

University of Alberta High School Model United Nations'

DAILY DELEGATE



February 20 - 21, 2020

HSMUN 2020 Kicks Off!



Madame Michaëlle Jean delivers her Keynote address at the HSMUN Opening Ceremonies.

Welcome to HSMUN 2020!

Gabrielle Potvin, USG Press & Media

On behalf of the Press & Media team, welcome to HSMUN 2020! We hope you all enjoy the conference, and reading the Daily Delegate. Not every committee has a Press delegate this year, but we'll make sure you can stay up to date with what's happening throughout the conference.

Happy debating!

Security Council: Division Between Delegates

Sumaya Soufi and Abby LeDrew, *Die Zeit*

As the evening of discussion for Security Council 2020 unwound, delegates wasted no time and quickly engaged in heated debate over Israeli-Settlements in the West Bank.

In early discussion, the Russian Delegation eagerly calls for a resolution to hold the US accountable for their actions with Israel, which go against U.N. policies and international law. Piggy-backing off of the momentum against the US and Israel policy, China, Equatorial Guinea, and Indonesia take the side of Palestine in emphasizing the humanitarian violations associated with Zionist extremism. Israel retorts against attacks from China and Indonesia by mentioning Uighur concentration camps and Indonesia's history with genocide, calling these nations "flat out hypocrites." China quickly dismisses this claim, calling the concentration camps "educational rehabilitation" and "greatly beneficial to the Uighur." Palestine finds the argument of Israel quite weak as "they are simply justifying their actions through diverting discussion by way of other nation's historical injustices."

Q1: So far, many delegates have been using the historical injustices of other countries to further their argument. Does the Delegation of the United States find these remarks beneficial to discussion, or just manifested hypocrisy on their part?

A1- Delegation of the USA: "Many countries have a history of injustices yet today blame Israel for much of the conflict that was originally provoked by Palestinian terrorist organizations."

Following the first unmoderated caucus, Israel feels that the majority of current discussion has been largely one-sided as they emphasize that they are "willing" to recognize Palestinian sovereignty through a two-state solution, but Palestine has no interest in furthering this agenda. The Israeli delegation feels ostracized as Palestinian rhetoric seems to just "want the Jews to be cast to sea." With this plea for victimization by the Israeli delegate brought minimal support from most of the committee, South Africa sends a message of forewarning to Israel, saying "WE DID APARTHEID, DON'T DO IT!" They were adamant about Israel learning from their prior mistakes, and they are not wrong.

As the committee became increasingly polarized, teaming up with either Palestinian or Israeli delegations, it was interesting to watch the delegation of the United Kingdom stray from their foreign policy and in full support of Trump's peace plan, calling it "the only solution to this crisis." To end the evening, the Palestinian delegation pled their case with a strong and lasting impression, saying that Trump's peace plan is merely a means of oppression hiding behind the mask of diplomacy. What a night!

SOCHUM - What's Love Got to Do With It?

Sophie Lafond, Die Zeit

The Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee (SOCHUM) has started off strong on the first day of debate. The committee first sets the topic to the Rights of LGBTI+ People and debate takes off in a flying leap from there with sides already being chosen. During opening statements, strong opinions are declared: South Sudan claims that the UN and governments should not encourage LGBTI+ peoples, while many Middle Eastern and some African countries take the route of religion and tradition. The Philippines claims that LGBTI+ peoples are "not a threat, but against religion." China, on the other hand, mentions that they have had a long struggle with discrimination, but now feel that homosexuals should be welcome in society. However, transgender individuals and American LGBTI+ community members are causing harm to everyone else.

Responding to the United States, the Nigerian delegate poses the question "when will this hypocritical bullying by the western superpowers end?" to which many delegates responded in agreement, notably Myanmar, who has spent much of the evening mentioning how they "refuse to be pushed around" by the western nations. The biggest issue for this committee seems to be the significance of religion. Many believe religion is a fitting reason to deny LGBTI+ rights, while some believe religion should not be a main factor in consideration. Luxembourg brings up the fact that many people are upset when LGBTI+ people try to "dictate" religion, so why can "religion dictate LGBTI+ rights?" With all this talk of religion, many people, including us here at Die Zeit, are wondering what delegates think is a pressing influence in regards to the rights of LGBTI+ people? Day two of debate is likely to be very eventful, with more alliances forming and wedges being placed and increased between others. There already appears to be plenty of behind-the-scenes note passing and communication, so it is exciting to see where this will take us into our second day of debate.

WHO - World Health Organization Sets the Topic

Mya Smith, Yomiuri Shinbun

HSMUN starts off with a bang as the World Health Organization decides which topic to start on. Their choices were either the opioid crisis or access to sexual health education. Primary speakers asked

intriguing questions such as what exactly defines an “opioid,” as North Korea says, or which issue is killing more people. When the motion to set the topic to sexual health education was turned down, the discussion was automatically turned to the international opioid crisis.

WHO was also granted a visit from Michaëlle Jean, who is the former Governor General of Canada as well as HSMUN’s keynote speaker. As debate began to pick up, discussions included financial support for those countries plagued by drug trafficking and addiction, as well as whether the opioid crisis is even an international issue to be touched on by WHO.

North Korea’s position on the topic is unsurprisingly a nationalist one, stating that they should not have to deal with problems in other countries. Spain, as well as many other countries, took the stance that it “absolutely” is an international issue, saying that countries may learn from one another on what works and what does not. The session ended with its third unmoderated caucus to discuss issues brought up in the secondary speakers list.

LEGAL - Discussion of Reproductive Rights Breathes New Life into Legal Committee

Skylar Johnson, Die Zeit

An overwhelming majority of delegates determined that the UN Legal committee would begin by discussing the question of reproductive rights last night. The urgency of this topic was emphasized by the Kenyan and Indian delegates, who explained the gravity of the situation as a result of the deaths of women and children due to failures to protect reproductive rights.

A clear focus of discussion early on was the issues associated with reproductive rights in developing countries, particularly pertaining to their ability to provide adequate healthcare services, including safe termination of pregnancy. One service discussed conspicuously was that of sexual education programs as a method of prevention to various challenges of reproductive health, however the committee ultimately chose not to further explore it last night. Despite strong pushes from the United States, the committee chose not to discuss modern day violators of human rights, instead they dove into issues related to often overlooked groups.

The inclusion of various groups when considering reproductive health was perhaps the most pivotal subject of the evening, sparking a heated discussion. On the forefront of advocacy for the inclusion of men in the issue was Greece, while Cambodia broached the subject of consideration of LGBTQ rights in the context of reproductive health. This was supported by a considerable number of delegations, with Zimbabwe stating that members of the LGBTQ community are “humans just like us”. Some delegations, however, expressed religious concerns. Other delegations expressed apprehension about a lack of financial resources to support specialized LGBTQ health services. Both may be expected to cause significant tension in further discussion of this issue.

Future Security Council - (Solar) Stormy Weather for Future Security Council

Gabrielle Potvin, USG Press & Media

In the Future Security Council, delegates have been dealing with the aftermath of a Coronal Mass Ejection, or CME. Countries are currently attempting to allocate resources before the situation has a chance to worsen.

Sources have informed us of a heated debate between the United Kingdom and Brazil, with the former accusing the latter of attempting to arm their military. With an abundance of working papers on the floor, we look forward to seeing delegates' solutions.

UNEP - Delegates Deal with JUNK IN SPACE!

Gabrielle Potvin, USG Press & Media

Delegates in UNEP are currently discussing how to deal with the problem of space junk. Currently, two main working papers exist: the first, proposed by Nigeria, Portugal, and the United States, focuses on the formation of a committee of experts who can advise the UN regarding the mitigation of existing space junk. South Sudan and China are sponsoring a paper which aims to form the "International Space Janitors Agency" (ISJA,) which would be funded by China and look to provide funding to African countries.

DISEC - Delegates Discuss Automation of War

Gabrielle Potvin, USG Press & Media

Delegates in DISEC voted to set their first topic to the Automation of War. Currently, the debate is split between those countries looking to develop Artificial Intelligence (such as the United States, Russia, and South Korea,) and those who would prefer to have human soldiers "calling the shots", such as Pakistan, Venezuela, and France.

We look forward to seeing the developments made in committee.