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INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS MODEL UNITED NATIONS

10 – 11 February 2020

Brief Overview:

The IRMUN 2020 was the first ever Model United Nations organized by the Department of International Studies, Political Science and History, School of Social Sciences, Christ (Deemed to be) University in collaboration with Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS). Spanned over two days, it was a national level event held at the Main Campus of the University. The IRMUN 2020 was supported by Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation. Being the principal partner of the event, the credits for the success of the IRMUN 2020 undoubtedly is conferred upon their support, attention and guidance throughout the course of the event. The Foundation was ably represented by its India Head, Mr. Peter Rimmele, Deputy India Head, Mr. Pankaj Madan, Research Associates, Mr. Ashish Gupta and Ms. Simran Dhingra.

The program commenced with an inauguration programme on the morning of 10th February. Soon after the inauguration, delegates split themselves into five committees and initiated simulations deliberations at their respective venues. The five different committees were: United Nations Security Council, UN DISEC, Continuous Crisis Committee, All India Political Parties Meet and United Nations Human Rights Council. The committees and their agendas were relevant to international politics. The aim of the simulations was to gain a global perspective on pressing issues. It was a unique endeavour as the discussions marked a unison of theory and reality.

Looking briefly into each of the committees; the United Nations Security General which is one of the most important committees as it is boiling with power-play and politics. The agenda for the committee was the use of lethal autonomous weapons in the Middle East. Secondly, the Disarmament and International Security Committee, was the most participated and prolific committee of the event because indeed, it is the only body of the United Nations that represents all the nations. The agenda for the committee was political situation in Yemen with special emphasis on the foreign policy in the region. Thirdly, there was the Continuous Crisis Committee which is undoubtedly one of the most thrilling committees. It was perennially

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packed with an adrenaline rush over the two days. The agenda for the committee was beautifully put as ‘The World is at War! Can you Prevent it? The Extinction of Mankind as we know it’. The fourth committee was the Human Rights Council, which had the agenda of repatriation of refugees with special emphasis in the MENA region. Finally, the fifth committee was the All India Political Parties Meet which is a forum for unrestricted political debates and discussions, not bound by parliamentary procedures. The agenda for the Committee was ‘One Nation, One Election’.

Details of the Program:

INAUGURAL CEREMONY:

The inauguration of the IRMUN 2020 took place in the morning of 10th February 2020 from 9:00 am to 10:30 am. The ceremony began with an invocation dance and lighting of lamp. Coordinator of the Department, Dr. Madhumati Deshpande extended a warm welcome to the dignitaries and the audience. The welcome address was followed with a brief introduction to the event by the Under Secretary General of IRMUN, Ms. Aswathy Anil. This was followed by inaugural address delivered by Mr. Karl Philip Ehlerding, Deputy Consulate General of the German Consulate General, Bengaluru. His dogmatic and eloquent speech was the perfect recipe of motivation and stimulation. This was further accentuated by the keynote speaker of the Inaugural ceremony, Mr. Peter Rimmele. Mr. Rimmele looked at the larger picture and wonderfully contextualised the exercises like MUN. His positive energy and cheerfulness motivated the delegates and the audience. This was followed by a Presidential Address by Pro Vice Chancellor, Dr. Fr. Jose CC. His words were assuring and emboldening. He commemorated the efforts put in by the entire organizing committee for the past few months. Mr. Pankaj Madan, the Deputy Head, India Office, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, in his Felicitation address, gave a wonderful exposition on the collaboration between KAS and Christ. His speech was highly motivating and reassuring. The next was the address by Mr. Preston Jowa, the Secretary General of IRMUN. He brilliantly communicated the intentions behind organizing the event and the undertakings for the following two-days. Finally, with the vote of thanks iterated by Dr. Stefy Joseph, Faculty Coordinator of IRMUN, the proceedings of the day were declared open.

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REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEES:

1. UNSC
2. UNGA (DISEC)
3. AIPPM
4. HRC
5. CCC

1. United Nations Security Council:

The UNSC Committee was one of the five committees organised in the IRMUN 2020 held on 10 February and 11 February 2020. Being one of the primary organs of the United Nations, UNSC is shouldered with the important responsibility of maintaining international peace. The committee consists of 15 member-states: five permanent and 10 non-permanent countries. The agenda for the committee was “The Use of Lethal Autonomous Weapons (LAWs) in the Middle East”. Besides the P-5 members, the non-permanent countries of the committee included Germany, Sudan, Egypt, Mexico, Turkey, India, Venezuela, Italy, Kuwait and Iran. The first day of the UNSC focused primarily on discussing various aspects of the agenda. All the member-states actively took part in the discussions. The committee transitioned into a moderated caucus which was the dominant session for the day. The committee witnessed nine moderated caucuses on the first day with topics for discussion as follows: Definition of LAWs, Relation between LAWs and Civilian Deaths, Role of States in LAWs, Dual Usage of Artificial Intelligence for military and technological purposes, Consequences of LAWs in the Middle East, Trade of Technology related to LAWs, possible Review Mechanisms of LAWs, discussion of the previous unmoderated caucus, and the Mechanisms to regulate LAWs. The UNSC also focused on drafting a resolution and voting on it. The session witnessed four moderated caucuses with formal sessions and unmoderated caucuses in between each. The topics of the moderated caucuses were as follows: Use of LAWs and the Future of Warfare, incorporation of Human Control in LAWs, possibility of Trade and Use of Artificial Intelligence and discussion on the Draft Treaty. A draft resolution sponsored by the People’s Republic of China and the French Republic was tabled. The resolution was widely supported by the member-states of the committee and was agreed upon smoothly.

2. Disarmament and International Security Committee:

The DISEC, which is a part of the General Assembly, was one of the most exhilarating committees in the IRMUN 2020. The agenda of the Committee was “Discussing the political

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situation in Yemen with special emphasis on the foreign influence in the region”. The Committee was indeed a success in terms of the discussions raised and the enthusiastic delegates. The Committee was open to discussing a variety of issues, ranging from military to economic to refugees. This indeed was an expansion of the ambition of the mandate of the DISEC as a committee. The Committee was a success. The countries passed a Resolution on restoring peace in Yemen. The Committee was a mixture of first-timers and experienced Munnors. The pace of the Committee was very high. Some countries played a very critical role while others got an opportunity to experience the rules and procedures of the MUN.

3. All India Political Parties Meet:

There were a number of motions set on the floor. The maximum participation was seen from regional parties like- RSP, AIMIM, Marxist Forward Block Party, AAP, TDP, SAD, AITC, SP and MNS. The major concern expressed by the regional parties involved were the disrespect of the spirit of democracy by the government by undertaking the decision, the breaking down of the federal structure and one of the most important concerns over national interest taking over regional issues that need addressing. Important concern raised during the public and private session was the issue of dissolution of the parliament and the future of elections in such cases. Most of the motions heavily focused on discussing the problems around the election. This promoted an effective discussion of election methods, machines used for elections, constitutional amends and the motion for the involvement of women in the parliament. The forum also discussed on solutions for issues faced by women representations in parties, identifying underlying problems with the election mechanisms of the machines and discussing the moral code of conduct during the elections. Overall, it was promising to see the concept of democracy where discussion and consensus was promoted.

4. United Nations Human Rights Council:

The UN Human Rights Council is a committee of 47 states and is responsible for the promotion and protection of all human rights issues around the globe. This committee discussed all the human rights issues and situations that require its attention throughout that particular year. The agenda of the Council was “Repatriation of refugees with special emphasis in the MENA region”. Most of the speeches focused on the current scenario and the challenges faced by their own countries: Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar, the Citizenship Amendment Act in India and Britain’s exit from the European Union. Solutions were offered by a few delegates ranging

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from collaboration with NGOs to collaboration with private institutions and even changing the mandate of the UNHRC itself. Many states focused on their country's achievements involving refugees or their problems with them. After two days of lobbying, the Council ended up being divided into three groups. One led by Syria, the other by Chad and the third by Turkey. The delegate of Syria went on to win the coveted 'Best Delegate' prize, followed by the delegate of Chad who won the 'High Recommendation' prize and the delegate of Turkey won a Special Mention. It was evident that the delegates who lobbied and raised the most points on floor were the eventual winners of the competition.

5. Continuous Crisis Committee:

With the agenda of "The World is at war! Can you prevent it?", it was undoubtedly one of the most interesting Committees of the event. The range of topics and issues from climate change to insurgency, from economic crisis to hijacking were deliberated upon. The sessions were so intense and vulnerable at the same time, that it was surely a testing time for the delegates to decide for the foreign policy for their respective countries. The delegates spoke on their national policies in the time of the crisis. They largely discussed the crisis in the Middle East. There were four crises introduced: deployment of Turkish troops in Syria, USA absence from the climate change summit, rise of neo-nazis in South Africa and rise of separatism in Catalonia, Spain. Some of the most significant policy changes that could be seen were the breaking of relations between Israel and United States, straining of relations between Pakistan and China, and agreement of India and Pakistan over signing a peace treaty with the mediation of Russia and finally, stabilization of Syrian conflict with the amalgamation of the insurgents in the political system. Although the Committee largely consisted of first-timers, it progressed at a very high pace. The nature of the crises introduced and the subsequent developments were very exhilarating. The delegates were in constant fix to address their national as well as international commitments.

VALEDICTORY CEREMONY

The closing ceremony of the IRMUN 2020 took place on 11th February 2020 from 3:30 pm to 4:30 pm. It marked the completion of the strenuous deliberations and simulations which took place over the course of two days. The proceedings were initiated with a welcome address by Dr. Vagishwari SP. Her address was followed by a valedictory address by Dr. Tony Sam George, Dean of School of Social Sciences. This was followed by an inspiring speech by Ms. Simran Dhingra and Mr. Ashish Gupta of Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung India Office. They not

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only congratulated all the participants but also gave their feedback about the committees that they personally witnessed over the two days. It was creditable that Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung representatives spent their valuable time among the delegates.

Thereafter, the Executive Board of each of the committees came upon the dais, gave a brief summary about the performance of the committee, evaluated the committee and announced the prizes. The winners were facilitated with trophies and certificates. The prize distribution was followed by a Vote of Thanks given by Mr. Vishal Sengupta, the Deputy Secretary General, IRMUN 2020.

TAKEAWAYS:

The two-day national event – IRMUN 2020 – the very first initiative of the Department of International Studies, Political Science and History, School of Social Science, Christ (Deemed to be) University was a success in terms of several takeaways.

- Firstly, it built up a spirit of democracy among the younger generation. Students clearly understood that any kind of contentions issue could be resolved through debates, deliberations and consensus building.
- Secondly, the idea and importance of peace and stability was realised by the amount of contentious issues that were looked at by various committees.
- Thirdly, it was heartening to note the expanse of talents in students that came out during the event. They range from good articulation, coherence, in depth research, critical thinking, deep analysis, rebuttals, and so on.
- Fourthly, the IR-MUN kindled their awareness on various issues afflicting the contemporary world. It also prompted them to think for solutions on conventional and unconventional terms. These augers well for the future.
- Fifthly, it is also significant to note that the delegates thought through the issues beyond narrow nationalistic perspective. The cosmopolitan world approach was found to be a better option.

Overall, the maiden IR-MUN was a grand success due mainly due to the magnanimous support granted by the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung India Office. Through the project, KAS has brought about some significant transformation in the approach and thinking of the younger generation

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towards positive direction. The Department of International Studies, Political Science and History, CHRIST (Deemed to be University) looks forward to the collaboration in the future.