THIMUN 2019 is centered on “Work in a Globalized World: protecting jobs, protecting people.” The impact of globalization is omnipresent in our world. In fact, our gathering here in the World Forum is made possible by the ever-growing connections of the world.

Globalization is the process by which the world establishes international connections and grows a global economy through trade, facilitated by technology and the reduction or removal of tariffs. Although it is tempting to observe only an increase in the unity of the world, it is vital to question the effect this has on jobs and workers. “The jobs of tomorrow might not be the ones of today,”... because the MUN delegates of today will be the adults of tomorrow.”

Globalization has made it possible for companies from developed countries to run parts of their company, from production to customer service, in a more cost-efficient way. Technology has enabled these countries to outsource tasks in order to circumvent higher minimum wages and strict regulations. This has resulted in countries like China and India, which are very populous, mobilizing many workers and noticing immense economic growth as a result. This practice prompts various moral questions, however. First, cheap labor is not beneficial for everyone involved. Low wages and poor conditions and rights result in struggles and tragedies. Outsourcing jobs inevitably results in rising unemployment rates in developed countries. Additionally, the advancements in and decreasing cost of technology are posing a threat even to the jobs in countries whose economies have emerged as a result of globalization.

Globalization has also had a positive impact. The market has become more open and global, with companies having access to a wide range of consumers, and consumers having access to wider range of different products. Communication and travel have also grown and expanded as a result of globalization. This has contributed to more awareness of other cultures and an increase in tolerance.

While there are benefits of globalization, the negative impact on people and jobs that differs immensely based on geographical and socio-economic factors is shared. So, how does one address the complex and varied vices of a process which has also brought many virtues?

By Amalia Anhalt

The United Nations sees its responsibility as creating a global framework to manage challenges as well as to design policies to support Member States’ achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

In discussing this multifaceted issue, we are tasked with acknowledging both the interconnectivity and economic stimulation globalization has bestowed upon us, as well as the well-being of individuals and populations. It is up to us to put our heads, with the vastly different perspectives and experiences we represent, together, to see how we can find solutions to protect jobs and to protect people.
The Year: 1989

A line of tanks approaches a man gripping a shopping bag. As they maneuver to pass him, he moves to obstruct their path. This iconic image, taken two days after the violent crackdown on the Tiananmen anti-communist protests, is the only photographic documentation of the uprisings against the Chinese government. While the identity of the man and the tanks remains uncertain, the message is provocative for, and central to, the year 1989.

Just weeks before, after the death of Hu Yaobang, a political leader who had promised for a more open and democratic system, thousands of Chinese students had begun to march through the streets of Beijing calling for democracy. Many of these protesters led a hunger strike in Tiananmen Square. After the protesters refused the wishes of the Chinese government, Prime Minister Li Peng imposed martial law. The international media was prohibited from all activity. By early June, the military began to forcefully intervene with the Tiananmen protests. Unarmed soldiers first invaded the square, only to find that the scale of the protests would require more than this to subdue. Within days, soldiers opened fire and tanks rolled in to assert their authority. BBC estimates that over 10,000 protesters like "Tank Man" were placed in internment camps or sentenced to death. Meanwhile, in Eastern Europe, thirst for democracy began to shatter the communist system in place. The old church in central Leipzig, East Germany had been a meeting spot for over a decade for anti-communist talk. But by the summer of 1989, these hopeful town meetings of less than a dozen people had morphed into active congregations of thousands. Within months, Leipzig became the hub for peaceful anti-communist demonstrations. On October 9, over 80,000 people marched around the city demanding German reunification. While it was feared that the secret Stasi police would take violent action, they did nothing. This allowed the Germans of Leipzig to lead a peaceful revolution towards democracy. Within a month, the work of the people of Leipzig led to the fall of the Berlin Wall.

While Central American Panama was not a communist state, it shared a similar sort of democratic upheaval with the Chinese and East German protesters. On 21 December 1989, the United States invaded Panama to overthrow the dictator Manuel Noriega over accusations of suppressing democracy and endangering United States diplomats. While Noriega had initially been on favorable terms with the United States government, accusations of drug trafficking lead to his indictment by Americans. As tensions grew between Noriega and the United States government, tensions in the Panama Canal zone also grew. After Noriega annulled the presidential election of his successor and a U.S. Marine was shot to death, United States President George Bush Sr. ordered an invasion to restore democracy.

The year 1989 brought great change to many nations. While many insurgents like "Tank Man" were lost in single uprisings, their actions were the spark for a year of revolution. 
The feature for the pre-issue is our very own Humans of topic of pertinence will be discussed in extensive detail. One element to definitely look forward to is unique issues that go beyond the norms and challenge nationalities. Our goal is to produce intriguing and journalists from 16 different schools and of 14 different members, directors, and other participants during the conference. We are the Editors-in-Chief of MUNITY, the official press publication of THIMUN. We wish all delegates to enjoy the conference – happy

**Introducing This Year’s Secretary General: Davina Grace Stamp**

THIMUN 2019’s Secretary General, Davina Grace Stamp, is a 17 year old senior at Carlucci American International School of Lisbon. With this year’s conference, she hopes to provide a platform to fulfill MUN’s objective “to show students that with knowledge, creativity, and diplomacy, they have the power to have their voice heard and someday use their ideas to make a change.” She is drawn to MUN because she believes it prepares students to make positive changes in the world. In a world where teenagers are rarely consulted on their opinions in a meaningful way, Davina believes at MUN “you see cooperation and solutions formed at a rate you don’t see in senators, government, and even the UN today” because students not only form opinions, but plans to make the world around them better. From a young age, this convinces students that “change is more than possible” when people keep global well-being in mind, despite what regularly occurs in society.

There are many who believe great change must happen to improve the world and Davina, someone who is consistently attempting to become a better person in order to “someday contribute to a better world,” is one of them.

**In her own words:**

The world needs a universal mindset of unity and cooperation. The problems that plague us now, and those which will arise tomorrow, are not only the problems of those suffering. It is not only when hurricanes hit your town that you should be concerned about climate change, or when war terrorizes your nation that you should be concerned about accepting refugees; we humans share this planet, we share these problems, and we share the suffering. As idealistic as it may sound, we need to start acting like it. In a tangible sense, I would simplify this to the world needs more Model United Nations; it needs more of people sharing their suffering and others working to solve it with each country sacrificing something small to ensure the livelihood of their fellow people.

**The Secretary General’s Perspective on This Year’s Theme, “Work in a Globalized World”:**

As the world becomes more globalized and information is shared via the Internet, “national boundaries of knowledge are a thing of the past.” This change is felt in all parts of life, with work being no exception. While Davina believes, “a global scientific community that shares its findings and cooperates to advance medical practice, food and water distribution methods, environmental conservation and sustainable practices, and innovation freely seems almost utopic,” she also noted that through solutions like those which will be proposed at MUN, it is possible.

**MUN’s Future:**

Moving forward, Davina hopes that the ability to participate in MUN will be offered to more students across the globe. To her, “being a part of MUN is opening yourself up to having your opinion criticized, to completely embody the perspective of a nation you do not fully agree with and understand their side more or use the faults you see in your delegation to adjust your own mindset.” This is an important part of setting up the current generation to solve issues where those before us have failed.

By Aimee Dastin

**Letter from the EDITORS-IN-CHIEF**

Dear readers,

We are the Editors-in-Chief of MUNITY, the official press publication of THIMUN. We are honored to serve delegates, chairs, advisors, administrative staff members, directors, and other participants during the conference.

This year, we are proud to present 26 talented aspiring journalists from 16 different schools and of 14 different nationalities. Our goal is to produce intriguing and unique issues that go beyond the norms and challenge ourselves. One element to definitely look forward to is the focus article we will feature in every issue, where one topic of pertinence will be discussed in extensive detail. The feature for the pre-issue is our very own Humans of THIMUN, which documents how diverse students from all over the world prepare for the conference and what they look forward to most.

Often times, the fourth estate can be overlooked and questioned. In today’s world, the press has been treated as unnecessary and even antagonistic to democracy. However, the world needs journalists to inform and protect citizens and speak truth to power. We will strive to put out quality news that model the essential role that press plays in a democracy.

Throughout this week, our team of reporters, photographers, and layout artists will be creating a total of five issues of the MUNITY newspaper. We will not only document heated debates and potential remedies to global crises but also capture new friendships, personal insights, and reflections that will be formed throughout the conference.

We would like to ask the delegates and chairs for two things:

First, please take the time to pick up our daily issues and give them a look–we promise to fill its pages with eclectic and engaging content ranging from feature articles to the secrets of writing a good chair report.

Second, when a press member approaches you for an interview, please be willing to voice your opinions and expertise.

We wish all delegates to enjoy the conference – happy THIMUN 2019!

Editors-in-Chief

Kirsten Huh, Dawn Kim

By Kirsten Huh and Dawn Kim
The EU’s War on Plastic

In January, the European Union (EU) waged a war on plastic. Since then, it has been strategizing to ensure every piece of plastic within its borders is reusable and recyclable by 2030. These strategies were approved in October by the European Parliament, and include plans to reduce the use of plastics for which no alternatives exist, a ban on single-use, non-degradable plastic products, and investments in bioplastic research.

Under the proposal, the use of plastics with no ready alternatives are to be cut by at least 25% by 2025. A potential flaw of the goal lies in its tepid nature. To put matters into perspective, in just 15 years, Denmark decreased its plastic bag use by almost 100%. To match that in seven years, the EU should aim for a reduction of at least 45%. While the EU requires a lengthier legislative process than single countries to overcome cultural differences, it should nevertheless set a more ambitious goal if it is waging a war on plastic. It is much better to strive for a challenging goal than to exceed a perfunctory one for the sake of promising statistics.

As Amazon has been accused of giving insufficient vacation time, inadequate bathroom breaks due to strict deadlines, and inadequate workplace conditions. As the company has grown, a greater variety of products have become available on its website. It has pulled business away from other companies, and become much like a monopoly. Competitors such as Sears and Toys-R-U have been forced to close or lay off workers. Many politicians such as Rep. David Cicilline D-R.I. and Bernie Sanders have called for Amazon to be broken up.

With Jeff Bezos, President and CEO of Amazon, now being the richest man in the world (his net worth is more than $165 billion), activists implored him to raise wages for workers. The pressure from US senator Bernie Sanders and labor organizers has compelled Amazon to raise its minimum wage for US employees to $15, effective next month. This would raise the annual wage for the lowest paid employees to $31,200 per year, an amount Bezos makes every nine seconds. Those already making $15 or more will also receive a pay increase. This wage raise will affect more than 250,000 American employees, including part-time and temporary employees, as well as 100,000 seasonal workers.

This minimum wage raise will not only benefit Amazon through good publicity, but will also allow it to attract more workers in a tight labor market. Despite increased roboization and cashierless convenience stores called AmazonGo, Amazon still requires large numbers of workers. As the minimum wage raise is coming into effect before the holiday season, the wage raise may be necessary to attract the temporary workers Amazon requires, making Amazon seem like a better job option than its competitors. The wage raise may also stop Amazon workers working in Whole Foods’ stores around the country to stage strikes.

Amazon, the American electronic commerce company, has faced much criticism from politicians, both for hurting traditional retailers and tolerating stressful workplace conditions. As the company has grown, a greater variety of products have become available on its website. It has pulled business away from other companies, and become much like a monopoly. Competitors such as Sears and Toys-R-U have been forced to close or lay off workers. Many politicians such as Rep. David Cicilline D-R.I. and Bernie Sanders have called for Amazon to be broken up.

In addition, new legislation has been proposed to tax companies for every single use, non-degradable plastic products. In October by the European Parliament, and include plans to reduce the use of plastics for which no alternatives exist, a ban on ten single use, non degradable plastic products, and investments in bioplastic research.

Under the proposal, the use of plastics with no ready alternatives are to be cut by at least 25% by 2025. A potential flaw of the goal lies in its tepid nature. To put matters into perspective, in just 15 years, Denmark decreased its plastic bag use by almost 100%. To match that in seven years, the EU should aim for a reduction of at least 45%. While the EU requires a lengthier legislative process than single countries to overcome cultural differences, it should nevertheless set a more ambitious goal if it is waging a war on plastic. It is much better to strive for a challenging goal than to exceed a perfunctory one for the sake of promising statistics.

As Amazon has also been accused of giving insufficient vacation time, inadequate breaks during shifts, and other negative workplace conditions. There have been stories of employees peeing in bottles and trash cans as they are scared to take bathroom breaks due to strict deadlines. Many employees have gotten injured or suffered panic attacks, leading Amazon workers around the country to stage strikes.

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As the minimum wage raise is coming into effect before the holiday season, the wage raise may be necessary to attract the temporary workers Amazon requires, making Amazon seem like a better job option than its competitors. The wage raise may also stop Amazon workers working in Whole Foods’ stores around the country to unionizing. However, in conjunction with this minimum wage raise came a reduction of benefits. For example, warehouse workers will no longer receive stock in the company or get bonuses.

After raising its minimum wage, Amazon pledged to advocate for raising the federal minimum wage, which has been $7.25 for about a decade. While this seems like an admirable goal, many economists believe it is simply being done to force its competitors to pay higher wages so that their costs rise as well.

Amazon’s rivals, Walmart and Target, have made similar minimum wage pledges following Amazon’s announcement. This rise in minimum wages may be too good to be true, as average wage is already rising slowly as a result of the labor market being near full employment. This makes Amazon raising the minimum wage seem like it is simply following the pattern formed by changing labor market conditions. But a company as large as Amazon raising wages makes a statement. This may lead to a trend of companies following Amazon’s example, in the hopes of remaining competitive.

Overall, Amazon raising its minimum wage has been a matter of great controversy, spurred by a combination of labor market and political pressures. Whether the new $15 minimum wage is large enough increase to outweigh the reduction in benefits implemented is still up for debate. The hope is that Amazon will continue to work to improve its workplace conditions. Nevertheless, it is still possible that the company only raised its minimum wage for its own self-interest.

By Aimee Dastin
A Robot Revolution on the Horizon

After successfully creating a time-travel device, you give your assistant a random date and send you to the future. You arrive in a drastically different world. The number of AI has vastly increased and has begun to outnumber the large human population. AI determines criminals’ prison sentences and rejects performing surgery on any patients with a probability of survival that is lower than 50%. It begins to duplicate itself faster than we ever could, and 500 million jobs slip out of our reach. Our lives lie in the hands of cold, empirical statistics generated by codes and algorithms. We have lost control of the very beings that came to exist at the cost of our blood, sweat, and tears. You check the date on the time travel machine, expecting to see a time difference of centuries or millennia. But the year is only 2030.

Now, although this is an exaggerated, hopeless future of what is to come, it isn’t entirely inaccurate. This dystopian future seems to be approaching faster, especially for certain individuals, as AI seems to be posing a new threat to the replacement of jobs.

A burning question regarding job security has risen in the minds of many, following the influx of technological advances and innovations. These emerging concerns were found in a survey conducted by the Pew Research Center from May 1-15, 2017, for their article “Automation in Everyday Life.” It states that Americans were “roughly twice as likely to express concern (72%) about the risk of automation (33%) about a future in which robots and computers are capable of doing many jobs that are currently carried out by humans.” Another 75% of participants anticipate that the economy will not create many better-paying jobs for humans if this scenario becomes a reality, while 6% expect that people will have a hard time finding jobs if forced to compete with robots and other forms of technology.

How can we feel so threatened by technology? To answer this question, it is important to know the definition of AI. The Science Daily defines it as “the study and design of intelligent agents where an intelligent agent is a system that perceives its environment and takes actions which maximizes its chances of success.” We are intimidated by them, as they are usually more productive, efficient, and accurate than the common man. Thus, AIs may have an advantage in the acquisition of certain jobs that require learning and judgement.

This issue has gone to the extent where there has been the creation of an actual website (https://willrobotstakemyjob.com/) for individuals worrying whether their jobs will be taken over by technology in the future. This website predicts several jobs that will eventually become redundant, such as truck drivers (79%), food preparation workers (87%), brokers in the investment business (58%), and accountants (94%).

But will the addition of technology only bring drawbacks to the economy and living standards? Joe McKendrick, contributor of the Forbes article “Artificial Intelligence Will Replace Tasks, Not Jobs,” disagrees. He believes that executives should be reducing jobs, so that AI can take over mundane tasks. Erik Brynjolfsson and Daniel Rock of MIT, and Tom Mitchell of Carnegie Mellon University say that our society is having the debate on the wrong questions. Instead of worrying about when and how our jobs will be wiped out by technology, we should be focusing on “the redesign of jobs and re-engineering of business processes.”

It is hard to predict what our future will be like in the next ten or hundred years. To see the answer for this debate, all we can do for now is wait and watch what the future has in store for us, while continuing to improve and adapt to any change that may present itself in the future. To end on a more positive note, however, we should be glad that our most pressing worry with regards to AI, is job security, and not a robot revolution.

Freedom of the press in 2018/19

Today, the press has become synonymous with mass media. From radio shows to newspapers and accounts on social media: any platform that broadcasts, falls under the multi-faceted umbrella of the press. The effects of such massive influence are two-fold. Investigative journalism can expose powerful people, maintaining an equilibrium of power between the common the power. However, the press can also be subject to governmental censorship, leading to one-sided information and control of public opinion.

Free press means publications are not restricted by governments in political or ideological matters. However, the concept of free press did not always prevail: from the Roman empire’s stone carvings in 130 BC to the print publications of the early 18th century, it was entirely censored by government-appointed censors. In 1644, John Milton, an English poet, presented the British parliament with ‘Areopagitica’, a speech calling for freedom of publication. He argued that it is impossible for a government to discern the right from the wrong without altering the truth. His ideas were widely criticized at that time. The political systems then, like colonialism and monarchy, meant that a single group of people had absolute power. This chilled the central governments to present themselves as faultless. In today’s pluralistic democracies, the fundamentals of censorship were challenged. Democracy in its truest form, promises a government that is for the people, of the people, and by the people. And if citizens are responsible for voting their leaders and in this way, controlling how their entire country is run, they are also responsible for making informed choices based on complete truths. Transparent access to these ‘truths’ is only possible if free press is implemented. This was first identified by Edmund Burke, an Irish statesman, who coined the term “Fourth Estate”. He referred to the press as an external element of a country’s political framework that wields indirect social, economic and political influence, through the way in which it shapes the reader’s beliefs.

Today, although most countries exercise free press, the conflict has not been resolved. Either systemic rights of the press do not manifest into reality or free press in itself is not practiced. In 2013, journalists working for Al Jazeera, including Mahmoud Hussein, Baher Mohamed and Mohamed Fahmy, were imprisoned by an Egyptian authorities on spurious charges. Similarly, in September 2018, two Reuters journalists, were sentenced to seven years of imprisonment in Myanmar for possessing top-secret documents for an “antinational investigation”. Another event that gained international attention was the role the Prince of Saudi Arabia played in death of Jamal Khashoggi, a Saudi Arabian journalist who had penned several controversial articles against him. Instances like these constantly put the prevalence of honest journalism at risk.

That said, is it possible that the press is always the victim and never the perpetrator? No. Even if it is not censored directly by the government, the content it publishes is always shaped by its owners. And just like any other private entity, it can be manipulated by monetary incentive. In India, A small publication called Cobra Post carried out a sting operation. It released footage of several Indian media houses agreeing to propagate a political stance in favour of the Indian prime minister and his party for a large sum of money. In fact, some media companies even agreed to vitiate the communal environment in India before an election. They began violently covering certain stories surrounding the successes of a single political party and began concealing its failures and unpopular beliefs, shaping the public’s opinions. This radically changed the course of the country’s election. As a result, the extent to which free press should be exercised came into question. Should such widespread power be given to a single estate, especially if it is capable of bias and dishonesty?

It may seem like a frustrating dilemma. Is the press good? Or is it bad? Should it be believed? What is freedom of press? Following the ideals of a free press are important to maintain an unqualified circulation of information and a just political system. Although this may lead to a fair share of biased reporting, journalists and readers can work towards eliminating this by approaching information with both skepticism and curiosity; by questioning its credibility; by researching its sources of information with both skepticism and curiosity; by researching its sources of information with both skepticism and curiosity; by researching its sources of information with both skepticism and curiosity. 

By Hitanshi Badani

Layout By Christine Lee

By Sunny Choi

Artwork by Camille Lucero
Will Wallentine - Park Tudor School
“I am Will Wallentine, I am a 17-year-old from Indianapolis, Indiana in the USA. This will be my first time going to THIMUN, and I am really excited! A fun fact about me is that I am a PADI certified Advanced Open Water Diver. What I like most about MUN is meeting new people from all over the country, and I am thrilled to meet people from all over the world at THIMUN. The biggest challenge that I can foresee at the conference is jet lag.”

Eda Devletsah - Park Tudor School
“My name is Eda, and I am from Istanbul, Turkey, although I currently live in Indianapolis, USA. This is my second time at THIMUN, and I am in the Historical Security Council. Last year I was in Special Conference 2 and had the best time. A fun fact about me is that I have lived in three different countries. I love MUN for the fact that we, as delegates, are able to come together regardless of what country we are representing and are determined to solve the issue at hand with respect and sensitivity. I am looking forward to meeting amazing people from all over the globe (and maybe from places I previously have lived in). I think the biggest challenge at the conference for me will be to represent a country and be a part of a committee that is set in 1989. It will definitely be challenging yet incredible to act as if we are currently in 1989.”

Margherita Firenze - Park Tudor School
“I am a 17-year-old student from Indiana, USA. Prior to moving to the U.S. I lived in Florence (Firenze), Italy. I speak fluent Italian, Spanish, and English. I look forward to attending THIMUN for the first time this February and meeting people from all over the world. Outside of MUN, I enjoy playing the piano and violin, watching movies, and swimming. Due to my long name I am called several nicknames including “Extra”, “Marge”, and “MargheLaFarle”. MUN has broadened my world view. In my heavily STEM classes at school, I often do not consider what is occurring on the other side of the globe. However, by participating in MUN conferences I immerse myself in issues affecting not only a region but also the rest of the world. In searching solutions for issues like child soldiers, refugees education, and nuclear proliferation, I am forced to consider multiple perspectives and seek consensus among nations. A conference like THIMUN further expands on this strength of MUN by creating truly international committees.”

Stacey Albegova - International School of Düsseldorf
“Hi, my name is Stacey. I am 17 years old, and I come from Russia. This is my third THIMUN conference. I love coming here because seeing people my age speak passionately about global issues stimulates my own intellectual curiosity. I always leave inspired and motivated to broaden by perspectives. What I am most looking forward to is hearing speeches. I am always fascinated by the mastery certain delegates have over language and persuasive argument. This is my last conference and therefore my last chance to challenge my own comfort zone and take some risks in debate. I am excited.”

Karina Strauch - John F. Kennedy School
“My name is Karina Strauch, and I am 17 years old. I am the ICJ President at THIMUN 2019, and this is my fourth and final THIMUN conference. When I first became a part of MUN, I was shy and quiet, but since my first conference, MUN has led shyness to give way to confidence and my quiet personality to turn into a desire to be heard. MUN is not only a place where students can come together to talk about world issues and attempt to solve them but also an opportunity to develop leadership skills and learn more about how far you can push yourself to achieve your goals. For me, THIMUN is the crown of MUN, the place where students can come together to find out what they are capable of achieving. My one piece of advice to you would be: use every opportunity to be heard, do not let yourself melt into a sea of a hundred other delegates in your committee. This is THIMUN after all.”

Marcus Grunnesjö - Frankfurt International School
“My name is Marcus Grunnesjö, I am 18 years old and currently attending Frankfurt International School. I am Swedish but have lived in Germany for three years now. This is my second THIMUN conference, and 10th overall (also my last high-school conference unfortunately). I always look forward to THIMUN as you can make new friends from all across the world. This year, I am in the Historical Security Council, which is my favorite committee. I am very excited to see how far everyone will go and perhaps witness some rising stars. My one piece of advice to you would be: use every opportunity to be heard, do not let yourself melt into a sea of a hundred other delegates in your committee. This is THIMUN after all.”
For this project, our goal is to highlight the broad perspectives of people coming to the conference. THIMUN is made up of people who all have unique stories to share.
Refugee Rights Throughout History

With a growing international concern for refugee rights, it is important to recognize the development of events leading up to the so called ‘Refugee Rights of The Modern Era’. The UNHCR describes a refugee as an individual who has been forced to flee his or her country due to war, persecution, or ongoing violence. In most cases, they cannot return home due to violations of their human rights and oppression associated with race, religion, nationality, or political opinion. However, the topic of refugees only became recognized and dealt with by the mid twentieth century.

Three years after the foundation of the UN, the first official refugee act- Displaced Persons Act- of 1948 allowed refugees to enter the US under a quota system. Nations worldwide created different policies and agreements on refugees; the 1951 Geneva Convention for the Convention on the Rights of Refugees set the fundamentals of refugee law and defined legal protection for refugees. In addition to the preceding definition, the convention explains procedures to offer legal protection and assistance for displaced people. It also outlines the governments’ and war criminals’ responsibilities for the refugees and their basic human rights. In addition, the US signed the Immigration and Nationality Act in support of this cause.

Following the Geneva Convention, the 1967 Protocol, effective since Oct. 4, 1967 modernized the rights of refugees as nations adapted to the demands of the world and began to offer more measures of protection. The world is currently and unquestionably in a global refugee crisis, with an estimated number of over 65 million refugees. Reasons for this situation include cross-border wars, civil wars, violations of human rights, unlivable climates, widespread poverty, and a lack of political and religious freedom. Nations that are facing the most challenges are Syria, Afghanistan, Venezuela, South Sudan, Somalia, and Colombia.

The UNHCR is proposing and implementing voluntary repatriation as its primary solution for refugees. Voluntary repatriation refers to the return of a refugee to one’s home nation. What the UNHCR is attempting to create is a secure domestic nation for the refugees to return to. On the surface, it seems as if the UN and UNHCR are ignoring the issue of the refugees, simply choosing to send them back to their countries of origin. However, once looked into, it becomes clear that the UN is directly addressing issues of human rights, tyrannical governments, and the threat to security on local and global scales.

The alternative is resettlement. The UNHCR provides refugees with education, cultural orientation, language training, employment, and other essentials. Nevertheless, that is only for the blessed one percent of refugees worldwide, according to The Guardian. Currently, there are many issues surrounding the way refugees are treated. Now is the time to investigate further and look for solutions, continue informing oneself, and share this knowledge to promote human well-being.

Tension escalates, violence increases, a nation polarizes. Seizing power becomes the cynosure amidst the chaos. The lust for power diminishes our willingness to arrive rationally at peaceful political settlements and ending civil wars. Instead, whether out of a fight for justice or avarice, we are inclined to defend our own interests.

What makes a country more prone to conflict? Fuelled by grievance or greed, civil wars tend to originate from oppressive civilizations, marking a trend that has remained for centuries. The basis of repressive societies being a main structural cause of civil wars commonly lie within the weakness(es) of a nation’s governing principles.

Civil wars tend to leave countries in a trap of conflict, considering that a prolonged conflict perpetuates poverty. Oppression, malnutrition, income inequality, injustice, civil war. Furthermore, civil wars are apt to worsen the conditions of a nation before war, resulting in the repetition of the cycle. As mirrored in the 2011 World Development Report, 90% of the civil wars since 2000 originate in countries that have undergone civil war within the previous 30 years.

Although no longer dominating the news headlines in the Western world, the many trends of modern civil wars are mirrored in the actions of ISIS in the Iraqi Civil War, as it aims for a broader Islamic caliphate. According to political scientist Barbara F. Walter, as published in the Annual Review of Political Science 2017, there are three principal arguments that differentiate post-2003 civil wars from those before. Touching on the concept of mono-ethnicity, it is stated that most conflicts arise in Muslim-dominated countries. Amongst others, the occurrences in Muslim-majority countries, including Iraq, Syria, Libya, Chad, and Yemen, used the internet as a means to form a front for a government confrontation. Additionally, Walter expressed that these rebel groups are fighting the wars to advocate radical concepts, whose interests focus on transnational aims, rather than achieving national objectives. Now the control of the central government is not the only objective. Devastating, momentous moments in not only Parisian history, includ-
WOMEN’S RIGHTS

Although much progress has been made in recent years regarding women, gender equality has yet to be achieved. A difficulty presents itself when talking about women’s rights: there is hardly anything universal that can be said. Some parts of the world have progressed significantly more than others. The United Nations has taken many initiatives, from stressing gender equality in the first article of the UN Charter to including gender equality as one of the Sustainable Development Goals for 2030. Measures such as setting goals through flagship programmes and a human-rights-based approach have been taken to ensure that countries aim for gender equality with the creation of UN Women in 2010.

According to UN Women, “1 in 4 out of 195 countries guarantee equality between women and men in their constitutions as of 2014” yet, discrimination against women continues, taking many different forms.

Women earn between 10 and 30% less than men in most countries out of 83 evaluated. The gender pay gap is an international issue that points to the still-present discrimination against women. Women are not paid the same amount as men are for the same work despite doing them with equal efficiency and quality. This creates economic inequality between genders, making it harder for women to become economically independent. Although there are differences in the size of the pay gap across countries, it is an issue that affects all.

Husbands are the legally designated heads of households in 29 out of 143 countries. In 18 countries, women need their husbands’ permission to work. In 17 of them, women can’t travel freely. In some, they can’t control key decisions such as choosing their families’ residence or obtaining legal documents. Gender equality inside families is especially essential for the sustainability of women’s rights.

Of the nearly 100 million people who are illiterate worldwide, more than 60% are women. Girls are more likely than boys to have never received an education. Education is the key to personal development and financial stability in the future. Girls should have equal opportunities to become whatever they want to be.

1 in 3 women has experienced physical or sexual violence. Today, 59 countries don’t have any laws prohibiting sexual harassment. Within the emphasis of the #MeToo movement, there has been more focus on sexual abuse on women. Yet, women continue to suffer daily.

133 million girls and women have experienced female genital mutilation (FGM). FGM is still a common practice in some cultures with devastating effects on the girls who are subjected to it. Progress has been made with the ratc of girls between 15-19 in countries where female genital mutilation is practiced decreasing to 1 in 3 in 2017 from 1 in 2 in 2000. However, there is still much to be done.

More than 140 million women have an unmet need for family planning. According to the World Health Organization, “214 million women of reproductive age in developing countries who want to avoid pregnancy are not using a modern contraceptive method.” Without proper family planning, the right to choose the number and age gap of children is undetermined. It may also lead to the death of mothers and children through unsafe abortions, malnutrition, or health complications.

Women occupy only 22% of parliamentary seats worldwide. They occupied 11% in 1995, which shows how slow the progression has been. Women gaining parliamentary seats is the best way to secure legal rights as well as civil and social rights.

While celebrating the achievements of the past, it is also important for us to focus on the areas that still require improvement. Though progress can still be made, is in our power to reach full equality. However, it is crucial that this issue receives its due awareness and action to get there.

Photo by Cecilia Vanloeveren

We’ve come a long way but there is still a lot to be done.
Why MUN?

We all know the benefits of participating in MUN: coordinators, classmates, and parents have long since peddled its positive effects on one’s confidence, public-speaking skills, and knowledge on world issues and politics. But the benefits of MUN don’t stop there. It also creates a global network of diverse opinions and a platform for students to speak on issues that really matter. It provides students with an opportunity to voice an opinion without having it dismissed due to their age. MUN gives students a chance to argue for causes they are passionate about and prepares them to put their words into actions. These values are fully embodied by THIMUN, which also closely resembles the actual United Nations. In THIMUN, delegates get to meet and interact with their peers all over the world and broaden their perspectives by exchanging unique ideas and arguments. To make the most out of THIMUN, here are a few tips that might help:

Don’t...

Stress too much: Of course, some stress can motivate you to work harder but too much will make unproductive. Remember this is all a platform for students to debate on world issues and improve themselves. There is nothing to be afraid of;

Be too hard on yourself: Everyone was a new delegate once but they improved through hard work and experience. Mistakes may be made and disappointments may occur, but the friendships and experience you gain are what matters in the long run. Just do your best and be proud of yourself for all of your accomplishments.

Act as you know it all (even if you do): Although it is important to be confident, being overconfident to the point where you seem condescending might put off others. Actively interact with other delegates and listen to their ideas.

Be mean: MUN is not a competition. Focus on cooperation and avoid sabotaging others. Don’t steal ideas or humiliate other delegates. Be respectful even if you think someone’s idea is not very good. Good criticism is never disrespectful.

Do...

Be prepared: Prepare for the conference beforehand. Go over the rules, know your issues and your country. Research your country’s socioeconomic status, external and internal relations, environmental challenges, and all the other aspects that may indicate political stance. Write a resolution if you can, and come to the conference with some ideas in mind. Remember, knowledge is power. It can make your MUN experience much more meaningful and beneficial.

Try to get out of your comfort zone: Public speaking can seem intimidating, especially when you are trying to reach out to complete strangers. However, it gets easier the more you do it. Taking that big first step and taking the floor is the most important part. Try to be confident and you will do well.

Be cooperative: MUN is not supposed to be an individual activity. Communicate and brainstorm with others so that you can form better ideas. Don’t be that person who tries to submit a resolution all by themselves. The collaborative process of writing a resolution is much more efficient—plus, you get to make new friends!

Be helpful: Help is something that goes both ways. If you need any help, don’t hesitate to ask for it. Talk to your chairs, advisors or fellow delegates. At the same time, don’t be afraid to offer it to others. Asking for help and providing it in return is key to a rewarding MUN experience.

Bring snacks: Being an active participant of MUN requires a lot more energy than you’d expect. Have a non-smelly, no-mess snack of your liking in your bag for a quick energy boost.

Have fun: This is probably the most important tip. MUN is supposed to be an enjoyable experience. Try to enjoy the process of working hard and challenging yourself.

Being a MUN participant, you are now a part of a family that has bonded over similar passions. The information you gain and the global networks you construct will help you develop into a rational and mature thinker. The public speaking and leadership skills you acquire will be beneficial for your future. Make your time at THIMUN worthwhile and be mindful of your experience.

By Diana Gomes

How Different Schools Prepare for MUN

One of the many privileges that come with MUN conferences is the ability to connect with students from all over the world. Not only is it exciting and interesting to work with peers from different schools or countries, but students are also provided a platform to learn from one another.

A key component of MUN conferences is the preparation required beforehand. Students work diligently to become well versed in their topics to guarantee a successful conference and to collaborate with others who are equally passionate. While methods vary depending on a student’s role in the conference and personal habits, there are still many similar routines.

“Often times, I use PDF files uploaded by UN committees and check to see how past resolutions have tried to tackle the issue,” said Yoon Yeo Eun Lim, delegate of the Philippines and student from Seoul International School. “Afterwards, I draft a (hopefully) comprehensive resolution and debate it during club meetings at school. With feedback I receive, I make adjustments to further improve my resolution and speak.”

For MUN chairs, extensive research is also necessary, but preparation differs slightly from that of delegates, explains Zouvika Perkul, student at Berlin Cosmopolitan School. “When it gets closer to the conference I make sure that I know my procedure inside and out.” Perkul continues that finally she focuses on “getting comfortable with the other Student Officers (STOFFs) and the delegates.”

Isabel Tscherniak, International Court of Justice (ICJ) judge from the John F Kennedy School in Berlin describes that her “role as a judge requires (her) to be impartial and not take on the perspective of a country before the conference. “I prepare by reading case documents developed by the advocates representing countries in the ICJ cases and a bit of background research on those countries.”

Representing Dhirubhai Ambani International School in Mumbai, Ishika Sri vastava is an advocate of ICJ, rather than a judge. “My co-advocate and I drafted a schedule of the work we need to complete between mid October and mid January, on a weekly basis in preparation for THIMUN. This included internet research to get articles for our evidence packet and reading documents regarding the case and similar scenario, to understand where our case stood on the world scale.”

Around the world, students in various positions in MUN work hard to prepare. They complete extensive research and build a comprehensive understanding of their countries’ policies to perfect resolutions. It seems like the vast majority of MUN members all value the common goal of a rewarding conference and are willing to do what it takes to ensure it.

By Emma Nathenson

PHOTO BY HOUR VOUCHCHAN

MUN BOOT CAMP
Model United Nations, also known as MUN, is an educational simulation and academic activity. Thousands of students all over the world attend various regional and international MUN conferences every year, with the purpose of developing a deeper understanding of current world issues, sharing profound comments with others, as well as enhancing academic ability. However, there are still significant differences between the two MUN conference formats.

Caucus vs. Lobbying
At the beginning of an American style MUN conference, delegates state their positions on the issue on the floor. Then, delegates form country-groups through several moderated and unmoderated caucuses, each lasting no longer than 20 minutes. While unmoderated caucus is similar to lobbying procedure, moderated caucus requires delegates to take the floor and speak in turns. Respective groups will rewrite a working paper base to create a joint resolution through several caucuses.

In a European style MUN conference such as THIMUN, lobbying gives delegates time to form blocks with other delegates who share the same position on the same topic in the forum. These groups will create one draft resolution together. Often, the first day is spent lobbying. Similar to unmoderated caucus, delegates will often look for signatories or draft resolutions with fellow delegates.

Resolutions
After a draft resolution is presented to the committee, the sponsors of this resolution will take the floor, while delegates who are not a part of the sponsors still have opportunities to propose amendments as well as adding, deleting, or modifying clauses. After getting votes from at least two-thirds of all other delegates, the joint resolution becomes the final resolution, which means that the resolution has been passed.

The formal meeting starts and continues onward in subsequent days. Delegates who get enough signatures from other delegates for their draft resolutions may share their drafted resolutions with the entire committee. Instead of keeping a list of speakers, the chair randomly chooses delegates to take the floor. Similar to the UNA-USA procedure, other delegates can support, refute, or write amendments to that draft resolution. A majority vote determines whether or not the resolution passes.

Awards
At the end of the conference, the best-performing delegates in each committee and delegation are oftentimes recognized with awards, like the best delegate or the best delegation.

While it varies by conference, THIMUN affiliated and European style conferences typically do not give out awards to participants.

Despite these differences, MUN participants are given opportunities to become mini-experts on important global issues, enhance debate skills, step outside their comfort zones, practice writing formal documents and most importantly, make new friends worldwide.
Resolution: Ensuring Success of Every THIMUN Delegate

Forum: World Forum The Hague
Topic: Ensuring success of every THIMUN delegate
Main-submitter: The MUNITY Press Team

THE WORLD FORUM THE HAGUE,

Welcoming everyone to the 51st annual The Hague International Model United Nations conference,

Recognizing that three thousand people of different backgrounds and views have gathered today, united by one common aim: the promotion of peace and sustainability worldwide,

Fully believing said goal is attainable as long as everyone takes the responsibility for action by participating in debate and making informed decisions,

Taking into consideration that the delegates have varying levels of experience, which directly affects their confidence and activity in the debates,

Guided by the wish to help all the delegates to succeed,

1. Affirms that extensive research about all aspects of the issue (political, economic, social, financial, humanitarian, environmental) is fundamental in ensuring a delegate’s flexibility and confidence;

2. Encourages all delegates to not confuse leadership with loquaciousness and create a safe environment for everyone to express their perspectives;

3. Draws attention to the fact that the ability to listen and scrutinize is in no way less important than public-speaking skills because this helps delegates understand the stances of their peers, facilitating alliance formation and identification of counter-arguments;

4. Emphasizes that asking relevant questions is the key instrument to enhancing debates because this allows delegates to identify strengths and flaws in arguments, which contributes to building a viable resolution;

5. Calls upon delegates to utilize every opportunity to make their voices heard:
   a. Using time yielded from another delegate for speeches,
   b. Using caucusing time to make speeches and form alliances,
   c. Negotiating with other participants outside the conference;

6. Stresses the vitality of being able to compromise because it is normal to not agree on every single point as long as the main message appeals to all parties involved;

7. Recommends that all delegates read the MUNITY Newspaper as it includes articles on topics discussed during the conference, which may spark great last-minute ideas by broadening delegates’ view of the world or help with writing resolutions.

The Press Team hopes that this resolution was helpful and wishes good luck to everyone!

By Fatima Djalalova