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SMUN Publications Director
Laura Goh

SMUN Press Director
Ephraim Tan

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Singapore MUN 2015



UNSC Plays Merry-Go-Round When Dealing with ISIS

by Ryan Cheong, Fox News Correspondent

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) convened today to absolve the Islamic State's Threat to Global and Regional Security, and how they should rally together to stop the momentum that ISIS militants seem to have built up.

The committee got off to a rocky start with voting procedures plagued by re-votes. Preliminary issues, like decisions over what ISIS actually constitutes, took up valuable discussion time.

The delegation of the United States led the charge by highlighting how instrumental the UNSC was in dealing with the ISIS threat. Clearly, with UN action coupled by American military intervention, Kurdish and Iraqi forces now have more "breathing room" in dealing with the radicalists, especially given their previous difficulty in gaining any real progress in reclaiming ISIS territory.

However, military measures have attracted some criticism recently as it appears that no matter how much military aid is pumped in to deal with ISIS, the military threat just does not subside. The delegates of Ukraine, Chile and China all adopt this line of reasoning, as they have yet to join military coalitions to combat the ISIS threat. These countries suggest that more subtle action should be taken, for instance: cutting off funding to the Islamic radicals or "unifying a latent Arab identity" to counter the radical ideologies ISIS espouse. All this only amounts to very strong rhetoric from countries who have yet to contribute a single man or cent to

any campaigns against ISIS.

Later in the committee debates, a motion was passed to discuss aid and intervention in the Middle East against ISIS. A pertinent point was raised by many countries about the growing problem of self-radicalisation, one that hits close to home for predominantly Islamic countries like Malaysia and Jordan.

A three-tiered approach was introduced by the delegate of Nigeria to combat this issue. This entailed reducing xenophobia through country-wide campaigns, censorship of radical ideologies on social media and performing security screenings for all suspected of having terrorist ties. The specifics of these proposals have yet to be ironed out by the UNSC delegates, and at the end of the two and a half hour session, many countries were disappointed that the Council could not reach any initial conclusions. When Fox News spoke to the delegate from the United States, his demeanour gave it all away as he reflected the concern that delegates appeared "to be pursuing their own agendas and rivalries" rather than "focusing on the issue at hand".

Iran goes to war with long-time rival Israel over Nuclear Incident

At around 1.30pm local time, a nuclear facility in Iran was apparently sabotaged by Israeli commandos. This resulted in a nuclear fallout in an estimated 500 km radius and is expected to affect food and water supplies of all the Gulf States. In response



the Iranian Prime Minister issued a press release saying that he “cannot pardon” Israel’s actions, calling the alleged attack a “violent breach of national sovereignty”. In response, Israel would neither confirm nor deny this attack but cited that the nuclear facility in question was obviously meant for nuclear weapons.

In response the UNSC called an immediate crisis-management session as escalation of the tensions would have far reaching consequences – any war between Israel and Iran would result in oil prices rising astronomically, as well as overall contractions in world trade. This reporter decided to interview the P5 or Permanent 5 on the UNSC on their immediate reactions.

The delegate of US shared that the foremost course of action would be to settle the refugee aftermath and allocate temporary housing for all displaced by the conflict. Further, they would be willing to resort to “military force” to break up Iranian blockades. The delegate of Russia immediately reflected neutrality, stating that they would “not take sides” but they would support any resolution that favours Iran. France stated that “sanctions are not a solution” and recommended the most moderate response of having UN peacekeeping force to stabilize the region, given that such stability was “key” to pursuing any sustainable diplomatic negotiations.

Meanwhile Jordan has closed its airspace to both Israeli and Iranian troops citing that they “condemn acts of aggression” and that safeguarding “its citizens are its number one priority”.



Finding Solutions? Or More Problems from these Solutions?

by Zoe Deborah Tauro, Al Jazeera Correspondent



Delegates debated intensely with the intention of resolving the problem of the Syrian refugees, however it appears that more problems were generated in the process of discussion instead.

The delegates identified problems that Syrian refugees may pose to the host countries. However, they did not specify any clear solutions. Most delegates were at many times beating around the bush and the delegates of Ghana, Ukraine and Lebanon had to repeatedly redirect the committee's focus back to the main topic.

The delegates simply proposed the idea of promoting social integration but none addressed the issue of convincing the people of their country to host the Syrians. Notably, delegates deviated from the issue towards the registration of the Syrian refugees. Many had suggested the idea of promoting self-reliance, based on the assumption that Syria possesses adequate basic necessities to aid the refugees.

The US delegate proposed to help Syria by providing the refugees job opportunities in both their and other countries but did not have a solution to convince the Americans to support this idea. Bosnia's delegate was also keen on working with Syria to resolve the conflict, stating in an interview that "the people of Bosnia show great empathy to our brothers and sisters who have been struggling the civil war".

The delegates of Iraq and Sudan were prominent in the committee debates. However, they were not actively forming alliances with US despite requesting monetary aid from the developed country.

Throughout the debate, numerous delegates played with the idea of an 'Open Door Policy'. However, they were criticised by the delegates of the hosting countries, who purported that their countries already faced existing problems such as the lack of financial resources.



This hampered their country's ability to support incoming Syrian refugees. Furthermore, critics of the policy highlighted the potential difficulties governments will face in promoting social integration.

The Iran-Israeli crisis escalation halted the debate. The delegate of Iraq took a violent stance against Israel. On the other hand, the delegate of US stood by its ally, supporting Israel's actions while condemning Iran for creating uranium weapons.

Israel's delegate proposed to help the Iranian refugees and send them back once the problem has been resolved, while the delegate of Jordan suggested moving the refugees to a neutral country to prevent any further violent clashes.

China believed that the most pertinent problem at hand would be in finding common ground between the Iranians and the affected neighbouring countries.

US's delegate took a dominating stance and reassured Iran's neighbours that they would come to their aid. It was observed that most delegates chose to wholly depend on the US initiative.

It would be best if the US did not interfere in this issue, which is a protracted conflict coloured by religious tensions. Moreover, foreign intervention can be seen as a breach of a nation's sovereignty. This problem should be best settled by the Arab league as they have a better understanding of the issue between Iran and Israel.



Hidden in Plain Sight

by Tan Yu Jie, Xinhua News Correspondent

The topic of foreign military bases (FMB) has been fraught with controversy throughout history; from issues of sovereignty on the part of host nations, human rights abuses that have occurred throughout history, and the question of overlapping areas of jurisdiction – is a soldier accountable to his actions, as according to the law of the land, or as according to the military rules and regulations that govern him?

Today, Disarmament and International Security Council (DISEC) sought solution to these concerns.

It was raised by a number of delegates, such as Georgia and Australia, that FMBs are strictly bilateral, an agreement between host and guest. This point was later elaborated on by countries such as Australia, France, and Argentina, stipulating that regardless, the United Nations (UN) plays some role in regulating FMBs, in the interest of international peace.

Some potential specifications were that FMBs should, as far as possible, be a temporary arrangement. Alternatively, the UN should use independent observers to ensure that guidelines are followed and that these military installations should be used strictly for humanitarian purposes.

When approached, delegates revealed that any possible resolution would require the support of the United States, who is perceived as a key player with respect to the extensiveness of its military influence. However, delegates recognized that it would be difficult to persuade the United States, as any form of universal military disarmament would adversely affect her geopolitical clout.

In the midst of debate, delegates were informed of an unexpected development. Israel had attacked a civilian Iranian nuclear power plant with commandos, leading to its destruction and resulting in immense nuclear fallout. An area within a 500km radius of the plant will potentially be affected, although actual effects would depend on specific weather patterns, which change sporadically.

In light of the development, some nations slammed Israel's action, insisting that it was an overt act of war. Other nations believed that direct military retaliation was mandated, while several nations wanted economic sanctions to be imposed on Israel.

The role of the committee is to de-escalate the conflict and ensure that international security is not threatened.

Israel alleged that nuclear weapons were being produced at the facility, thus consolidating its decision to send commandos in to destroy these weapons. The delegate of Israel explained that it was more beneficial to prevent the malicious use of these weapons despite the inevitable nuclear fallout afterward.

Regardless, the committee needs to hammer out a resolution to satisfy all stakeholders. While Xinhua recognizes that China is a close ally of the Middle Eastern countries, Beijing is unlikely to fully support the proposition for universal military disarmament.



Foreign Military Bases – Asset or Detriment?

by Prasha Maithani, Fox News Correspondent

DISEC delegates debated the pros and cons of foreign military bases on day two of SMUN 2015.

Georgia, France, Venezuela and Iraq opposed the establishment of such bases, citing previous incidents such as the rape of an Okinawan girl in 1995 by US marines as well as environmental damage done to host nations.

The nations of Lebanon, Australia, Argentina, Gabon, Afghanistan, Israel, Russia, South Korea, Germany, Italy, Azerbaijan and the USA favoured the establishment of overseas military outposts, citing economic returns to the host nations, strengthened alliances between states and the ease of providing aid and relief via such bases.

Jordan, Ukraine and Syria played the matchmakers, suggesting safeguards be put in place generally to protect host nations' rights to convince the opposing nations to consider hosting such bases. They highlighted the 'need' for stricter guidelines and the presence of a neutral authority. Egypt stated that they would not entertain any such bases on their land but would assist the other countries in coming to a consensus. At the end however, no resolution was passed. Delegates from different countries repeated several points but none put forward convincing proposals for international norms to protect host nations' interests in establishments of foreign military bases on their soil.

This is definitely cause for concern. Foreign military bases have played an important part in securing the world. The United States' troops stationed in Korea and Japan continue to deter North Korean threats, and NATO's network of bases ties Europe together against external aggressors. It is vital that DISEC countries work out a modus vivendi between host countries and states posting their troops abroad in a way that reduces friction between governments, and between locals and foreign troops stationed near their homes, so as to defend the system that underpins global defence.



Marshall Islands v UK Hearing convened

by Goh Yu Ning Esther, Wikileaks News

Marshall Islands legal team underwhelms as UK displayed its nuclear double dealings in ICJ

As the Marshall Islands laid out its accusations of the UK of breaching the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty (NPT), appalling truths have unravelled as representatives of both governments have displayed behaviour that is a cause for concern.

The French judge said the Marshall Islands prosecution had not been “working as a single unit” and held “divided” opinions. She professed that the team was “cherrypicking” evidence. One representative also faltered under intense questioning by the bench, especially from the French and Somali judges. The representative later admitted that she “haven’t (sic) really done a lot of research” on this case. Considering that this case is pertaining to an exceedingly serious topic – nuclear disarmament – such a flippant, cavalier attitude cannot be afforded by any parties if justice is to be served

Much time was wasted by both parties fighting over a simple treaty term, “in good faith,” before both finally agreed this phrase meant sincerity, a definition a layman could have easily arrived at. Representatives from both sides noticeably tried to avoid going into specifics and constantly tried to weasel their way out from sticky questions.

The British delegation’s stance was also ultimately hypocritical. While the UK representative stated “in good faith” bound NPT member states to be fair and reasonable in their dealings pertaining to nuclear weaponry. However the existence of

a British “secret deal” with the United States of America emerged during the trial, a deal displaying neither transparency nor honesty.

The UK claimed to aspire to a “world without nuclear weapons” yet stated it has “no other option” but to supply NATO states with nuclear weapons if it is required.

It claimed to be “religiously complying” with the 13-step programme (requiring nuclear armed states to completely eliminate their nuclear arsenals) introduced in the NPT review conference of 2000, but its Trident programme (leaked by our agency) shows the UK’s clear intent to modernise and upgrade its nuclear weapons.

One wonders how nuclear-armed states can be trusted to disarm themselves. The verdict of Marshall Islands vs. UK could shape the fate of the global nuclear arms race, affecting the world at large. The Marshall Islands professes a noble cause in seeking redress for the post-WWII nuclear testing on its islands, which has indelibly affected the health of generations of islanders, but it has not done well jousting the British windmill. While might may not make right, the UK team has put up a strong defence for their hypocritical cause.



A Grand Coalition

by Ambrose Wang Xun Jie, BBC News Correspondent

16th/17th October 1973

The Security Council has unanimously banded together to address the Arab-Israeli issue currently poised to wreck devastation upon the disputed local territories and the global oil economy. Syria and Egypt faced a rapid turnaround in their military campaign against the Israeli state after a prolonged failure to push their lines forward. The rest of the council had to contend with the oil embargos imposed by the OPEC on the United States of America, which would almost certainly lead to severe economic repercussions worldwide.

The twelve nations gathered to debate on ways to reverse the political misgivings of the previous months. Israel and the United States were more than willing to accede to the Arab states' demands for territorial boundaries to be reverted to their pre-1967 borders. In return, Syria and Egypt did not object to the idea of the disputed territories (consisting of the Golan Heights, Sinai Peninsula, West Bank, and Gaza Strip) being designated as de-militarized zones (DMZs). A united call for an immediate ceasefire was heard shortly after.

“Please stop being Syria for a moment.”
– Israel, in an unmoderated caucus.

A common observer would consider such an approach from the council to appear desperate. The no-holds-barred attitude of the community reflected their acknowledgement of the potential heavy consequences following a failure to reach an effective resolution. The house remained collectively decisive in their discourse over the various snags present in the wartime situation, swiftly addressing the issues of disarmament, refugee resettlement and to

a lesser extent, the recognition of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) as a state actor.

Debates were crisp and progressed with near universal consensus, posing a promising chance in averting the continuation of war and the potential oil crisis.

Unfortunately, the council's progress was impeded by a series of unrelated developments. Leonid Brezhnev, leader of the Soviet Union, was assassinated. Yuri Andropov was thus set to succeed him as Secretary-General. Riots had broken out in Czechoslovakia over socio-economic grievances as protesters decried Soviet rule. It was reported that several administrative buildings were razed and that 17 civil servants were killed while over a hundred protestors were arrested. 90,000 troops from the Red Army had been dispatched to Prague to uphold order and to “stand by”, according to a spokesperson. However, the unusually large mobilization may have suggested a very different agenda.

This crisis has yet to threaten the Security Council's cohesion on the Arab-Israeli conflict, but further escalations may prove dire in the coming days. BBC will remain at the forefront of covering this issue.



BALI PACKAGE: To Trade or Not To Trade

by Yangdup Sherpa, TASS Correspondent

The Bali package is a trade agreement resulting from efforts of the WTO (World Trade Organization) in Bali, Indonesia on 7 December 2013. Enthusiasts for the deal claim that the deal will boost the world economy by \$1 trillion. This will probably never be contested: with the 2012 world GDP hitting \$72 trillion, it is hard to why a 1.3% growth would be disputed. Economic trade will be smoothened out, and more profits will be channeled for poor countries, as a result.

The debate started with discussions about existing economic hardship that developing countries had to contend with. The delegate of China started by stating that preference should be given to these developing nations, and her stance was only ratified by the delegates of Israel, France and Panama. Such 'special preference' would entail direct financial assistance and possible aid packages from developed countries - to which most delegates agreed to.

The Bali package sounded feasible to most countries except India, who raised concerns about food safety and stockpile issues. The recurrent issue was that of assistance from developed countries - training programmes, technical assistance and education. The delegate of China stated, "we will support these developing countries but they must be self-reliant", which the delegate Panama snarkily replied "that's not exactly helping". China responded quickly by asserting that "certain countries will be left behind, but we will help all to get there!"

Due to India's disagreement, the delegate of USA

(United States of America) suggested a new and better upgraded package, which was agreed by Mali, France and a few others. Mali further addressed the organization by bringing up the Package's benefits for the infrastructure growth for developing countries.

In one of the moderated caucuses, France asked other countries what developed countries would get in return from assisting developing countries, aptly summed up as "it's like Love, it can't be one way", to which China replied "it is like giving money to beggars, you won't get anything back", resulting in other countries criticizing China's statement on developing countries.

In spite of its large territorial area, the delegate of Russia too highlighted that agriculture options were largely restrained given its northern location (being unsuitable for such agrarian purposes). The World Bank has estimated that Russia can gain 11% annually in its GDP and trade increments from the Bali Package alone. Russia also agreed with Mali to find a solution for the food safety problem and remove trade barriers to benefit Russia.

The 1st committee session came to a close with statement papers, with each countries giving their thoughts on developments thus far and potential benefits. On the whole, most of the countries appear to be for the Bali Package except India; and if things proceed according to the current majority, it is likely the the WTO will reach a resolution on the Bali Package. Tensions rise as Russia's Head of Security is arrested under suspicions of espionage and Taliban claims responsibility for the St.



SCO's Discussions Fruitful Amidst Growing Tensions To Trade

by Lee Lui Xia, TASS Correspondent

Petersburg bombing.

Tensions rise as Russia's Head of Security is arrested under suspicions of espionage and Taliban claims responsibility for the St. Petersburg bombing.

Following the bombing in St. Petersburg on Monday, Russian Head of Security, Rustam Noyatov head of the Federal Security Bureau (FSB) was arrested while crossing the border at Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan in the wake of the assassination of the late Uzbek Premier. The bombing by the Taliban and the treasonous act has led to the locking down of several cities in Russia and the tightening of border security as authorities begin the hunt for collaborators.

The Uzbekistani government has not taken any action against Russia and does not wish to blame Russia at this moment. The Uzbekistani delegate has expressed interest in hearing the Russian delegate's comments.

"Before blaming Russia, we should listen to what Russia has to say as to avoid miscommunication among us," said the delegate.

The Russian delegate of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) has stated that the Russian Duma was neither aware of this, nor did it ever authorize such activities.

"Russia deeply apologises for this occurrence. We had no idea that this was going on," said the Russian delegate. Russia has indicated that Noyatov will be sent to Uzbekistan for prosecution after he has been

"Uzbekistan can do anything to him after he has been interrogated (by our officials)," he said.

The Russian Foreign Ministry confirmed today that the bombing in St Petersburg on Monday was carried out by Tehrik-i-Taliban, a branch of the Pakistani Taliban. The Pakistani delegate has spoken out to say that "Tehrik-i-Taliban is against Pakistan" and that they have no ties with the mentioned Taliban group.

Investigations are being carried out to find out the Taliban's motives but at present, when asked by TASS, the delegate of Russia stated that "People are claiming to be blowing up Russia".

In order to combat the recent tragedies that have occurred within the region, Pakistan and other SCO member states will be discussing the establishment of a joint counter-terrorism organization to allow for cooperation in areas like intelligence in order to prevent similar occurrences in the future.

China is leading the joint counter-terrorism organisation and assures the members of the SCO that the participation in the joint effort is entirely voluntary. The delegate of China added that the joint counter-terrorism group will be funded and run by the SCO.

TASS will continue to cover the developments in SCO's over the next few days.



A Silver Lining for UNICEF?

by Jong Ching Yee, BBC Correspondent

In famine-stricken Africa, the high child mortality rate accounts for 100 or more deaths per 1,000 live births. Addressing this issue, the delegate of Congo repeatedly emphasised that while poverty may contribute to child mortality, it may not be the root cause.

The delegate of Congo kicked off the UNICEF committee session with pithy statements like “Poverty cannot ever be solved!!” and “We should focus on stop-gap measures instead”, namely birth control. According to Congo, this strategy was particularly applicable in its society. Congo contends with a high birth rate, which strains healthcare resources and contributes to its equally high infant mortality rate.

Contrary to Congo’s proposed solution, Russia suggested education as an alternative measure, and this was supported by delegates of Colombia and Germany. The delegate of Russia explained that improvements in the education system in LDCs were desperately needed; reasoning that education plays an influential role in enhancing the people’s understanding of the importance of family planning and its effectiveness in controlling the population size.

Afterward, Thailand offered its successful 30-bhat health care reform (where even the rural population could access public health services at more than affordable prices) as an example of a possible solution, yet cautioning that its success “depends very much on each country”.

Evidently, the Developed Countries (DCs) and the Less Developed Countries (LDCs) maintained differing positions on the issue of child mortality and showed varied levels of willingness in forming alliances. The DCs were agreeable in providing the LDCs with a supply of vaccinations and funds, with the US maintaining its condition on lowering

tariffs imposed on its exports. The LDCs were well-aware of the unsustainability of depending on the DCs and hence were seeking internal solutions to their domestic problem.

A crisis occurred in the Middle East between Iran and Israel, interrupting the ongoing discussion. The refugees in Iran and Israel were exposed to nuclear radiation and started to exhibit symptoms of irreversible health damage. Moreover, disrupted trade within the Gulf countries significantly reduced food supply.

Since both conflicting parties were absent from the Council the delegate USA suggested that all present countries maintain neutrality until more crisis developments were released and that they draft a preliminary resolution together. However, American efforts were significantly impeded by many countries with diplomatic ties with either Iran or Israel.

The DCs were willing to provide healthcare facilities and share their expertise on helping those children. However, not all were agreeable on accepting refugees into their countries, fearing that refugees who were affected by the radiation may pose a threat to the local population. This could potentially prolong the suffering of the refugees and victims. This however pales in comparison to the humanitarian crisis in the Arab region which will only deteriorate if governments take the back seat and ignore the refugees’ plight.

BBC recognizes that individual countries face certain limitations in dealing with this crisis and its effects on the issue of discussion “Child Mortality”. However human rights are a universal concern and given that all countries deeply value the lives of the children, they should strive towards working around the restrictions by considering all possible solutions.



Allies Don't Always Agree!

by Edgar Foo, Xinhua News Correspondent

In the committee debate (United Nations Development Programme) heavily fixated on policies to tackle anti-corruption, China and Russia polarised delegates with opposing proposals. Both countries asserted the need for a task force to maintain standards of governmental transparency, but advocated different approaches.

Russia's blueprint outlined harsher sanctions for officials found guilty of corruption. The greater need for administrative accountability via corruption reports, entailing tallies of corruption cases and actions taken against them, would also be mandated. Russia held that if an anti-corruption task force was established, as was the popular opinion of the council, it should first operate on a national level.

China, Angola and Australia countered this with calls for an international anti-corruption task force with larger scope and greater autonomy to operate across territories. Russia raised concerns that this would breach national sovereignty, and the possibility of noncompliance in the case of governments preferring to deal with corruption internally.

Angola then diplomatically raised the possibil-

ity of consensus between both working papers. Neutral delegations provided more objective perspectives, with Iceland calling attention to income inequality since it relates to corruption in a vicious cycle of causation. Papua New Guinea also reiterated the need to identify specific roots of corruption in different countries, rather than enforcing one-size-fits-all solutions.

Xinhua understands the Sino-Russian difference to be healthy competition - allies don't always agree. Even though the two allies may differ on issues, Russia and China still assuredly share a common goal of managing corruption.

Last month, this was affirmed with an anti-corruption cooperation clause included in a Sino-Russia joint declaration, which mapped out plans of "Operation Foxhunt" and "Sky Net" to collaborate on tracking down fugitives wanted for corruption.

The high levels of involvement exhibited by the delegates of Russia and China through their speeches and working papers attest to this. It is imperative that both countries work closely given similar political systems and trends of corruption.



Shedding Light: Chats with Neel Chakravarthy

by Goh Jing Yi



One has to admire the courage of Neel, ASEAN +3 delegate representing Myanmar, as he pitched his ideas to the Minister during the Dialogue. Despite being faulted by the Minister for his supposedly unfounded fact that the rising housing prices in Singapore are unaffordable, he accepted the Minister's responses with graciousness. Since he was unable to express his opinions completely without being constantly grilled on the basis of his arguments, we approached this particular Malaysian delegate to listen to his side of the story.

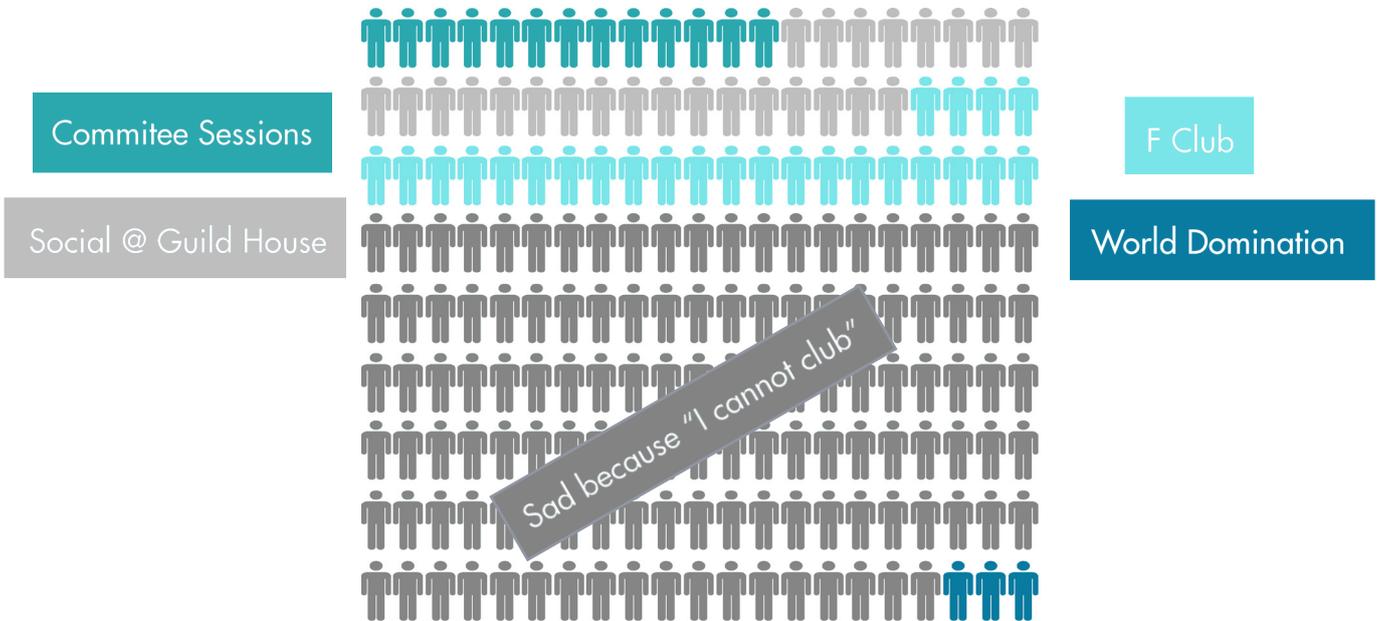
Neel was open to our interview and readily clarified his question posed to the Minister. He was keen on finding out the solutions undertaken by the Singapore Government in terms of addressing the twin social issues of unaffordable

housing prices and the widening income disparity between the rich and the poor. These problems were particularly pertinent in the post-General Elections 2011 period, given that they were hot-button issues which plagued the Elections and were probably one of the multiple factors which led to the worst PAP electoral performance since independence in 1965 (won 60.1% vote share).

He felt that the Minister answered his question in part, who acknowledged the concern of social disparity but did not address the issue on rising housing prices with a definite solution. It was evident that Neel was deeply passionate about this topic, who suggested a greater participatory role of the Government in encouraging public-private partnerships.



What are you most looking forward to in SMUN?



ONE WORD THAT BEST DESCRIBES SMUN





To Tie a Tie

by Ambrose Wang Xun Jie, BBC

Apart from writing policies to boss over people, a distinctive element of MUN is the steep dress code observed. As the single most personalized and fiddly piece of any gentleman's (or woman's) suit, the necktie perhaps deserves a little introduction for itself.

Origins

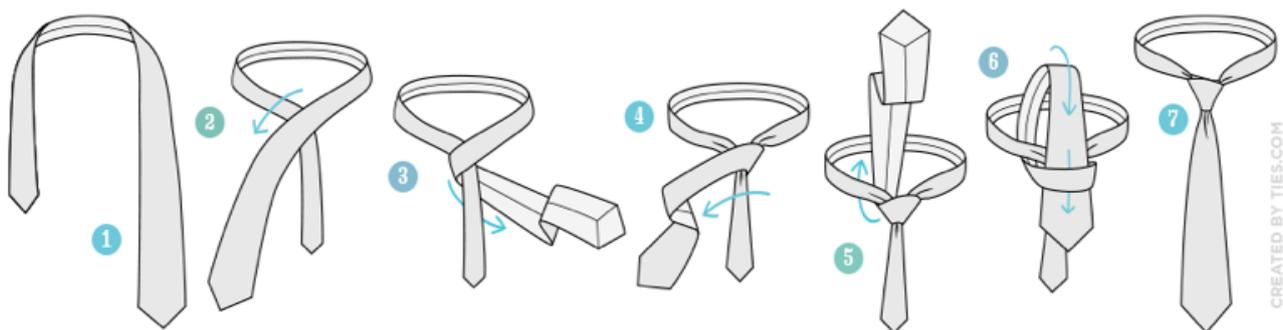
The tie first came about in 1646 when the French boy-king Louis XIV took to wearing lace cravats, a sort of garment tied by strings around the neck. French nobility soon followed their leader and this trend soon spread feverously across Europe. Several iterations popped up over the following centuries, such as the Steinkirk, stock, and solitaire, ultimately leaving us with post-industrial neckties and bowties that remained fundamentally the same until today.

Customs

Neckties should reach belt level; no higher or lower. When wearing a waistcoat or cardigan, tuck the tie into your pants if possible. A tie clip should never be wider than your tie. Necktie colours should stand out but not clash with the rest of the outfit- a plain white oxford shirt will accommodate a wide range of tie patterns and colours. And throw your tie over your shoulder when eating- it's table manners.

Types

The methods of tying a necktie vary, as it depends on ease, function, tradition, and of course appearance. An essential for all men, however, is the **four-in-hand**. It is asymmetrical and self-releasing, not to mention one of the simplest and most versatile knots. An instructive illustration is included below.



Tying the four-in-hand.



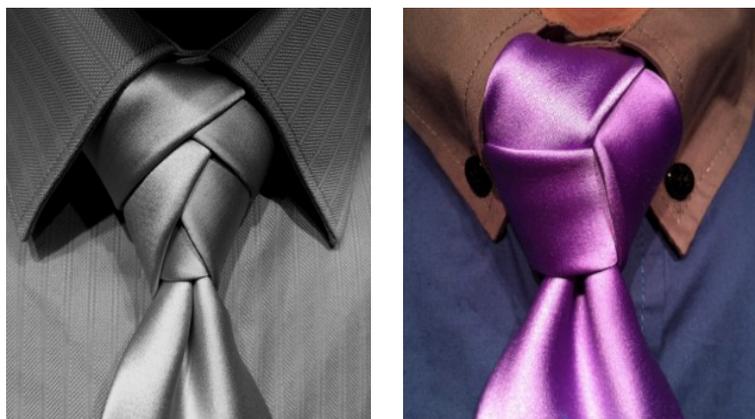
A more traditional option is the **Windsor knot**. The classic, symmetrical style harks from a regal past (it is still mandatory in the British Royal Air Force) and exudes elegance, while also being delightfully functional by firmly maintaining its adjusted tightness.



The Windsor (left) and half-Windsor (right).

A compromise from the Windsor knot is the **half-Windsor**, a knot what is nearly as symmetrical, with a deeper, distinctive dimple down the middle. It is also less thick and easier to tie.

More elaborate knots include the **Elridge knot** and **Trinity knot**. These are tricky, almost gaudy knots that are only appropriate when one intends to show off. Fortunately, very few people will ever need to put their knotting skills to the test- learning a simple four-in-hand is quite enough.



Elridge knot (left) and Trinity knot (right). Good luck with these.



EU Debates

by IvanHong

The Future of the EU: To Hell in a Handbasket?

Disarray in the EU, as what can only be described as boredom afflicted the committee. Soy bars wrappers and Coke cans were strewn across the floor, and even a lone Famous Amos cookie lay sadly on one of the empty seats - the damage evidently done by the delegates snacking through proceedings. Others were spotted doodling (this editor reasonably inferred the scrawls as cartoon monsters).

Understandably this situation resulted in some delegates struggling to form coherent responses at every interval the Chairs recognized them.

Chair: The Delegate of the UK, you are now recognized.

The Delegate of UK: Again? (*This delegate doesn't know what she will be talking about yet ...*)

Fortunately, majority of the committee focused on the issue at hand - European Common Foreign and Security Policy. The talking points included the structure and powers of the proposed combined EU military force independent of NATO. Delegates further discussed possible arrangements of having this EU force replace their national armies entirely as a standing military, or a having this force present as a Joint QRF (Quick Reaction Force) - one mobilized only in times of emergency or crisis.

A European Army?

Delegates of Spain and UK proposed the construction of the European Army against threats from the East. However, despite lengthy debates over financing and the location of such military bases the council remained undecided as to

what form this pan-European Army should take. Questions over who should contribute most to its maintenance, how large this force should be, and where these forces should be based went unresolved despite the numerous unmoderated caucuses throughout the day.

Neither of the delegates, with the exception of Greece (ironically the most informed, but most bankrupt country to be represented today), demonstrated the slightest appreciation for military strategy, or a functioning model of regional military cooperation. The Greek delegate noted that the battle groups spread across the EU had a total strength less than that of the Singapore Armed Forces – a nation with a largely conscript army defending a city-state no larger than 40 square kilometres. All things considered, the prospects of any successful cooperation on the establishment of a joint European military framework to resist aggression appears to be dim at best.





The Road Ahead

The lacklustre proceedings is perhaps symptomatic of the state of the European Union today. An organization cobbled together in a happy haze of pan-European unity is now proving to be a tragic farce. The EU has in recent years suffered enough disrepute over the Euro Zone crisis. With these numerous economic problems, and the rise of popular xenophobic sentiment within Europe, fears of aggression (especially from the Iran-Israeli crisis) will only drive further regional spending on materiel that have no contribution to long-term economic development of the region. It might even swing the EU vote on their European Armed Forces.

And with delegates motioning for increased spending on a large standing EU army (while the UK snacks in the back), the legitimacy of the EU as a respectable transnational body may need some relooking. Here's hoping that the following days will yield more productive debate, and that EU's future is not headed to hell in a handbasket.



ASEAN +3 Crisis

by Laura Goh, Press Delegate



The Secretary General of the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) of Thailand caught the delegates of the Association of South East Asian Nations, China, Japan and Korea unawares. Interrupting their buzzing unmoderated caucus on the original issue of economic integration, the Secretary General broke the news of corruption within the ASEAN Plus Three nations with regards to the unannounced construction of the Kra Canal. This project is purportedly supported by China. The Kra Canal would cut through the Malayan peninsula, through the North of Thailand, providing a shorter pathway that does not pass through the straits of Johor. This would affect trade routes from Singapore, Indonesia and Malaysia. Thailand has neither confirmed nor denied the existence of the project.

It was found that the several party members of Thailand had recently received bribes transferred from Singaporean, Malaysian and Indonesian bank accounts. In light of the upcoming vote

for construction of the Kra, it is believed that these party members who received the bribes will choose to vote against its construction.

The delegate of Thailand sprung to his feet to defend the Land of Smiles, and attempted to draw the council's attention to environmental issues and encouraged ASEAN Plus 3 to investigate corruption in other institutions, "like FIFA, for instance!" This attempt proved futile. The delegate of Myanmar, the state recently rising from the ashes of the recently lifted economic sanctions, proposed to slap similar economic sanctions on one of its major trading partners Thailand. Despite the obvious fact that the National Anti-Corruption Commission of Thailand was already investigating the bribery, the delegate of Republic of Korea opted to maximise redundancy by demanding that ASEAN interfere in the sovereign affairs to investigate the very same case.

There were a few voices of reason, the delegates



of China and Laos emphasised the seemingly foreign concept of respecting sovereignty and pointed out the anti-interventionist policy of ASEAN.

The Secretary General of the NACC later revealed more news. The bribery money transferred to the Thai party members were from the bank accounts belonging to high-ranking executives of the government-linked company Petronas, and multinational corporations SHELL and Neptune Orient. All these companies have vested interest in stopping the construction of the Kra Canal, given that should it be constructed, trade in the countries they operate in will be affected badly. The Secretary General also hinted that with China's upcoming plans to construct the Southeast Asia Railway, which will benefit Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam and Thailand, should hint to the delegates how to proceed. Given that the railway will draw funds from the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, the rival of Asian Development Bank; it may draw the ire of Japan who supports the latter greatly. This information appeared to confuse the delegates even more.

“ASEAN Plus Three needs to resolve the main problem: MULTINATIONAL TRANSBORDER CORRUPTION”, the Secretary General emphasised.

Bouncing around the council were ideas of making new anti-corruption frameworks and using existing anti-corruption frameworks. This discussion of the importance of these went on until the committee went into an unmoderated caucus to come to create working paper of soft and hard measures to tackle the delicate matter of transborder corruption.

“At least, they're doing what they're supposed to do”, Chair Russell Marino said with an uneasy smile.

“There's more to come anyway.”



DEAR CRISIS CASS,

I wish to participate in pageant since I have the looks anyway...but my girlfriend will break up with me! What do I do?

Dear Delegate,

Let me first break down the situation for you by asking you a few preliminary questions. How do you and your girlfriend view your relationship as? Relationships consist of a union of two people who love and cherish each other. This means that they care for each other and truly want the other person to be happy. If participating in pageant is something that you wish to do and would make you happy (provided that of course, it does not mean you use it as a springboard to meet newer, hotter MUN delegates and abandon your girlfriend), then your girlfriend should support you in your endeavours. Secondly, what is the purpose of participating in pageant? To ease the inner turmoil of living up to your responsibilities and facing your heart's greatest desires, remember that pageant is basically an exhibition of a set of humans who embody certain physical characteristics that are more attractive (by social definition). If you do believe that you're slightly more special than others because you "have the looks" and you feel the need to participate in pageant for others to recognise that... go ahead...

A helpful solution would be to always communicate with your girlfriend and express your thoughts and concerns calmly and rationally. It is important to consider each other's feelings and desires - and reach a compromise. All the best, and please do tell us if you enroll in pageant - we will decide then if you really do "have the looks".

-Crisis Cass



:OVERHEARD

PP DELEGATES, PLEASE STOP PASSING 99
NOTES TO THE ENVOY OF IRAN. HE IS
DEAD. HE DIED FROM THE AIRSTRIKE.

CHAIRPERSON OF UNSC

PP ARGH...I'lljusteeniemeeniemynee 99
moe my pageant partner!

DELEGATE, PRESS CORPS

PP POINTOFPERSONALPRIVILEGE- 99
CAN ZOOM IN ANOT?

DELEGATE OF PERU, HSC

PP Isthereabar nearby?Weneedto 99
get a drink within 15 minutes.

(MORE THAN ONE) DELEGATE

PP INEEDONEPERSONTOBETOILET-TRAINED... 99

USG (ACADEMICS), INGMAR



Xinhua's Press Statement

By Edgar Foo, Press Delegate

In this edition of SMUN, Xinhua takes great interest in three pertinent issues close to home. The first issue would be “Income Inequality and Corruption” debated by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). In 2010, the Central Government published a booklet entitled 《七个怎么看》 (Seven Perspectives) which aimed to promote greater awareness and understanding of socio-economic inequalities between provinces in the mainland. In 2013, President Xi Jinping initiated the “反腐运动” (Anti-Corruption Campaign) as a firm crackdown on rampant corruption previously characterizing the party’s political functions. According to Transparency International’s latest Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), China is among the countries with the largest decline in points. Xinhua hopes to present the development of such political frameworks in the years since their launch. To present China’s political progress against the backdrop of the world, further press releases comparing the anti-corruption and equity measures of countries with high corruption indices such as Libya, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) and Sudan could be considered.

The second issue of “Clean Water and Sanitation” is also addressed by the UNDP. In multiple press releases by the Central Government, authorities have asserted that economic development is largely prioritised over other political goals. The necessary industrialisation that follows results in various forms of environmental pollution (e.g. haze, poisoned water bodies) as well as degradation of arable land. Xinhua aims to chart the stages of reform in environmental law enacted in the recent decade, where greater balance between

environmental conservation and economic progress has been achieved. The collaboration of the PRC with countries that utilise green technology on a macro-infrastructure scale could also be explored. One possible feature would be Singapore, which is highly successful in its ventures in desalination and advanced water treatment.

Last but not least, the issue of “Child Mortality” debated by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) may also be considered. With motions to reinstate a “two-child policy” since 2013, China is moving forward from the legacy of Deng Xiaoping’s reforms and creating greater flexibility in population growth. With a larger population, it is only necessary that existing healthcare systems for both parent and child be adequately developed to ensure that increased child mortality does not result from political apathy. Xinhua will look into how welfare systems have been reformed to tackle problems of child mortality that inevitably arise from a growing population.

In presenting these issues, Xinhua remains politically neutral and cognizant of benefits and costs incurred by all relevant governmental policies. With supporting input from fellow delegates and experts, Xinhua aims to provide fair and reasonable judgment without political slant.

Beyond these domestic issues, Xinhua looks towards addressing affairs on an international scale, such as a “Transpolar Sea-Route”, “Acceleration of the Arms Race in the Asia Pacific” and “Geopolitics, Strategic Competition and Multilateralism in Southeast Asia”.



Xinhua's Press Statement

By Tan Yu Jie, Press Delegate

Xinhua News Agency is the primary news source of China, and it is at the forefront in reporting current affairs. Xinhua enjoys an international readership, thus aiming to portray China in the image of a peaceful, rising power.

Foreign media often skews reportage that China intends to extend its geopolitical clout by installing more foreign military bases, especially within the Indian Ocean region. This has resulted in strong opposition from numerous countries, especially India, who views itself as the “net security provider in the Indian Ocean region”. Currently, New Delhi provides patrol ships, surveillance radars and ocean mapping for the island states. Xinhua thus strives to shed light on the issue debated on in the DISEC - namely Foreign Military Bases.

China's rise is often perceived by other countries with suspicion or hostility, as the balance-of-power to the declining geopolitical influence of the U.S. While these concerns are valid, they are unfounded upon closer scrutiny. For example, China is unlikely to compete with India over security dominance of the Indian Ocean region. It is necessary to consider the geographical advantage that India wields, in addition to the necessity of a substantively larger Chinese force in the region in order to enhance their security dominance. Any attempt by China to establish foreign military bases in the Indian Ocean would be viewed as blatantly expansionist and even politically unsound.

Currently, China operates her People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) deployments with regular re-supply from commercial ports in the region. China states that overseas bases would be “equipped with medical facilities, refrigerated storage space for fresh vegetables and fruit, rest and recreation sites, a communications station, and ship repair facilities to perform minor to intermediate repair and maintenance.” This would allow China to shoulder its international responsibilities, which include escorting and peacekeeping missions.



TASS' Press Statement

By Yangdup Sherpa, Press Delegate

I am Yangdup Sherpa and I am a TASS correspondent for the International Press Delegation. I have been assigned by the IPD to keep the Conference up-to-date about the progress of the TASS over the next several days.

TASS (Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union) provides timely news from around the world as well as extensive news coverage on political, economic, social, cultural and sports events globally. With an extensive network of 70 regional centres in Russia, 68 foreign bureaus and staff of 1,500 in strength, TASS provides around-the-clock reporting in 6 languages.

We are associated with: Trustworthiness, Actuality, Services and Synergy. Our trustworthiness is reflected strongly by our sizeable audience of more than 1,000 media organisations and over 5,000 corporate subscribers in Russia. We have an extensive network of correspondents and information sources, allowing us to provide immediate, in-depth coverage of all types of news. We publish print-ready infographics on the latest of current news affairs across several topical and geographical dimensions.

One of the recent issues that is bothering the world, directly or indirectly, is Iran. There has been tension between USA and Iran for decades but with Iran's developing nuclear weapons it has made many of the countries unhappy and they do not want that to happen. In fact, UN is threatening Iran with sanctions which Iran is trying to

push back as all though they have a 6.3 billion dollar defence budget and are capable of building military equipment their economy is not doing well. Iran's condition can change if they obtain nuclear weapons. The UN Security Council will take a decision about the sanction relief not earlier than 30th June.



TASS' Press Statement

by Lee Liu Xia, Press Delegate

TASS ON-BOARD FOR SINGAPORE MODEL UNITED NATIONS

Leading Russian news agency will be covering news at Singapore's premier Model United Nations conference

Singapore, SINGAPORE, June 3, 2015— Russia's oldest and leading news agency, Telegraphic Agency of Soviet Union (TASS) has been confirmed as one of the participating news agency which will be covering news at the premier Model United Nations of Singapore from June 8 till June 12.

The five-day conference will be held at the National University of Singapore whereby delegates from around the world will be discussing issues of security, of bilateral and regional relations.

TASS has never stopped its work delivering timely and accurate news from around the world and will continue to do so at the 12th Annual Singapore Model United Nations.

The organizers, National University of Singapore Political Science Society (PSSOC), plans to create a society of active global citizens through this conference similar to the United Nations.

Singapore Model United Nations (SMUN) is a conference that seeks to foster in students an awareness of, and an interest in international and regional affairs within a globalized society and the role that international organizations such as the United Nations play in such issues that are of global concern.

In addition, the conference will also be an international social gathering that encourages engagement, interaction, and networking among delegates and cultural exchange within and beyond the region's diversity.

As Russia is an ally of Syria, TASS sees an importance in covering the topic of Rights of the Refugees of the Syrian Conflicts from the United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR). Russia is one of the only nations which have knowledge regarding Syria's political system and has used its veto on three occasions since the outbreak of the Syrian Conflict to prevent the UN Security Council from taking punitive actions against Bashar Al-Assad, President of Syria.

TASS will be also be focusing on the Disarmament and International Security (DISEC)'s topic on Use of Depleted Uranium in Munitions. Russia remains one of the producers of depleted uranium (DU) and has the second-largest number of DU stocks in the world. It was only three months ago that the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro had a memorial for the 1999 NATO's 'humanitarian' bombing of

Yugoslavia. Its use of DU has left many citizens of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro scarred.

This bombing caused an alarm to the world as NATO acted without the approval of the United Nations Security Council. NATO has shown the world that it is powerful and is willing to take action as it believes in countering "war on terror" and declaring their actions as "humanitarian in-



tervention”. TASS will continue to update on the situation of DU weapons as it is being questioned to be used to make another “preventative war” towards the Islamic State (IS).

Apart from that, TASS will be alongside other news agencies originating from various parts of the world covering this conference, namely, Qatar-based Al Jazeera Media Network, United Kingdom’s British

Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and China’s official news agency, Xinhua News Agency.

About TASS

Russian News Agency TASS is the principal news agency of Russia and the first official Russian news agency. While it started off as a news agency to “report within the Empire and abroad political, financial, economic, trade and other data of public interest” in 1904, today it is a symbol of professionalism, enthusiasm, readiness of its team for personal development that delivers news to both Russian and international audiences. It is owned by the government of Russia.

Due to its prioritization of its four key assets: Trustworthiness, Actuality, Services and Synergy, TASS has been the pioneering Russian News Agency for the past 110 years. TASS has accumulated a rich body of experience throughout its 110-year history by being an active and authoritative member of world and regional media organizations with a strong number of corporate subscribers, an extensive network of correspondents and contributors that caters to six languages as well as the largest in Russian collection of historical photo records and up-to-date infographics on major issues.

For more information:

<http://tass.ru/en>

<http://www.singaporemun.org>

Contact LEE LUI XIA

Cell +60123121385

Delegation Youth Diplomacy Society of Malaysia

Email leeluxia@gmail.com