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Perspective from a Nobody: The Spirit of the MUN

Franni Eulo

This year, 38th annual ODUMUNC conference was held just one day after Hampton Roads was reminded of the unavoidable yet despised temperatures associated with the winter season: weather that, though laughable compared to our Northern counterparts, had me housebound for nearly two days. In an area associated mainly with beaches and almost stiflingly-warm temperatures, a climate such as this can never be fully prepared for. Watching the snow flakes' falling, at times, seemed unbelievable, illusory, even; but certainly unfamiliar to my friends and me. Regrettably, the conditions worsened once the snowfall ceased and was replaced with a brief spout of bitter rain that, in almost-perfect succession, mutated into sleet practically instantly.

I found the next day that the snow (perhaps the only somewhat-enjoyable result of freezing temperatures) was substituted with rock-hard ice, making most rethink walking outside. Though for two days ODU classes were cancelled, I was troubled to realize the next day, Thursday, February 19th, was the first day of ODUMUNC.

I was invited to ODUMUNC under circumstances dissimilar to most staff members – my boyfriend has been active in the model UN society throughout his six semesters attending ODU. Though I was, and still am not, a member of ODUMUNC, I was encouraged to write for the International Press Corps for the annual conference. Journalism as a whole is somewhat of a foreign concept for me, especially being that my area of study is creative writing and, though I read a fair amount, all is fiction. This fact was likely apparent by the end of my first sentence; to my readers, if I still have your attention, I apologize for the lack of urgency in my style that seems to be a characteristic of journalistic writing. My absence of experience writing for journals was the precise reason I immediately decided I would “assist” former MUN member Robby Townsend in the IPC at the conference, convinced there was something to be gained from the ordeal.

After checking in on February 19th, it all began, slowly, yet all at once. I greeted a few members I'd actually met, met those I had heard about, and encountering those who, ordinarily, would be no more than strangers. I realize now the only reason I felt out of place was due to my own irrational and unfair preconceptions of all people.

The night wore on. I found a globe and studied it in a room ringing with delightful conversation. I couldn't help but overhear; and in my doing so... *continued on page 2*

Biggest Question for ECOSOC/NGO: What about the STICKERS?

Robby Townsend

NGO and ECOSOC convened on Friday with the goal to address child labor. There was plenty of agreement: both NGOs and the states quickly found that their goals aligned in many areas on stopping or changing the laws worldwide on child labor.

Momentum nearly stopped, and the culprit was quite surprising. Stickers. More specifically, the idea of stickers that go on products that say “Child Labor Free.” Or, as some countries and NGOs argued, the stickers should say “Product of Child Labor” to punish bad corporations. Did the sticker belong on the back of products? Or more prominently displayed? Does it matter? Only time, and the resolutions themselves, will tell.

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I agreed that despite obvious differences in the members, all of them are fruitful in their pursuits: to relate, to understand, to learn – these types of conversation were the ones I had the privilege to listen in on. The most minuscule of interactions, too, absorbed me: I was not the least bit bored, although the absurdity of being so consumed in an object one can find in an elementary-school classroom probably gave off that impression. But I had an object in my hands that showed me just how concrete our world is; the physical distances between countries, whose cultures are all unique in their own manner – and though separated by distance, a relationship still exists, here, all comprised into a single perfect sphere I could hold in my two small hands.

It was that day, more than ever, that I felt that tug to move beyond what I know, and have known, for almost twenty years. Today I saw the lines on the globe, remembering the map of the world posted against the wall of my middle-school history class; the lines we create blur quickly away. That day I learned exposure creates openness, a pursuit to always experience something new. That day I began to grasp the spirit of Model UN: that difference does not equate to a separation, but an opportunity to appreciate the intricacies of our world that, despite our attempts to obscure ourselves from it, there is an understanding that should drive us. Dr. Simpson, a guest speaker at the opening ceremony the next morning, only reinforced this belief in her speech, saying the UN is a representation of a “commitment to a peaceful world”. Only through building the capacity to be receptive, tolerant, while at the same time fully exposed, will our world finally acquire something far beyond the values we seem to fixate on: a genuinely peaceful world.

South Korea Promotes LGBTQ Rights in Human Rights Council, Some Dissent

Huffington Post Correspondent

The Human Rights Council, an integral UN body promoting the rights of humans from all backgrounds across the world, started off ODUMUNC 38 with the topic of solving the refugee crisis worldwide. An already disadvantaged population, one group is even more at-risk: refugees from the LGBTQ community. At least 73 countries punish homosexuality in some way, and refugees coming into these countries are in danger.

South Korea has attempted to address this through resolution clauses. The delegates believe that all refugees deserve asylum in a country that is safer than the one they are escaping from. One of them told me that "the dynamic issue of LGBTQ rights must be addressed in every resolution possible."

Many other countries agreed with this stance, including the United Kingdom and Japan, who both out-

spokenly supported the rights of this group to have protection from persecution.

Not all states agreed, however, and many unsurprisingly came from the least LGBTQ-friendly places. Pakistan stated that the clause was "unnecessary" while their oft-rival India concurred, saying they were against an LGBTQ clause as well. Kuwait was another country whose delegates believed such an important clause was somehow "irrelevant."

The persecution experienced by the LGBTQ community even in the best of circumstances is undeniable, and the support of the Human Rights Council can help protect refugees in new ways that haven't been approached yet. In time, the rest of the world will see how the HRC manages to gain a consensus on the issue.

Security Council Focuses in on ISIS and Refugees

Ethan Steadman, Russia Today

Early in the morning, a refugee camp in Lebanon was attacked and ISIS is reported to have been the perpetrators. The attack started with heavy bombardment followed by a precise and swift strike on UN peacekeepers and refugees, which left them vulnerable for execution in front of locals in the town.

Eyewitnesses were reported to have seen Iranian servicemen giving orders to the attackers. Many countries have stepped forward to help protect and help the refugee villages including Australia who invested a large sum of money helping fund and maintain the camp.

Other UN officials have reported to have coordinated with their mother country's to have soldiers enter Lebanon and help protect against future attacks from ISIS. Resolution 2.1 was brought to the floor, sending aid to Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon. Res. 2.1 is sponsored by France and the United Kingdom and promises civilians will be kept out of harms way and will not be subjected to worse living conditions than the regions from which they've come.

Resolution 2.1 also calls for the aid of other country's to contribute monetary and humanitarian aid by channeling them through NGO's giving the refugee's proper supply's and recourses to live safely and healthy. 2.1 also calls for aid in supporting trusted local forces such as the Kurdish Peshmerga forces to stop the expansion of the self proclaimed Islamic state.

Resolution 2.2, sponsored by China, Jordan, and Russia, was brought to the floor shortly after. While 2.1 promised an investigation into whether any Iranians were involved, resolution 2.2 wishes to show more force, sending UN peacekeepers into refugee camps to better regulate and secure safety among the camp. Additional refugee camps are also going to be built and will be funded by voluntary UN member states. Funding and construction for additional refugee camps will go to countries neighboring Syria and Iraq, among them Jordan.

The attack on the Lebanese camp was a wake up call to the conditions of these camps and security of their refugees. The actions of ISIS send a warning to areas needing attention in the future, ones that will have to be resolved and improved by the members of the Security Council.

We'll be Prepared for the Militarization, but Watch Out for the Asteroids!

Melissa Kriz

Debate was opened in the United Nations' Special Political and Decolonization Committee early this morning on the topic of weaponization in space. From this, three major groups emerged, the environmentally focused; the forward thinking; and the peace-focused, each putting forth their own very similar working paper. The peace-focused group grew shaky quickly, ironically unable to foster their own sense of peace. Half of the group, led by France and China, sought to include a clause on a nation's right to self-defense, whereas the other half, led by Iraq, were adamant this not be included. This once peace-centered group quickly divided into two; those for self-defense, and those against it.

The forward-thinking group found themselves caught on another issue. What about the asteroids? This group began their own working paper, one focused on stopping space weaponization, but also keeping open the field in case something crazy were to go down. Others didn't seem so keen on allowing space weapons just in case an asteroid of apocalyptic proportions came into the danger zone, but the forward-thinkers insisted mercilessly.

The environmentally focused, led by Sudan and Kuwait, shifted their gaze slightly to the issue of space debris. The other groups quickly called into question whether or not this focus had much to do with space weaponization but Kuwait quickly dismissed the idea by saying that the reason space weaponization is an issue is because people want a safe frontier to explore and that eliminating debris in space will also help achieve this goal.

Over the next few hours, the committee went back and forth between moderated and unmoderated caucuses. France's original strong position on self-defense measures being included may have hurt them here, seeing as it was one of the only things the other delegates wanted to discuss with them. Regardless, the Iraqi led group and the French/Chinese led group both submitted their similar working papers, having only differed on that point. Thus, the Chair insisted they merge. Behind the scenes, tensions mounted, but in moderated caucus, both groups seemed excited to be working together.

After much negotiating, France decided to add in their clause on self-defense as an unfriendly amendment, an amendment that must be voted on by the entire council before it can be added into the draft resolution. Even Turkey signed onto the resolution, having previously referred to the issue of space weaponization as a "moot point".

After voting, the Sudan/Kuwait led group's draft resolution had passed, making sure debris cleanup was not forgotten in the UN. The France/Iraq merger was also passed. This draft had two unfriendly amendments attached; one a clause on the right of nations to self-defense against space weaponry, and the other a clause on the consequences for nations who do not follow UN policy on space weaponization. Both were passed.

Old Dominion University Archeological Review

Isaiah Jones, Archaeological Reporter

A journal was found in Virginia today dating back to 1606 of a man named Francois, the "John Smith" of the French settlement. In this journal he talks of encounters with natives and the new life he had found. The following is an entry from his journal:

"The Natives sent a spy to our camp. We know because he stands out very much. We want to be friends with the Native, so we allow the spy to gather information on our settlement. In order to gain a foothold on the new land we need allies, and by what better means than the people that lived here before us? I went to a meeting of the leaders of each tribe to talk about becoming friends. I only asked of furs, beads, and food to sell in Europe. All they cared about was how long we plan to stay and how much land we plan to use. I tell them we want to be best of friends and use the land together.

"We gave the natives about four guns and showed them how to use them. They said they would show others and proceed from there, further. They had made a trade deal with us. Guns and training for food, fur, and beads. We graciously accepted the trade and are currently waiting for our food.

"The Natives had a strange gathering, and around thirty people died. Rumors have been said that one of their gods had possessed a person there by the name of Pesico, and he said the gods were unhappy of the poisoned food and that they are now watching their every move. I hope the Natives were not going to give us that food for many of our women and children would have died.

"One of my guards found out tobacco can be made in to this thing called cigarettes and we need them badly. Only the natives have them, so we went to the council meeting and pleaded for tobacco. The whole town is addicted, including me, to this cigarette. I love it so much; I could kill for it, the thought of a cigarette. I think we might have to..."

Most of the journal was damaged beyond repair and studies of the stories of Francois are still being investigated.

Competing Voices: Historical Crisis Simulation Pits NATO Against Russia; Nukes Threaten Peace

By Isaiah Jones, Russia Today Correspondent

The Soviet Union has made it clear they are a force to be reckoned with. The Soviet Union's military has recently fired a test atomic bomb that has the capability to severely cripple any country.

World leaders from NATO gathered to discuss the threat that the Soviet Union is. The more important news is why NATO hasn't discussed the United States' atomic bombs. Japan would be the first to say they shouldn't have any. The U.S. has killed thousands of innocent women and children using the same atomic bomb NATO is criticizing Russia for testing.

The chance that the U.S. will become power hungry and try to take over the world is possible. They call the Soviet Union's bombing capabilities a crisis, but the real problem is world leaders not understanding that the U.S. is not to be trusted. They spend all this time across the pond in Soviet Union business when they are having issues with spies in their own government.

Norway and Great Britain seemed to focus on spies in their own government and fix their country while China, the U.S, and Australia want to attack Soviet Union. The leaders agreed the Soviet Union can't have bombs even though the Soviet Union has done nothing to deserve the bashing and should be left alone. The reason behind the bashing is the U.S. convincing the world that communism is wrong. It is not. Also, the U.S. delegate compared to Stalin as Hitler. Hitler was a power-hungry leader who led his country to shame, while Stalin is the definition of a perfect leader. The Soviet Union is an amazing country that cares for the people and wants to spread happiness and peace. Soviet Union military officials just want defense in case of a U.S. attack, which is not wrong.

By Ethan Steadman, Fox News Correspondent

The Soviet Union is an emerging global power expanding quickly, and with eyes set on nuclear weapons. The Soviet leader Stalin is almost as bad as Hitler in his savagery and hunger for power.

Soviet's have spies in governments all around the world working to destabilize and cripple the country. If the U.S and its NATO Allies wish to contain Russian influence and power they must begin with securing their own countries. And if the U.S is to protect their freedom, they must build more nukes and take steps to stop the tide that is the Soviet Union.

Democracy is key in the struggle with the Soviet Union, and we must keep Communism out of these countries if we hope to be safe. If the Russians are to come to nuclear power we would lose the freedom to live in peace under the looming big question of what The Soviet Union would do with the bombs, and how would we react.

What would life be like back at home living in a nuclear age when at any moment you could be looking for the closest bomb shelter? The Soviet Union is a superpower, there is no doubting that. NATO's fears what the Soviet Union is going to do with the power is what strikes fear in us all.

With the Soviet Union being communist what would that mean for Democracy, and the countries within Stalin's reach that wish to remain democratic? NATO is working to help the country's that resist Stalin's pull and show these country's that if they need aid they can turn to others then Russia. The aid that NATO provides would be food and money to maintain the country and feed the people, giving them the means and opportunity to resist the influence of the Soviet Union.

Attempting to corral the Soviet Union and protect world peace can be a daunting task, but NATO officials are working to not allow countries to be controlled on strings by super powers that have the capability of nuking the planet.

ODUMUNC 38 t-shirts and other souvenirs will be sold throughout the conference. Visit us on the second floor (next to the GAs) to get your ODUMUNC swag!



T-shirt front and back, featuring the United Nations logo and Monarch lion, hand drawn by one of our own ODUMUNC club members. Available in green and red.