The Hague International Model United Nations – Qatar 2014

One of the most prestigious global youth events in the world, THIMUN began its opening ceremonies with a grand procession of flags to welcome delegates and advisors from across the globe.

By Ryan Villanueva
OVER 1,400 high school delegates visited The Hague International Model United Nations – Qatar conference from January 28-31, 2014. A program of the Qatar Foundation and Qatar Academy, THIMUN Qatar is one of the premiere MUN conferences in the Middle East region. THIMUN Qatar is held at the Qatar National Convention Center, which is one of the nicest venues I’ve ever seen for a Model UN conference: marble walls and floors, high ceilings, lots of natural light. There’s a reflecting pool next to the coffee bar and the auditorium seats are made of Bentley leather. But the first thing you notice when you walk in is the gigantic spider.

Wessam impressed me with her mission for the conference: “to create global citizens and future world leaders” through Model United Nations. She sees Model UN as a way to create “international awareness and a genuine passion for MUN” and is apparently a fan of classic rock music.

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I'MUN13

By Rashed Rabata
I'MUN was the International Academy's third consecutive MUN conference held in the monumental city of Amman. Established in 2011 by a dedicated group of pioneers, the conference invites a variety of bright students to participate and debate demanding, fruitful and stimulating world issues. I'MUN is the first of its kind to introduce the ‘Arab League Committee’, which similar to other committees yields crucial topics to the debating floor. However, what makes it particularly distinct is that the debates are carried out in Arabic. This allows for a notable merge between the international and the local delegates.

The I'MUN conference has blossomed over the past two years, starting off as a mere concept, and it has been flourishing into what it is today: a

O-MUN in French….O-MNU: A Dream Coming True

By Ipek Guney
AS IT HAS BEEN only a few days since THIMUN 2014, it is hard to believe that it has been a year since I have become a part of the Online MUN family. The day when I first encountered OMUN in THIMUN 2013, I was baffled by the Blackboard and amazed by the enthusiasm of students who were giving the OMUN workshop. That was when I had decided to be a part of this program. In spring, Bulut Cakmak and I have thought about forming a French online Model UN program: O-MNU.

We were not sure about how many people would like to be a part of it in the first place, and we were anxious since French was our second foreign language. However, we believed that debating in a second foreign language was worth trying because it would help us develop our French. An idea that seemed so abstract a few months ago is now applied with great enthusiasm, thanks to Ugo Roasting, David Radji, Binil Matthew Jacob, and everyone who attends our debates.

I cannot thank these people

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THIMUN O-MUN Travels to The Hague

By William Shia

THIS YEAR, THIMUN-OMUN sent its second delegation to The Hague International Model United Nations. Co-hosted by the Taipei American School, the team comprised of delegates from a variety of countries including Nigeria, the United States, Singapore, and the United Arab Emirates. The team this year mainly submitted eight resolutions, most of which passed, and one of these papers was even discussed in the plenary session.

The week at The Hague was filled with not only the intense sessions of lobbying, drafting operative clauses, and debate; during the week, the team also took advantage of checking out local art museums, stroopwafels, and popular sightseeing destinations. After spending so many days bonding by attending the same MUN conference, the team members, who were once strangers who had only met before in an online classroom setting, became inseparable friends. O-MUN had not only given students the opportunity to attend the world’s largest conference, but also the opportunity to connect with other students across the globe. In doing so, O-MUN truly fulfilled its mission.

“The trip was phenomenal. I have never met a group of people so intelligent and skilled at Model UN, yet at the same time so friendly and warm.” (William~Taiwan)

“When life gives you meerkotjes, first teach them how to fly so that you have your own personal jet to take you back to Den Haag, and wherever all the friends you’ve made live. That way, if you suffer from Post-THIMUN Disorder (PTD), you’ll have the best solution.” (Binil~Nigeria)

“You meet so many fascinating people at a conference of this size—it really puts your own life and experiences into perspective.” (Justin Rhee~Taiwan)

‘’Being on the O-MUN Travel Team to THIMUN 2014 was by far the most amazing Model UN experience of my life! I had an amazing time at the conference and was able to promote O-MUN and spread the word about our unique program’’ (Dylan Sexton~USA)

THIMUN O-MUN Launches in UAE

By Farhan Farooqui

LAST WEEK, the introduction of O-MUN into the United Arab Emirates reached a new peak after students within the region successfully organized a large debate involving over 30 participants. With delegates logging in from four different schools across two cities, the debate was intense and contested. The resolution was heavily scrutinized and did not pass, but there was a good exchange of ideas among delegates. The debate showcased how the MUN community in the UAE is tight knit yet highly competitive. The schools involved were Dubai International Academy, Emirates International School (Dubai), American Community School of Abu Dhabi and the Millennium School (Dubai). Farhan Farooqui (DSG Special Conferences) and Saarthak Saxena (DSG for the Middle East), who are both from the UAE, chaired this debate and felt that O-MUN would also be a great way for delegates in the country to gain more debate experience outside local conferences such as DIAMUN and ACSMUN.

Ashish Tharoor, the National Liaison for the UAE on behalf of OMUN, hopes to see an even greater delegate turnout in the next debate.

Check out the website for information on when the next debate is to be held.

MEASURES TO ENSURE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Welcome
To THIMUN O-MUN’s January UAE National Debate

Debate will begin promptly at 15:00 UTC.

This past January, O-MUN extended its platform of online debates to MUN delegates in the United Arab Emirates.
enough for making our dream come true. I still find it amazing how the four people blackboard session that we have done with Ms. Martin, Binil and Bulut to discuss ways to develop O-MNU, has turned into debates that many delegates are attending.

Since summer 2013, as the Online “Model Nations Unis” (O-MNU), we have made considerable progress. We now have a banner with our logo on it and we are still working to improve its design. We have had one orientation session to help newcomers adapt to how Blackboard and the procedure works, and we have had two really fruitful debates. The debates were not any different than the English debates in terms of quality because there were always delegates who wanted to take the floor to make a speech, and ask points of information. We could not even entertain all the amendments that were presented to us during the debate. I can say that it was incredible to observe the passion of the delegates who have attended the first two debates.

Our new leadership team consists of Ugo Roasting, as our SG, and David Radji, me, as DSGs. Yves Bakker has newly joined our team as a DSG and I hope that he will help us maintain and improve the multinational nature of our program.

With the help of Ugo and David, we also have native French speakers in the debates as well. I believe that having native French speakers during the debate helped people who speak French as a second foreign language since they could both debate and discuss ideas with native speakers, and these delegates were able to develop both their speaking and writing skills in French.

Finally, we have our third debate in the 19th of January at 13:30 UTC, and we invite everyone who is interested to sign up for this debate. Just don’t forget that you do not have to be an excellent French speaker to attend an O-MNU debate because there are always people who are willing to help you. Additionally, I can speak from personal experience that your French skills will definitely improve as you attend and participate in more debates.

2013 was the year of adaptation, production, and development for the Model UN French program. I hope that 2014 will be a much more productive year for O-MNU with more debates and more delegates!
A Penny for the Executives’ Thoughts?

By Faisal Darwish

HAVE YOU EVER wondered what the job of the Executive team is? Jokingly, Caroline Nunn, Head of Press, stated, “our goal is to make sure the conference runs smoothly while the directors sit back!” With that said, it’s time to look into what some of the Executives have to say about THIMUN Qatar 2014.

Likes and Dislikes

Since the team supervises the conference, it’s pretty interesting to look into what the members think about the conference. Wessam Kanes, Secretary General, likes “the international aspect as it attracts people from all over the world.” However, Felix Schmidt, Head of IT, dislikes “the amount of walking” each day requires. Noor Ahmed, Deputy Secretary General, disagrees with Felix and argues that “walking is beneficial for exercise.” Delegates, whose side are you on?

International Love

THIMUN Qatar is one of the largest high school conferences that the Middle East hosts, but there are considerably a lot more merits to discuss other than its size. Caroline believes that this conference takes place in “the best venue” because its facilities provide a “professional atmosphere.” This is why schools from Spain, Nigeria, and many more travel across the globe: it provides a sense of authentic UN meetings, according to Numair Muqeeb, President of the General Assembly.

Expect Only The Best

We have the highest expectations of THIMUN Qatar 2014, but we know it’s not just the setting that makes the conference captivating — it’s also the participants! Considering that Numair is in charge of most events, he “anticipates the Plenary Session and the Closing Ceremony” as he revealed that they will be “amazing!” Humorously, Caroline is looking forward to the conference’s last day because she can finally “get a good sleep” without worrying about being on time the next day. Felix hopes to “move technology forward within the conference and implement different, more efficient systems,” even though this year’s technological systems, like “iPads in the Security Council,” were impressive.

Are You Qualified?

If you are interested in playing the role of an Executive in the future, keep these skills in mind! We asked the team what qualifications they would recommend, and common suggestions were: “leadership, communication, teamwork, time management, and, of course, patience!” To be an adequate leader, Wessam suggests that you be “fair but firm” with your colleagues because it is the only way to properly organize an event.

It’s Worth It!

Conclusively, Wessam is expecting “a successful and memorable conference” because the Executive Team has been “planning this for a very long time and has worked very hard so we want everyone to benefit from it!” To participants: Caroline also advises you to always “work hard and keep pushing yourself because something good will always come out of it!”

Arabic Update

By Lisa Martin

KEY DIRECTORS met at THIMUN Qatar to discuss the launch of MUN Arabic programming. In order to proceed with the planned March 29th pilot debate, the issue of language and vocabulary first had to be resolved. The Chair and key delegates will use Modern Standard Arabic, the language of diplomacy, during debates, and tutorials, messaging and modeling will help other delegates learn the necessary language for formal debate. Participants, however, may use any dialect of Arabic that they feel comfortable with.

The target date for draft materials in Arabic is February 28th. At that time, the Arabic program will begin taking delegate sign ups and the Moderating/Chair team will be announced.

O-MUN is working to facilitate the foundational elements of Arabic programming in the region. For more information, contact Lisa Martin or Kadan El Dib.
understanding," to "facilitate change and give perspective."

The theme of the conference was sustainable development, which Wessam explained was an important driver for this year’s conference. “A lot of people think of Model UN as the political side: conflicts, wars, etc.” said Wessam, “but the sustainable development side tends to get overlooked, like clean water, renewable resources, and being environmentally friendly.”

I asked Wessam one of my favorite questions to ask MUNers: “What does Model UN mean to you?” And she told me:

“Model UN is a source of inspiration because it has allowed me to discover my leadership capabilities. MUN is a very comfortable atmosphere, a very familiar place. You feel like you’re part of some thing so grand, but you're all in this together. I don’t consider this an extracurricular — it’s a part time job — I’m in the THIMUN office before school and after school. It’s unity with diversity.”

This year’s conference was also the last THIMUN Qatar for outgoing Executive Director Cameron Janzen and Conferences Coordinator Ann Rogers. Over the past two years, KFC and I have been working with Cameron and Ann to promote Model UN throughout the Middle East. They have been MUN pioneers, working with hundreds of students to organize THIMUN Qatar and the Qatar Film Festival, and to launch the Qatar Leadership Conference.

I was particularly touched by Cameron’s speech at opening ceremonies. He opened up to a captive audience of students and teachers by sharing his own family history. His grandparents lived through war and famine in early 20th century Russia that killed 6 million people. They would have died if not for the work of a group of dedicated individuals who managed to bring the family to Canada. And as Cameron shared, those heroic efforts reflect one of the biggest lessons that students learn through Model UN:

“It’s always very easy when we’re facing massive problems that seem insurmountable to become discouraged and do nothing. Cynics may point out that this group really didn’t do very much — 6 million people still died, the civil war raged on — on a macro level, they did nothing — they didn’t solve the problem.

But they did save my grandparents. And they are our heroes.

We may not solve the world’s problems, but each and every one of us can make an incredible difference in the lives of others. This is what MUN is all about — it’s about forming people who have empathy towards others, who have the skills to engage in purposeful, peaceful, but well-organized action.”

Schools and delegations came from all over the Middle East region to attend THIMUN Qatar. But one of the most interesting and unusual delegations was not a school — it was the Online MUN delegation, most of whose delegates had never met before coming to the conference!

These delegates had met through online monthly debates organized by THIMUN O-MUN. Through fundraising, sponsorship, the work of partners around the world, and the efforts of founder Lisa Martin, THIMUN O-MUN sent delegations to both THIMUN Qatar and THIMUN Hague, which took place at the same time.

Lisa shared with me her belief that "part of the power of MUN is allowing students to develop the confidence of their own voice and their own leadership." This is a belief that drives Online MUN and reflects on the entire THIMUN organization, which strongly believes in giving students ownership over the conference organizing and committee management process.

Lisa is also the incoming Executive Director for THIMUN Qatar, and KFC and I have also been working with her over the past couple years to build up Model UN in the Middle East, especially with the launch of the Olive Branch newsletter.

Lisa shared with me her hopes and vision for THIMUN Qatar going forward: "Whether you are a new delegate or a very experienced student officer, I hope participants of THIMUN Qatar will feel empowered: empowered to act, to speak, and to feel confident enough tackle serious issues. And of course, to have a GREAT time doing it!"

Congratulations to all delegates, advisors, secretariat, and student officers on a great conference! And thank you to Cameron and Ann for having me visit — KFC and I are going to miss you!
THIMUN O-MUN Travels to Doha

By Ibrahim El Kazaz

MOST TEENAGERS seek escape from the boring repetition of going to school and doing homework and going to the same place again and again every day. Model United Nations gives students a chance to escape that ennui by presenting a chance to explore another world of issues. Online Model United Nations (O-MUN) does something even greater; not only are you able to escape the bubble mentally, but physically and culturally as well. This year, the THIMUN Qatar conference began. Though quite small, and having less than a week to bond as a team, they became some of the closest friends! Even the Moveneck staff commented on this team’s amazing connection, as they bore witness to the emotional tie they witnessed as each delegate left—many tears and a real sense of loss. This emotional bond was only one of the accomplishments of the team. Five out of seven delegates represented non-governmental organizations (NGOs) now have voting rights when it comes to voting for resolutions. Although this is not an accurate simulation of real life, it has educational value in getting those delegates more involved and in return elevating the status and work of different NGOs around the world that play major roles supporting the UN’s work.

After the conference, delegates universally experienced a common syndrome called Post-THIMUN Depression (PTD). Fortunately, they can re-live their memories through the Best Delegate Facebook page album, MUNITY Online, and through the unofficial THIMUN 2014 Facebook group.

THIMUN O-MUN has been providing unprecedented access to Model UN for youth worldwide — and the program expanding to French and Arabic soon. For the first time in THIMUN history, delegates representing non-governmental organizations (NGOs) now have voting rights when it comes to voting for resolutions. Although this is not an accurate simulation of real life, it has educational value in getting those delegates more involved and in return elevating the status and work of different NGOs around the world that play major roles supporting the UN’s work.

5. Launch of European version of The Olive Branch. Best Delegate was invited to garner feedback from Directors about launching an European version of The Olive Branch Model UN Newsletter. The current editions are published through a partnership with THIMUN Qatar and THIMUN O-MUN and have been highly successful in sharing regional Model UN news, conference information, and advice for delegates and directors. Directors not only expressed interest in launching an European version, but one for the Africa continent and one in the French language as well. We definitely be recruiting for writers!

After the conference, delegates universally experienced a common syndrome called Post-THIMUN Depression (PTD). Fortunately, they can re-live their memories through the Best Delegate Facebook page album, MUNITY Online, and through the unofficial THIMUN 2014 Facebook group.
Ryan’s Well: Can You Dig It?

By Amin Ahmed

What is Ryan’s Well?

Ryan’s Well is an organization that has donated millions of dollars towards the global water crisis. Ryan’s Well targets nations with water scarcity as well as nations with unsanitary water by building wells. Providing water for those who can’t reach it empowers the people of these countries, encouraging them to provide for their communities, take action and promote change in the world.

Not just one well — try 750

Ryan’s Well has been working in 16 African countries will be spreading to other continents in the next few months. Ryan’s Well has built up to seven hundred fifty wells, bringing safe water and sanitation to thousands of people. This is done mostly through donations through the website www.ryanswell.ca as well as through schools in Canada.

Ryan’s Inspiring Story

Ryan Hoejic, founder of Ryan’s Well, grew up in a small town next to Ottawa, Canada called Kemptville. Ryan recently graduated from the University of King’s College in Halifax, Nova Scotia. In 1998, Ryan was sitting in his first grade classroom when his teacher was explaining many in Africa lived in poverty without access to clean water, having to walk hour to obtain a bucketful of water. Ryan realized he simply had to take ten steps to reach the closest water fountain. He was unaware that having easy access to water fountains was a privilege unavailable to others around the world. Inevitably, he decided to do something about it.

Ryan undertook extra chores around the house in order to gather the money needed to build a well. At the time he was over flowing with ambition, thinking that one well would solve the problem! He quickly found out this was not the case and began organizing fundraisers at his school, which then expanded to his community and eventually the world.

All this sparked from a six year old’s grade one project.

Make a Difference!

Ryan is an inspiration to anyone willing to make a change in this world. I urge everyone to donate generously to the Ryan’s Well website. Even one dollar could make a difference. Fund raisers are a great way of bringing individuals from a community together and changing the lives of many living in harsh conditions.

In the words of Ryan himself: “Be brave enough to have a naive attitude, to put yourself in the mind of a first grader. Take a small step to do something about it. You never know where it might take you.” The youth, our generation, is the the voice of the future so let’s start digging!

British Ambassador from Bahrain Talks about International Diplomacy

By Kari Peiscop Grau

WHILE VOLUNTEERING at the British Embassy in Bahrain, I had a chance to meet with the British Ambassador to Bahrain, Iain Lindsay. I learned many key skills of international relations and diplomacy just by helping out with certain events and listening to the advice people gave me. That being said, nothing quite helped me as much as meeting with the Ambassador himself. As the new year has fallen upon us and many of our delegates are getting ready for college next year, I hope this advice given by the British Ambassador will be helpful and applicable to in Model United Nations, college, and the path ahead. Enjoy this interview and keep your eyes out for part two; I have another interview in store and my tips for volunteering in the world of international relations!

Kari: How did you become interested in the field of international affairs and working for your government overseas? Ambassador Lindsay: Having studied international politics and history at university, and with a zest for travel, working for HM [Her Majesty’s] Diplomatic Service is a dream which came true!

Kari: Do you believe programs such as THIMUN Online Model United Nations help students become better prepared for careers in the field of government service?

Ambassador Lindsay: Absolutely. It gives students a good idea of international affairs and multilateral diplomacy.

Kari: What is your number one piece of advice to students representing your country in Online Model United Nations?

Ambassador Lindsay: Be yourself and be respectful to others. Building numerous beneficial relationships is the key to successful diplomacy.

Kari: What is one skill that you urge students to develop if they are looking into working in the field of international affairs?

Ambassador Lindsay: Interpersonal skills. It doesn’t matter how intelligent or organized you are; if you cannot influence others or have an impact, you will not succeed in international affairs.

My thanks and respect to The British Ambassador Ian Lindsay for taking time out of his busy schedule, and enlighten us of the ways of international diplomacy!

I’MUN ‘13, cont.

respective and renowned conference. Over the past few years, I’MUN has served as a platform for development, pushing students to the limit and bringing out the best in every delegate. With every passing year, I’MUN has taken a step forward, striving to improve and be considered among the most prestigious conferences in Jordan. This year was no exception.

I’MUN was a simulation of the actual United Nations, in which students actively took on the roles of various countries in order to represent those countries’ views regarding current world affairs and discussed present issues on the international agenda. At I’MUN, we provided the students with a realistic and unique opportunity to debate these issues and exchange ideas for solving current problems. Students left with a sense of accomplishment and a better understanding of the world around them. By including committees such as the General Assemblies, the Economic and Social Council, Human Rights committees, and even the International Court of Justice, we exposed the participants to a wide array of roles and responsibilities, all of which will aid in broadening their global horizons.

I’MUN has been a truly memorable experience where delegates, staff, and faculty all worked together in a cohesive and productive environment in order to produce the best results and accomplish the unexpected.

I’MUN aspires to bring together the young and bright minds of today to make a better tomorrow.
An Introduction to the Newest Director of THIMUN, Lisa Martin

By Chloe Rickards

IN AUGUST, there will be a new face in the THIMUN Qatar office; Lisa Martin, currently the Director of THIMUN Online, will assume the position and brings a strong background in MUN and program development to the job.

Lisa, a California native, has been involved in Model UN for close to two decades. Her first MUN assignment was to build the ACS Abu Dhabi program in the early 1990s when THIMUN programs were just beginning to be established in the Gulf. In 1997 she moved to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and founded the Mont Kiara International School program, taking the first student officers from Malaysia to The Hague and laying the groundwork for today’s MY-MUN conference. In both cases, Lisa’s work to integrate MUN into the curriculum at ACS Abu Dhabi and MKIS led to the formation of strong, lasting programs. In 2009, while working at an online school, she pioneered the first Model UN club in a totally virtual environment, leading to the first ever THIMUN-style debate online in the winter of 2010. The development of the program at K12’s iCadmey has recently been shared in ed-tech leader Scott McLeod’s blog, Dangerously Irrelevant.

Lisa’s background in developing THIMUN programs found a natural extension into a virtual environment, and she has applied the THIMUN philosophy of direct student leadership to what has become a global MUN movement. Launched as an independent not-for-profit educational program in 2011, Online Model United Nations (O-MUN) has since expanded from one monthly debate into a global program encompassing distinct programs in Asia, Middle East/Africa, Europe/Americas, as well as the first online ICJ, a new French online MUN program, a national program initiative with active school-sponsored clubs in Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore, Jordan, Egypt, France and the United Arab Emirates, a university level program, and a soon-to-be launched O-MUN Arabic program. Lisa also co-developed with Keptin Rowe, middle school MUN Director at Taipei American School, the iro-MUN program focused on mentorship, skill development, and debate.

THIMUN Qatar programming is familiar territory to Lisa. She was a 2012 Qatar Leadership Conference keynote speaker, and for the past two years has presented numerous workshops at both the QLC and on behalf of the THIMUN Online program. Last year, she led a successful delegation to THIMUN Hague, where she again ran demonstration debates and conducted outreach with conference participants and Directors. She has supported, through work in MY-MUNOS and PAMUN’s THIMUN affiliated conferences, the THIMUN mission, and is one of the co-founders and editors of The Olive Branch, also a THIMUN Qatar initiative. She has actively supported the work of Best Delegate’s work in the region, organizing outreach in Jordan and in Palestine. Lisa views the role of the THIMUN Qatar office as a pivotal “change maker” in the region, seeing O-MUN as a direct beneficiary of the support and network THIMUN Qatar provided. “The THIMUN Qatar mission is one that I completely embrace. The leadership opportunities that the THIMUN philosophy promotes are an often overlooked component in most education systems, yet one that is critically needed today. THIMUN Online sought to expand that THIMUN philosophy where traditional conferences could not go. To join THIMUN Qatar and to help provide that guidance and support to other fledgling programs in the region is both an honor and the ultimate opportunity to give back to an organization I respect immensely.”

Paris American Model UN: A Recap

By Anne Laure Razat

PAMUN was a thrilling weekend filled with debating, discovering the beautiful city of Paris, and meeting up with fellow O-MUN delegates: Kevin Hu (Germany), Anne Laure Razat (Paris), Maryam and Ayla Al-Ammari (Saudi Arabia) and Russel Evans (USA).

The weekend commenced with us shaking off the jetlag by enjoying a simple meal at a traditional French brasserie in the middle of the afternoon. As we arrived at the UNESCO Headquarters on Friday morning, you could see the awe in the eyes of the hundreds of delegates as they realized that they would be debating in such a monumental building. After an interesting and thorough speech from the Secretary General, Michael Carden, the gavel was struck and the conference formally opened!

Two full days of committee debates then took place, covering topics from LGBT rights to the question of how to successfully integrate immigrants into society. Halfway through the second day of debates, each committee was surprised with a different crisis topic that initiated frantic clause writing and sent delegates scrambling to find out their official positions. The crises helped re-ignite the spirit inside the delegates, encouraging them to speak out and show their countries’ stances.

The highlight of the day was when the team also met the O-MUN National Liaison for France, Eva Chorna! At the end of the first day, we were able to venture out of the 15th arrondissement where our hotel was located, and find our way to the famous Christmas market that lines the Champs Elysees. We marveled at the beauty and vastness of it all by taking many photos and making new memories we got to know each other better.

Before we knew it, the final day of PAMUN had arrived. The GA debate, held in the largest assembly hall in the UNESCO Headquarters, centered on the revision and enforcement of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. With over 800 delegates packed into the room, it was difficult to be noticed by the chairs, but the debate was fruitful and interesting to follow. When the final resolution of the GA passed, and closing speeches and final “Thank you’s” were said, the gavel struck once more, and PAMUN was closed until next year!

After photos in front of the impressive UNESCO sign, we parted with sorrow, leaving us all hoping our paths would cross again at another conference.
The Man Behind the Badges: O-MUN Tech Officer Cem Gokmen Explains

By Cem Gokmen

How was badging at O-MUN first introduced?

O-MUN had been searching for means of acknowledging its participants’ hard work before even I joined. In my role as Technology Officer post, I was asked by Ms. Mar- tin to look into implementing Mozilla’s Open Badges Infrastructure – however it was not possible for us to implement it back then – it was simply too new and a platform over which we would issue these badges did not exist. Later in 2013, we partnered with Achyver, a com- pany the support of whose team proved essential to the planning and launch of the O-MUN badging initiative.

Why offer badges instead of awarding “best delegate”?

At O-MUN, we have hundreds of stu- dents working very hard – researching, debating, moderating, chairing – essen- tionally investing hours and hours of their free time in our program. Everyone is involved in different levels, therefore awarding a “best delegate” award would be discouraging, and more importantly, unjust. Instead, we give everyone the credit they deserve, through the De- legate Recognition System (DRS), and of course, badges. There are multiple other benefits of the badging initiative, the badges allow outsiders to see exactly how much a particular participant has been involved, and most importantly, thanks to the reliability of the Mozilla Foundation, these badges are persis- tent, and should something happen to the O-MUN website or the program itself, they will not be affected, making them achievements every O-MUN par- ticipant can proudly display throughout their entire life.

What kinds of badges have been of- fered so far?

The first badges offered were those that acknowledged Executive Leader- ship Team members. Then we gave out badges for O-MUN Travel Teams, which are delegations of our program to conferences worldwide. Then we started giving badges for the Delegate Recognition System – badges that show how much a participant has been in- volved. We also have designed the THI- MUN Qatar badges and will be offering those to delegates that participate in the conference.

How have you helped develop badg- es?

I have mostly been involved with the design of the badges. There were a sev- eral badges to design and initially my approach was to implement a standard for badges. We’ll keep it simple, however that ap- proach seemed to degrade the badges as effectively - we had twenty almost- identical badges. Therefore I designed a variety of concepts, one for travel teams, one for THIMUN conferences, one for executive board, and so on. This way, badges of the same type look simi- lar while it is easier to distinguish one’s separate achievements simply by look- ing at his Mozilla Backpack.

Why do you think is the design of the badges, banners and other graphical materials important for O-MUN?

For a program like O-MUN, the first impression we leave on potential par- ticipants or supporters is crucial. That is exactly why everything needs to look as good as possible, because on the In- ternet in general, good graphics is an indicator that the site is worthy of a viewer’s attention. It is also important because we use some of these graph- ics in order to deliver important infor- mation. For example, on the O-MUN Delegate groups, we have the banners, which not only decorate the group but also provide delegates with their pro- gram leaders’ contact information. The design of the badges is also important because it makes them more valuable, as it shows viewers that the organization that awarded this person all those badges is actually a credible one that takes its work seriously.

What is your outlook on the badges associated with THIMUN?

I’m very glad that we have embarked on this pioneering journey with THI- MUN Qatar. It pleases me that the or- ganization shares our vision of badges as an alternative to delegate certificates. Surely as a delegate you do remember all those participation certificates they awarded you. But it should also be noted that these certificates are almost value- less, due to the simple fact that they are printed on what’s easily and frequently lost or degraded – after all, they are made out of paper! Therefore, I think it is safe to presume you will not be able to dis- play all your MUN certificates, anytime, it would be impractical. This makes these certificates lose value and also causes a huge waste of paper. This year in THIMUN Qatar, alongside certifi- cates, we will be giving out Participation Badges to individual delegates – which is a first in the history of MUN. And this does matter greatly for the future of Model United Nations, because my hope is that, within the upcoming cou- ple of years, most conferences will have

Overview: What the UN Says About the Rights of Prisoners

By Vanlee Trindade

HR/C2: The Wrongs of Rights

To know your rights as a human be- ing, is to have access to a form of protec- tion of your freedom and actions, but, does being a criminal make you any less human? Today, the United Nations fac- es the issue of unequal treatment within the system of justice and the officers ig- nornance of basic prisoner rights.

The Current Situation

The fight for equality is a battle still raging, a battle that some prisoners know much about. In 1955, the Stand- ard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners was introduced, which, provided prisoners around the world with basic rights. Today deeper story lies behind closed doors as allega- tions of prejudice and unfair treatment regarding severity of crime and race come to light. Alongside poor prison conditions and cases of malnutrition, various states across the US and groups such as Amnesty International have taken steps into ensuring the safety of prison individuals in an attempt to diminish prejudice. In 2005, the UN published the ‘International Human Rights Stan- dards for Prison Officers’ under which requires the understanding that ‘All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights’ as stated within the handbook. Additionally, laws that protect prisoners against torture tech- niques and undignified acts have been implemented as early as 1990. Yet the effectiveness of these laws have recently come into question as cases of acts of sexual harassment against women, par- ticularly in North Korea, have made news where the UN had been prohib- ited from entering for further investiga- tion in late 2013.

Rehabilitation or Retribution

The ill treatment of prisoners due to their crimes poses the question, can these individuals be reformed into fu- ture members of society or do they de- serve to be punished? With cases of re- tribution in the US prisons on the rise, the issue of prisoner rights around the world is in need of change.

Will the minds of hopeful delegates be able to combat an international crisis? Much is to be expected from THIMUN 2014.
HI EVERYONE! Hope you all had a great winter break and wish you an awesome year ahead! The past year has been great, and we look forward to bringing a lot more better experiences and a lot more learning in our calendar events for this year. THIMUN Qatar is happening on the January 28-31 weekend, and it’s going to be a super busy time for all of us here in Qatar. We look forward to see a lot of you here as well!

In terms of technology, we’re fully utilizing the MUNIS system and are relying heavily on it for all the operations including assigning committees, delegates, and various schools and even for printing badges and certificates! It’s quite impressive how this system encompasses so many different functions and is specifically tailored for MUN conferences. I think that we, as organizers, would have had a hard time doing our job without MUNIS. In fact, there was a recent update and we’re now running MUNIS 1.1.8, and the system is a lot smoother and stable at this point. There are a couple of new features too that have been introduced such as custom participant tables and notes for school MUN Directors. In fact, during the THIMUN Qatar 2014 conference, I will be holding a session exclusively about the MUNIS system in which I shall introduce and demonstrate the system to the MUN Directors and anyone else interested in it.

Last week, I happened to come across some of the amazing technology services that Adobe offers on the cloud currently. With their Creative Cloud initiative, Adobe hopes to provide seamless access to almost all of their desktop apps including Photoshop CC, InDesign CC, and Illustrator CC. Although the service is offered as a paid service (in which you pay monthly installments), the company is currently offering a free 30-day trial in which they give access to almost all their apps with limited features. It’s sure worth a try and at least for me, it’s helping me get through some typography work and graphics that I need to work on at the moment. Moreover, Adobe’s tools for web development and mobile development are really interesting and easy to use. Adobe provides users with access to pre-made templates, and you can actually set up a website in a few hours.

For those of you interested in websites and website hosting, I’d like to share with you what I’m working on for the Press Team website at THIMUN Qatar. We use a WordPress site and keep updating the themes based on the event. WordPress is super user-friendly and I feel is a great Content Management System (CMS). It lets us put in our pictures, content and almost everything you could think of, in a smooth and elegant manner. Hats off to the Press team here that works hard to maintain the site and puts in some amazing content. If you have a moment, do take a look at our website here.

That’s it for this edition from me! I’ll get back to working on setting up all our systems and technology in place for the conference. I will definitely share some of the great moments, lessons and takeaways in terms of technology at the conference in the next edition. Until then, take care and have a great time!

Tech Corner: KIS iTunesU Presents “Model UN 101”

Step 1

Go to iTunes -> Click on the “iTunes Store” in the upper right corner.

Step 2

Type “Model UN 101” into the search engine in the upper right corner.

Step 3

Click on the image of the course to the left. To play a video, double click on its title.

Step 4

To download a file, click on its price (the tab to the right).

So, what are you waiting for? Subscribe now to gain free access to a compilation of 54 quality videos and files! Also, feel free to promote and share the program with your friends, teachers, colleagues, and anyone else who may be interested!

To ask questions about or offer feedback on KIS iTunes U, please contact the Korea International School Model United Nations faculty advisor by email at mun@kis.or.kr

From the Techie’s Desk...

By Abhay Vallyavettil

EDUCATION/STRATEGY

THE OLIVE BRANCH

FEB 2014

By Jae Hyun Park

WITHIN SIX DECADES, Model United Nations has grown from one university’s initiative to a global scheme. But when it comes to teaching materials for Model UN, there has not been much progress.

That is, many high schools and universities still create and rely on their own curricula. Such a thing as the global, unified curricula. There still create and rely on their own curricula. That is, many high schools and universities still create and rely on their own curricula. That is, many high schools and universities still create and rely on their own curricula. That is, many high schools and universities still create and rely on their own curricula. That is, many high schools and universities still create and rely on their own curricula. That is, many high schools and universities still create and rely on their own curricula. That is, many high schools and universities still create and rely on their own curricula. That is, many high schools and universities still create and rely on their own curricula. That is, many high schools and universities still create and rely on their own curricula. That is, many high schools and universities still create and rely on their own curricula.
Bringing Peace in More Ways Than One

By Sara Sarwar

SINCE THE DEADLY World Wars, the United Nations and accompanying organizations have worked to prevent such tragedies from happening again. However, when the end to bloodshed finally comes, there is more damage done to a nation than just its government and military force.

The Worst Kind of Damage

When a war takes place, innocent civilians of a country often find themselves mentally disturbed, with many unable to return to their original state of being. Combat stress reaction often brings about post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), an anxiety disorder caused after experiencing traumatic events.

The mental damage continues on even after the cries of war dissolve, with many veteran soldiers experiencing depression, anxiety, and even relationship issues. In 2009, the New York Times reported that 129 American soldiers had committed suicide in only the first half of the year.

After World War I first brought combat stress to light, organizations dedicated to healing the trauma such as the Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society have been founded. The World Health Organization (WHO) also assists in regions of conflict stress reaction as well.

A Different Kind of Civilian Battle

The civilians of a nation are not exempt from the shock and stress of war either. Families who have lost a loved one due to the violence of war often never recover from the loss and grievance.

Death is not the only aspect of war to break communities apart. For the sake of a civilian’s own safety, many find their status heartbreakingly changing to refugee after fleeing their homes. Ages vary, but the trauma of the past is all the same.

Wars with Nature

Regions of conflict do not only refer to those in battle. Natural disasters are arguably the worst sort of war that a nation could go through, as there is often no way to predict when, where, or how one will strike. The 2011 Japan Earthquake had resulted in over 158 children missing, and 2,36 being orphaned.

The Goal of THIMUN

THIMUN Qatar General Assembly 3 Student Officer, Zohair Syed, shared his thoughts on improving mental health support in regions of conflict. “No matter what the difficulties, humans should be treated with equal respect,” he stated. “Everyone in need requires assistance.” It is hoped that a resolution on the importance of the issue will be reached during this week’s three-day conference.

While attention over the years has been given to the ‘second kind’ of damage caused by war, it is still hoped that not just peace of war, but peace of mind will be achieved.

Viewpoint: Screening a Terrorist

By Afif Haitams

THE SEPTEMBER 11TH attack highlights just how volatile security can be to terrorist attacks. Our safety has become a critical concern and the desire for security is now more pervasive than ever.

Countries around the world are taking effective measures in combating acts of terrorism to ensure safety for their population. However, terrorism itself is an ambiguous word. Taking these preventative steps in screening a terrorist is like finding a needle in a haystack.

What is a Terrorist?

Unfortunately there is no international agreement on the definition of a terrorist. Countries, conventions, organizations, the public, and the media all have differing opinions. Even the UN itself cannot define terrorism and class who or what defines a terrorist.

The lack of a legally binding definition of a terrorist poses a major obstacle to organizations and governments, hindering them to take meaningful counter-effective measures without discriminating or violating one’s human rights.

Regardless, cracking down on terrorism is crucial to our safety.

The Screening Process

How can we justify and class who is a terrorist and who is not? It’s quite a difficult task. Nevertheless, governments need to take these preventative steps with airport security being their first line of defense against terrorism. Contraversially, innovations in technology including America’s Advanced Imaging Technology have aided our desire for security at the expense of strenuous security checks. Moreover, profiling these potential terrorists based upon their characteristics is unjustifiable on all levels. Skin colors, facial features and clothing are becoming factors to the selection — a concern to many victims of racial profiling.

The Role of GA6

The delegates in General Assembly 6 at THIMUN Qatar 2014 are trying to develop an international consensus on the definition of terrorist. Deputy chair, Dialla Jandal, believes by not having an international consensus on terrorism, states will have their own definition and thus their own method of treatment of terrorist groups. Examples of this are seen in reported tortures within Ghraib Prison in Iraq and Guantanamo Bay in Cuba. By having one definition, Jandal believes “states can develop unified measures on how to combat terrorism.”

To the delegate of Yemen, finding an international definition on terrorism is “crucial” because there are terrorist groups in Yemen and the Arabian Peninsula. By having a unified definition, “Yemen will be able to further its progress in combating terrorism.” However, the delegate of the USA argues that by having one definition, it can inflict fear upon specific ethnic groups without validation and hopes that we “must try our best to diminish such an idea.”

Are these Security Checks Worth It?

Questions arise in the general public whether these security checks are worth it. Some say that TSA’s Advanced Imaging Technology, which bounces electromagnetic waves off the body and thus exposes our body, is too extreme of a security measure to require for every person. Moreover, screening the wrong person is becoming a usual encounter in many airports, with innocent victims being stopped and frisked by airport security, leaving them embarrassed and offended. However, if these security checks save the lives of many, then perhaps questioning nationalitiy, intentions or having bags thoroughly checked and told to take off shoes shouldn’t be a problem, rather a necessity for our safety.

PHOTO CREDIT: JENEANE JABER

PHOTO CREDIT: AYA IBRAHIM
Getting ready for a Model United Nations conference can quickly become intimidating or overwhelmed with complicated data related to their committee topics. We live in a digital age with easy access to information from a variety of sources such as UN organizations, national bodies, and NGOs. In short, the amount of data that a delegate may come across even through a simple Google search is truly amazing.

However, having data without understanding the meaning of the numbers is often useless. The goal of Model UN is to help students understand and use this data in order to formulate solutions to global issues. The more we understand global trends, the better we will be able to understand the world’s current needs. With greater understanding, we increase our chances of finding long term solutions to these needs. Thus, any tool that helps improve delegates’ methods of analysis and presentation is a great resource.

Gapminder is a particularly useful tool for data analysis. Hans Rosling started the Gapminder Foundation because of the perceived ‘gap’ between the worldwide collection of data and the general lack of public comprehension.

Gapminder aggregates a number of data sets from a variety of publicly available and reputable sources such as UNESCO, the World Bank, and the WHO. It transforms this data into a format that is easy to understand and use.

Gapminder is a free-to-use tool that converts complex global trend data into animated and interactive graphics. By using compelling visuals, it allows users to quickly recognize global trends. One of the most interesting features is the graphs move dynamically so that you can watch the historical trends on a particular topic.

My other favorite feature of Gapminder is the user’s ability to choose specific data sets for comparison. Currently, Gapminder has 519 data sets to explore. Each data set can be viewed in multiple formats or directly compared to other data sets. For example, in the graphic below, I wanted to see the correlation between life expectancy, pollution (CO2 emissions), and income per person. I selected the three data sets and could quickly identify a global pattern of higher incomes leading to not only a longer life, but also to significantly higher CO2 emissions. For delegates debating issues such as climate change, economic development, or sustainability, this data can help further guide students in their research.

Gapminder is a tool that not only solves a common researching problem, but also has a user-friendly design and interactive interface. For first time users, there is a quick 2 ½ minute video tutorial showing you the main features of the interactive graphs.

If you are interested in seeing Gapminder in action or learn more about why the founders created the tool, I would highly recommend viewing Hans Rosling’s presentation using Gapminder at a TED talk.

Resource Corner: Gapminder

By Cameron Janzen

Type of Resource: Electronic
Purpose: To understand and use data in order to formulate solutions to global issues.
Cost: Free
Website: http://www.gapminder.org/
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People’s Choice Award

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MUNIS (Model United Nations Information System)—provides an advanced management system for MUN conferences. An all inclusive manual tool at your fingertips.

The MUNIS system is the portal area where schools/conferences access information services.

The THIMUN Foundation mission is to promote and foster collaborative solution-oriented discussion to important issues by instilling life-long passion for improving our global community into today’s youth, who will be tomorrow’s leaders.
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