

Debating Diversity, Connecting Culture
8th, 9th, 10th February 2018

NEWSLETTER

THE SECRETARY GENERAL WELCOMES YOU

Esteemed organizers, delegates and advisors,

It has been an absolute pleasure hosting you at the 11th annual American University of Sharjah Model United National (AUSMUN). This year, AUSMUN has broken several records, enriching its reputation as the biggest conference at AUS. We hosted over a thousand individuals, which makes up one fourth of the AUS student population, making it our best conference yet. I am extremely proud of the hard work the organizers have put into making our vision a reality. Most importantly, I am grateful to all the delegates for working so diligently to embody the role of diplomats. Your commitment and determination is the fuel to our conference.

As I am set to graduate, this letter marks the end of my 7 years at MUN. This conference has changed my life drastically and helped me develop many skills that will stay with me for a



lifetime. I have had my precious memories being a delegate, organizer, and board member and I hope your experience was as delightful as mine.

I wish the next board of AUSMUN the best of luck as they continue the legacy of the conference. I am extremely confident that they will do a spectacular job.

Alia Al Hazami

What's On?

- Secretary General Address
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A WORD FROM THE HEAD OF MEDIA

As the Deputy Director of Media, It has been an honor and pleasure working for the AUSMUN2018. I believe that this opportunity was all about growing myself before growing the rest of the team. It has been a great experience filled with learning, working, and inspiring the team members towards one goal. Seeing the conference come to life was the real accomplishment and it was that very proud moment when I realized that hard work pays off. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to my team members, who have managed to stay motivated and perform well throughout this journey. I have learned a great deal from all of you and I wish you the best.

Mahra Mohammed AlQaseer



OPENING CEREMONY SETS THE TONE

With the familiar tune of Wavin' Flag playing in the main auditorium, flags of various countries from all over the world were brought out onto the stage. This ceremony marked the beginning of a new decade of AUSMUN and it is with hope that this coming decade will surpass all that has been done so far and continue to grow into a more globally recognized conference. Over a thousand students from high schools and universities across GCC countries, Indonesia and Gambia were present, making this the largest AUSMUN conference this university has ever held. These young adults were here to learn to make a difference and discuss global issues that plague the world today.

During the opening ceremony, many inspirational speeches were given by the Chancellor, members of the Executive Board, and esteemed guest speakers. After welcoming everyone, the Chancellor announced that AUS is a United Nations of sort as it was named the most diverse international university in the world by the Times Higher Education University Ranking. He went on to acknowledge and commend the delegates' research and efforts in preparation for this conference.

Perhaps the most noteworthy part of his speech was pointing out that the first day of AUSMUN coincides with the beginning of the Winter Olympics in South Korea. After briefly explaining the history behind the divide between North Korea and South Korea, the Chancellor spoke about the significance of the act of both the Koreas playing under a single unified flag at the Winter Olympics and how it would not have been possible without the countless debates and negotiation sessions held by the diplomats of both nations.



Later, the Secretary General, Alia Al Hazami, began her speech by thanking her team, faculty advisors and organizers. Additionally, she went on to express her pride at the progress that AUSMUN has made from the early days. Up next, the Deputy Secretary General, Pooja Baburaj, was welcomed onto the stage. From her arrival, it was apparent how excited she was to welcome the delegates to AUSMUN. She seemed confident in the success of the conference and predicted intense debates taking place during the three days to come. She spoke about the privilege that the delegates possess to be able to debate on world issues that are, in truth, other people's realities.

Furthermore, an AUS alumna, Amal Amin, was invited from the Mohammed Bin Rashid Space Centre to speak about what they are currently working on and the progress they have made so far. Plans such as the Emirates Mars Mission and KhalifaSat are currently underway and the MBRSC is now accepting applications from those interested in becoming an astronaut as part of their space team. His Highness Sheikh Fahim Al Qassimi was also invited to speak. You can learn more about his speech on the future and more specifically, on the hyper disruption of the media industry and how it can affect us in our daily lives on page _____. For the entertainment of the night, students from the American University of Sharjah presented musical performances that left the audience in awe.

Fatima Tabassum

**“THIS TIME,
DON'T JUST
MAKE YOUR
VOICE HEARD,
MAKE YOUR
VOICE COUNT.”**



AN INSIGHT FROM HH SHEIKH FAHIM AL QASSIMI

Executive Chairman of the Department of Government Relations and the AUSMUN Platinum Sponsor, His Highness Sheikh Fahim Al Qassimi, posed three important questions to his audience as the keynote speaker of the opening ceremony of AUSMUN 2018. The questions were related to the future, innovation, and technological advancements, and he emphasised that our journey should be structured around addressing these questions.

According to His Highness, the most important aspect of the current age is the way we create, analyze and consume information. In this century we can see a proliferation of open data, big data, machine learning and fake news. He believes that the way we deal with information can provide recommendations to improve government functioning. Moreover, he believes that collectively, we need to decide whether or not to trust information based on its sources. It has become crucial that every stakeholder has access to the information that political actions are based on.

His Highness further stated that disruption is completely changing the dynamics of the media industry, as it is the only industry that has witnessed hyper-dysruption. People constantly challenge traditional media and research institutions. Individuals like Mark Zuckerberg have completely changed the way we create and access information and how public opinion is influenced through it. It is now crucial that governments and international institutions require adapt to this fact since the media has become a powerful instrument that shapes public opinion. As a society, we need to think about how communication will develop in the future if we wish to make inferences about future scenarios and prepare for them. By looking at future possible trends, the question of the hour is how governments and international institutions should interact with stakeholders.

His Highness established that there are also global shifts in the way we think of our values. This establishes the need to understand how we can increase the transparency and efficiency of transactions which affect the way governments and international institutions deliver their services. The possibilities of providing government services through cryptocurrencies are extensive and they have immense implications in the foreseeable future. We need to question information sources, changes in our methods of communication, and the transaction challenge. His Highness concluded by stating that morality, integrity and objectivity are the pillars that education aims to provide. These are the three aspects that technology will never change. His Highness concluded by requesting delegates to ponder over the challenges posed to education, life, and the future throughout their MUN experience.

Yuvika Bhatia



MUSICAL PERFORMANCES

The AUS choir performed at the MUN opening ceremony led by Dr. Terrell Hooper and pianist Dr. Natalia Tykhonova. The three song set included 'I lived' by One Republic; 'Amani,' a classical African folk song by Audrey Snyder; and 'Why we Sing' by Greg Gilpin. While 'I lived' received exceptional response from the young crowd as students sang along, the other two received just as much praise as the students were impressed by the exceptional talent of the choir. The last song, 'Why we Sing,' represented the different backgrounds, nationalities and cultures that we all come from.

This is the third time the choir performed at the opening ceremony but the first time it performed a longer and more modern song set. Although they only had two lessons to master their performance due to an earlier performance at the International Music

Festival, the Choir still managed to wow the fully packed auditorium with their talent.

Mariyam Mahmud also gripped the crowd with her exceptional solo performance at the ceremony. Mariyam, who is an AUS graduate with a degree in chemical engineering, was part of the AUS Choir, the AUS Women's Choir and a vocal performance student during her time here. Mariyam sang 'I Believe' by Eric Levi, which has been sung by other famous artists including Andrea Bocelli and Katherine Jenkins. Her performance, especially with her perfect pitch of the high notes, received an overwhelming response from the crowd.

If you haven't heard enough of these brilliant voices make sure to come see them at the upcoming Performance of Alice in Wonderland and if you'd like to be a part of the fun, join the AUS choir!

Rija Habib



MEET THE DELEGATES

Interviewed by Aminath Ifasa

Have you been to any youth conferences before?
How is AUSMUN different?

What I like about the AUSMUN is that the mood is really serious, it's about taking serious action. Other MUN's goals are to have fun but here it's fun but some serious work at the same time.

What was the thing that you enjoyed the most about AUSMUN 2018?

Competition! It was the main highlight of the event.

Does the country that you are assigned to affect your style of debating?

It depends on the mood I'm in. I'm the delegate of Mexico so I've to research about the fallacies of other countries to support me.

If you were to debate against your best friend, would you be lenient towards them?

Maybe...

Adil From Sharjah

Have you participated in MUN's before?

Marzu: No, this is my first MUN.

Rand: Yes I've participated twice in the AUD and HMC MUN.

So what do you think is different about AUSMUN?

Rand: AUSMUN focuses on the potential of the delegates and on genuine resolutions. We get a lot of encouragement and it's a new experience.

So Marzu, since this is your first MUN, can you share some 'tips and tricks' that you've gathered while you were preparing for this?

Marzu: I think the main point is confidence, you shouldn't back off or be hesitant about talking to delegates or other chairs. Confidence plays a key role and of course researching about the laws and the position of your country. Finally, enjoy it and don't stress it out! You'll have a great time.

So finally, if there's one superpower you could possess

Marzu from Ma'rifa International School & Rand from Mawakib Grahoud



when you're in your session, what would it be?

Marzu: Reading the minds of other delegates and knowing what they're about to say!

Rand: I think having power over time and knowing what other delegates are thinking about would be great!



Have you participated in a different youth conference before this?

Yes! This is my fourth and my last one while I'm still in high school!

Do you have any tricks that you have to have an upper hand against the other delegates?



Does your mindset change when your opponent is refuting your arguments successfully?

I'm a flexible person yet I get convinced if their refutation is logical. At the end of the day I believe that the goal of AUSMUN is to cooperate and find a common solution, to solve a global crisis.

I actually initiated the MUN club in my school and I've been the leader of it for 2 years now. And the tip I would give is to carry yourself with false confidence and not be nervous!

Did you attend the delegate training session? How helpful was it?

This time I was here mostly for moral support as this is my fourth AUSMUN but in the previous years it has been very helpful especially because you could have all your questions answered!

How do you tackle any obstacle that might rise while you're speaking?

The tip is that you research a lot and even if you can't answer 100% just answer aversively and try to use their weak moments to your advantage.

If you were to play dress up to represent a spokesperson or a Politian who has inspired you the most, who would it be?

Malah Yousef definitely! I'm a big feminist and she inspires me so much. I mean, she nearly died yet look at her change the world now. That's something that is very beautiful to me and I hope I can achieve in one day.

Ayah from Dubai International School

If you were debating against your best friend, would you go easy on them?

Not really, even on a daily basis I always criticize my friends and were always fighting so..

Does the country that you're assigned to impact your style of debating?

Depends on the research you've done. I've been assigned to Mongolia at the CSW Committee. Mongolia has a very rural background and is politically weak so I could only represent my country as a sponsor but my debating style, my attitude and ton doesn't change.

If you could have a superpower during inside the conference room while the commencement is taking place, what would it be?

There's always some delegate who doesn't know what they're talking about so I'd want to go and politely help them out.

Jeline from South Korea, living in Dubai for 3 years



What helps you to have an advantage over the other delegates while you're in the conference?

Ahlam: We have great support from our professor as she has previous experience so she knows what ideas are going to help us effectively.

Would you rather represent the country you're from or a country with stronger influences?

Zainab: I wouldn't choose to represent the country I'm from. If the country has lesser power, it would give me chance to really develop my ideas, it would be a challenge.

So Zaina, if you were to talk against Ahlam would you be any lenient on her?

Zaina: No way! If anything my arguments would be stronger and it would really be fun!

What did you enjoy the most about AUSMUN 2018?

Zaina: Its very friendly and gets everyone together by the means of debating.

Ahlam: It gives everyone a chance to share their ideas and socialize.

If you could be a superhero and have a power while debating, what would it be?

Ahlam: A mind that would capture every detail in the room!

Zaina and Ahlam from DACT



Have you had the experience of participating in a youth conference previously?

No, this is my first ever youth conference and MUN!

So as a new comer, what do you wish was different about the AUSMUN 2018?

I would selfishly say that I'd want this to happen more often, more than once a year, even though it's not possible with the majesties of it being 1100 people. It's a huge conference and a great experience.

If you had the chance to represent the country you're from, would you opt for it?

I think the countries given within a committee always has an opinion and that opinion is important. It doesn't matter what country I'm assigned to as long as I can represent it to the best of my ability.

If you had to dress up like the person who has inspired you the most, whom would you dress up as?

I actually don't know, I think I'd dress up like myself! I think I inspire myself the most!

Zeeshan from Abu Dhabi University

IN CONVERSATION WITH CHERNO FROM GAMBIA

Cherno S. Jallow, a student from Gambia, is one of five international delegates who joined us for the 11th AUSMUN conference. With this conference being his first Model United Nations experience, Cherno says he has been familiarizing himself with the terms of procedure as the sessions have progressed.

For the past three days, Cherno has been involved in a discussion regarding engaging and empowering youth through access to technology and media in his committee, UNESCO.

Cherno indicated a personal interest in the topic as he expressed that he would, one day, like to help improve the state of technology and media in Gambia in order to ensure more opportunities for the youth there. To this end, Cherno is currently looking to enrol at a university in the UAE, and says the American University of Sharjah is one of his main options.

We wish Cherno the best of luck in his future endeavours, and hope he joins us again next year!

Ayesha Burney



MEETING OUR INDONESIAN INTERNATIONAL DELEGATES

Have you been to different MUN's before outside of the UAE?
Yes, we've been to several ones in Indonesia.

How has the AUSMUN 2018 been different for you guys?
The terms here are different. 'The point of amendment' and 'The point of order', it's a lot to deal with. The format of MUN's in the Middle East, East Asia and Middle East Asia is very different. In Indonesia we follow the format of Europe. It was good at the beginning but it's been challenging as we progressed.

How has the cultural difference in UAE influenced your thought on world issues as you're discussing?
The people here have a specific manner of speaking while putting forward their points. Their behavior is quite different but we made some friends!

Aminath Ifasa



Zakiyah Ramadhanty Siregar, Dirra Kurniawati, Bintar Mupiza, Yuni Syeila
Delegation from Universitas Islam Indonesia

HEAR WHAT THE FACULTY ADVISORS HAVE TO SAY!



Dr. Jeniece Lusk

Last year I came as a visiting professor at the International Studies Department and so I didn't have any service responsibility but I saw all of the plans for AUS MUN and I was really interested in it since I hadn't had MUN when I was at school. This year I'm a faculty advisor at AUS MUN and we have so many more people and so much more organisation wise, this has been more of a challenge but still a lot of things went smoother logistically.

My interests are always in topics that are dealing with women's rights and women's empowerment and I noticed that those were being discussed this year. I think that looking at the SDG's, one of the goals that stands out to me most is creating gender equality and I feel any issue that serves as an obstacle to gender equality should be addressed because we will not be able to develop and progress unless we deal with very imperative issue. Some of the things I'm interested in seeing at future MUN conferences are discussions on female genital mutilation and other such taboos as well.

I think the most important thing for such a conference is being confident and being able

to assert one's self, not being shy and standing behind your beliefs and incorporating them into some of the resolutions that the delegates come up with. My advice to delegates that fear public speaking is- act like you've been here before and fake it till you make it. It doesn't matter if you get things wrong, everyone gets things wrong, so there's nothing wrong in saying 'I don't know' or 'I need a moment to think about this' or just not saying anything and being quiet for a moment before you get your stuff together. Come back next year!



Dr. Johannes Van Gorp

This is my fourth year as an AUS MUN advisor. It keeps getting bigger and bigger! It's been a learning curve and it has gotten better each year just because you get to smooth out the kinks the more you do this. So for example just the fact that we have a room where the advisors can go to, the committee sizes despite the fact that we have grown, have remained relatively small while some have gotten bigger, it just finds a nice sweet spot between being able to grow and at the same time having an interactive environment where people can get a chance to speak, engage and show what they have spent the last few months preparing for.

I think we have started to hit on some of the topics that are getting bigger such as cryptocurrencies and their impact because even though they've been around for a while, we have reached the point now where governments and central banks are starting to recognise them and are getting involved. I don't think that the UN is the most obvious place for these to get discussed but I won't be surprised if it comes up there in the future. Other topics that I think are really interesting and could be discussed is populism, my little pet peeve. So that is something which will reflect in future MUN and should make a very interesting debate in some of these committees.

Ofcourse some delegates will have the gift of 'gab', if you want to call it that, but that doesn't mean you can't use this opportunity to develop your skills. Many of us when we start out in a field, are perhaps a little nervous when we stand in front of a classroom, but by the time you're 4 -5 years in that's not so much of a problem and you get better at it too. That's the same message I would give to students. If you are struggling and are a little shy, that doesn't mean MUN is something that you should avoid. This conference gives you the opportunity to develop the skills and when you get to the marketplace it's useful. These are skills that you can't necessarily be taught in a classroom which will make you stand out.



Dr. Aaron Tylor Brand

This is my third time as an MUN advisor. AUS MUN has gotten much bigger since the first time I became an advisor and, in a sense, more complicated. The board is exceptional, especially this year. Everything's going really well and everyone's on the same page which makes things very smooth for us.

I think in order to perform well at MUN, delegates need to have certain qualities. They need to be professional, they must enunciate and have confidence in their speech and be very clear, not just in terms of what they say but how they're thinking. They also need to be able to persuade people to get on their side without people even knowing they're being persuaded and be able to have fun with it. If you can get people on your side that want to be associated with you, even if they're not naturally as a country inclined to be on your side, then you have performed very well. Some of the most galvanised delegates can actually get people behind them just because they're so good.

There is a great range of topics being discussed at this year's conference but there are still several issues we are facing that need to be addressed. Currently in Madagascar there is a major plague outbreak. These sorts of things are a major issue but there are also things that are a little more subtle such as diseases for those in poverty that affect hundreds of millions of people every year and have probably caused more death than other major diseases like Ebola and HIV etc. Thinking about solutions to these things is more of a long term issue to deal with and it's not just a current crisis. There are also issues like Blockchain and how to deal with these new technologies coming in which are potentially also creating further issues in terms of corruption and human trafficking etc.

Do MUN! it's a fantastic experience and it's almost like event planning for those wanting to get in to a socially based career. No matter what sort of work you like there's always going to be something you can do and it's great for a CV.

FEATURING OUR EXCHANGE STUDENT MODERATOR

Shivam Daftari is an exchange student here at AUS serving as a moderator in the Tech Summit. Hailing from the University of South Carolina, Daftari has an extensive range of experience in debating while AUSMUN 2018 is the second MUN conference he's attended. He majors in International Business and Global Supply Chain along with minoring in Political Science. It's his second semester here at AUS and he finds the students here super outgoing and fun, making it easier for him to move out of the international student bubble. He loves Dubai and absolutely adores Ajman, deeming it one of his favorite places and oh has he been to places! He spent a summer in Morocco and he's traveled to at least 75 places with his top 3 favorite countries being Iceland, Egypt and Russia.

On a personal level, he describes himself as straightforward, jovial and persuasive, which are three characteristics that I can guarantee will stand out to anyone he's interacting with. He definitely has a well-rounded personality and to add on to his remarkable complex, it comes as no surprise that he speaks 5 languages. Whilst talking about his interests, many of us can definitely connect with him, as he's a huge Pixar fan and a Star Wars geek. In his free time, he enjoys skiing, debating, soccer, politics and history. He's won several awards such as the title of National Champion in a Public Forum Debate and Best Counselor in AUDMUN last November.

His favorite part of AUSMUN is the culturally diverse delegate body as it brings in an "absolute wealth of different opinions that you wouldn't normally see." In the US, it's mostly Americans who just adopt their country's stance on paper but in the UAE, you can find people representing the country they're from. For him, it is usually "very easy to dominate the entire conversation," but in AUSMUN, delegates give way to other



opinions and quiet speakers. Additionally, handling 40 delegates in a room taught him how to maintain order and efficiency to keep sessions flowing smoothly. It represents to him his debating coach's concept called "baptism by fire," which means you only learn if you get into it head on.

The differences were also clear between high school and university students. During sessions, he noticed high-school delegates brought a different energy to the room as they were more likely to think outside of the box in comparison to university students, most of whom are more methodical and to the books. As a moderator, he recommends to delegates that they shouldn't try too hard to win an award by speaking when they don't need to or speaking too much while also suggesting not to hesitate taking controversial positions if they can support it.

Yuvika Bhatia

OUR SOCIAL MIXER

After a long day of debating and writing resolutions, it seemed obvious that everyone was ready to wind down and enjoy some great entertainment. The smell of spiced grilled meat was almost tangible in the air as students eagerly made their way to the mini eateries located in the main plaza.

The Open Mic Night allowed students to showcase their diverse talents in front of an enthusiastic audience. The performers comprised of stand up poets, singers, and musicians. One of our first performances showcased a student's striking skill of playing a harmonica and a guitar simultaneously. As the night progressed, several singers came on stage, covering songs by mainstream pop artists such as Adele and Ed Sheeran. Even without the instrumentals playing in the background, singer of Angel Eyes managed to rock the stage with great vocals.

Moreover, although the number of poems performed were few and far between, the skill behind them was undeniable. The rhythmic words were enunciated with clear passion and intellect in both Arabic and English. One delegate, in particular, performed a spoken word poem regarding the dangers of having a closed mind and being quick to get offended rather than evaluating the situation with a different perspective.

The final act of the night was a duet singing a popular Ed Sheeran song, Perfect, which invited a swaying crowd near the stage. Thus a night of gripping talent and delectable bites closed the second day of the 11th AUSMUN conference.

Fatima Tabassum



A GLIMPSE OF AUSMUN 2018





840 +
DELEGATES


2152 LIKES


9693
IMPRESSIONS

AUSMUN 2018 STATISTICS

20
SECRETARIATS

20
COMMITTEES



43
INSTITUTIONS

58
MODERATORS

ALL IN
3 DAYS

UN INVOLVEMENT



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While our Model UN conference has helped sow the seeds for future policymakers and world leaders, the AUSMUN 2018 Board decided to incorporate a platform through which delegates could have a real-time impact on current affairs. As such, the Community Services department at AUS and AIESEC UAE were invited to set up their stalls during the three-day conference.

Delegates were invited to contribute to the World Food Programme joint initiative with the Big Heart Foundation that aims to distribute food resources to war-stricken regions in Syria and Palestine.

Meanwhile, the Executive Board of AIESEC in Sharjah, UAE invited delegates to sign up for six-week long volunteer exchange trips as part of their outgoing program. As part of the world's largest youth-run organization, AIESEC in Sharjah offers affordable volunteer internships abroad that target one or more of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals set by the UN in 2015. As students travel to and live in a different country for six-week to 3-month long internships, they not only contribute towards sustainable development within that country but also gain the skills and experiences that shape them into world citizens. As a partner of the UN, AIESEC provides students around the world with an immediate platform through which they can contribute towards building a sustainable future by the year 2030.



THE TEAM

DESIGNER

Naqiyah Mustafa

EDITORS

Ayesha Burney

Lobna Abouelleil

Naqiyah Mustafa

COORDINATOR

Ayesha Burney

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Alaa Altheraawi

Hams Saleh

Ramsha Nasir

CONTRIBUTORS

Aminath Ifasa

Ayesha Burney

Fatima Tabassum

Rija Habib

Yuvika Bhatia