there.. After months of continuous campaigning we forced them to open their doors to filthy snot nosed children- now isn't that an achievement?"

The response was instantaneous- thunderous applause resonated through the entire hall; reflecting appreciation of Dalglish's phenomenal contribution to humanity.

Smiling widely; Dalglish concluded with an empowering message; "Don't you wait for your teachers or schools to take you to these places- don't even wait for your parents, these girls need you, this is relevant this is happening TODAY, every person sitting in this room has the ability to change a LIFE."

- Hannah Akhtar

Overcoming My Fears at the QLC, cont.

This year came, and I went ahead and presented a workshop on my own, with nobody to depend on if my public speaking became a problem. Since I was presenting on the second day, I made sure to attend a workshop on public speaking on the first day of the conference, getting pointers from the presenters to help me out. When the time of my workshop came, I remembered the pointers and repeatedly told myself to breathe, be calm, interact with my audience, and smile. To my utter surprise, I was calm and collected, presenting my workshop just the way I had imagined myself

doing.

I wanted to share this story so that everyone would understand, as I have come to know, just how great and beneficial the conference is. Not only was I able to overcome some of my long-lasting fears, but I was able to attend some of the most riveting workshops, ones that did not fail in inspiring and motivating students to take a stand and strive for what they want.

Thank you QLC for a brilliant conference!

- Razan Kalhout, Qatar Academy

THIMUN O-MUN has declared 2014-2015 as the Year of Affiliated Initiatives. As a result, the O-MUN executive team has hosted various programs within its community, including socratic seminars, current affairs blogging and discussions, and infographics.

October's theme for THIMUN O-MUN's Affiliated Initiatives revolves around Multinational Corporations (MNCs). In this month's infographic, Cherice Tsai examines the impact of MNCs on the international community, international responses to these actions, and taxation as it relates to MNCs. As global economies grow and

develop, so do MNCs, but their tactics are sometimes questionable. Delegates should be aware of the implications of these corporations when approaching international economics, especially in developing nations. For more information regarding MNCs, their impact, and their future, check out the THIMUN O-MUN blog for related student-written posts.

- Chloe Rickards, O-MUN Assistant Director for Press and Publications

MNCs & Tax

By Cherice Tsai

What are MNCs?

Multinational Corporations are companies/corporations that conduct their business operations in several states.



To begin to understand more on corporate tax avoidance by MNCs, we should begin by DEFINING some key terms....

Tax Avoidance...

is seeking to minimize a tax bill through abusing and "[taking] advantage of weaknesses or ambiguities in the tax law." - UN Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters

Tax Evasion...

-Usually associated with the commission of a criminal offense
-Consists of willful and conscious non-compliance with tax laws
-Can include a deliberate concealment of facts from revenue authorities



Difference between Tax AVOIDANCE and tax EVASION:
Tax avoidance, while considered improper behavior, is done through legal means, while tax evasion involves escaping tax illegally.

The Problem

MNCs make up a large sum of the world's GDP and operate on interstate, regional or global levels. In order to fund public spending, countries levy taxes. One important source of tax originates from company profits. This type of tax is called corporate income tax. Countries do not look in general for taxing purposes, only the ones that operate under their jurisdiction.

To prevent double taxing (multiple countries taxing MNCs for their profit) of MNC profits, an international tax regime came into operation in the 1920s.

These agreements have also given MNCs opportunities for under-taxation and tax avoidance.

More and more worldwide tax agreements were made to eliminate double taxation.

WHY do MNCs avoid taxation?

MNCs avoid taxation in order to maximize their gains and minimize the amount they have to pay for their profits.



What are the implications of tax avoidance by MNCs?

When MNCs avoid taxation, they reduce governments' gains from tax, which is used to fund public spending. The problem is further complicated because of the tax competition between developing countries.

Many developing countries compete with each other to offer lower rates of taxation on multinational corporations operating in their countries.

The problem with this is that it comes at the cost of losing taxable income generated by foreign firms, that countries can put to use if not in a race to offer lower tax rates to attract investment

Countries do this because they want to attract more foreign direct investment so that they can not only increase economic flow in their countries, but also gain from the taxes.

WHAT ACTIONS HAVE BEEN TAKEN ABOUT THIS?



UN has advocated for strengthening of international tax structures so that adequate amounts of taxes can be collected, and increase revenues in many countries. This could potentially allow some countries to exit from the international aid system altogether, and funding could be shifted towards the poorest countries.

Recent OECD Actions



Recently OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) has proposed a set of rules for an international approach to curb tax avoidance by multinational companies.

The proposals are part of the bigger 'Base Erosion and Profit Shifting Project (BEPS)' (a project it previously created) and will seek to create a single set of international tax rules to end the erosion of tax bases and the artificial shifting of profits to low-tax jurisdictions.

Read more about tax on the OECD website: <http://www.oecd.org/tax/beps-about.htm>
Read more about the BEPS: <http://www.oecd.org/ctp/BEPSActionPlan.pdf>





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