2017

PASMUN
TRIBUNE

ISSUE ONE





Opening Ceremony Strikes a Chord

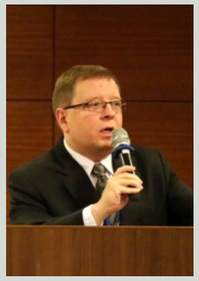
BY: Phoebe Lee

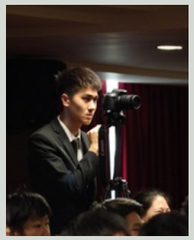
The second hand ticked soundlessly across the chasm that distinguished one minute from another. It was 8:41 in the vacant auditorium, one minute after the intended starting time. As the minute hand journeyed through the passage of time, delegates, chairs, admins, and directors began to quickly file into the auditorium. The once vacant seats were now filled with formally dressed figures as Sean Hu, the Deputy Secretary General, stood at the podium, beginning the opening ceremony by announcing for the PAS Quintet to take the stage.

As the five musicians moved across the stage, a loud thud produced from a collision between the cello and the wall stopped them in their tracks. Neither the wall nor the cello showed signs of injuries, yet, as the musicians proceeded to tune, a dissonance resonated. The collision had dealt an indiscernible blow that the cellist could not mend without the assistance of the pianist and violist. After a prolonged delay, one filled with giggles and the desperate cries of the cello, the cello was once again in tune and the quintet was officially ready to embark on their musical journey. As the bows moved across the strings, the melodies became neatly interwoven, the notes were passed from one to another, and the chords danced in accordance to the music. Although the PAS Quintet had a bumpy start, they soon redeemed themselves with their music.

Ensuing this performance was a short, introductory video produced by Jeremy Chang, the cinematographer of the PASMUN Tribune. This video, one that integrated news and animation, gave a highlight of some of the most pressing issues of each of the committees: the question of setting internationally recognized guidelines regarding cyber warfare for General Assembly 1, labor discrimination on the basis of race, religion, gender identity, or sexual orientation for the Economic and Social Council, the situation in Syria for the Security Council, and many more.











After the video was the welcome address from the MUN director of PAS, Mr. Jeff Buscher. According to Mr. Buscher, "PASMUN has been distinguished by three main characteristics... the quality of debate...the outstanding work of the Secretariat and student officers...and the small size and intimacy of the conference." Despite these consistencies that PASMUN has maintained over the years, PASMUN has been growing and innovating, whether it is "towards a digital conference or getting ready to move to a new campus." However, the main emphasis of Mr. Buscher's welcome address was to bring the audience's attention to the changing world around us and "to rededicate ourselves to what MUN is all about – to understand each other and the world around us, to build bridges rather than walls, and to work together to solve the real problems we have inherited, rather than bicker over imaginary ones."

After Mr. Buscher's inspiring opening speech, the Secretary General, Howard Yin, and the Deputy Secretary Generals, Sean Hu and Alex Tai, proceeded to present the gavels to the chairs one at a time. After all the chairs had received their gavels, Deputy Secretary General Hu picked up his gavel and gave it a tap as he announced, "It is my pleasure to officially declare PASMUN VIII open!" With that, delegates from all over Taiwan – whether they are from Hsinchu International School, the International Bilingual School at Hsinchu Science Park, Kang Chiao, Morrison Academy in Taichung, Stella Matutina, or Tainan First Senior High School – dispersed into their respective committee rooms, rooms that will serve as their primary places of residence for the whole of PASMUN VIII.







Photos by: Cathy Lu, Frank Hung, Sabrina Ho

The Untold Story of

the Admins

by Teeny Chen

Photos By: Frank Hung





For days leading up to the conference, a group of students from Pacific American School stayed on campus until seven o'clock each night, hectically getting everything ready for PASMUN VIII. Unlike other participants, they tend to be neglected due to the uniformity in their appearances. However, if not for their attentiveness to the infinite small details, the conference would not have been as perfect as it is today. This people are who we known as the admin staff.

The admin staff resembles a group of busy bees working in their bee hives. Before the conference, they had to make the badges, print the certificates, and put together delegation packages. "Not only did we need to print them out, we had to double check, triple check, or even quadruple check the names and information for any mistakes on those things," said Kerry Teng (Deputy Head of Admin, PAS). Beyond preparing for these materials, they are also in charge of other aspects of the conference, such as ordering lunch, renting classrooms, managing the wifi... and the list goes on. "Efficient communication with various people is vital in conveying the right message," explained Carly Wen (Head of Admin, PAS). "I also realized that in order to let everything run smoothly and efficiently, timing is especially important during the planning process."

During the conference, admins are everywhere, always running around. Regardless of the pain in their feet, they still stand by in the committee, managing all sorts of unforeseen circumstances. Richard Yoo (Admin Staff, PAS) was a delegate during PASMUN VII, who "used to just sit and lobby." "This year as an admin, I have to be extremely active and prepared to react to all kind of situations," he elaborated. Though digitalizing the conference became much more convenient for the admins, they still have an abundance of problems to take care of, including checking to see if the delegates are on task and fixing technical problems.

On the bright side, admins also find joy in their jobs. "Being an admin staff, I am able to interact with a lot of people, including those from other schools," said Elvis Chang (Admin Staff, PAS). "I am also learning new things about MUN at the same time, which could benefit me as a delegate in the future." Eunice Lin (Admin Staff, PAS) added, "By watching the entire process of MUN, I am able to learn its procedures and operations."

The admin staff of PASMUN is definitely one of the biggest driving forces behind the conference. Despite having to walk around constantly and fixing numerous unexpected problems, they still do their jobs with their full potential and dedication, assisting every participant at every corner of the conference. We, as a member of the conference, should acknowledge them and give them credit for making PASMUN VIII as successful as it is today!





New and Old, what is different?

By May Lee Photos By: Sabrina Ho

Experienced

Tips to new delegates

Ho-Hsuan Hsieh (Delegate of Japan, HIS) recommended all delegates to do "thorough research," as intensive research results in "winning a half before going into the battle field." Research is the basis of all debates, and the more you know, the more you grow! Jack Baek (Delegate of China, IBSH) advised new delegates to "not be afraid of making mistakes" during the conference. There can be many unexpected situations, and not everything will go as you have planned. However, all participants join MUN to learn and improve themselves, so do not be afraid to learn from your mistakes and gain experiences.

Rena Ju (Delegate of Yemen, PAS) recommended delegates to "take advantage of small committee" sizes. Many national and international conferences have big committees, where it is harder to be recognized by chairs, not to mention much more intimidating. Luckily, PASMUN VIII allows all delegates to have the chance to speak as chairs would easily recognize delegates.



What do you do when your country stance contradicts your personal belief?

There are many cases where the country stance contradicts delegates' personal beliefs. It is hard for many delegates to consistently follow the stance throughout the debate, but Hsieh apprises new delegates that they must "lie to yourself, and pretend that you are representing the delegation's true values." Jonathan Wu (Delegate of Oman, PAS) encourages delegates to "stick to the country stance," as the entire debate may change if a country takes a different stance from their own and confuse other delegates.

First Timers

How do you feel about PASMUN VIII?



Both Jason Chu (Delegate of the Netherlands, PAS), and Kylie Zofia Bazarnik (Delegate of Central African Republic, IBSH) felt nervous about PASMUN VIII as it is their first time joining the conference as a delegate. Bazarnik has participated in HSINMUN twice as an admin, but she commented that being a delegate is very different and unique. As an admin, she would just observe the delegates debate, so she wanted to join the debate to feel the atmosphere, but now that she is in the other people's shoes, she feels a bit nervous.



Have you had any embarrassing experiences throughout your MUN career?

It is easy to lose track of the debate if delegates do not pay close attention. Baek had the same experience. He blanked out during a debate and "returned back to reality" when he heard the word "violence." He then made a speech opposing violence. Then, a delegate raised a Point of Information clarifying whether the delegate is aware of the topic at hand. "It was a humiliating experience in front of the whole committee."



Why did you join Model United Nations?



Many students join Model United Nations to improve their public speaking skills and to study contemporary world issues. Like many, Rodell Lin (Delegate of Spain, Morrison Academy Taichung) decided to join MUN to "boost his confidence toward public speaking and make friends outside of school."

Committee Reports

by: Lindsey Yu, May Lee, Michael Chen, Phoebe Lee, Teeny Chen
Photos by: Cathy Lu, Frank Hung, Sabrina Ho

General Assembly 1

After the opening ceremony, delegates scurried into the committee room to begin the day's session. As the committee commenced lobbying, the room was filled with heated conversations and ardent discussions. Delegates shared their opinions on the two crucial issues: "proposing internationally recognized guidelines regarding cyber warfare," and "curbing black market sales of weapons." Annshine Wu (Delegate of USA, PAS) collaborated on a resolution about cyber warfare to ameliorate the situation by "defining the terms of agreements of the proposed guidelines," while Alex Hsu (Delegate of UK, IBSH) drafted a resolution on combating black market sales of weapons by creating "regulations that would ban gun usages." Bryan Ying (Delegate of Vietnam, PAS), another main submitter for the issue of black market sales of weapons, said "the main focus of our resolution is to monitor the flow of illicit arms." Regardless of the time being heavily constrained and polarizing country stances, the delegates of GA 1 are all very "productive and effective," Alice Hu (Chair of GA 1, PAS) said with a positive remark. "I expect the debate to be intense and I hope that the delegates would submit constructive amendments to improve the resolutions," commented Jessica Wu (Deputy Chair of GA 1, PAS). The enthusiasm of delegates and the professionalism of the chairs will undoubtedly lead the debate to great success over the coming weekend.





ECOSOC

In today's lobbying session, delegates of ECOSOC spent the morning drafting resolutions on critical issues. The major challenges delegates faced when trying to solve the issue of economic development in post-conflict regions was that war-torn states typically lack the necessary infrastructure and resources to develop properly. "They often need to rely heavily on outside donor bodies for aid. The difference between short-term and long-term goals is very crucial to be distinguished in this particular issue," stated Eric Young (President of ECOSOC, IBSH). Delegates in ECOSOC also discussed the issue of "building vulnerable people's long-term economic resilience to the effects of climate change." This is pertinent to all countries, considering that it requires collaboration from many nations. Less Economically Developed Countries (LEDCs) that are severely devastated by climate change and do not have sufficient resources to recover or prevent future crises require assistance from More Economically Developed Countries (MEDCs). "MEDCs' approaches might be methods that can directly help mitigate the effects climate change has around the globe," suggested Oscar Cheng (Deputy President of ECOSOC, PAS), the expert chair on the question. So far, the chairs are all very satisfied with the delegates' performance during lobbying sessions. "I like that they are all really dynamic, and they are willing to share their countries' stances. They have also done a lot of research," commented Claire Chang (Deputy President of ECOSOC, KAS). Considering their progress, the ECOSOC delegates are certainly ready for debate. The chairs are confident about the delegates' ability to generate rich discussions during debates this afternoon and tomorrow.





General Assembly 4

Dismissed from the opening ceremony, delegates of the General Assembly 4 filed into their committee room, ready to launch into a full day's worth of discussion surrounding two issues: the question of Palestine and plans for the anticipated repatriation of refugees in the Middle East. For the question of Palestine, delegates found themselves buried deep in heated discussions regarding terrorism from the Hamas Administration in the Gaza Strip, one-state solution and two-state solution, and the sovereignty of Palestine. Andrew Chen (Delegate of Israel, PAS) collaborated with other delegates to create a resolution that asks "Palestine to terminate the aggression and terrorism of the Hamas Administration in the Gaza Strip as a precondition of a peace talk for a more detailed solution to the conflicts in the region." On the other hand, the resolution submitted by Jenny Lin (Delegate of Sri Lanka, PAS) calls for the two-state solution, one for the state of Palestine and the other for Israel, to reduce the conflict. As for the other issue regarding plans for the anticipated repatriation of refugees in the Middle East, Rachel Huang (Delegate of France, PAS) asks for "countries to assist and peacefully return refugees to their home countries" in her resolution. As of now, the chairs found the lobbying process to be a highly successful one. "Lobbying went great!" remarked Justin Wang, the deputy chair of GA4. As PASMUN VIII carries on, the chairs are confident that the delegates will remain productive, constructive, and positive.





Security Council

In the early morning of the first day of conference, the delegates of Security Council have already gotten their A-game on. "They are always awkward at first, which is understandable," said Jessie Wu (President of SC, PAS). "However, the delegates have been extremely engaged and on task during lobbying." Though wearying, lobbying in the Security Council has surely been made productive by the delegates as they express their opinions and clarify their stances to other delegates in order to draft a resolution. This year, the delegates of the Security Council are focusing on three main issues: the situations in Syria, Yemen, and Kashmir. The ongoing civil war in Syria has affected the lives of thousands of civilians and is causing unending political unrest. Although Russia and Turkey have proposed a ceasefire, such a proposal may not be viable as a long-term solution. Thus, the delegates of SC are attempting to aim for a different approach. While doing so, they are also "tackling the stances on extremist groups, government transitions, and ceasefires." Wu explained, "The current situation in the US has definitely destabilized the old direction of the debate, making it more fruitful and interesting than ever."



Human Rights Council



"All victims of human rights abuses should be able to look to the Human Rights Council as a forum and a springboard for action," UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said in the Opening of the 4th Human Rights Council Session on March 12, 2007. Indeed, to protect and advocate the fundamental rights of every human being is the core value of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC). In PASMUN VIII, students from all around Taiwan have gathered in a small classroom, prepared for rigorous discussions on three pressing issues. In the topic of "Ensuring the legal and practical protections to the right to privacy," delegates proposed resolutions that strike balance between personal rights and national security. Protecting the rights of minorities remains relevant in a time of rising racial/communal tensions. The third issue aims to equalize gender representation in government bodies. In the collaborative lobbying process, the delegates take the first step to draft a comprehensive resolution that will then be debated on. As Alan Syau (Deputy President of HRC, PAS) puts it, they have already conquered the hurdle of "Wi-Fi deprivation" by obtaining the fundamental human right to internet connection.

2017 THE YEAR OF POPULIST EARTHQUAKES

LINDESY YU



Image source: CNN

The year 2017 is going to be a challenging–and likely chaotic–year for Europe. Still recovering from the Brexit shock, several European countries now face a series of elections and referendums that can further influence the respective countries' foreign relations dramatically. Seeing the numerous unexpected, yet extremely close results, from elections in 2016–Trump's victory, UK's decision to leave the EU, and Columbia's rejection on the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) peace deal–the global community is wondering if the European election turnouts are going to be just as surprising. The upcoming elections in France, Germany, and the Netherlands has everyone on their toes.

The French Republic is hosting its first round of Presidential Elections on April 23, and its second round on May 7. National Front leader Marine Le Pen, Republicans' candidate Francois Fillon, and Centrist Emmanuel Macron are the three main contenders to become France's next President. Le Pen has a strong Eurosceptic, anti-Islam stance and has pledged to hold a referendum on France's membership of the EU. Three days after Donald Trump won the U.S. presidency on an anti-elite, populist platform, Le Pen boasted that she will be France's next president. According to a recent poll by PrésiTrack OpinionWay, Ms. Le Pen leads with 25 percent support, with Mr. Macron on 24 percent and Mr. Fillon trailing on 21 percent. Socialist candidate Benoit Hamon is set to come in fourth place with 16 percent.

Political experts have stated that a Le Pen victory would upend French politics, energize far-right parties elsewhere in Europe, and leave Chancellor Angela Merkel as the only European leader forcefully advocating for a unified EU. "It [a Le Pen victory] would be bad for refugees. There will be a lot of xenophobia around, as well as the polarization of French politics. Many of the minorities, especially Muslims, who immigrated to France illegally from the Middle East, will be marginalized, and this will likely worsen the situations in both the Middle East and Europe," commented Arvin Wu (Deputy President of Security Council, PAS).

At the same time, the right-wing party in the Netherlands is also trying to put an end to multiculturalism and open immigration in Europe after decades of liberal leadership. Far-right leader Geert Wilders, the anti-Islam leader of the Dutch Party for Freedom (PVV), is on course to win the most seats at the general

the Netherlands from the EU if he wins. Mr. Wilders' party, the PVV, is also on course to win the most parliamentary seats in the upcoming election, with an opinion poll from Peil predicting that it will win 32 out of 150 seats. Bookmakers Betfair, an online betting website, has made the PVV the favourite to take the most seats with odds of 1/4, with the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD) holding the second highest odds. However, this does not necessarily mean that Mr. Wilders will become the next Prime Minister. The Dutch parliament relies on coalition governments, and so far none of the main political groups have expressed an interest in working with the anti-EU party. Incumbent Prime Minister Mark Rutte has said that there is "zero" chance that his VDD party will work with Mr. Wilders. Rem Korteweg, a senior researcher at the Centre for European Reform (CER), said that the other Dutch parties are also unwilling to form a coalition with him. If the PVV maintains its lead, there will likely be conflicts among the Dutch political parties, and this could leave the Netherlands with a shaky and immobilized political leadership at the time when the EU faces major challenges.

For the German General Election on October 22, Angela Merkel will run for a fourth term against Sigmar Gabriel of the center-left Social Democratic Party. In Merkel's 11 years in office, she has had measures to deal with the eurozone's debt crisis, welcomed more than one million refugees to Germany, and led Europe's effort to present a unified front against the aggressive Russia. Although most polling sources say that Merkel's center-right Christian Democratic Party will win, the party will likely lose seats in the Bundestag, the National Parliament. Gabriel, from the Social Democratic Party, trails Merkel by ten percentage points in recent polls (34 percent v.s 24 percent). However, the Alternative for Germany Party--a right-wing populist, anti-immigrant, and anti-Islam party--has done surprisingly well in Germany's state and local elections and now is up to 13 percent support. It could gain more support if opposition to Merkel's migrant policy grows. If Merkel loses, the EU could be in big trouble with immigration issues.

The series of elections and referendums in Europe has a high potential of causing massive changes in the countries of the European Union, which would in turn, affect the international relations-- or at the very least, mark the trend of increased party polarisation in the world .



Image source: The Journal



Image source: the Iran Project

"Great Birtain is not part of the Euro-zone; but the decision we take will have great importance for great Britain - Francois Fillon"



Image source: DW



Image source: FoxNews

“ZERO PRIVACY… GET OVER IT”?

MICHAEL CHEN



IMAGE SOURCE: THE NEW YORKER

At the verge of the digital age, with an ever-growing percentage of the global population carrying a smartphone and connected to the Internet, personal information is more vulnerable to be exploited than ever. On one hand, the convenience yielded from our smartphones and electronics can greatly benefit the quality of life for their users. On the other hand, our personal data can be easily hacked and manipulated by uninvited parties. The integration of data in technology is certainly a double-edged sword. “You have zero privacy anyway… get over it,” said Scott McNealy, founder of Sun Microsystem. With this proclamation, McNealy perfectly encapsulates one radical aspect of the privacy debate for the digital age. Viewing the loss of privacy as an inevitable event, McNealy speaks some truth as both the international and the domestic regulations for the protection of privacy have not yet aptly transitioned to meet the challenges of the era of the Internet. The existing legal framework for privacy is failing. Audrey Hsu (President of HRC, IBST) added, “Privacy laws that have been traditionally developed in disregard to technology are being rendered outdated and inadequate. Therefore, it’s essential to reform the international guidelines for privacy in order to adapt to the increasingly digitalized world.”

This leads to the long-debated topic of Privacy vs. Security, especially after whistleblower Edward Snowden sparked a national outcry regarding the NSA’s bulk gathering of private information. Nevertheless, the United States is certainly not the only country involved in the mass collection of phone records and Internet data, operating under the claim of national security. Proponents argue that the most important role of the government is to ensure the security of its people, and that mass surveillance is a necessary means to achieve this goal in the 21st century. The very establishment of a tribe is for that very reason: security and safety. Therefore, as a member of a society, it is argued that one must give up some personal freedom (in the form of privacy) to form a stable, functional community. In this year’s Human Rights Council, Libby Linliu (Delegate of the United States, PAS), Andre Tsai (Delegate of the Russian Federation, IBSH), and Gary Twu (Delegate of France, PAS) are working hand-in-hand to uphold their national sovereignty. They are proposing policies that forbid surveillance conducted by non-governmental parties. That way, on the surface, those countries seem to oppose mass surveillance, where in fact, the clause implies the approval of governmental interventions. Their proposal certainly works in conjunction with the NSA, where, in an interview with Senate Intelligence Committee Chairs Mike Rogers and Dianne Feinstein, they maintained that the NSA is performing a necessary function to keep America safe. Rogers says it’s crucial to “understand that intelligence services are not the bad guys.”

However, one of the core values of the United Nations is to defend the basic rights of every individual. As stated in Article 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, “no one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence….” While intelligence services such as the NSA claims that they have good intention at heart, some consider their excuse of exercising huge-scale surveillance as rather weak. Terror attacks, plane sabotages, and school shootings are overly exaggerated by the media in the danger they pose to individual citizens. While such events are devastating, they may not legitimate reasons for governments to undergo intensive monitoring over their citizens. The European Union (EU), in the summer of 2014, came together to address the issue with the concept of “The Right to be Forgotten.” This ruling primarily tackles the easily compromised digital world, stating that “search engines have to remove online information that may be a threat to freedom of speech.” Essentially, the regulation gives people the right to make a case in court if they wish to remove personal information on the Internet. Although the ruling has not become widespread internationally, the EU has set a leading example of how privacy can be taken from the Internet and given back to its users.

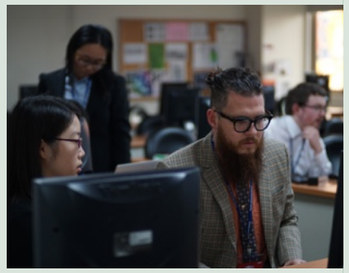
Though many people might contend that security and privacy have a trade-off relationship, they are actually not at the opposite end of a seesaw. Governments should, in the digital age, properly safeguard people’s private communications and financial information. By pushing for policies that protects information instead of exploiting them, the government can then serve as the mediator of both privacy and security. In PASMUN’s Human Rights Council, this matter will be deeply explored and extensively debated on, in hope that a comprehensive resolutions will be passed that will effectively tackle this complex issue.

MOMENTS...

BY: CATHY LU, FRANK HUNG, SABRINA HO



















































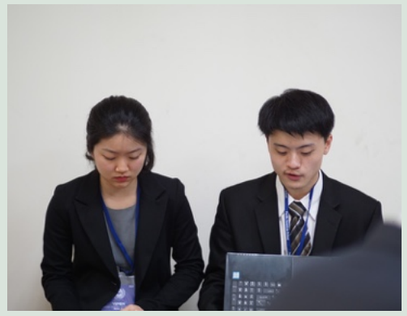




















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