

2017

PASMUN  
TRIBUNE

PRE-CONFERENCE ISSUE



# VIII: The Best PASMUN Yet

by: Teeny Chen

The Pacific American School Model United Nations began in 2009 as an end of year conference that allowed PAS students to confidently showcase their public speaking skills in front of a group of their fellow intellectuals. Though it started as an intra-school MUN conference, PASMUN has grown from being a local to national, and last year, an international conference. Such development is truly a meaningful accomplishment for those who have watched PASMUN grow the past eight years. Nonetheless, the school, the MUN directors, and the rest of the team endlessly strive to break records from previous years, leaving legacies for the upcoming years' conferences.

PASMUN commenced and continued with several objectives in mind: inspire a global perspective, strengthen and foster public speaking and critical thinking skills, and promote awareness of international issues. As a part of such a globalized community, PASMUN seeks to prepare students to view the world from angles that are unusual to them, and to embrace those perspectives. Given these intricate real-world issues, the students are trained to develop innovative solutions to the problems given to them. Through research and lobbying with other fellow delegates, students are encouraged to deliver their ideas to the audience by persuading them with their own written speeches. Most importantly, PASMUN strives to keep up with the most recent events in order to further raise awareness and expand students' knowledge on the global community.

According to several past participants,

PASMUN is notable for its professionalism throughout the entire conference. "The chairs are certainly more formal in terms of the procedures," said Willa Lin (delegate, PAS). "Rather than picking out grammatical errors, the chairs make sure that the delegates concentrate on the content of the debates." Eric Young (President of ECOSOC, IBSH) added, "What makes PASMUN different from other MUN conferences is the passion for global issues that all PASMUN participants share in common. Delegates were completely absorbed in the issues that were discussed and showcased remarkable diplomatic skills that are rarely seen in other conferences."

One of the biggest adjustments to PASMUN this year would be the digitalization of conference operations, including the resolutions and Conference Handbooks. "We want to be one of the first few MUN conferences that goes [almost] completely digital, making it an eco-friendly conference," said Alex Tai (Deputy Secretary General, PAS). Moreover, due to the growing number of delegates in each committees, PASMUN is expected "to expand the conference to more locations," Carly Wen (Executive Administrative Officer, PAS) explained. "Although we only have five committees this year, we hope that such locational improvements would increase our debate quality as delegates feel more comfortable interacting with each other."

It seems that the Secretariat and the rest of the executive team are ready for the new and improved PASMUN VIII. Hopefully, the improvements in PASMUN this year will continue to give the participants a memorable MUN experience.

# BTS with the Secretariat

by Teeny Chen

photos by Frank Hung



Behind every MUN conference, there is a group of people who start working over half a year before the actual conference. They contact all the participating schools, communicate with the directors, and perfect every detail of the conference. Without their execution, the conference would not run as smoothly as it does today. They are the Secretariat.

Howard Yin, the Secretary General of PASMUN VIII, like many others, started MUN as a mandatory course in middle school. Although his knowledge in the field was minimal in the beginning, his curiosity towards MUN brought him to where he is now. As a delegate in countless MUN conferences and a chair of various forums eight times in a brief span of four years, Yin most enjoys "hearing delegates' unique perspectives and passion on the pressing issues" at hand. As the SG of this year's PASMUN, Yin wishes to create a conference environment that will allow all the participants to willingly step out of their comfort zones and present their ideas.

Alongside Yin are Sean Hu and Alex Tai, who will both be serving as the Deputy Secretaries General for PASMUN VIII. Hu, a senior at PAS, devoted much of his high school life to MUN. For somebody who loves to research, debate, and "have the ability to sound smart," he found that MUN suits him perfectly. Hu has attended over fifteen conferences during high school, including local ones, such as TASMUN and HSINMUN, as well as major international conferences, such as THIMUN The Hague

and THIMUN Singapore. Nonetheless, Hu's favorite conference is THIMUN The Hague, given that the delegates in the conference "did not feel like students, but actual legislators who were making policies for actual countries." "The depth they go into and the multifaceted perspectives they took into consideration for every move was quite a spectacle to marvel after," he remarked. Having been a delegate, ICJ advocate, and judge throughout his MUN career, as well as a chair, Hu wishes to use his past experiences to make his last PASMUN an amazing conference for all.

Alex Tai, who is also a senior at PAS, started MUN in middle school with the desire to lead delegates and resolve world issues. With such ambitions, he continues to pursue his MUN career as a delegate, a chair, and now, a member of the Secretariat. Tai has been to roughly fourteen conferences in total, both in Taiwan and overseas. He claims that his favorite conference is also THIMUN The Hague for its accelerated and advanced debate quality. Tai added, "With participants from all over the world, THIMUN generally creates a much different experience compared to other conferences." As PASMUN continues to expand and reach out to schools from overseas, Tai wishes to deliver the same feeling he has received from THIMUN The Hague to participants of PASMUN VIII, running a conference composed of challenging and intellectual debates.

Driven by the mantra of making PASMUN better each year, the SG and DSGs continue to generate a friendly yet challenging environment for all participants.

# Meet Your Chairs!

by: May Lee

photos by Frank Hung

## Security Council

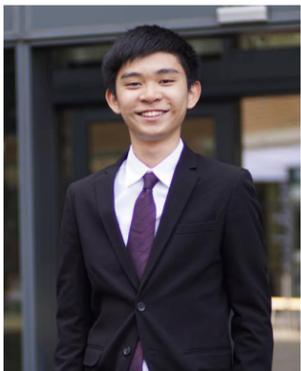


**Jessie Wu**  
The President of the SC, Jessie Wu, is passionate about MUN, with four chairing experiences in the past, and believes that MUN is “a window [that allows her to] inspire, express, and venture into the various aspects of life.” For PASMUN VIII, she hopes that delegates will come with motivation

and open-mindedness in order to fully experience the best of PASMUN. She also hopes that delegates can discover the true meaning of the conference through “shaping and bridging diplomatic relations to reach consensus.”

## Thomas Kim

As a fervent learner, the Deputy President Thomas Kim has had an exceptional experience chairing at the renowned THIMUN Singapore conference. In addition, Thomas has also been exposed to the organizational level of a conference as a technician for HSINMUN XII. Through Thomas’ adroit chairing expertise, delegates will certainly be able to discover various facets of MUN.



**Arvin Wu**  
As a Deputy President, Arvin Wu values not only the acquisition of persuasive skills, but also socializing. Regarding the situation in Syria, he firmly hopes that “we can make some striking progress with new compromises and in-depth resolutions,” imposing great

responsibilities on the SC delegates’ shoulders. With Arvin’s professional guidance, there is no doubt that the delegates will come up with creative and effective solutions to ameliorate the situation at hand!

## Human Rights Council

### Audrey Hsu

Audrey Hsu, the President of HRC, began her MUN career in an attempt to refine her public speaking abilities. Throughout the years, she has become more engaged and has even grown to love this activity “a bit too much,” with PASMUN marking her 19th conference. She expects professionalism from all participants, but she also suggests delegates have fun and enjoy the conference as much as possible.



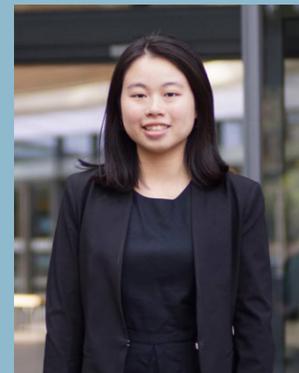
### Alan Syau

Deputy President Alan Syau believes his critical thinking skills have improved “to a whole new extent” through MUN. In his very first debate, he was assigned to an imperative role as DPRK on the issue of nuclear weapons, which is “one of the hardest states for that issue”. Based on his extraordinary involvements

and practices, Alan has advanced from an experienced debater to a committed chair.

### Mindy Wu

MUN has truly been a remarkable problem-solving platform for the Deputy President, Mindy Wu. Despite taking an incorrect country stance in her first conference, Mindy has progressed to becoming an energetic chair who will be able to skillfully lead the HRC committee alongside Audrey and Alan. She affably welcomes all delegates to approach her for any questions.



## GA1

### Alice Hu

The Chair of GA1, Alice Hu, cherishes her profound MUN involvement as it has allowed her to meet more friends and gain real life experience. PASMUN will be her fifth time chairing, having experience in the national and international sectors. Her MUN involvement extends to Online MUN, where she has held the Deputy Secretary General position since 2015. With her expertise, GA1 sessions would surely run efficiently.



### Jessica Wu

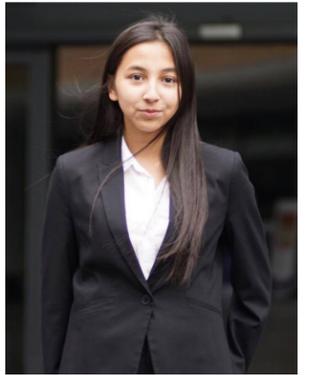
The Co-Chair of GA1, Jessica Wu, started her MUN career after taking an “intensive summer course on the United Nations.” PASMUN will be Jessica’s second chairing experience, and her 13th conference. “For this year’s PASMUN, I wish to see delegates’ comprehensive

knowledge on the issues, cooperation amongst allies, and motivation to engage themselves in any discussion,” remarked Jessica.

## GA4

### Salina Kuo

The Chair of GA4, Salina Kuo, finds MUN an astonishing opportunity for the youth to learn about “the complex, oftentimes difficult, nature of society and the issues many states, diplomats, and unfortunate individuals are embroiled in. As an extrovert, Salina is extremely excited to see new friendships being forged between delegates from all kinds of backgrounds in PASMUN. She hopes that delegates can bring about the positive changes they have generated from their thorough research.



### Justin Wang

Although the co-chair of GA4, Justin Wang, is very new to chairing, he showed great enthusiasm and aspiration for this year’s PASMUN. Justin believes that MUN is a place for him to “utilize the [acquired] knowledge and information through discussions and debate.”

With the enduring “Question of Palestine,” he hopes that delegates can come with “clear country positions” and be ready for “high quality debates” in GA4.

## ECOSOC



### Eric Young

An excellent debater and skilled basketball player, the president of ECOSOC, Eric Young, believes that cohesive cooperation between all participants of

PASMUN will truly make it a “successful and memorable” conference. Eric started his MUN career in his sophomore year as an “avid debater,” and “immediately fell in love with it.” Despite his late start, Eric is a veteran chair who has participated in various national and international conferences. His experiences will certainly assist him in running the sessions smoothly.



### Claire Chang

As the ECOSOC Deputy President, Claire Chang always senses “a rush of thrill” whenever delegates in the committee room share a common interest

in solving the global issues at hand. Though she has made mistakes in the past, including calling on the wrong delegation, she is ecstatic to gain more experience in chairing and meet new friends. She notes that all participants can have fun and learn something “whether it is learning to represent a country, or taking a better photo from a certain angle [for press members].”



### Oscar Cheng

Another ECOSOC Deputy President, Oscar Cheng is a sophomore who has extensive MUN experiences ranging from national

THIMUN-styled conferences to an NAP-styled conference in San Francisco. Oscar considers MUN an outstanding opportunity to communicate with foreign students and connect global issues to an academic career, which further expanded his insights. “I am absolutely confident that all participants of PASMUN 2017 will come prepared,” remarked Oscar.

# THE RISE OF CYBER WARFARE IN AN INCREASINGLY DIGITALIZED WORLD

BY MICHAEL CHEN

Imagine a weapon — so powerful, so boundless, so untraceable — being mass-produced and widely distributed. The wielder of such a device is capable of launching crippling attacks on governmental infrastructure from the other side of the globe without leaving a fingerprint. Not long after its conception, the Internet has been utilized to relay and intercept information for the purpose of war. The prevalence of technology has improved nearly all aspects of our lives, yet it is still a double-edged sword. From the 2013 hack of Yahoo that compromised more than a billion personal accounts to the speculation that the 2016 U.S. presidential election results were influenced by Russian cyber operations, the menace of cyber warfare can no longer be disregarded.

In the year-ahead predictions published by A.T. Kearney's Global Business Policy Council, the authors have identified "a cyber attack on a critical infrastructure in a major economy" as one of ten significant global events that will occur in 2017. Every day, despite an estimate of one million cyber attacks taking place and new vulnerabilities being exposed at a rising pace, such assaults made against governments, corporations, and personal devices went under most people's radar. In October 2016, hundreds of popular websites including Amazon, Netflix, Paypal, and Twitter were taken offline in the largest distributed denial-of-service (DDoS)



Compounding the insensitivity regarding the severity of the problem, the Internet of Things (IoT) is rapidly proliferating and permeating the products we interact with daily, from smart home applications that control security cameras to wearables that measure our biometrics. The compound annual growth factor of IoT after 2016 is anticipated to be as high as 34%, resulting in a staggering 20.8 billion devices connected to the Internet by the year 2020. As the world becomes increasingly linked, both the public and the private sectors will become ever more vulnerable to cyber attacks.

In 2017, the scale of cyber attacks will escalate, possibly with one so extensive that it will serve as a wake-up call to the world. It will demonstrate clearly that the power dynamics have yet again shifted. In the past 50 years, hard power gradually waned as soft power surged, but in the coming digital age, influence has been increasingly yielded to cyber power.

Before the 20th century, power was measured by economic and military might: the more gold and soldiers a country had, the more dominant its status. Then came the rise of soft power after World War II, where persuasion and attraction overshadowed coercion or violence. Most recently, however, the denomination of global power has undergone another dramatic shift toward cyberpower. The most prominent characteristic of this new paradigm is its ease of access, which enables non-state actors to operate with minimal resources.

Power is granted to independent parties, such as terrorist organizations with meager financial support or simply a bored kid in his basement who wants to wreak havoc on society. It is most imperative now to foster cooperation and collaboration between corporations and governments to face common cyber threats.

Conversely, on a larger scale, countries (such as the United States, Russia, and China) have invested millions of dollars on both cyber defenses and attacks. The shift to using cyber means of attack instead of conventional ones has already been happening for some time. The world has seen a micro version of this new age of warfare playing out recently in Ukraine and Syria. As one U.S. Army officer puts it, "future fights aren't going to be guns and bullets; they're going to be ones and zeroes."

States can do mainly four things in cyberspace: collect, steal, block, and change information. For example, intelligence agencies already collect a myriad of public data, and those in the offensive hacking space try to steal more. China also seeks out information on classified military projects, like the F-35 fighter, so it can develop its own counterpart. In particular, changing data allows states to launch cyber attacks that have real-world, physical consequences, as was the case in the joint US-Israeli "Stuxnet" attack, which wiped out a large number of Iranian nuclear centrifuges.

This year in PASMUN, the General Assembly Committee 1 will convene to debate on the international guidelines regarding cyber warfare. As delegates rigorously advocate their countries' policies, it is important to not only understand the technical details but also place them in the proper political, economic, military, and scientific context. Solutions to cyber-warfare issues can include not only a computer security component but account for other domains and disciplines. More importantly, the global community needs to recognize the significance of the issue and come together in goodwill to form detailed definitions and guidelines that will set the foundation for an international joint effort to combat cyber warfare.



by Getty Images

# CHALLENGES AHEAD FOR THE WORLD'S TOP DIPLOMAT

by: Lindsey Yu

On October 13, 2016, Portuguese politician and diplomat António Manuel de Oliveira Guterres was elected the ninth Secretary General of the United Nations, succeeding Mr. Ban Ki-moon in steering the most influential and challenged international organization in the world. Having been the Prime Minister of Portugal from 1995 to 2002 as well as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) from 2005 to 2015, Mr. Guterres is described as a “superb choice to steer the UN” by Ban Ki-moon. There are certainly a lot of improvements to be made, but also expectations regarding Guterres’ method of meeting the competing demands of the world’s big powers and addressing global issues.

To Guterres, ending the civil war in Syria would be his biggest challenge. The five-year armed conflict began as pro-democracy protests and slowly escalated to a full-scale civil war. Under Ban Ki-moon, the UN has called for the elimination of Syria’s chemical weapons, delivered aid to millions, and established the International Syria Support Group, paving the way for Security Council Resolution 2254, which aimed to find a path to a ceasefire. However, events such as the attack on a United Nations Syrian Arab Red Cres-

cent humanitarian convoy in December 2015 still proved that the international community lacks the ability to reach an armistice. Ban Ki-moon has admitted to the international community’s collective failure by saying that “the Syrian tragedy has shamed us all,” given that over 300,000 Syrians have been killed and much of the country’s infrastructure lay in ruins. But without losing his faith, Ban Ki-moon believed that the international community can make a difference, and Guterres agrees by stating that, “I believe it is the international community’s first priority is to be able to end this conflict and use this momentum to address all the other conflicts that are interlinked.”

Furthermore, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) continues to take advantage of the chaos, while millions of refugees have risked their lives trying to reach Europe. This latest crisis is on top of the long-standing regional problem of Palestinian refugees, who, during Ban Ki-moon’s term, suffered from enormous hardship and challenges even though aided by United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). “A major expectation of the new SG, especially from the member states, is how he deals with the human rights issues of the

European Migrant Crisis,” commented Jessie Wu (President of the Security Council, PAS), “with someone who has a background as the High Commissioner for Refugees, countries are definitely looking up to him for him to mobilize or use his power to call in sessions from the SC countries to fix upon this.” As the head of the UNHCR for ten years, Guterres led the agency through some of the world’s most severe refugee crises, such as those in Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq. During that time, he repeatedly appealed to Western states to help refugees flee the conflicts. GA4 delegates may need to pay close attention to Guterres’ continual pursuit of combatting refugee crises, seeing that his decisions may influence how delegates choose to solve the issues of “plans for the anticipated repatriation of refugees in the Middle East” and “the question of Palestine.”

As for the environment, Ban Ki-moon left behind two powerful legacies: the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and it is now up to Antonio Guterres to ensure their implementation. Guterres has stressed in the UN Security Council that, “Most of today’s conflicts are exacerbated by climate change, population growth and the globalisation of crime and terrorism. With so many factors at work, it takes very little to trigger a crisis that can engulf a country or a region, with global consequences.” Indeed, the link between climate change and a conflict is a long-established one. A study published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS) shows that nine percent of armed conflicts over 1980-2010 coincided with climate-related disasters such as heat waves or droughts. A group from Columbia University also argued that Syria’s experience of the most severe drought in 2007 and 2010 contributed to the 2011 uprising.

Despite the change in position, the two secretaries general have shared visions and similar approaches of international issues. Through learning from Ban Ki-moon’s successes and failures, Antonio Guterres would be able to incorporate that knowledge with all of his own experiences and face the challenging times ahead, hopefully with the support of all world powers.



by Getty Images

# THE DESPERATE PLIGHT OF REFUGEES

by: Phoebe Lee

by Getty Images

Each day, thousands of people traverse the open seas to an unfamiliar land filled with the unknown. Their minimal luggage - assuming they had time and money to pack any - is far from sustainable. Their insufficient layers - worn out in the passage of time, poverty, and warfare - are incapable of keeping them warm. Rather, it is the heat generated from dozens of others who are also forced to leave their nations due to war, persecution, or natural disasters that is keeping them from shivering to their very bones. And this one journey with hardly the basic necessities needed for survival across a body of water to a land that may undeniably reject them is only the beginning of more challenges that are yet to come.

Dubbed the biggest migrant crisis of the last decade, the refugee crisis remains one of the most consequential challenges of the modern world. Ever since the outbreak of the Syrian Civil War, which started in 2011 when pro-democracy protesters protested against the regime of Bashar Al-Assad, civilians have been fleeing the country in search for asylum. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), approximately 20,000 Syrian refugees registered in Lebanon, Turkey, and Jordan in 2012 have increased to over two million refugees by 2013, not accounting for unregistered refugees. Other political unrest in Middle Eastern and African areas such as Afghanistan, when the Afghan conflict broke out in 2001, and Iraq, when the United States invaded Iraq, also contribute to the influx of refugees in nations that accept them.

Neighboring countries play a crucial role in providing asylum for refugees. Despite having eventually closed its border to Syrian refugees, Turkey, a country bordering Syria that contains one of the largest refugee populations, harbors more than 2.5 million Syrian refugees, and has spent approximately \$15 million to set up six refugee camps across the nation. Likewise, Lebanon has welcomed more than one million Syrian refugees. In addition to support from neighboring nations, countries overseas have contributed significantly to refugee relocation and resettlement. For example, the United States, one of the biggest contributors for humanitarian aid for Syria, spent over \$1.3 billion to help those affected by the Syrian crisis.

Although some countries have accepted refugees, these homeless victims are still not getting the proper assistance needed due to many factors. First, refugees do not register in fear that they will either be sent back for crossing borders illegally or that their information can reveal any misdeeds. Without registration, international programs are incapable of providing aid. Furthermore, the lack of necessities can lead to widespread outbreaks of diseases such as cholera and typhoid, seeing that the refugees' immune systems are already weakened. In addition, xenophobia, when people from other countries are discriminated against, may cause political unrest within host countries, urging borders to be closed to refugees. Despite these obstacles, nations, non-governmental organizations, and the European Union have been working on improving conditions for refugees over the last decade.

The UNHCR, a leading UN organization aimed at improving the welfare of refugees, not only provides shelter and advocates for displaced people, but also strives to ensure that refugees have access to proper healthcare, education, and basic necessities. In addition, they donate money to improve conditions in the refugees' homelands. The UNHCR has spent hundreds of millions of dollars to help resolve the crisis in Syria. For the problem of xenophobia, countries such as Lebanon have given out heightened benefits to help people, specifically children seeing that they can pave the road to enhanced understanding of refugees in the future.

This year in PASMUN, the General Assembly Committee 4 will convene to debate on the issue of the repatriation of refugees in the Middle East, considering the return of millions of Afghan refugees from Pakistan. Salina Kuo, the Chair of GA4, believes "that it is the respon-

sibility of the international community to ensure the security of these repatriates and to set an example of having empathy, seeing as it is the key to lasting peace."

António Guterres, the former United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees between 2005 and 2015, once said, "The moment has come for a radical change in international efforts to address displacement. As humanitarians, we are supposed to be the first responders - but we are at breaking point. There is no way we can go on treating the symptoms while talking about curing the disease as if that were possible only in an ideal world. We must stop just dealing with the consequences of displacement, and seriously start tackling its root causes." Hopefully, the implications associated with his inauguration as the new Secretary-General of the United Nations in January 2017 will shed more light on the plight of the refugees.



by Getty Images



## PASMUN TRIBUTE

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