

SHREWSMUN V: ONE FOR THE HISTORY BOOKS

This is an historic conference – one which has set a path for others to follow in this difficult era. No doubt organisers in years to come will learn of *that* executive team which managed, mid-pandemic, whilst online, to hold a virtual MUN. That is the ingenuity that comes with the territory in this activity. One learns how to debate, methods to compromise, to understand, and can even make lifelong friends. Given the council meeting that has dominated the news cycle in the last few days, we could understand your worry that this could turn into chaos. However, through your perseverance and all-out magnificence, as well as a little direction from chairs, you have shown how to correctly hold a Zoom Meeting and discuss pertinent issues. It may be ‘nothing if not lively in Handforth’, but it is nothing if not exhilarating, impressive, vivacious, and fascinating here at ShrewsMUN V.



Our Opening Ceremony

This was no doubt a tough undertaking, not least with a camera-shy secretary-general. However, credit where it's due, Rhys mustered up the courage to make what was a marvellous video, with help from Fred Stephens, of course. Rhys' screen persona allowed him to adopt the character of newsreader, which one can be sure left many a viewer in hysterics.

Best Bit of the Opening Ceremony:



Funny things said on Zoom:

What delegates often fail to realise is that their ‘private chats’ on zoom, are actually accessible to the meeting host. With anonymity ensured to prevent embarrassment, here is a selection of the more amusing messages:

‘Are they even a country?’

‘Can't we just bomb them?’

‘Not going to lie, the delegate for ***** is very attractive, might message them mate.’

‘Why are they so mean to me – I have no clue what is going on 😞’.

‘Mr Peach is such a legend.’

‘That Head of Press – what a lad. He should be Secretary-General.’

I may have made the last one up.

Security Council:

This committee is traditionally for the more experienced MUN-er, and this was immediately evident when our guest chair attempted to break the ice through delegates making MUN-related jokes. Some do not bear repeating (Gavels slamming on tables should not be used as a pickup line) but others raised reluctant smiles – such as Russia managing to pick a fight with Venezuela before resolutions were even discussed, and Canada’s argument that the delegates’ favourite animal would be a MUN-key.

The Chair for this committee neglected to inform me of the actual resolutions, but his replacement of gossip proved much more exciting. The Head of Press can exclusively reveal that, UK loves children, Iran loves dogs, USA loves kittens, leading to accusations of misconduct with animals, which the Brits justified with examples of previous malpractice in the country.



Political:

In this committee everyone began by introducing their strong stances on the issue of child marriage, demonstrating their great rhetorical and moral skills, which have undoubtedly been nurtured through their involvement in MUN. The spirit of working together and compromise was clear, but would it last? The Head of Press had to move on to the next committee, so did not have the time to find out. Luckily, he was reliably informed that it did. Russia proposed a solid resolution which passed, a testament to the combative but accepting nature of this committee. Unfortunately, the other one failed, with France attempting to limit political corruption, which, although a shame, could perhaps be viewed ironic in its failure. Did its rejection merely reveal the true extent to which the UN is corrupted? Your judgement may depend on pre-existing beliefs.



Human Rights:

The Head of Press arrived just in time to view Venezuela advocating the first resolution of this committee on the question of Yemen – including CIVIL WAR (which he was relieved to find out was merely an acronym for something else). This delegate’s literary skills did not end there, however, for they even extended to the ingeniously named mission, ‘FART’. It is moments like these which give MUN its solid reputation as an outlet for maturity and class. Unfortunately, Clause 1 of this resolution was struck, and France impressed throughout the debate with their insightful commentary. This did not eventually pass.

However, the second resolution, on post-Apartheid South Africa, passed unanimously, which may be a first for the argument-heavy MUN. Well done!



Disarmament:

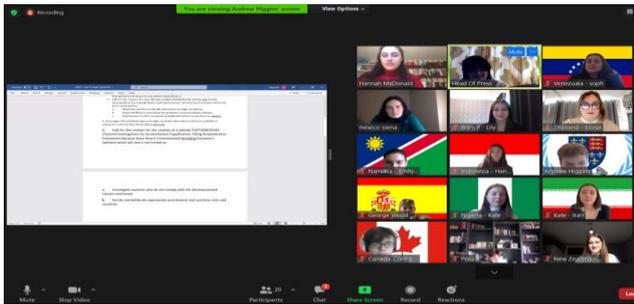
Ever the explosive committee, this one did not disappoint, with the USA and Venezuela in a dispute for the ages. America attempted to amend France’s resolution on Nuclear proliferation (arguing for regulation of both private and public corporations for expansion into space), as it wanted to keep its research to its own citizens, implying that ‘America First’ had not vanished along with its most prominent proponent. Venezuela then claimed America was acting in its own self-interest, America asked if that was in order, the chair asked if it was Venezuela’s own opinion, Venezuela said no, then the chair told them to say yes, then they had the last laugh as USA’s amendment received just two votes for. If you are struggling to keep up, just think how the Head of Press felt, trying to write all that down. Unfortunately, the second resolution by New Zealand on Iran failed, but they at least launched a compelling campaign for it.



Environment:

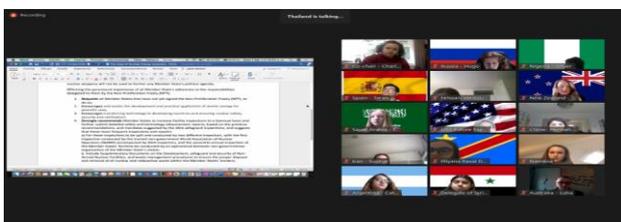
Thailand proposed a resolution concerning Food Security, which impressed many onlookers, as did the Rhetorical excellence of Venezuela, France, and Nigeria. The resolution, though undoubtedly well-intentioned failed to convince the other delegates of its soundness as a document and was resoundingly rejected.

Nigeria then argued for their resolution concerning plastic pollution, which helped to engage all the delegates, with amendments arriving left, right and centre, such as from Mexico. This resolution, according to the chair, ‘passed btw’, and so we can regard this committee as successful, exemplifying the teamwork so integral to MUN.



Future:

This committee may classically be populated by newcomers, but it appeared that this was not the case today, for they excelled. They attempted to ensure there would still be a place for their committee through a resolution to enforce the nuclear proliferation treaty, whilst still encouraging atomic energy to help others. This was clearly a humanity-based motion, but as always, the nuances of the debate ensured vehement disagreement between the delegates. They had two resolutions on nuclear energy, the first from China which failed. The second from New Zealand (now Algeria) passed with a vast majority and more delegates seemed to agree with this one. Delegates from Mexico and Spain contributed good amendments which arguably led to its eventual victory.



Health:

This is obviously a very topical committee, but after watching much of their debate, the Head of Press can reliably inform you that the health of MUN is in good stead. Australia and Venezuela had particularly notable stints speaking, attempting to use their respective gifts of the gab to solve the HIV crisis. Education, contraception, and awareness were all key facets of their successful motion, which showed collaboration at its finest. Policy statements in this committee allowed debaters to understand opposing views before the cut-and-thrust began.

China then proposed a resolution to combat obesity, arguing for a state-mandated daily 1 hour exercise minimum – at which point the lazy Head of Press left, so appalled by such a suggestion.



Ecosoc:

This committee grappled with a very topical issue, that of reducing the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. New Zealand produced a thorough, impressive resolution, and, although Clause 1 was removed, it did manage to pass, which conveys the tactical compromises necessary for diplomacy. Thailand also did their bit – proposing clauses to alleviate the crisis. All of the resolutions passed – and the chair noted Canada’s excellent use of humour- ‘this resolution is like a pencil: sharp and to the point.’ Saudi Arabia were apparently very partial to a point of parliamentary privilege and for those hoping for a radical outlook Cuba did not disappoint as it made Marx proud with its communist worldview.

Unfortunately no photo exists of this elusive committee

The Joint Committees

Security Council and Human Rights

This committee worked together to combat global terrorism, introducing measures to tackle radicalisation on the internet, as well as prevent state-funded terrorism, showing the good that comes out of working together. The Delegate of Germany was highly commended for their impassioned speech, on how to define 'terrorist'. A controversial amendment proposed by Venezuela, named All lives matter, failed to pass, and, according to one of the chairs, sought to essentially ban freedom of speech and the liberty granted to citizens to protest. Germany sought to utilize KITTEN to obtain the lost region of Alsace Lorraine.

Environment and Ecosoc

A resolution was proposed by Canada to stop the threats caused by Climate Change, which sparked significant debate on the floor. Particular mentions for their compelling cavalier debating went to Canada, Nigeria, Thailand, and Saudi Arabia.

One of the chairs extended 'major props' to Venezuela for saying we don't make climate change, it is natural, in a coherent manner, which, as I'm sure you'll know, is rare for climate change deniers. Given our theme for the conference is the environment, it was a brave move, but the Head of Press has heard that it paid off.

Political and Disarmament:

A resolution was submitted by Algeria to educate people and monitor terrorist groups. they advocated for it convincingly and got some initial support but then an amendment was passed that stopped nations from funding such groups.

Then France suggested sending terrorists to the moon and this got overwhelming support however this support was split by delegates wanting to send them either mars or the andromeda galaxy that would give them more space and others wanting to solve world hunger by eating or sending them to France to live in. Despite these logistical disagreements it passed with a large majority.

Future and Health

One of the Chairs from this committee released this heartfelt statement, the sentiment of which can be echoed by all of us involved in this marvellous collection of talented individuals, who have been the reason for this great conference: In the second half of the Joint Health and future committees, debate was strengthened and heartened as votes on amendments got closer and closer. China and Australia managed to pass with diplomatic prowess amendments on deforestation and use of plastic, respectively. Others were not so lucky. A great afternoon of debate that one was lucky to be a part of.

A Tale of Three Countries

It was the best of times; it was the worst of times; it was the really poor organisation from the MUN team times. Unfortunately, at the beginning of this conference it was discovered that there were two New Zealands, causing great strife for the respective delegates. The tireless executive team made a strong attempt to rectify the situation, through replacing one of the New Zealands with Namibia, and thus the difficulties appeared to be over. Unfortunately, it soon transpired that Namibia were also already present at the conference, leading a panic over an apology letter that had just been sent, professing to have solved the situation. Many 'sorry's down the line, Algeria proved to be a country that was not present, and thus they were adopted by the Kiwi Namibians. We do apologise for the inconvenience caused but recognise how it represents the interconnected global world we live in today.

