

Asia-Pacific Model United Nations Conference 2013

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The Asia Pacific Model United Nations Conference (MUN) that was held in Wellington in July was an eye-opening experience for the three of us. MUN brings like-minded individuals together to discuss pertinent and current issues that the international community has faced

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represent various international actors. These can range from representing nations to Non-Governmental organisations and even various press organizations that report on the events of the conference. Within our delegation of nine from the University of Canterbury, the three of us (Jasveet Sandhu, Kate Macfarlane and Laura Stills) study law with a particular focus on public international law. We were each assigned to represent the delegation of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Poland and Finland in differing UN committees which addressed issues ranging from m

when speaking within committees, in which the main objective was to successfully draft and pass a resolution. The aims of such resolutions were to create action statements which to the important issues under consideration by the UN.

Jasveet: In representing the DRC in the Legal Committee (otherwise known as GA6), both topics in question were of importance to the DRC and thankfully my background in public international law came to be very handy. The issues discussed were by far the most interesting and current as they tackled firstly, the issue of establishing an international definition of a terrorist and secondly, the use of drones in modern warfare. With major Western powers such as the USA, UK and France being represented along with developing nations such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Cuba and African nations, these issues provided for heated debate between the delegates within the committee. The issue of determining what

primarily with the legality of the problems, it was extremely interesting to see how politics and governmental policies also play such a large role in the decision-making process of such contentious issues in the UN. I would definitely recommend such a committee to interested law students out there, especially those with a background or interest in international law as this provided valuable insight to the functions and procedures within the UN.

Kate: In representing Poland on the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC), my previous focus on international law within my studies was extremely helpful in allowing me to fully understand and engage the issues that the committee was charged with addressing. We discussed two topics, firstly, the application of the death penalty for drug related offences and secondly, the rights of transgender persons.

In discussing the death penalty, the committee quickly discovered that any resolution requiring the outright abolition of the death penalty for drug related offences was not going to receive enough support to pass. Instead, the committee focused on introducing more stringent measures to monitor the situations in which the death penalty may be applied. With the support of other European and South American states, Poland was able to draft

successfully passed an amendment to the resolution that was concluded by the committee at the end of the week. The ability to think quickly, gained from many different experiences at law school, from tutorials to exams, was exceptionally handy.

The experience offered the chance for great personal development both in communicating and conducting yourself in a professional manner, and since finishing my law degree it has been an element of my CV that sets me apart, every interviewer has been very interested in my involvement with MUN and the skills it has taught me. I would recommend AMUNC to everyone. It is a fantastic experience that teaches and expands on a myriad of skills. It backs up knowledge gained at law school and offers an insight into just one of the many ways that a law degree can be used in an international context.

Conclusion:

The whole delegation found the conference a highly enjoyable and rewarding experience being held in Brisbane, Australia in 2014 and is an opportunity not to be missed! While the conference is highly informative and educational experience, it also has a strong social aspect which allows you to meet people from all over the region who have similar interests and this allows for a highly enjoyable experience.