



BEIWATCH

BEIMUN XXVI

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Closing the BEI 门

By William Zhou



XXVI MUN presidents waiting for their speeches during their ending ceremony

This year's special group of delegates, admins, advisors, and many more crowded the theater of the International School of Beijing one last time. It marked the culmination of many months of incessant research and passionate hard work. In stunning fashion, over the course of less than three days, hundreds of delegates – from across the globe – gathered here at ISB and voiced their opinions, shared and merged resolutions, and came to a consensus addressing the world's most pertinent issues.

As the closing ceremony commenced, a chair of each committee delivered a short speech, reminiscing on the previous 72 hours that elapsed far too quickly. Each speech expressed high praise for delegates, not just for their diligent work, but also for exemplifying the professionalism and collaboration expected at every BEIMUN conference. While each speaker touched upon various subjects, it was mutually understood that the resolutions each committee passed, whether few or many, were equally valid, feasible, and important. Whether we feel the effects or not, every topic holds significance. As put forth by Luca Coban, president of General Assembly three, this year's conference, just like every year, was "flourishing," as Coban abstained from using the hackneyed term "fruitful."

The flourishing BEIMUN XXVI marks the end

of MUN for many students, as seniors graduate and begin their journey in the vast, ever-changing world. However, MUN is not something to be forgotten, as Andie Kim, Assistant President of Human Rights sub-commission two, states, he is "perpetually indebted to the delegates." Without the dedication of each delegate, the BEIMUN conference would be meaningless. MUN is not just another club or after school activity, it extends beyond each conference, and adds immense value to our lives.

In a powerful and emotional speech, Evelyn Li, Assistant President of Environment Commission sub-commission two, proclaimed that our home, the world, "is catching on fire." While every delegate at BEIMUN may just be part of a model UN, every student in the theater is global-minded and more importantly, cares about the world. This shared sentiment is what will help the world survive. This tenacious attitude is what will fight for "Security, Sovereignty, and Sustainability," before it is too late for humanity.

To quote Leo Cheng, Deputy Secretary General of BEIMUN, who was paraphrasing former U.S. President John Kennedy, "mankind must put an end to conflict, otherwise conflict will put an end to mankind." It is very likely that not every delegate or chair in the theater will choose to continue

with MUN; however, it is the select few who become awe-inspired that make the event and the experience all worth it.

This year's closing ceremony saw the absence of the strike of a gavel, which usually brings the conference full circle. And perhaps, this choice was appropriate. We are in the midst of an ever-changing, rapidly developing society. The threats that we face are persistent and ever-present. This year's conference was merely the crossing of a threshold – "pre-emptive measures of a changing world" – as we embark on a journey of establishing a better future. A journey where the destination is dictated by the choices humanity makes.



Eden Liu, President of Secretary Council, giving her ending speech

RJ Simonds

By Harry Xiao

As the delegates of General Assembly two settled down, Dr. Robert James Simonds, the Regional Associate Director for Eurasia in the Division of Global HIV/AIDS (DGHA) at the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), spoke on the issue of public health in the modern world. Tackling major topics such as the obstacles that the modern society faces in regards to health and the actions that international communities have taken to combat epidemics, this keynote speech was extremely relevant to the theme of “security” in this year’s BEIMUN conference.

Dr. Simonds received his BA degree in Geography from the University of California, Berkeley and a MD from the University of Hawaii. Before taking the position of Regional Associate Director, Dr. Si-

monds served as Vice President for Program Innovation and Policy at the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation for four years, and before that, spent 20 years as a medical epidemiologist in CDC domestic and global AIDS programs.

At the beginning of his presentation, Dr. Simonds outlined several major health threats that humans face worldwide, such as antimicrobial resistance, infectious diseases, and zoonotic diseases. He emphasized that in the age of modernizing travel and transport, diseases and outbreaks can spread incredibly quickly between regions and continents. Building upon this, Dr. Simonds discussed the preemptive measures that the international community has undertaken to help combat these risks and prepare nations for a potential outbreak.

The World Health Organization (WHO) in 2005 attempted to create a standard method of dealing with disease outbreaks, known as the International Health Regulations (IHR). However, a few years after its publishing and signing, fewer than one in three of the countries self-reported full preparation for outbreaks. This led to the formation of the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA), with the vision to attain a world safe and secure from global health threats posed by infectious diseases. Operating under the framework of “Prevent, Detect, Respond,” cooperation between all sectors within a country along with the harmonization of the GHSA and IHR into the Joint External Evaluation Tool will help create a world prepared for outbreaks.

CHRIS BUCKLEY

By Frank Cui



Chris Buckley, a New York Times reporter in China

“I do feel guilty,” admitted Mr. Buckley.

As the delegates from the Security Council gathered for a critical yet sensitive discussion on the South China Sea, Mr. Chris Buckley, The New York Times’s correspondent covering China, gave a speech on the significance of the Global Warming and its various geopolitical consequences.

Before joining NYT in 2012, Mr. Buckley studied Chinese political history and worked in China for over 20 years as a Reuters correspondent.

The key to conflict in South China Sea, is territorial control over its resources and shipping zones, all of which will be affected by global warming. As sea levels rise, China will find its artificial islands useless beneath the water. As coastlines and islands submerge, major economic zones will change, creating more uncertainty in a conflicted area. Asking

whether “we want our world to exploit those resources,” Mr. Buckley implored the delegates of SC to consider the political, geographical and environmental costs of the fossil fuels in the South China Sea and continue the discussion with Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

Turning the focus outside of the South China Sea, Mr. Buckley went on to discuss the “2 trillion stranded assets” in the oil industry alone. As the world phases out oil reliance and adopts natural gas or renewable energy, the Middle East could find its economy and politics in trouble as the region’s economies are heavily reliant on oil exports. If the Middle East countries do not diversify, the region’s global presence and international attention will rapidly diminish. As a region least prepared for and most affected by global warming, this will harm its peo-

ple. This is equally true for Asia where China, India and Pakistan struggle over the Himalayan glaciers whose water resource can no longer be dependent on.

Mr. Buckley admits that he along with most of the western nations are “environmental hypocrites” who are not contributing enough while “flying 10-11 times a year and producing more CO2 than many people would in their entire lives.” Often, developing nations are dependent on energy to grow and are in no position to afford clean technologies. Mr. Buckley concedes that nuclear energy may be the only answer. “I have a daughter of your age, and I do feel guilty leaving behind a world that will be under threat from global warming for the next century.”

COMMITTEE RECAP: CRISES

GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2

By Kathy Liu

At exactly 1:20 in the afternoon on Saturday, Deputy Secretary General Andrew Liu burst into the GA2 committee room, announcing a new crisis: the United States stock market had crashed just prior at 15:39 local time, and the US dollar had become hyper-inflated within minutes. Economists have announced that unless prompt action is taken, this new stock situation will lead to a “21st Century Great Depression” with an “unimaginable” outcome. The exchange rate has plummeted, allowing the Euro to appreciate sharply against the USD.

Delegates immediately divided into groups, working jointly on resolutions and clauses to try and mitigate this crisis. According to the delegate of Poland, who was working with a group of other delegates each representing various nations around the world, the United Nations must first increase the number of funds available to the United States in the form of financial aid and grants. Furthermore, the central bank must use its currency reserves to buy up large amounts of foreign currency in order to appreciate the USD once again. If this is not achieved, NATO nations are worried that the situation will lead to increasing opportunities to join Sino-Russian aggression towards the US both economically and militarily. Delegates fear that could give China the chance to assert the RMB as the new dominant global currency.

Assistant President of the committee, Sang Young Lee also worries that if the US changes its fiscal policy to allow the use of foreign reserves to purchase foreign currency, it will launch the United States further into debt.

The delegates will continue to work together to mitigate this crisis, solving a currently hypothetical situation that—in light of the growing American trade deficit—could soon prove to be all too real.

SECURITY COUNCIL

By Hyoree Kim

At 2:30, crisis struck the security council. Delegates had been in the midst of a heated debate on the issue of tension between NATO member states and Russia when Samuel Soh, BEIMUN executive, burst into the room to announce that a nuclear armed Sea-wolf-class submarine has been involved in an accident near the Natuna Islands. The room burst into chaos as delegates immediately commenced lobbying for solutions. Not long after, Young Soo Kim, Delegate of the Netherlands, proposed a declaration of war that knocked the room off kilter. The delegates of Cote d'Ivoire, People's Republic of China, Indonesia, the United States, the Russian Federation, and Kazakhstan all proposed resolutions. The first called for the condemnation of the People's Republic of China for their transgressions regarding illegal vi-

olations of territorial claims in the South China Sea. Another called for the issuing of a claim which suspends any other ships of the United States of America from entering the South China Sea.

ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION 1

By William Zhou

It was in the midst of a heated debate when the crisis struck. Delegates of the Environment Commission sub-commission one had been passionately discussing the development of coastal settlements against concerns due to climate change, when Andrew Liu, Deputy Secretary General of BEIMUN, burst into the room announcing an emergency: “Due to heavy storm during the past weeks, East Asia has experienced a sudden storm surge, damaging coastal properties and threatening the local population.”

Lobbying immediately commenced, and with everyone's attention averted to the dire situation at hand, coalitions of delegates formed. The responsibility of curtailing and containing the disaster, the act of taking necessary short and long-term precautions, and ultimately, the effort to save lives, laid in the hands of the delegates.

After a bustling, almost thrilling, 20 minutes, the delegates reconvened, with a total of five proposed clauses. The first clause called for the creation of the United Nations Emergency Relocation Administration, which aims to assist in the relocation of coastal settlements. The second clause aimed to address the issue by constructing temporary underground shelters, as it focused on long-term issues. The third clause encouraged the participation of NGO's in as-

sisting the affected populations. The fourth and fifth clause urged all UN member states to open their borders and extend resources to the affected areas. Ultimately, clauses one, three, four, and five were passed, thereby finalizing the resolution.

The debate crisis simulates the operations and procedures of the real UN. It provides the opportunity for delegates to think on the spot while maintaining a professional manner, especially under urgent situations. It challenges students to propose resolutions and solutions addressing all facets of immediate and impending matters. This gives insight, and sheds light, to the volatility of our society and world.



Declaration of war by the Republic of Yemen



Delegates of the security council committee having a meeting about the crisis

INTERVIEW: BEIMUN EXPERIENCE

By Casper Suen

Q: Which issue discussed during the conference stuck out to you the most?

“Sustainable agriculture in LEDCs.” - Evelyn Li, Grade 12

“When we debated on the issue of Rohingya refugees and landmines, the delegate of Myanmar left a really strong impression. He continuously challenged the standpoints of all other countries in the committee, and I think this in some ways shows how in the real world the international community tends to apply pressure to small nations to do something that they don’t want to do.” - Alan Wang, Grade 11

“Facilitating the research and development of affordable renewable energy. It struck me because it is always easy to stand behind the push for green and renewable energy, but some delegates’ speech really made me consider the costs of this, especially for developing and oil reliant economies.” - Catherine Lin, Grade 11

“The protection of refugees, specifically the Rohingya.” - Reina Zhang, Grade 10

“The topic regarding the use of Private Military Contractors in the Middle East stuck out to me the most. They are heavily used by countries such as the United States and the Russian Federation because of the limited power the United Nations and other member states have over them. With the less limitations than every member states militaries, it was an issue that caught my attention because of the numerous events such as the Nisour square massacre. Even our guest speaker—Thomas Henderschedt—regarded PMCs are detrimental to the country and should not be used.” - Eric Xie, Grade 9

Q: What was your favorite part of the conference?

“My middle schooler admins were so small, hardworking, and cute.” - Evelyn Li, Grade 12

“Listening to the delegates talk and being able to hear different perspectives without feeling the need to interject or try to challenge them. The chairing experience in itself was also very enjoyable!” - Catherine Lin, Grade 11

“Ugandan knuckles reference by the delegate of Uganda.” - Alan Wang, Grade 11

“The period of debate time prior to the end of the conference where delegates started joking around and making meme references.” - Reina Zhang, Grade 10

“My favorite part of the conference is the crisis. The crisis that we were given was that South Korea has just faced a massive cyberattack and that there are accusations saying that North Korean hackers were the cause. The looks on both the North Korean and South Korean delegates was unforgettable. They both looked panicking as they have now suddenly become the stars of the show in the committee room. The next 45 minutes were just of accusations being made everywhere, delegates demanding objects, etc. Even with the chaos, it was one of the best and exciting moments of the committee room.” - Eric Xie, Grade 9

Q (seniors): What about MUN will you miss most?

“At schools such as International School of Beijing (ISB), we have privilege (as we are often reminded; bear with me), and I define this as being able to afford indifference without any repercussions. Because of this, my peers and I tend to hold pressing matters at arms length because, I believe, if we looked at them too closely, then the moral imperative to take action would be uncomfortable, and we would feel shame. Since really, the world is full of inconvenient truths. I think that Model United Nations at ISB provides a space for students to confront inconvenient truths, and I think that is—or at least should be— its purpose as an organization.” - Evelyn Li, Grade 12

GROWING USE OF FACIAL RECOGNITION TECHNOLOGY

By Isa Pan

Facial recognition is a relatively new field of technology, yet Chinese banks, airports, hotels, and even public toilets are beginning to utilize these intelligent algorithms to verify identities. Artificial intelligence is a key tool in an ambitious project known as “Xue Liang,” in which the technology will contribute to a nationwide surveillance platform intended for tracking suspects and suspicious behavior, monitor-

ing the general population, and coordinating services such as police forces and emergency care.

A recent report from ZDNet demonstrated that this technology is allowing security firms like SenseNets to track the GPS coordinates of over the 2.6 million Muslims in Xinjiang, a region in western China simmering with political tensions and powerful anti-Muslim sentiments. China sees this

as a “fight against Islamic radicalization and Uyghur separatist movements.” Those entering the cities of Kashgar and Urumqi must submit to facial inspections and x-rays that may link to birth dates, ID numbers, addresses, photos, and other personal data to their GPS locations.

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6 PHOTO COLLAGE







Spot the Differences!



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