



UN-FORUM

National Model United Nations 2019

Report of the Participation of Freie Universität Berlin

Representing the Commonwealth of Australia

Winter Semester 2018/2019

Freie Universität Berlin



“Traveler, there are no paths. Paths are made by walking.”

Australian Aboriginal saying

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*Report of Participation of Freie Universität Berlin
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Edited by
Darwin Veser and Valentina Kleinsasser

On behalf of the Berlin-Brandenburg Branch of the
United Nations Association of Germany

National Model United Nations 2019

The Delegation of Australia



(From left to right)

Gregor Eichhorn, Valentina Kleinsasser, Nicolas Loth, Johara Meyer, Leah Gölz, Arianna Morales, Laura-Isabela Meichsner, Maximilian Beckmann, David Klusmeyer, Roman Şarov, Łucja Bojek, Timo Kitzelmann Darwin Vesper, Jacob Bradaczek, Jasmina Eminić, Annika Strunk, Celia Bähr

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Foreword by the Head Delegates

Dear Readers,

participating in the *National Model United Nations* (NMUN) conference in New York is very much likely the closest a student can get to being a delegate at the United Nations (UN). The annual conference attracts roughly 5,000 university students from all over the world who gather to debate relevant global issues like nuclear disarmament, climate resilience, or human trafficking from the perspective of the country they were assigned. Its close ties to the United Nations allow the conference to host distinguished guest speakers as well as a visit to the UN Headquarters. This year, for instance, students had the honor to hear a speech by the current president to the General Assembly, María Fernanda Espinosa, and, for the first time at NMUN, one student per University was allowed to hold a speech inside the General Assembly Hall. In a nutshell: NMUN is truly an extraordinary experience.



Due to the dedicated work of faculty advisors *Dr. Peggy Wittke* and *Gandhi Vela Vargas*, the Freie Universität Berlin (FU), once again had the opportunity to offer this experience to 17 of its students. Thus, once all the applications had been reviewed and interviews had been concluded, we, the 2019 FU NMUN Delegation were born. As you will see in this booklet, we are students from a range of faculties, semesters, and of varying ages. However, we shared a common objective: to develop into the Delegation of Australia.

Achieving this objective was not going to be easy. Most of us already had some knowledge about Australia or had even been there ourselves, but we did not know much for example about its regional partners or large coal industry. Therefore, we initially spent many of our weekly meetings getting acquainted with Australia: its economy, political system, culture, and foreign policy.

Additionally, we had to work on becoming the best possible delegates. This meant, obtaining a comprehensive understanding of how different UN bodies work and function within the system of the United Nations but also engaging in speech training exercises

designed to improve the speeches held before large audiences at NMUN. One activity that many of us remember fondly is reciting songs like “Hey Jude” or “Who let the dogs out” in the form of a speech.

Next, we engaged with the topics we would be discussing in our committee and presented our findings to one another. This turned out to be the source of many fascinating debates such as the sustainability of Australia’s aid giving, its immigration policy, and its janiform relationship to China and the United States. Presenting our topics that we would be discussing at the conference to our fellow students was obviously only possible because we had researched them in depth before. This happened in order to write and ultimately submit our position papers for the conference. The position papers are a written 2-page statement by each Member State concerning the topics that will be discussed in each committee. Especially the position paper peer review and editing sessions were very exhausting indeed because all ten of them had to be improved and rewritten in a uniform manner.

However, before we headed to New York to represent Australia we received some more insight into Germany’s involvement with the United Nation. We visited the Federal Foreign Office (Auswärtiges Amt) in Berlin where we listened to a presentation on the topic and had the opportunity to ask questions. Amongst other things, we were interested to know how the Federal Foreign Office realistically assessed the option of a permanent German or permanent EU seat on the Security Council. We also had the chance to meet Prof. Dr. Vergau, who represented Germany in the United Nations for ten years. His appealing narrative gave us significant insight into the diplomatic behavior required as well as the inner workings of the United Nations. You will be able to read up on his accounts on latter pages.

Then, it was finally time to catch our flights to New York. After months of effort, fundraising, organizing and learning, we set off. Some of us had been there already several times, for others it was the very first step on US-American territory ever. The experience of New York City and everything you do there as a Delegation can be truly overwhelming. Apart from the conference, which is a simulation of the UN, there is the Study Tour, which is the reality of the UN. The Delegation met with a whole range of different officials in the UN HQ and elsewhere that all contribute or work at the UN in a variety of manners. On the following pages you can discover for yourself who they are and what they revealed to us about the inner workings of the UN. In some ways this was an even more fruitful encounter than the conference itself, because what is a simulation compared with the reality, right? Nonetheless there was still enough time left to wander the streets and museums of New York City and simply marvel. We will not tell much about the conference itself in these introductory remarks, because this will be covered extensively in the following pages. It suffices to mention, that it is by no means an understatement to say that

no-one will ever forget this experience in their entire life. We will all surely look back at the NMUN conference fondly with the knowledge that we spent some of our most exciting moments of our academic educations there. Finding time for NMUN next to our studies was often a struggle, however, the understanding we have obtained, the friends we have made, and experiences we have gained are unparalleled and will remain with us long after we leave university.

We would once again like to extend our grateful and manyfold thanks to our faculty advisors for being chosen, trained and helped to take part in NMUN and their efforts to make it the truly unforgettable experience that it was. It is our hope that this booklet will give you some insight into our journey and maybe even motivate you to join the FU NMUN Delegation of 2020! For us and the past FU-Delegations, the slogan: “NMUN never ends” will ring out as true as ever.

Gregor Eichhorn and Johara Meyer



Sponsors of the FU Berlin Delegation at the National Model United Nations 2019

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1. The National Model United Nations Conference

The *National Model United Nations* (NMUN) was founded in 1946 as a successor to the *Model League of Nations* which originated in 1923. These programmes are directed at students to offer thorough and detailed information on the United Nations system and the work and function of international organizations by means of an authentic simulation. The popularity of the *Model United Nations* programme has risen constantly over the years. Meanwhile, these programmes are also being offered at high schools – in the United States more than 200,000 high school and college students take part in the simulations annually. The great acceptance of *Model United Nations* is not limited to the United States: today *Model United Nations* take place in more than 25 countries throughout the world including Germany. Freie Universität Berlin organizes, together with different co-operation partners like the *Federal Foreign Office*, various *Model United Nations* conferences throughout the year in Berlin.

The *National Model United Nations* today is the largest simulation of the *United Nations* in the world. Each year more than 5,000 students from North America, Latin America, Asia, Africa and Europe take part in the conference, which is held for five days at the Hilton Hotel or the Sheraton Hotel & Towers, New York, and the *United Nations Headquarters*. The *National Model United Nations* is sponsored by the *National Collegiate Conference Association*, a non-profit organisation, which works closely with the United Nations and was granted consultative status by the Economic and Social Council in 1995. The Board of Directors co-ordinates and supervises the simulation. The conference is administered by a 55-member Secretariat which is composed of graduate and undergraduate students who are elected annually. Head of the Secretariat is the Secretary-General, supported by a Director-General and a Chief of Staff.

Each participating university represents a United Nations Member State or non-governmental organization at the conference. According to reality, these Member States and non-governmental organizations are represented in different committees and international organizations. It is the task of the Delegations to make themselves acquainted with the history and policy of their country or non-governmental organization in order to act as realistic as possible at the conference. In addition, it is necessary to lay down the position concerning the different topics that will be negotiated during the sessions. The visit at the *Permanent Mission to the United Nations* offers the valuable opportunity to gather first-hand background information by consulting high-ranking diplomats.

During the five days of the conference, the Delegates of the various committees strive to work out proposals and draft resolutions. At that point it becomes clear that the knowledge, which has to be obtained, cannot be limited to the country or non-governmental organization represented, but has to include information on ‘friends and foes’ as well, in order to get into contact with the proper partners during negotiations. The participating students are expected to behave as active diplomats, who have to formulate their positions and try to

enforce them, but at the same time have to be open-minded towards compromises, always taking into consideration the special interests of the represented nation or non-governmental organization. This marks one of the major attractions of *the National Model United Nations* conference: each Delegate has to participate in the negotiations by ensuring that his nation's/non-governmental organization's interests are taken into account.

By the reaction of the other Delegates, failures are immediately realized, as well as – most importantly – success.

At the end of the conference, voting procedures take place. Selected resolutions are on the floor of the General Assembly Plenary and the Economic and Social Council. The passing resolutions are forwarded to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. António Guterres, as the official result of the *National Model United Nations*.

Peggy Wittke



2. The FU Berlin NMUN 2019 Delegation

Celia Bähr

World Health Organization
(WHO)



My age is... 19 years.
I was born in... Berlin.
I am studying... Psychology.

I have applied for NMUN 2019 because...

I truly believe in the United Nations. I believe in universal health care for all, I believe in gender equality and fighting patriarchy, I believe in education and I truly hope that an international organization, founded to secure peace and security will create decent living conditions for all.

I wanted to be in this committee because...

...of the second topic which sadly was not on the agenda. How can we heal invisible scars in areas of the world where the issue of mental health is highly stigmatized and people are starved or chained as so-called treatment-options?

The best thing about NMUN 2019 was...

Definitely the UN Study Tour! Naming one speaker: Franz Baumann.

The greatest challenge was...

Keeping on my blazer in an awfully overheated committee room. Besides that: accepting various procedural approaches and sensing that my utopia is somebody else's dystopia.

Maximilian Beckmann

Special Committee on Peace-
keeping Operations (C-34)



My age is... 20 years.

I was born in... Bonn, Germany.

I am studying... Law, 1st semester.

I have applied for NMUN 2019 because... I have always been interested in law and global politics, as I also appreciate debates and discussions. In addition, I was able to experience other MUNs prior to NMUN 2019 and became familiar with the United Nations as the most important advocate for peace. Applying for NMUN 2019 was therefore the next logical step, to learn more about this great institution.

I wanted to be in this committee because... The Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operation (C-34) is the most important UN body, when it comes to the deployment of U.N.-personnel in conflict zones. Although the UN Security Council gives the final order by resolution, C-34 together with the Department of Peace Operations, is responsible for the safe deployment and well-being of those who fight under the U.N. flag. Therefore, I wanted to join this rather interesting and small committee during NMUN 2019.

The best thing about NMUN 2019 was... The best thing about NMUN 2019 were my fellow delegates with whom I was fortunate enough to partake in this conference and to spend time together in New York. Nevertheless, I also had the great opportunity to learn a lot, by attending various presentations of senior U.N. staff during the Study Tour.

The greatest challenge was... Creating consent and agreements with other delegations present at the conference, as the amount of people in our committee was overwhelming at first and as some delegates were rather stubborn.

Łucja Bojek

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)



My age is...

21 years.

I was born in...

Radom, Poland.

I am studying...

Economics, 4th semester.

I have applied for NMUN 2019 because...

It was always my dream to work for an international organization, which aims to make the world a better place. NMUN was a unique opportunity to learn a lot about the United Nations and find out whether this particular environment could become someday something for me... and the answer is yes!

I wanted to be in this committee because...

As an Economics student, it was natural for me to choose a committee that deals with economic issues. What I particularly liked about ESCAP was that economical and environmental issues were not separated from each other.

The best thing about NMUN 2019 was...

The UN Study Tour. It was really inspiring to visit the UN Headquarters.

The greatest challenge was...

Merging the working papers with another groups. In my opinion, we had to put too much effort just in phrasing sophisticated sentences. The challenge was to concentrate on the content as well.

Jacob Bradaczek

The United Nations General
Assembly First Committee
(GA1)



My age is...

18 years.

I was born in...

Wolfsburg.

I am studying...

Economics, 1st sem.

**I have applied for NMUN
2019 because...**

I wanted to understand the language of diplomacy and how international relations work. In general, I believe that behind many decisive political shifts in the world, a macro-economic explanation can be found. Therefore, studying economics and participating in the biggest and most real simulation of the UN allowed me getting a much clearer picture of international politics. Also, as the delegates from the Freie Universität normally have many different academic backgrounds, the project allows students to leave their comfort zone and invites them to think about different models to explain the world.

I wanted to be in this committee because...

I believe that peace and security are the precondition for the UN to work. Also, I saw it as a challenge to be in a committee with 192 fellow delegations, where everyone's vote has equal value.

**The best thing about NMUN
2019 was...**

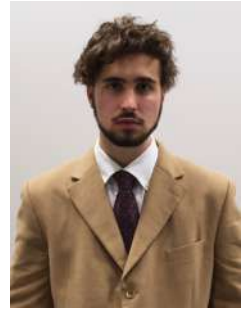
Definitely the UN Study Tour and listening to these very inspiring personalities. Climate change, refugee crises and world peace are current and very urgent problems, one can easily repress after switching off the news and living in a wealthy country. However, during the Study Tour, we actually met people who spend their lives fighting for the issues, others ignore. Their resilience and dedication were really inspiring.

The greatest challenge was...

To authentically slip into the role of an Australian diplomat. The sheer amount of delegates in the General Assembly makes it very difficult to find consensus and suitable solutions. Especially themes in GA1 are a diplomatic challenge for Australia, as it constantly has to find a balance between its own interests and those of its many global and regional partners.

Gregor Eichhorn

The United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA)



My age is...

22 years.

I was born in...

Berlin.

I am studying...

Comparative Literature, 7th semester.

I have applied for NMUN 2019 because...

I already tried last year and was not chosen. Stubbornness persists and not only did I get in but also became Head Delegate. I heard about NMUN because Alonso Burgos Vázquez, a good friend of mine who studies comparative literature as well was Head Delegate in NMUN 2017. I loved the idea to form a group with students from a variety of academic fields that you would practically never encounter otherwise and at the same time participate in the truly awe-inspiring conference.

I wanted to be in this committee because...

The effect that human activities have on the earth and its natural wonders is devastating. We are probably the last generation to preserve at least the majority of life on earth. If we do not succeed, we are the first generation to face the catastrophic consequences.

The best thing about NMUN 2019 was...

That truly once in a lifetime I had the opportunity to speak at that infamous podium in front of a packed audience in the General Assembly Hall!

The greatest challenge was...

To choose between the manifold possibilities of working groups that open up on the first two days of the conference.

Jasmina Eminić

United Nations High
Commissioner for Refugees
(UNHCR)



My age is...

28 years.

I was born in...

Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I am studying...

History and Culture of Middle
East, 1st Semester.

**I have applied for NMUN
2019 because...**

I have done UN simulations before and wanted to take part in one of the biggest worldwide. I also aspired to deepen my knowledge of the UN, diplomacy and international relations as well as test theoretical knowledge in practice.

**I wanted to be in this com-
mittee because...**

The issue of refugees is close to my heart and I wanted to expand my knowledge about the subject as well as gain insight into how it is being addressed at the UN.

**The best thing about NMUN
2019 was...**

The Briefings at the UN and Australian Embassy, New York, countless discussions about current political issues.

The greatest challenge was...

Teamwork, time management, negotiations at the conference.

Leah Gölz

Human Rights Council (HRC)

**My age is...**

20 years.

I was born in...

Berlin.

I am studying...Law, 4th semester.**I have applied for NMUN 2019 because...**

I always wanted to get to know the work of a diplomat. Working within an interdisciplinary group on all sorts of political, environmental and economical topics and taking part in an international conference was a good way to do so.

I wanted to be in this committee because...

Since I've started studying, I have been interested in international human rights law. I'm also an active member of Amnesty International, therefore I was eager to use my knowledge and to learn even more about human rights.

The best thing about NMUN 2019 was...

Meeting students from my university with different types of studies and meeting students from all over the world at the conference. Also, the excitement throughout the whole conference, whether your clauses make it into the final resolution.

The greatest challenge was...

To fight for your clauses to make it into the final resolution.

Valentina Kleinsasser

Human Rights Council (HRC)



My age is... 22 years.

I was born in... Munich.

I am studying... Law, 7th semester.

I have applied for NMUN 2019 because...

One of the most appealing attributes of NMUN is the interdisciplinary approach for me. Unfortunately, lawyers tend to stay in their own “bubble” and miss out on teamwork projects, in particular with people of other fields of study. Hence, I wanted to get at least some of that before starting preparations for the first law state exam and have not regretted it since. I think that NMUN is one of the best experiences one can get during university if they think about working in the international field, something I want to do in later life. Also, who would want to miss out on a chance to go to New York City and the United Nations?

I wanted to be in this committee because...

I thought that Australia had very interesting positions in their human rights policies in regards of the topics that were to be discussed in the conference, not all of them uncontroversial. Furthermore, I had a course in International Human Rights Law within my studies in England and had the feeling that I could put my knowledge to good use.

The best thing about NMUN 2019 was...

The best thing was definitely the trip to New York City with the whole group, in particular the first Thursday where Gandhi and I went to go jogging in Central Park in the early morning (meeting a Samoyed!), went to the UN for briefings (listening to Franz Baumann!) after that, went to a screening of *Late Night with Seth Meyers* (seeing Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez!) with Max and Johara after and then took the bus to New Jersey with several other delegates to go to Walmart (they actually did not have firearms, we asked). Furthermore, Leah and I won a Position Paper Award, which was very special to us as MUN-first-timers.

The greatest challenge was...

Holding one’s ground in a committee full of very experienced delegates (and opening the door of our second Airbnb).

David Klusmeyer

The United Nations General
Assembly Third Committee
(GA3)

**My age is...**

22 years.

I was born in...

Zweibrücken.

I am studying...Law, 8th semester.**I have applied for NMUN
2019 because...**

I wanted to do something different before entering the preparations for the state exam and NMUN is exactly in the area between politics and law, I'm personally most interested in.

I wanted to be in this committee because...

I've been very enthusiastic about human rights for quite some time. Hearing that GA3rd is the primary body for setting human rights I knew I had to choose it.

**The best thing about NMUN
2019 was...**

One of the best things about Model UN was getting in touch with topics I normally wouldn't pay too much attention to like inclusive development for persons with disabilities. You start to realize how important they are, and you become passionate about things you didn't think of before.

The greatest challenge was...

Getting used to the dynamics at the conference. Especially if you haven't been to a Model UN before, the first few hours can be quite overwhelming.

Nicolas Loth

The United Nations General
Assembly Second Committee
(GA2)



My age is...	24 years.
I was born in...	Berlin-Wilmersdorf.
I am studying...	Political Science, 5 th semester.
I have applied for NMUN 2019 because...	I heard great stories from friends who already participated and I wanted to do something outside my Political Science bubble.
I wanted to be in this committee because...	“It’s the economy, stupid”.
The best thing about NMUN 2019 was...	Besides many other things probably Peggy and Gandhi’s surprise hotel-room-party after “Meltdown Tuesday” with Pizza, beer, and lots of chicken wings.
The greatest challenge was...	Getting enough sleep during conference week and finding healthy food in Manhattan without spending 20\$ for each meal.

**Laura-Isabela
Meichsner**

The Conference of the Parties
(COP)



My age is... 21 years.
I was born in... Germany.
I am studying... Law, 4th semester.

I have applied for NMUN 2019 because... For me, concerning myself with international questions and relations is fascinating. I attended different workshops about intercultural issues, and I noticed this is what I want to do. To get in touch with people from different countries, cultures and backgrounds, as well as occupy with the concern of them to debate and think about solutions.

I wanted to be in this committee because... In my opinion, climate change is the most urgent issue of our time. There is a link between poverty, hunger, human rights violations, migration and climate change. Climate change is and will be the challenge for us as a society - for us as human beings.

The best thing about NMUN 2019 was... The mix of everything! The group was just great, and I had the special feeling of a class trip. I felt comfortable all the time and that's a precondition for a great time in my opinion. Outstanding was the presentation of Franz Baumann a former UN Assistant- SG. He put the climate crisis in a nutshell.

The greatest challenge was... The large committee because it is hard to negotiate with so many countries and to keep the overview in the chaos of so many students. And the merge process because we needed to halve our 14 working papers.

Johara Meyer

The United Nations General
Assembly Third Committee
(GA3)



My age is... 18 years.

I was born in... Berlin.

I am studying... Mathematics, 1st semester.

I have applied for NMUN 2019 because... I enjoy the creative challenge that comes with finding solutions to global problems that are both constructive and attainable in the eyes of many. Therefore, I cherished the opportunity that NMUN provided; to join delegates representing countries from all around the world in quest for common ground.

I wanted to be in this committee because... The topics discussed at NMUN in the General Assembly 3rd Committee seemed interesting and turned out to be very relevant to Australia.

The best thing about NMUN 2019 was... Not one thing in particular but rather the experience as a whole. Listening to María Fernanda Espinosa hold a speech, receiving insight into the day-to-day workflow of the EU-Delegation, taking a seat in the General Assembly Hall, and doing so together with a group of truly unique individuals I now call my friends has been an experience like no other.

The greatest challenge was... Getting used to the procedure. The procedure used at NMUN was quite different to the MUN procedure I was used to from other MUN conferences. So, before you go know that: draft resolutions are called working papers, there's no such thing as a moderated caucus, and calling for a roll call vote in a GA committee will make you deeply unpopular with your fellow delegates.

Arianna Morales

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)



My age is... 23 years.
I was born in... Quito, Ecuador.
I am studying... Law, 3rd semester.

I have applied for NMUN 2019 because...

I've participated in MUNs ever since I was in High School. It was always a good opportunity for me to combine my interest in international politics with my academic goals and my personal growth. It was always a great event to meet people from other Schools who had the same interest as I had. Also, to explore other visions on how to change the world and at least feel for some days that you could actually have an impact on politics at such a young age and argue about possible solutions to certain topics.

I wanted to be in this committee because...

This committee was on my preference list because it is a topic which has gained a lot of importance over the past years. I also found it really challenging to slip in the role of Australia even if I do not agree on their policy vision. Therefore, I challenged myself to expand my vision on other opinions and have a neutral point of view, which is fundamental for diplomacy.

The best thing about NMUN 2019 was...

Let's not lie about this - definitely the opportunity to fly to New York, to visit the Headquarters of the United Nations and to meet people all over the globe. Personally, it was great to slip into the everyday life of a diplomat.

The greatest challenge was...

To work with a person in your committee that couldn't be any different than you are and therefore dealing with dispute all the time. But I guess in the real diplomatic world this won't be any different so it's good to learn how to deal with that.

Roman Șarov

The United Nations General
Assembly First Committee
(GA1)



My age is...

22 years.

I was born in...

Chișinău, Republic of Moldova.

I am studying...

Political Science, 8th Semester.

**I have applied for NMUN
2019 because...**

Visiting the United Nations has been a dream of mine since my childhood in Moldova. I truly believed the experience in New York and the NMUN will enrich my personal development and I was right, it actually exceeded my expectations.

**I wanted to be in this com-
mittee because...**

International Security has been a key element throughout my studies and the opportunity to practically apply the knowledge in the GA1 Committee was a great learning experience.

**The best thing about NMUN
2019 was...**

Simply everything, starting from the UN Study Tour, the indescribable energetic vibe of NY, walking around Times Square and Wall Street, the view from the Rockefeller Center and tons of Bagels, Bison Burgers, 1 Dollar Pizzas and Bacon Milkshakes was simply Legend... (wait for it) DARY!

The greatest challenge was...

Handling jetlag the first two days, however, there is something in the New York air that makes sleep useless.

Annika Strunk

The United Nations General
Assembly Second Committee
(GA2)



My age is... 22 years.

I was born in... Brühl.

I am studying... Economics, 4th Semester.

I have applied for NMUN 2019 because... A friend of mine had been part of last year's FU-Delegation and she encouraged me to apply. I have always been interested in international politics and NMUN is a unique opportunity to get an insight into how the world's biggest multilateral organization works. It also appealed to me that the language of instruction is English, as I missed getting any speaking practice at university.

I wanted to be in this committee because... Well, actually, I didn't want to be in GA2 because (to be honest) it sounded pretty boring to me. But after reading the background guide, I realized that the topics are super interesting and researching them was a lot of fun. In the end, I can say that I am very happy to have been assigned to this committee.

The best thing about NMUN 2019 was... It was great to do and learn something completely different than you normally would in the standard economics curriculum at university. My favourite memories will probably be the speech trainings (which I dreaded at first, but they turned out to be surprisingly fun and valuable), the Delegation Dinners and our field trip to Walmart.

The greatest challenge was... Overcoming my shyness and talking to people I have never met before. But trying to get the shower at the Hilton to work was definitely a challenge as well and could only be solved by an amazing group effort.

Darwin Veser

Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations (C-34)



My age is...

22 years.

I was born in...

Ravensburg, Germany.

I am studying...

History and Political Science,
4th Semester.

I have applied for NMUN 2019 because...

Already at school I was interested in politics, especially foreign policy and diplomacy. My first personal and direct connection with the area of the United Nations was to participate in the PuszMUN, an international conference in Poland in 2017. I was very impressed by the spirit of MUN and the work of the United Nations, so I joined the United Nations Association in Germany and became part of their project "UNO at School". The prospect of participating in a simulation of this magnitude and the UN-Study Tour, which I had heard a lot of positive things about before, did not let me hesitate to apply.

I wanted to be in this committee because...

This Committee is working on topics I concerned myself with in my work at the German Bundestag and in my private Engagement.

The best thing about NMUN 2019 was...

The really well organized and extremely exciting UN Study Tour. It was a great opportunity to get a direct insight into the work and thoughts of high-level UN diplomats. I will especially remember the visit of the European Union Delegation to the UN, where I learned a lot about the role and function of the EU within the UN.

The greatest challenge was...

To keep an eye on the overall picture and to always see with which states or groups of states a cooperation seems possible despite the short time and the many delegates. Teamwork is always important here, which fortunately worked very well for my committee.

3. The Commonwealth of Australia – An Introduction



Our logo

3.1 History

Probably about 56,000 years ago, the first indigenous people from South and Southeast Asia immigrated to Australia. Maybe even 120,000 years ago. This immigration from Asia was made possible by numerous land bridges. These were formed when the sea level sank a few meters due to the ice age. After the end of the ice age the sea level rose again and the Aborigines (from Latin “ab origine”, someone who lived here from the beginning) were isolated in Australia for thousands of years. Even before its discovery, many scholars suspected the existence of a southern continent. It is possible that Chinese sailors met the continent already in the 9th century during their voyages to Africa and Indonesia. Presumably the Portuguese were the first to land on the Australian coast in 1516, as they founded a settlement on Timor less than 500 km away. But also, the Spaniards came in the 17th century again and again into the proximity of Australia.

In 1606, the Dutch captain Willem Jansz landed on the Australian north coast. This is the first reliable report. In 1622, the “Leeuwin” reached the southwest tip of the continent. Due to the shift of the balance of power by the Thirty Years' War (1618 - 1648) the British continued the exploration trips of the Dutch. On 21 August 1770, Cook took possession of the entire east of the country in the name of the British King George III and gave it the name “New South Wales”. This paved the way for the later Governor Arthur Phillip to establish the first penal colony in Australia in 1788. The settlement of the southeast coast, which James Cook declared to be the property of the British Crown in 1770, began with the convict colony in the area where Sydney now lies. The first 1,000 prisoners went ashore on 16 January 1788 and the governor of the new English colony founded the first settlement in Australia. This was the beginning of the “White Australia” and the 26th of January is today a national holiday (Australia Day). The waves of immigration tripled the

white population to 3.8 million in 1901, but this had a detrimental effect on the Aborigines, who lost land and population due to the spread of the whites.



After the colonies had received the self-administration, a federal constitution was adopted by the population in July 1900 and approved by Queen Victoria of England. Thus, it came to the union of the Australian colonies to the Commonwealth of Australia on 1 January 1901. In the First World War (1914 - 1918) they fought on the side of Great Britain against the Germans and their allies. The German colonies of New Guinea, Samoa and the Bismarck Archipelago in the Pacific were occupied by Australia. In the 20th century, Australia changed its immigration policy and from 1966 allowed several hundred thousand Asians to enter the country. The principle of “White Australia” was thus abandoned. The Aborigines became Australian citizens in 1960 and were therefore entitled to social benefits. Until 1967 they also received the right to vote and all Australian civil rights. In 1999, 55% of Australians voted to maintain the monarchy. One reason might have been concern about a party state. In addition, it was feared that a republic with its own president would come too close to its Asian neighbors and that the majority of whites would have been endangered.

3.2 Society and Culture

The inhabitants of Australia are more relaxed about life compared to the Europeans. Besides this joy of life most of the inhabitants are very helpful and the tone is very open. Since most Australians live in the coastal metropolises, the leisure activities often have to do with the sea. Besides water sports, Australians like to visit national parks and wine regions and enjoy the wonderful nature there. Cultural activities such as concerts or theatre are less popular with the exception of modern concerts.

There is usually a good working atmosphere and therefore far less bullying than in Europe. Employees often spend their free time with their colleagues. On Fridays in Australia there is therefore also a “Beer o'clock”, i.e. an hour in which you drink one or two beers with your work colleagues in a pub or in the specially designated room in the company. The art of the Aborigines is mainly based on stone carvings, bark paintings, totem poles, sand paintings and wickerwork. Their religion is based on the “ancestors of the dream time”, magical beings who endowed nature with spiritual meaning. This is why there are always objects on which the connection between people and their environment is depicted. An important example of this kind can be found in Northern Australia as cave paintings.

As motives the creator ancestors of the dream time were painted in the so-called X-ray style. The organs and innards are also drawn in. Another Aboriginal art movement are the ceremonial dances, which are still performed for tourists today. The art of the European immigrants was based on English painting and thus on naturalism. The aim is to reproduce nature as accurately as possible. A separation of this art direction originated in 1880, due to the invention of the camera and the new possibilities connected with it. At this time the artists began to paint in the impressionistic style and tried to convey special impressions to the viewer. This was achieved by capturing the light conditions and thus the colors of a moment in the painting. The most important Australian Impressionist artists were Tom Roberts, Arthur Streeton and Frederick McCubbin.

3.3 Political System

Australia is a federation of 6 states and 2 self-governing territories, the federal government is based on the principle of a parliamentary government. It is also part of the Commonwealth, an Association of 53 sovereign states. The members have no legal obligation to one another, they do however share common values, which are anchored in the Commonwealth Charter.

For historical reasons, they also have similar legal and political systems, called the Westminster System. Queen Elizabeth II is the Head of Commonwealth as well as Head of State, which makes Australia a constitutional monarchy. By constitution, her powers are delegated to the Governor-General, her representative in Australia. The Queen has the power to disallow an Act of the Australian Parliament, however, the British monarch has never made use of this right. The Governor-



General performs the ceremonial functions of the Head of State on behalf of the Queen. The Governor-General's executive powers include: appointment/dismissal of Councilors and Ministers responsible for smaller departments, commander in chief of defence forces, decision when the Parliament meets and (s)he may suspend/dissolve it, issuing writs for general elections, initiating government expenditure by making recommendations to the Parliament, converting proposed laws into Acts of Parliament, block/propose amendments to laws passed by the two Houses of Parliament. The Governor-General usually acts on advice of the Prime Minister and Ministers.



“Washminster system” of Australia

Australia is a unique hybrid with influences from the traditional UK Westminster system, as well as from the U.S. Constitution. The Australian government faces a fully elected upper house, being the Senate, which must be willing to pass all its legislation, similar to the U.S. Senate. Although the government is elected by the lower house, being the House of Representatives, the government needs the support of the Senate, in order to govern. Furthermore, the Senate is able to block supply against the government, similar to the ability of the British House of Lords. The Governor-General can then dismiss the government, if it is unable to obtain such supplies, however this is seen as a last resort.

Legislative

The Parliament of Australia, being the world's sixth oldest continuous democracy, consists of three components: the Monarch, the Senate and the House of Representatives. The House of Representatives consists of 150 members, each elected for a three-year term, representing a single electoral division. The party or coalition which has the confidence of the majority of members of the lower House forms the government. The Australian Senate

counts 76 members, each serving a six-year term. The six states of Australia return twelve senators each, the two mainland territories return two senators. By Constitution, the Senate is afforded much greater power than the lower House, being able to block its legislation.

Executive

By constitution, the executive power lies with the British Monarch, in practice, however, it is held by the Prime Minister (PM) and the Ministers. The Prime Minister is the head of government, so the elected leader of the party currently in government. The Ministers are appointed from both Houses of Parliament; the ones responsible for major departments are usually also members of the Cabinet, which is the main policy-making body, presided over by the PM. The Parliamentary Secretaries are part of the executive as well, they assist/represent Ministers in their administrative responsibilities and are appointed by the PM. Last but not least, there is the Federal Executive Council, which provides ministerial advice to the Governor-General. All Senators and Ministers are members.

Judiciary

The judiciary of Australia comprises judges of federal courts of the States and Territories, with the High Court of Australia sitting at the apex of the court hierarchy, as the ultimate court of appeal. The large number of Australian courts includes the Federal Court of Australia, the Federal Circuit Court and the Family Court of Australia. Federal jurisdiction is also vested in Senate courts, while the Supreme Courts of the states and territories are superior courts of record with unlimited jurisdiction with their territories. All judges are appointed by the government and can be removed from office by the Governor-General. Common law and equity are administered by all Australian courts.

Parties

Currently in power is a coalition of the Liberal Party of Australia and the National Party, representing a centre-right economic liberalism and conservatism ideology. Their leader is Australia's Prime Minister Scott Morrison. The strongest opposition party is the Australian Labor Party (ALP) led by Bill Shorten and established in 1901, being the oldest party of Australia. Aligning itself with the International Progressive Alliance, the ALP follows a centre-left approach. Then, there are the Australian Greens, whose leader is Richard Luigi Di Natale. Their core values include environmentalism and ecological sustainability, social justice, and grassroots democracy.

3.4 Economy

Australia has a controlled economy in which the state exerts a large influence on economic processes. At the beginning of 1980, the economy began to modernize and privatize. After

a severe economic slump around 1985, Australia recovered quickly and recorded an economic growth rate of 3.7 % between 1995 and 2005. In addition, unemployment fell sharply, increasing the competitiveness of Australian companies. The currency is the Australian dollar. Among the most important export products are the abundant mineral resources. Australia, for example, is the world's fourth largest supplier of gold, accounting for 12% of gold on the world market. In addition, more than 90 % of the world production of the mineral opal is mined here. Other important mineral resources are coal, especially from the large mining areas of Queensland, and diamonds and iron ore from the Pilbara region.



The largest growth trend in the Australian economy is in the service sector. The proportion of inhabitants working in this sector has risen by almost half since 1960 and now stands at 77%. In addition to tourism, the real estate, telecommunications, insurance and finance sectors have also experienced strong economic growth over the past decade. The agricultural sector has a huge impact on the Australian economy due to the huge amount of land it covers, and more than 400,000 people are employed in the sector. Large pastures feed 100 million sheep and 25 million cattle. This makes Australia the world's leading wool producer. About 80% of Australia's agricultural produce is exported. 80 % of the electricity is generated from coal-fired power plants, the remaining 20 % comes from

hydroelectric and gas-fired power plants. As Australia has large quantities of coal, it is almost independent of imports of fossil fuels. However, due to its dependence on coal exports and coal-fired power plants, Australia is the penultimate industrialized country to sign the Kyoto agreement. It defines climate protection as a clear goal and sets a clear target value for CO₂ emissions for the first time.

3.5 Foreign Policy

On 24.11.2017, the Australian government presented the new Foreign Policy White Paper *“Opportunity, Security, Strength”*, which defines the strategic direction of Australian foreign policy for the next 10 years. In view of the current global political situation, global partnerships are to be diversified and strengthened. Australia is also relying on its strategic orientation, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region. The paper focuses on deepening economic relations with partners in the Indo-Pacific and deepening ties with regional and global value partners. In addition, relations with Southeast Asia are identified as a priority and a strengthening of Australia's engagement in the Pacific is justified. With regard to resilience and autonomy: protection of the sovereignty of national decision making against attacks, e.g. terrorism and cyber-attacks.

In addition, maintaining close relations with the USA as the central strategic partner and guarantor of security in the region is a clear priority. At the same time, China is Australia's main economic partner. For this reason, room for maneuver in relation to Australia's most important partners is of paramount importance for Australian policy. Relations with Asian states are being expanded as a contribution to peacekeeping. In addition to economic relations, political cooperation in regional forums such as EAS (East Asia Summit), APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation), etc. is to be intensified. But it is also important to look for new approaches to the EU, especially after the Brexit decision of Great Britain, Australia's traditional gateway to Europe.

Australia is actively involved in the United Nations and other international organizations. Australia has earned the recognition of its partners as the holder of one of the non-permanent seats on the United Nations Security Council in the 2012/13 parliamentary term and as G20 Presidency for 2014 (Summit of Heads of State and Government in Brisbane in November 2014). In the 72nd UN General Assembly elections on 16 October 2017, Australia was elected to the Human Rights Council for a term of three years (2018-2020). Australia has been a partner country of ASEM (Asia-Europe Meeting) since 2010. The Australian Defense Force (ADF) is an integral part of Australia's foreign and security policy. As part of a global commitment to strengthening the international security architecture, the Australian armed forces are currently involved in a number of foreign missions with more than 2,300 soldiers.

4. The Preparation Process in Berlin and New York City

4.1 Visit to the German Federal Foreign Office

On the afternoon of the 10th of January 2019, we met in front of the Lichthof of the *Federal Foreign Office*. The first lecture dealt with the United Nations in general, i.e. its foundation, organs, structures and financing, as well as current issues and challenges. The time at the beginning of 2019 was a particularly favorable one, as Germany has had a non-permanent seat on the Security Council for two years since the beginning of this year and is therefore currently engaged in a special way within the framework of the United Nations.

We then went into Australia in more detail. Some of our findings can now also be found in the “Foreign Policy” section of this documentation. It concluded with a two-hour exchange of questions about the training and work of a diplomat. Thus, this date could bring us directly in many directions further.



4.2 Visit of Prof. Dr. Hans-Joachim Vergau

Prof. Dr. Hans-Joachim Vergau was a German diplomat for ten years in New York City at the United Nations, so of course, we all were eager to getting to know him. When he entered the room, we could see that not only we were looking forward to meeting him, a former diplomat, but he was delighted to meet us as well – the future diplomats.

First, we all introduced ourselves and told Prof. Dr. Vergau in which committee we were representing Australia in at the conference. Prof. Dr. Vergau listened carefully and then started to talk about his time as a diplomat. He studied law and at first, he did not intend to become a diplomat but later that happened rather unplanned.

He started working for the Federal Foreign Office in Germany in 1964, at the time still in Bonn, the former seat of government of the Federal Republic of Germany. Surprisingly, without any experience as a diplomat, Prof. Dr. Vergau was sent to the Conference of the International Telecommunication Union in Geneva right away where he had to prevent the German Democratic Republic (GDR) from acquiring an international code, since the Federal Republic of Germany did not recognize the GDR as a state.

He told us many stories about how he was involved in the development of an International Convention Against the Taking of Hostages in 1976, how he negotiated the independence of Namibia over years within the Western Contact Group and how he helped mediating between Iraq and Iran after the war in 1988 through “proximity talks”. Furthermore, he told us about the time he came late to a meeting of the Security Council which could not start without him. Once, he did not receive a promotion he had hoped for due to him having insulted the former German chancellor Helmut Kohl. Moreover, he described how difficult a negotiation can become when one is not familiar with cultural particularities of other diplomats.

At the end of his visit, Prof. Dr. Vergau gave us five tips on how to be a good diplomat:

1. Express yourselves clearly.
2. Be loyal. Do not start intriguing against your own country.
3. Try to put yourself in the position of other people and cultures.
4. Listen to what others say!
5. Be always calm and serene – no matter how serious the situation may be.

We are very grateful for having heard his stories and insights into the life of a real diplomat. After the visit of Prof. Dr. Vergau, we worked a little bit more on our position papers, send them in and prepared ourselves for the conference in order to become real Australian Diplomats. And then, the most exciting part of our journey together begun: our trip to New York City!

4.3 Guided Tour through the Headquarters of the United Nations

We started our time in New York with a guided tour through the United Nations Headquarters, located at the United Nations Plaza in Manhattan, looking over the East River. Among others, the UN's principal organs like the General Assembly, the Security Council and, the Economic and Social Council gather in these buildings. It is also the seat of the UN-Secretariat. The foundation stone was laid on 24 October 1949 on premises donated by John D Rockefeller. The complex – consisting of the UN-Secretariat, the General Assembly building and the Dag Hammarskjöld Library – was designed by a group of renowned modernist architects led by Le Corbusier and Oscar Niemeyer and completed in 1952.



Before the tour, we all had to pass airport-like security checks and were given special tickets to be able to move in the buildings. In the front yard, we passed the famous sculpture Non-Violence, a revolver with a knotted barrel and the muzzle pointing upwards and a universal symbol for peace – the United Nations' core aim. After entering the General Assembly building, the tour itself started. The halls are richly decorated with artwork and gifts from United Nations Member States as well as historical background information, such as portraits of former UN Secretaries-General. Furthermore, current goals and concerns of the United Nations are presented such as a live count showing the daily expenditure spent on weapons and military as well as the Sustainable Development Goals forming the *United Nations Agenda 2030*.

The tour was an accurate reflection and reminder of what Kofi Annan, the 7th UN Secretary-General, once said: *"More than ever before in human history, we share a common destiny. We can master it only if we face it together. And that, my friends, is why we have the United Nations"* While we were unfortunately not able to enter the UN Security Council Chambers due to an ongoing session, we got to see several other conference halls. However, the highlight of the tour for all of us was its end: visiting the UN General Assembly Hall for the first time, a place that is the embodiment of the United Nations philosophy of multilateral cooperation and international dialogue. Overall, the tour was the perfect start of our UN journey in New York and we will certainly never forget it!



4.4 Briefing on Role of the Secretary-General

Briefing by the Executive Office of the Secretary-General

Our Speaker, who has already worked for several Secretaries-General, was able to give us a very close insight into the work of the Secretary-General, which was also once described by the first Secretary-General in office, Trygve Lie (Norway), as being the most difficult one in the world. During his presentation we would start to understand, why it can be called so.

Although the UN Charter only vaguely defines the job of the Secretary-General as being the „chief administrative officer“, there are five main roles in which the Secretary-General acts. Firstly, he is the chief of the UN-Secretariat, which is one of the six main organs of the United Nations and its main executive body. Most importantly, he appoints different Under-Secretaries for different UN posts, such as the head of the *United Nations Development Programme* (UNDP). Also, the Secretariat handles UN operations, which have been initiated by the Security Council. Besides, the Secretariat is also responsible for initiating research programmes, translation and media relations. Secondly, the Secretary-General has an important and unique political role. As being the head of the United Nations, he has to be impartial and must not prefer the interests of his home country to any other.



Fortunately, according to our Speaker, the candidates automatically leave their nationality behind, once they are coming into office. This neutral position facilitates his ability to prevent and stop the spread of conflicts and mediate between different parties. Ensuring his neutral position, normally only candidates from small- to medium-sized neutral powers are being appointed.

In order to grant a clear overview, he can also appoint envoys charged with brokering peace deals, who report to the Security Council. At this point, our Speaker made clear that it is also always up to person in office, to fulfill the position with its own character and ideas. In the past some have acted more as an activist, like Dag Hammarskjöld, while others preferred bureaucratic way of ruling.



Part of his political action is also shaping the agenda of the General Assembly by setting items on the provisional agenda of the General Assembly. He can deliver speeches, establish commissions and propose solutions to certain issues. Thereby, according to the Charter, he shall bring attention to the Security Council to any matter that, in his opinion, poses a threat to the maintenance of peace and security. In doing so, he naturally is the moral voice of the United Nations and therefore can give clear global directions to any matter of his concern. While it is up to the Member States to vote upon the resolutions at the end, the Secretary-General can use his position to indirectly lead the discussion towards a certain direction.

Therefore, the Secretary-General must also have an overview about all different themes and events around the world, at all time. Additionally, he, as having the highest position in the UN, has to listen to all people and their needs. Constantly, he has to reach out for new partners, new funding and secure the position of the United Nations as a representative place for the whole world community. Fighting for the poorest in the world, while also considering the concerns of all Member States, it is a constant finding for balance of interests in the life of the Secretary-General.

Being the chief administrative officer, having an important political role, shaping the agenda, reaching out for new partners and being the moral voice of the world community are only his main tasks.

Apart from these tasks, the Secretary-General has to work with current issues and problems during his legislation. From 2015 on, perusing the *Agenda 2030* has been the top priority of the UN and is therefore constantly part of all his work. Especially climate change poses a bigger threat to humankind and so the Secretariat constantly works towards achieving the goals of the *Paris Agreement* and will review its progress on the *UN Climate Change Review Conference* in 2022. For Mr. António Guterres personally, mainstreaming gender equality in peacekeeping and other domains is a top priority.

During the presentation, our Speaker drew a very conclusive picture why the job of the Secretary-General is so difficult. He is responsible for peace and progress around the world and therefore has to fight on all different fronts. Meanwhile, the United Nations are neither a government with an executive arm, nor do they have enough financial resources.

Therefore, the United Nations are both, depending on the active participation of all Member States and their funding, while also being responsible to act as a neutral body.

It seems like the unofficial job of the Secretary-General is to establish himself, within his limited powers, a ground on which he can work towards global peace and stability, without hurting the sovereignty of a state. This certainly demands skills and experience that can't be earned with university-degree. Being persuasive, resilient and a having thick skin are only some attributes, according to our Speaker, a good Secretary-General needs to have to provide „the oil to keep the place running“.

4.5 Briefing on Counter Terrorism

held by the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED)

Our Speaker started interactively by asking us for a definition of terrorism. The answers were divers: Somebody referred to the Latin origin of the word meaning fear. Another one referred to the violent nature of terrorism. Also, the fact that it is often performed by organizations and not nations was mentioned. The wide range of these answers reflects the difficulty the UN has in defining this topic. Terrorism is hard to define but looking at reality makes the identification of terroristic act easy.



The city of New York has right in its center a drastic scar, the 9/11 memorial. Due to the fact that more and more terroristic attacks are happening our awareness is rising and the world is trying to tackle the issue. The most important resolution on terrorism is Resolution 1373 which was adapted unanimously by the Security Council on 28 September 2001 as a direct answer to the terror attack that reshaped the city of New York forever. This resolution established the *Counter-Terrorism Committee* (CTC). The CTC is structured exactly the same as the Security Council, however, the chair rotates only every 2 years and not every month. Another difference is that only the non-permanent Member States can chair this committee. One of the main objectives is assessment and therefore the CTC has 115 missions monitoring terrorism in different Member States. These missions are never unannounced and usually take one or two weeks. The committee agrees, that nothing can ever justify a terror attack and believe that the root causes need to be addressed.

Essential Questions are: what makes people cross boundaries? Why do people become terrorists? While fighting terrorism the CTC urges to respect fundamental human rights and believes in courts and the rule of law. Our Speaker explained that under the name of countering terrorism some Member States systematically fight oppositions. He highlighted border security as a possibility to minimize terrorism and elaborated on different reasons why Member States do not implement the recommendations by the CTC. On one hand, it can be the lack of money, on the other hand the lack of expertise.



He explained why the so-called Islamic State is unique, mainly because they do not hide after performing a terror attack and because of the important role territory plays. Through

invading, through taking territory they earn money, which they invest in more weapons and fighters. For these reasons, they are different from any other Islamic terror organization. Our Speaker furthermore mentioned that focus on religious terrorism is too much and tends to overlook political terrorism. Moreover, he stressed the role of social media in radicalizing especially the youth.

4.6 Briefing on the United Nations Disarmament Initiatives

held by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)

If one reads the Charter of the United Nations, one quickly recognizes the importance of disarmament as a crucial measure for maintaining international peace and security, the key priority of the UN. As one begins to read closely, he will realize, that disarmament is referenced to several times, even within the preamble of the UN Charter. As war is nourished by arms and weapons, their abolishment is key to establish lasting peace. While sanctioning countries, which disobey the principles of war, falls into the hands of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), which is also able to impose arms embargos, there are several other UN institutions dealing with disarmament.



These bodies include: the *United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs* (UNODA), the *International Atomic Energy Agency* (IAEA), the *General Assembly First Committee* (GA1), the *Conference of Disarmament* (CD) – a subsidiary organ to the Assembly and the successor of the *United Nations Disarmament Commission* (UNDC). All these institutions have a mandate to prepare proposals for the regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of armed forces and armaments, including the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction although their resolutions remain non-binding.

As the UN seems to find itself in a deadlock on the issue of the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, most prominently seen in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, one is wondering what the UN is focusing on, fighting the distribution of weapons of any kind.

Our Speaker, a Senior Political Affairs Officer of UNODA, gave us insight on how the UN and its bodies are tackling the issue of disarmament. While the UN is not only combating the distribution of weapons of mass destruction, as for example agreed upon in the *Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty* (CTBT) of 1994, it also focuses on the spread of medium- and small-sized weapons, which can be bought illegally and which are easy to smuggle. While the UN has already agreed upon sanctioning countries, which build or distribute ABC-weapons of mass destruction, as all UN Member States are accounting for controlling and eliminating such weaponry, the idea of “micro-disarmament” has been more difficult to enforce, as there is no binding international framework yet.

One key aspect of micro-disarmament is the *Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration* of ex-combatants of war (DDR), as these men are often at risk of becoming mercenaries, as they are not properly reintegrated into postwar-society, mostly not being treated psychologically in post-combat time. Furthermore, the UN is determined to fight the threat of mines, still creating new mine-sweeping units, mostly composed of highly-trained personnel of the *United Nations Mine Action Service* (UNMAS), located within the *United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations* (DPKO). In most instances, former countries and places of war are unable to get rid of such explosive traps, due to underequipped or overwhelmed military, leaving local communities in danger.



However, the most difficult task of micro-disarmament is the prevention and eradication of illicit trade of small arms and light weapons and other conventional weaponry. These

arms are the most common used tools in war, being relatively easy to obtain and to be efficiently used. For instance, in 2000 the international black market made US\$ 1 billion dollars, according to *Small Arms Survey*. In that period, assault rifles such as the Avtomat Kalashnikova (AK-47), were priced at around US\$ 15 dollars, due to extreme surplus. Even today, it is possible to obtain such semi-automatic rifles for very low prices in war-torn countries or post war stages, such as the African continent or Yugoslavia.

Nonetheless, the UN and even its predecessors were able also to contain and ban some weaponry from being used in war. The authority for, controlling and elimination of weapons, through constant dialogue, security and confidence building measures, has been successful. As early as 1874, first non-binding resolutions were signed in Brussels by several European countries, condemning the bombing of hospitals and killing of surrendering soldiers. Conferences in The Hague followed in 1899 and 1907, along with the *Geneva Convention* of 1864, being the first formal statements on the laws of war and war crimes, in the body of secular international law. As a result, projectiles or explosives, discharged from balloons, alongside poisoned and in-body expanding soft-point “dumdum” bullets were prohibited.

In 1925, the *Geneva Protocol* was signed banning chemical and biological weapons from modern warfare. Incendiary and blinding laser weapons, mines and booby traps, anti-personnel mines, explosive remnants of war and cluster munitions were added to the list from 1980 until 2008, upon several protocols of the *UN Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons* (CCW). Even a resolution for disarmament in Outer Space was signed as early as 1967. As of 2017, 125 states have ratified or acceded to all protocols of CCW, also opening discussions on restricting lethal autonomous weapons within the UN.

Today, the UN General Assembly passes resolutions on a regular basis, upholding these international legislations and treaties, fighting for further disarmament and more transparency within national military, determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which has brought untold sorrow to mankind.

4.7 Briefing on the Sustainable Development Goals

held by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They address the global challenges we face, including those related to poverty, inequality, climate, environmental degradation, prosperity, peace and justice. The goals interconnect and in order to leave no one behind, it is important that we achieve each goal and target by 2030. Nowadays, the *United Nations Department of*

Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) provides substantive support and capacity-building for the SDGs and their related thematic issues, including water, energy, climate, oceans, urbanization, transport, science and technology. In order to make the *2030 Agenda* a reality, broad ownership of the SDGs must translate into a strong commitment by all stakeholders to implement the global goals.

The briefing commenced with a succinct statistical overview: the world GDP grew 75% in the timeframe 1900-2010, likewise did the gap between rich and poor expand by up to 20%. Today, 884 million lack access to clean water and 2.6 billion don't have access to basic sanitation. Similarly have issues as climate refugees, desertification, deforestation, coral bleaching, ever-increasing population growth, the imbalanced distribution of resources around the world and ongoing armed conflicts been imperative global issues to be dealt with.



At this point should the question be addressed: what does the UN do? The United Nations is the key intergovernmental platform for negotiating and finding a way forward to pending difficulties. A case in point is the *Paris Agreement*, which for the first time brings all nations into a common cause together, to undertake ambitious efforts to combat climate change and adapt to its effects, with enhanced support to assist developing countries to do so. As such, it charts a new course in the global climate effort. The central aim is to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping a global temperature well below 2 degrees Celsius. Additionally, the agreement aims to strengthen the ability of countries to deal with the impacts of climate change. So, what can we, as global citizens, do to affect change? Ending poverty, tackling climate change and reducing inequality aren't things only policymakers can do. By taking small steps together, the SDGs aren't difficult to achieve - it is all doable.

At this moment we were introduced to the *Lazy Person's Guide to Saving the World*. The guide exemplifies practical, day-to-day things that everyone can do from our couch, home, neighbourhood or work to get a step closer towards implementing the SDGs. Practical examples: take short showers, eat less meat, poultry, and fish or shop local supporting neighbourhood businesses. Another informative element during the briefing was the Video *Break-Up with Plastic*: "It's not me, it's you." In the short video for the #CleanSeas

Campaign (cleanseas.org), UN Environment takes a lighter look at the global issue of marine litter and urges everyone to give up the use of single-use plastic products such as disposable cutlery, water-bottles, food containers and shopping bags.

Here are some questions that have been addressed during the SDGs briefing:

How can we really achieve and finance the Sustainable Development Goals?

For instance, through the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda* of the *Third International Conference on Financing for Development*, which provides a foundation for implementing the global sustainable development agenda and focuses on bold measures to overhaul global finance practices and generate investments for tackling a range of economic, social and environmental challenges. The groundbreaking agreement was reached by the 193 UN Member States and marks a milestone in forging an enhanced global partnership that aims to foster universal, inclusive economic prosperity and improve people's well-being. Additionally, as nationalist movements globally upsurge, should we revisit the global institutional architecture and firmly recommit to multilateral engagements, and strive for international trade and cooperation.



How can individuals from Least Developed Countries (LDCs) be reached?

The United Nations is in this matter closely cooperating with local governments and municipalities all around the world. By means of the *United Nations Information Centers*, translating materials all around the world, the main aim is taking goals like the SDGs closer to individuals and getting people closer together.

How can Member States invest more money?

The amount each member must pay, known as its assessed contribution, varies widely and is determined by a complex formula that factors in gross national income and population. However, should Member States spend at least 0,7% on development aid. The countries could invest more money by means of mobilizing domestic public resources, improve tax administration and reduce tax evasion, as well as mobilize investors to shift investments from bonds and equities towards long-term infrastructure projects. Likewise, an often-proposed solution is public-private-partnerships, yet they are mostly considered problematical due to the fact that some countries don't have the necessary capacities for such type of contracts. The center of our attention should therefore unremittingly be on multilateral cooperation and governments getting together to create infrastructure for the collaboration to be successful.

4.8 Briefing on Financing for Development

held by Daniel Platz, Inter-Regional Advisor, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)

No matter what kind of brilliant idea is discussed to be the best way to change the world. There is always the same question which requires an urgent answer: Who will pay for it? Exactly that was the purpose of the Briefing on Financing for Development. All measures taken by the United Nations, nowadays especially the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), could never succeed without sufficient financial support. Therefore, it is crucial to provide a concrete implementation pillar for the *Agenda 2030*.

The first and most important framework to finance the SDGs was the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda*, which was adopted in 2015 in Ethiopia. The document defines seven Action Areas, including: domestic public resources, domestic and international private business and finance, international development cooperation, international trade as an engine for development, debt and debt sustainability, addressing systemic issues, science, technology, innovation and capacity building. The *Financing for Sustainable Development Office*,

which is one of DESA's divisions, provides support to policymakers in implementing the over 100 policy commitments contained in the *Addis Agenda*.

The full and timely implementation of the Addis Agenda is driven by Member States. For instance, Member States can improve the mobilization of domestic public resources by improving tax administration and combating tax evasion. Another challenge for the politicians is to ensure macroeconomic stability and sustainable, inclusive and equitable economic growth. Hospitable conditions for private investment, both foreign and domestic, as well as policies that help unleash entrepreneurship will further contribute to higher tax revenues and therefore extend the room for financing for development and ultimately improve overall welfare and the wellbeing of the people.



Furthermore, governments can pursue private-public partnerships. However, they should ensure that risks and rewards are shared fairly between the public and private sector. They can also put in place policies and incentives that promote long-term infrastructure investment from institutional investors. Moreover, UN Member States should cooperate closer and develop multilateral strategies in financing SDGs. The estimated annual amount of money needed to achieve the SDGs ranges from 2.5 to 7 trillion US Dollar per year. Only by working together, and in partnership with a wide range of public and private stakeholders, will Member States be able to finance and achieve the *Agenda 2030* commitments.

4.9 Briefing on Youth, Leadership and Education

held by Nicholas Ceolin, United Nations Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth

Climate change is the most urgent issue in our time. Especially the young and following generation will be facing the consequences of our actions in the past and future. So, what is the UN doing to connect the youth and climate action in the UN? “We bring the UN closer to young people, and young people closer to the UN”, Nicholas Ceolin explains. The *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* consisting of 17 Sustainable Development Goals and many targets are only achievable through involvement of the young generation.

Therefore, the UN stands for the empowerment of young people and offers various programs such as: *Conference of Youth (COY)*, The *Youth Climate Report* film project or the *United Nations Joint Framework Initiative on Children, Youth and Climate Change (JFI)*. United Nations Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake is giving the youth a voice at the UN and in the world. The UN emphasizes the roles for the youth for example as a critical thinker, change maker, innovators, communicators or leaders, as Nicholas Ceolin underlined.

4.10 Briefing on Climate Change after Paris and Katowice COP 24

held by Franz Baumann, Professor at NYU, Graduate School of Arts & Science, Program in International Relations

“The opportunity to prevent global heating has been missed, and the task now is mitigation as well as adaptation – and limiting the political fallout.”

The Conference of the Parties (COP) is the conference of the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)*. Mr. Baumann, who has served as the Assistant Secretary-General and UN Special Advisor on Environment and Peace Operations at the UN Secretariat in New York until 2015, started the briefing by telling us that the first COP actually took place in Berlin in 1995. The COP cooperates closely with the *Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)*, which regularly reports on the science of climate change. The most recent report from October 2018 stated that the global



warming probably won't stay below 1.5°C. In fact, even if the world became carbon neutral today, the earth would still warm up by 1.5°C due to the rebound effect. Therefore, we only have 11 years left to stop our emissions and 18 years to reach the 2°C goal. Mr. Baumann made clear that it is five minutes past midnight, and we cannot undo global warming, but we can limit the damage.

In the 18th century humans started to burn coal, which enabled the Industrial Revolution, and continued to do so until the 1950s. Then coal was overtaken first by oil and then by gas. Burning coal, oil or gas releases carbon dioxide (CO₂), an invisible, odorless greenhouse gas. The greenhouse effect and its impact on earth have been known for about 200 years. Looking at the *Keeling Curve*, we can clearly see that the global CO₂ concentration has been below 320 ppm in 1960 and has now surpassed 415 ppm. But if we want to keep global warming below 1.5°C and comply with the *Paris Agreement*, the CO₂ concentration must stay below 420 ppm.



The reason for climate change according to Mr. Baumann is “the great acceleration”. In 1820, the earth had around one billion inhabitants, while today there are 7.6 billion people on earth. All those people consume more and more resources. For example, in 1970 there were only 250 million cars in the world, whereas today there are 1,300 million with another doubling expected until 2050. As well as the plastic production today stands at 300 million tons compared to only 1.5 million tons in the 1950/60s. By contrast, the number of wild animals has drastically decreased, with 60 percent of vertebrates having died out. This way of life is causing a lot of CO₂ emissions. The problem is that the top 10 percent of global

income earners are responsible for nearly as many greenhouse gas emissions as the bottom 90 percent. Therefore, it is clear that not everyone can follow the Western lifestyle and that Western countries must reduce their ecological footprint.

The greatest obstacle to stop global heating is political unwillingness. For instance, the *Paris Agreement* can only be reached if the average emissions per person per year is at or below two tons of CO₂. The problem is, large emitters like Russia have not ratified the Agreement and the USA even has announced to withdraw. Together with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, these states have blocked resolutions at the recent COP 24 in Katowice, Poland. Looking at the past, the main emitters of greenhouse gases have been the USA and Europe. Countries like India want to achieve the same living standards as the USA and Europe. With a budget of two tons of CO₂ per year per person, this would be impossible to achieve. Therefore, the global economy needs to transform into a climate-friendly economy sensitively. If we were to act on climate change today, it would bring great cost and trouble. However, in the future a transformation would be even more troublesome. Sadly, it seems like Western governments will not act without pressure from the outside.

Mr. Baumann also answered the question how to manage economic growth, prosperity and climate change. He said that we have to differentiate and need to decide which aspects of the economy need to grow, as not all of them will be able to grow. Also, we should look at other indices than the GDP. For instance, Germany has the capability to create a green economy. He also answered the question on what options we have to fight carbon emissions and climate change. Mr. Baumann said that there is no silver bullet at this time. Some suggestions were the introduction of carbon pricing, the cancelling of CO₂ subsidies and a tax on aviation. Another question was on the possibilities of *Carbon Capture and Storage* (CCS). Mr. Baumann said that for now, the technology is too expensive with €130 per ton. Economically this makes no sense, because CO₂ emission is free, which means that the real costs are externalized, pushed onto the next generation. Eventually, this could change with a carbon price. All in all, Mr. Baumann gave us a great insight into the scientific, political and economic aspect of climate change.

4.11 Briefing on Refugees

held by the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR)

On our third and last day of the UN Study Tour we had two presentations. One of them was on refugees and was held by a Public Information Officer for the UNHCR, the *United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees*. She has been working there ever since the violence erupted in Syria in 2011. She serves as a spokesperson for the UNHCR's Lebanon

operation, working with Arab and international media to advocate on behalf of Syrian refugees.

Herself born in Beirut, she has a lot of expertise on this topic. Unfortunately, she was not able to assist personally due to her busy schedule but committed herself to hold the presentation via Skype, which we appreciate a lot.

The presentation started with a differentiation between Migrants and Refugees. While refugees flee from war, persecution, human right violations, etc., migrants look for a better future in the host country. Therefore, migrants leave their country mostly voluntarily whereas refugees are forced to do so. At present, the number of refugees stands at about 25.4 million people, almost half of them are under the age of 18.



Another key point of the presentation was to determine what *Internally Displaced Persons* (IDPs) are and the risks they are faced with. Like refugees, IDPs are forced to flee but have not crossed any internationally recognized border, which means they have remained within their home country. IDPs are therefore exposed to a higher risk of abduction and physical attacks and consequently to a higher mortality rate.

More than 80% of refugees are hosted in poor or middle income countries. Funding is therefore direly needed, however, according to our Speaker, so far only half of the amount needed was received. In addition to financial help, more durable solutions need to be found

to improve the living conditions, such as scholarships for the purpose of providing “alternative pathways” for refugees. After her presentation we had the chance to ask about her expertise. A student from a fellow delegation asked why the UN does not give awards to countries that deal particularly well with refugees, to which our Speaker responded that these countries surely would deserve an award. The next delegate asked to give an outlook on climate refugees e.g. from Chad. Our Speaker concurred that this is will be a big problem in the future, however, the definition of a refugee as the UNHCR uses it does not apply in this situation and it would therefore not be within their responsibility.

The following question was about the different ways of dealing with refugees, meaning integration as practiced for example in Germany or separation from the local population as in Lebanon. Our Speaker first pointed out the different situations these respective countries are in, as Lebanon is a neighboring country of Syria and Germany is not. She also stressed that this issue is a global responsibility and the load should be carried by various actors. In any way, the end goal should be the eventual return to their home country, as she learnt during her work that this is what most refugees wish for. When asked about the average time of 17 years refugees spend in a refugee camp, she again stressed that starting relocation programmes immediately is of priority. She believes that separating refugees from the host community only furthers tensions between these groups and should therefore be avoided. The Delegation of Freie Universität Berlin thanks our Speaker for her time and valuable insights into the work of UNHCR.



4.13 Briefing at the Permanent Mission of Australia to the UN

held by David Yardley, Political Counsellor at the Mission of Australia to the UN

On Monday morning, March 25, we jointly walked over to the Permanent Mission of Australia to attend our first meeting of the week. The mission is located between Third and Lexington Avenue, just a few steps away from Grand Central Station. Mr. David Yardley, who has been working in his position at the Mission for many years, welcomed our Delegation.



To ensure a free exchange of ideas and discussion about Australia's work at the United Nations, we decided not to publish the content of this meeting. After about an hour, we walked back to the NMUN conference fully prepared to strongly represent Australia in all committees.

5. The Delegation at NMUN 2019, 24th -28th March

5.1 The FU Berlin Delegation at the SDG Ceremony in the GA Hall

This year, NMUN organized a special ceremony: every delegation got to send a delegate to deliver a speech about the UN Sustainable Development Goals at the General Assembly Hall, representing not the delegation's "NMUN country" but their university. For all of us, this was a very special part of the conference, as we could spend a lot of time in the General Assembly Hall, truly feeling the spirit of NMUN.

For our Delegation, our Head Delegate Gregor gave a speech about SDG 4, in memory of the historical background of Freie Universität Berlin:

Good evening fellow delegates! (sorry about my voice, NYC got me) ...

I study at Freie Universität Berlin, Free University of Berlin. It is called free because in the beginning of the Cold War ... students like us were oppressed.

SDG 4. Quality Education. It cannot be delivered without freedom.

Let's extend this privilege of freedom of education to all of humanity.

Thank you very much!







5.2 Australia at the General Assembly First Committee

represented by Jacob Bradaczek and Roman Şarov

Our Committee – an Overview

Role, Function and Power

The United Nations General Assembly First Committee is one of the six Main Committees of the General Assembly and it mainly deals with disarmament and international security. Although resolutions by the General Assembly are non-binding, they serve as key international policy norms and have often been adopted as customary international law.

The First Committee is able to introduce resolutions, initiate new negotiations and conduct reports about the current state of disarmament and security. As it belongs to the General Assembly, the First Committee only requires a simple-majority, displaying the consensus-based nature of the General Assembly.



History

The United Nation General Assembly has existed since the creation of the UN in 1945. According to Chapter IV, Article 11 of the Charter, the General Assembly has to address international peace and security, especially disarmament. As a growing number of issues concerning security and disarmament have faced the international community, the First Committee became the main organ for focusing on them. Ever since, it has mostly dealt

with the technological implications of the atomic bomb and has provided a stage for debates between the two superpowers during the cold war. Today, it concentrates on issues of disarmament and threats to international peace and security.

The most prominent achievement is the *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons* (NPT), which main objective is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, to promote peaceful uses of nuclear energy and finally achieve nuclear disarmament. However, it does allow the permanent members of the Security Council to keep their nuclear weapons arsenal.



Membership

According to the Charter, the General Assembly is comprised of all 193 UN Member States. Observer status can be granted to intergovernmental organizations such as the African Union and states without full UN membership, which currently are the Holy See and the State of Palestine.

In addition, the General Assembly is the only of the main UN bodies in which all members have equal representation.

Australia's Role

Australia's role and participation in the United Nations framework and throughout all Committees is of incontestable importance, as a founding member of the UN has the

country been vigorously promoting the fundamental principles indoctrinated in the *United Nations Charter* (1945) on a global scale. Australia has a long and distinguished record of promoting global disarmament and non-proliferation. In doing so, it has set up its own national *Canberra Commission* working on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. Australia also played a major role in the negotiations of the *Chemical Weapons Convention* (CWC) and in the negotiation of the *Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty* (CTBT). Together with Japan, it has established in 2010 an initiative with the key objective of promoting the main ideas of the *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons* (NPT). However, Australia has strongly rejected a resolution in 2015, which goal in the long-term is to establish a legally binding ban of nuclear weapons for all countries.

Our Experiences

The proposed topics in the General Assembly First Committee were the following:

- I. *Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security*
- II. *Nuclear Disarmament and International Security*
- III. *International Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space*

During the position paper writing, each of the respective topics was challenging, as they require extensive knowledge and research. When the preparation and study process went on, one topic specifically stuck out as being notably demanding, namely being Nuclear Disarmament. Throughout the last years it got increasingly difficult to deal with disarmament of all kinds. Declining multilateralism and the withdrawal from international agreements show that a universal solution seems to be far in sight in the real-world community.

On the first day, we firstly looked for the delegations from our potential partners, as the United States and the CANZ partners (Canada and New Zealand). Also, during the informal session, we tried to promote the third topic as the first one to be discussed in the committee. Although the preferences concerning the order of the topics seemed to be relatively mixed, the second topic, Nuclear Disarmament and International Security, was voted for in the end.

After the agenda setting was finished, we decided to split up, so that we can maximize our output and attain different perspectives of the issue at hand. We ended up working on two different resolutions simultaneously and could soon start to work and shaping the first drafts of our resolutions. At this point, it should be highlighted that Australia is actively engaged in Nuclear Disarmament and party to all of the major nonproliferation treaties and international export control regimes. Especially, Australia was an active proponent of the

Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) negotiations from the 1970s forward and ratified it in 1998.

In the first working group, Australia was engaged in drafting a resolution with delegations as Bhutan, Bolivia and Peru. Our main focus was urging the promotion of multilateral nuclear projects for peaceful purposes. In concrete, we tried to achieve this by incentivizing the collaboration of developed and developing states and encouraging the spread of business and vocationally oriented public-private partnerships between governments and private companies.

Additionally, we were keen on pushing for the creation of a Special Rapporteur on nuclear disarmament, that: revises all present processes to formulate an accessible pathway for denuclearization amongst all Member States, oversees all Member States' biannual voluntary reports on their respective disarmament processes, observes domestic activities utilizing nuclear energy, develops domestic capabilities and ensures that various Member States do not lag behind in order to maintain a nuclear advantage.

While Roman concentrated on these approaches in his working group, the Australian Delegation was also active in another one, together with New Zealand, the United States and many other ASEAN countries. As our group was very large and communications seemed quite complicated in the beginning, we soon split up into smaller groups in order to focus on each respective topic of the resolution. Our common approach was to work towards a world without any nuclear weapons, on which all Member States have once agreed on, while still recognizing the current circumstances and including the position of the *Nuclear Weapon States* (NWS).

The best way to achieve this goal is to increase trust between all Member States by strengthening the existing transparency-measures and the IAEA and its International Safeguard system. Building up trust and verification between all Member States is the key pre-condition, so that NWS can slowly reduce their arms. Also, we focused on the third pillar of the NPT, namely the peaceful use of Nuclear Energy. Therefore, we included a clause which steps towards more financial and technical support to fasten the transition from highly enriched uranium, which is necessary for Nuclear Weapons, to the usage of thorium for peaceful uses.

During all the discussion, the briefing of Mr. David Yardley, Political Counsellor at the Permanent Mission of Australia to the UN, was really helpful. He recommended us to be pragmatic, transparent and working towards a rich outcome. In implementing these attributes, Australia was able to include a clause into the resolution, which called for the previous implementation of measures of the CTBT:

“Encourages all Member States, who have not yet ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), to implement concrete actions in order to support the main ideas of the Non- Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as appropriate, including, but not limited to:

- a. The installation of facilities by Member States for the purpose of collecting and transmitting data to the international Data Center in Vienna, Austria;*
- b. Allowing access for UN-Inspectors in order to verify Member State compliance to the NPT;”*

Finally, after the voting procedures, both of our Resolutions had been passed with overwhelming majorities. During the lobbying and resolution writing, we have really understood what it means to work in a committee with 193 parties. It is really important to have a lot of background information about both, your country’s own activities and the exact position of your potential partners and opponents. Especially Nuclear Disarmament is an interesting issue as every leader in the world community is aware of the consequences and its potential to destroy our planet. And so, we learned during the conference that the slow progress in this field is not due to a lack of will for a peaceful world, but rather the fear that in a power imbalance peace and the sovereignty of one’s own state cannot be granted anymore.

5.3 Australia at the General Assembly Second Committee

represented by Annika Strunk and Nicolas Loth

Our Committee – an Overview

Role, Functions and Power

The Second Committee (GA2), also known as the Economic and Financial Committee, is one of the six Main Committees of the General Assembly. The General Committee of the General Assembly allocates the agenda and the main areas of discussion to the Second Committee. During its sessions, delegates discuss and try to find a common solution to the assigned topics. Following that, the committee submits draft resolutions to the GA Plenary. If the General Assembly adopts a Second Committee draft resolution, the adopted resolution is not legally binding, but generally represents a global consensus.

The Second Committee works towards promoting economic growth, sustainable development, knowledge transfer and modern energy infrastructure. Fulfilling the 17 Goals of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* is one of the Committees main priorities, especially SDG 7 (access to affordable, reliable, and sustainable energy) plays a

vital role as it contributes to achieving other Sustainable Development Goals, such as SDG 1 (eradication of poverty).

History

The General Assembly is a primary organ of the United Nation and therefore present since the formation of the UN. The first meeting took place in London in January 1946. Following World War II, the UN was formed to prevent the outbreak of future wars. To do so, Article 55 of the UN Charter claims that conditions of stability and well-being are necessary for peaceful and friendly relations among nations. The Second Committee is tasked to fulfill these objectives by promoting higher standards of living and conditions of economic and social progress worldwide.



Membership

As it is one of the Main Committees of the General Assembly, all 193 Member States plus Observer States and several NGOs are part of the Second Committee. Each Member State has one vote of equal weight.

Australia's Role

As a founding member of the UN, Australia has been a member of the Second Committee from the start. According to the 2018 budget, as released by the Australian Department of

Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia contributes \$3.12 billion to development assistance, thereby mainly focusing on the Indo-Pacific region. Australia partners with the World Bank to support development programmes. In 2016 and 2018, Australia hosted the Australian SDGs Summit to promote national implementation of the SDGs. Furthermore, Australia submitted a voluntary national review to the UN. Australia was actively involved in the development of the *2030 Agenda*, its implementation is led by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Our Experiences

The proposed topics in the General Assembly Second Committee were the following:

- I. *External Debt Sustainability and Development*
- II. *Facilitating Knowledge Transfer for Sustainable Development*
- III. *Ensuring Access to Affordable, Reliable, Sustainable, and Modern Energy for All*

After attending the NMUN Opening Ceremony at the Hilton Ballroom and taking large quantities of pictures, we finally walked over to the Sheraton Hotel for the first GA2 committee session. All delegates were very motivated and chatty, exchanging business cards and looking around for possible partner delegations to work with. By the time the first formal session started, the Dais welcomed all delegations and did roll call. First motion on the floor: agenda setting. As Australia puts high emphasis on exchanging innovation, technology and knowledge in the field of development, we promoted topic number 2 to be the first topic under discussion. Two, one, three is how it should be. In the end, the committee set the agenda to be 3, 2, 1 and we started discussing about energy right away. Australia has a strong position in this matter and works actively to achieve the *2030 Agenda*, which made it easy for us to work with other delegations. Luckily, criticism on Australia' high coal exports did not come up, but of course we would have been able to counter this thanks to our intense preparation ;)

During informal session, we decided to work in two different work groups separately. Annika joined a group mainly consisting of European and Western states, Nico worked with New Zealand and other states on a paper mainly focusing on the aspect of financing.

During the semester we had researched potential strategic partners of Australia, such as the states in the Indo-Pacific and other trading partners, and we expected similar groupings to form at the conference. In New York we were surprised to find the work groups to be totally mixed and their composition seemed to be somewhat random. Work in the groups started off with collecting ideas on the topic of each delegation. After that, topic specific subgroups were formed to formulate perambulatory and operative clauses. Nico and

Annika were able to integrate gender equality, a major priority in Australian policy, into the working papers as well as proposals for policies and initiatives Australia supports or initiated. By the end of Monday, both our groups were able to send a first draft to the Dais.



The conference session on Tuesday – or famously known as “Meltdown Tuesday” – was scheduled from 8:30 to 22:30 hrs but thanks to lunch and dinner break, we did not perceive this day as horrible as advertised. We worked on the comments we received from the Dias and finally submitted a second draft. Wednesday’s session was about finding partner groups to merge with, groups were exchanging their working papers to look for common ideas or even potential deal breakers.

It was also the day we finally made it on the Speaker’s List, you can find our speech below. Just before we were about to approach the microphone, a fellow delegation raised the motion to shorten the speaker’s time to 45 seconds, which (luckily) did not pass. During the merging process, subgroups were again formed, each focusing on either grammar, perambulatory or operative clauses. Nico and Annika joined the group working on the operative clauses, in order to ensure that our clauses remain in the working papers. After submitting the working papers for the last time, the Dias accepted them to become draft resolutions. On Thursday, the last day of the NMUN Conference, we were very pleased to see both of our draft resolutions to be passed by the General Assembly.

Below, you can read one of our speeches held during the conference:

“Fellow delegates,

energy is the motor of all action. But at the same time, it contributes largely to one of humanities` greatest threats: climate change. We, the international community, are tasked to tackle both challenges at the same time.

Australia believes in the promotion of the private sector as well as the cooperation with international institutions such as the World Bank or the Asian Development Bank to achieve these goals.

Australia strongly supports the installation and enhancement of infrastructure and electricity grids. Furthermore, we need more research and innovative solutions to support the shift towards clean and reliable energy.

Australia has a lot of expertise to offer, so please join us in our work groups in the very back or in the room to your left. Let`s fight for equality and save our planet!”

5.4 Australia at the General Assembly Third Committee

represented by Johara Meyer and David Klusmeyer

Our Committee – an Overview

Role, Functions, and Power

The General Assembly Third Committee is one of the General Assembly`s (GA) Main Committees and the world`s primary forum for the creation of international human rights norms. Being a Main Committee, its task is primarily the discussion of agenda items allocated to it by the GA. On these agenda items, the Third Committee (GA3) adopts draft resolutions and decisions and reports them to the GA. Once they have been adopted by the GA they take effect. Therefore, the Third Committee`s work is foremost of normative nature; the committee isn`t responsible for carrying out the actions called for in its resolutions. However, it is in the committee`s power to request relevant UN bodies to perform studies.

“Promotion and protection of human rights” constitute around half of the Third Committee`s work. The committee is responsible for negotiating the majority of resolutions and conventions regarding human rights issues. Thereby, the committee concerns itself with questions related to the treatment of refugees, the right to self-determination, the advancement of women and other vulnerable groups, and indigenous issues. Moreover, the Third Committee has become one of the most important bodies of

the UN in regard to social aspects such as overpopulations, prostitution, social welfare and development, drug control, and crime prevention. Thus, the Third Committee is also called “The Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Affairs Committee”. In addition to questions from the General Assembly, the committee also receives and considers reports from other UN entities. Most notably, the *UN Human Rights Council* provides an annual report on its own recent resolutions and decisions to the Third Committee, based on which the committee adopts a resolution.

History

The Third Committee was established in 1947. Major milestones achieved in the Third Committee include the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) and the text of the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (CEDAW). The UDHR was adopted in 1948 and has a binding character under international customary law. However, based on the UDHR the Third Committee drafted the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* and the *International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights*. Both of these treaties incorporate the rights articulated in the UDHR and are legally binding. Combined they are known as the *International Bill of Human Rights*. The *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* was adopted by the General Assembly in 1979. The Third Committee played a major role in the preparation of its content. Hence, the committee played an important role in promoting the fundamental rights of women globally.



Membership

The Third Committee is a “committee of the whole”, therefore all 193 Member States of the GA are represented here. The State of Palestine and the Holy See can attend to and participate in meetings but cannot vote.

Australia's Role

Australia was one of the eight nations involved in drafting the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. In fact, Australian E.V. Evatt presided over the occasion as the President of the General Assembly. Since then, Australia has continued being in support of human rights throughout international treaty negotiations. Australia has ratified almost all of the major international human rights instruments.

Our Experiences

The proposed topics in the General Assembly Third Committee were the following:

- I. *Inclusive Development for Persons with Disabilities*
- II. *Combating Human Trafficking*
- III. *Strengthening Humanitarian and Disaster Relief Assistance*

Our first formal NMUN session proved to be highly successful. Since GA3 is among the largest committees, we arrived early to occupy seats in one of the rows directly in front of the podium. As it turned out the Delegation of New Zealand had the same idea and we were able to secure a seat right next to one of our most important partners. First contacts were made, which proved to be highly helpful throughout the next few days of negotiations.

We experienced our first setback during the agenda setting. Australia heavily tried to push other states to opt for Inclusive Development for Persons with Disabilities as agenda topic No. 1. The plenum instead chose to discuss Strengthening Humanitarian Aid and Disaster Relief Assistance first. Since we had a spot on the speaker's list shortly after the agenda was set, we quickly wrote a speech outlining our main proposals and our will to push disability issues, despite the decision of the plenum to focus on humanitarian issues. Our focus on disability and gender issues in humanitarian action and our continuous promotion of these topics during the conference made Australia stand out and helped to gather support from delegations who had a similar agenda.

As the negotiations and the drafting began in the following days it became apparent that few delegations had gender and disability in mind while approaching humanitarian aid. Since Australia historically is in the forefront in the fight for women and persons with

disabilities, we made sure that the topic got the attention it deserved within our working groups. Along the way, we found a small group of like-minded delegations notably the Delegations from Solomon Islands, Singapore, Indonesia, Poland and Ecuador that cared about the disadvantaged as much as we did. In cooperation with the Delegation of the Solomon Islands, we drafted a plan for the protection of women. Singapore helped us to refine our perambulatory clauses and programs. Indonesia merged their ideas on the protection of women and disabled persons with our plans and we managed to form a strong block of states within our working group working towards those issues.



While all this happened, we were under enormous time pressure. The conference was one day shorter than it normally is and hours before the first working papers were supposed to be handed to the Dias our Chairs proposed to disregard our current working paper and create 4 joint resolutions covering the topics Education, Funding, Preparedness and Collaboration. This meant an enormous amount of coordination and negotiation to finish the working paper on time. Despite the stress this had initially caused it ended up being favorable for us as we were able to take on a leading role in discussions on the topic of Education. During the lunch break that followed, we created the template for the Education resolution and shared it with our fellow delegates. Then, it was time to move on to working on draft resolutions. We continuously engaged in negotiations ranging from the scope of the term “vulnerable people” to the issues of schools during disasters. It turned out to be difficult to get used to the dynamics of the conference at first but once we were used to the fast exchange of ideas, the negotiations and sitting on the ground things got a lot easier. We are especially proud of our continuous and successful engagement for persons with disabilities and women.

We were happy to see that the need to protect these vulnerable groups when disaster hits became a popular talking point in the speeches held by other delegations. Australia was a great country to represent during the conference due to its progressive and credible stance on many issues. We enjoyed it to constantly meet new people and to hear new ideas and thoughts every few seconds. General Assembly Third Committee was an especially great place to represent our perspective in since human rights affect all of us. We were especially happy to end the conference by receiving an Outstanding Position Paper Award.

5.5 Australia at the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change

represented by Laura Meichsner and Timo Kitzelmann

Our Committee – an Overview

Role, Functions and Power

The *United Nations Climate Change Conference* (Conference of the Parties; COP) is the supreme decision-making body of the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* (UNFCCC). The COP meets every year to review the implementation of the convention and to make decisions to encourage an efficient implementation of the climate agreements. The main goal of the UNFCCC is to stabilize the greenhouse gas concentration in the Earth's atmosphere in order to prevent a dangerous disturbance of the world's climate. UNFCCC defines non-binding limits on greenhouse gas emissions without enforcement mechanisms. However, the framework outlines how certain international agreements or treaties are to be negotiated in order to work towards the main goal of the framework.



At the last UNFCCC COP, which was number 23 in November 2017 in Bonn, Germany, the parties reached significant progress on the implementation guidelines for the 2015 *Paris Agreement*. The focus now lies on the COP24 in Katowice, Poland, in December 2018, where the implementation guidelines need to be finalized. The implementation guidelines describe how the *Paris Agreement* will work in practice.

History

At the *UN Conference on Environment and Development* (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992, 154 states signed the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*. In 1994, the multilateral agreement entered into force. In 1997, COP3 took place in Kyoto, Japan, and the *Kyoto Protocol* was adopted. For the first time, the Member States signed legally binding limitation and reduction obligations for industrial countries. The Protocol's first commitment period started in 2008 and ended in 2012. The second commitment period consequently began in 2013 and will end in 2020. With the *Paris Agreement* of 2015, whose commitment period will start after 2020, the Member States aim to limit the global temperature increase under 2°C with the target of staying below 1.5°C.

Membership

All states that are Parties on the Convention are represented at the COP. Currently, 197 contracting parties including the State of Palestine, Niue, the Cook Islands and the European Union ratified the agreement. Australia is part of a party group called the *Umbrella Group* with partners such as the USA, Canada, New Zealand, Japan, Norway, Russia, among others.

Australia's Role

Australia is an Annex I party of the UNFCCC and a signature party of the *Paris Agreement*. Australia has subsequently ratified the *Paris Agreement*. As a developed country with one of the highest per capita emissions worldwide, a significant landmass and large reserves of natural resources, Australia is an important international partner in climate change issues. Climate Change is a large challenge to Australia and Australia will continue to be an active country within the UNFCCC. The goal of Australia's climate change policy within the UNFCCC is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 26 to 28 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030. Australia is also the closest large neighbor and partner to many small Pacific Island States, which are severely endangered by Climate Change and rising sea levels. As such, Australia has committed AU\$1 billion of climate finance to support developing countries, including AU\$200 million to the *Green Climate Fund* and AU\$300 million support for the Pacific region.

Our Experiences

The proposed topics in the COP were the following:

- I. *The Role of Youth in Achieving the Paris Agreement*
- II. *Capacity-Building for Combating Climate Change in Developing Countries*

III. *Sustainable Agriculture and Climate Change*

Our first conference day took place on a Sunday afternoon and after the roll call it was established that 140 Member States and one Observer were present or present and voting. The Sunday afternoon was scheduled for agenda setting. The task was to find consent in which order the committee members wanted to discuss the abovementioned topics. This took the whole afternoon and evening to negotiate and ultimately vote for a final order. The afternoon was filled with a lot of speeches and informal meetings and with every new informal meeting the preferences changed. We had many ballots until the final order was voted as follows: 2) Capacity Building; 3) Sustainable Agriculture; 1) The Role of Youth. After this first afternoon it was clear: 140 countries in the committee means 140 different perspectives and interests. The first lesson that we learned was: Consent is not made within one hour.



As we represented Australia in COP in a team of two, it was possible for us to split up and join different working groups. With this approach we worked on two working papers at the same time. This approach meant we managed to have influence and the ability to push our own agenda forward in two working papers. One of us worked with other developed countries such as the USA, UK, Netherlands, Germany, and Sweden in order to establish a funding board that manages funding for capacity-building projects that are initiated by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The funds here come from developed countries which fund projects that combat climate change. Australia could include provisions that

make sure funding goes to projects that include groups such as youth or women. The other working group was with countries such as Japan, France, New Zealand, Rwanda, Algeria and Armenia. The outcome was a resolution to establish a global learning program to educate marginalized communities (youth, women, indigenous people) about the efforts to achieve the *Paris Agreement*.



The work on the papers was a real challenge. When delegates of forty countries gather to discuss their points of view it becomes hectic, loud and sometimes overwhelming, but this busy spirit was something unique. However, the hardest part of the conference in our committee was the “merging procedure”. On Tuesday there were 14 working papers, two of which we had worked on and gave our input. On the last day of the conference the Chair kindly encouraged us to find other groups which share the same topics to reduce the number of working papers in order to make the upcoming voting procedure easier and quicker. The result was that almost seventy countries worked together on one draft resolution. Despite the busy work environment, we worked hand in hand with kindness, respect for each other and interests as well as support for everybody. The other working paper did not merge with another paper, as the developed countries did not want to favor any other group of countries, instead that paper was meant for all developing countries. As such, the work in the non-merging paper group was not as stressful and there was time for general talk and discussion with other groups.

In the end, both draft resolutions that Australia worked on ended up as resolutions passed by the committee. The spirit of COP was the fact that climate change affects all countries

in the world. This spirit was felt in the negotiations, as big and small countries cooperated in order to find the best solutions for climate change. Of course, the climate will not be saved in one committee session alone, but the resolutions that have been passed are a great start.

5.6 Australia at the UN Environment Assembly

represented by Gregor Eichhorn, Lukas Römer and John Gubernath

Our Committee – an Overview

History and Establishment

The *United Nations Environment Assembly* (UNEA) started life in 2013 replacing the *United Nations Environment Programme* (UNEP) Governing Council. The General Assembly decided to change the designation in Resolution A/RES/67/251 explicitly stating that this does not represent any change of: “[...] the present mandate, aims and purposes of the *United Nations Environment Programme* or the role and functions of its governing body”. UNEP itself was founded in 1972 under Resolution 2997 and plays a prominent role in advancing environmental issues and their respective combat strategy around the world.

Role in the UN, Membership and Organization

UNEA meets biennially and three universal sessions have taken place since its creation, the last one in December 2017, in its HQ Nairobi, Kenya. UNEA is composed by universal membership (193 Member States as of today) and manifold participation from the private, civil, academic, scientific sector, as well as the environment responsible ministries. It is led by a Bureau (consisting of ten Ministers of the Environment, rotating geographically every two years) and its President, reporting to ECOSOC and the General Assembly, which must approve resolutions. The next *UN Environment Assembly* will meet in Nairobi on 11-15 March 2019.

Tasks and Responsibilities

UNEP is the official body concerned with environmental issues within the UN. Its main task is to address critical environmental challenges and promote sustainable development. UNEA, as the governing body of UNEP, aims to set priorities for global environmental policies and develop international environmental law. The establishment of UNEA marked the start of a new era where environmental topics and governance are seen equally important as issues of peace, poverty, health and international security.

Achievements

In 1992, the UNEP helped organizing the *UN Conference on Environment and Development* (UNCED) in Rio. 154 nations signed the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* (UNFCCC), a treaty that obliges its signatory states to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. Ever since, the contracting parties annually meet at conferences (COP) to discuss progress and their future strategy. Another success achieved during UNCED was the adoption of the *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development*, which was signed by over 170 Member States. It contains 27 principles that pose a guideline for the signatories' national policy in order to guarantee a sustainable future. Another landmark in the history of UNEP was the adoption of the *Convention on Biological Diversity* and the *Agenda 21*. The latter treaty focuses on sustainable development and national changes to economic, environmental and trade policy.



Australia's Role

Australia appreciates the *UN Environment Assembly* in its important, valuable role of facilitating implementation of the various agendas, targets and goals set out in order to ensure sustainability and the protection of the environment globally as well as supporting regional cooperation on environmental challenges, including in the Pacific. Australia is

pleased to see that progress is being made in the strategic directions and takes pride in participating in a number of pledges such as our *National Clean Air Agreement*, through our plan to halve food wastage by 2030 to the agreement on standardizing environmental management of industrial chemicals. Australia points out that it co-sponsored a resolution on marine litter and microplastics in UNEA3, noting that we coordinated a similar resolution in UNEA2. The *2017 UN Environment Assembly* addressed five sub-themes: Water Pollution, Land Pollution, Marine Pollution, Air Pollution, and Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste. Australia assisted productively and points to the similarities to the topics to be discussed at NMUN 2019.



Our Experiences

At the NMUN NYC 2019 Conference A United Nations Environment Assembly session, representatives of 139 Member States and three Observers were in attendance. It was my first MUN Conference ever, luckily, I was helped in part by John Gubernath who had attended the committee last year and was able to give me a lot of valuable advice on the way. He actively stepped in because my committee partner unfortunately could not travel to the conference. John supported me in this committee for a few hours each day thus I was able to experience the obvious difference between being alone in a committee and being a pair representing a delegation. The decisive fact is that you can effectively work on two working papers at a time. This is practically indispensable because when I was alone, I always had to excuse myself and hop between different working groups.

But before you can start discussions about specific topics, the agenda setting must take place. After introductory and explanatory remarks from the Dais the Speaker's List was

opened and immediately clogged up. Crucial to know here is that the first agenda that will be adopted is set in stone. Equally interesting is that if agenda setting fails to get adopted, the original order is kept. In accordance with the present Member States the absolute majority for the session was set at 94 and Signatory Parties at 28. There was actually a lot of back and forth about the agenda setting and for a time it seemed to me that Topic 2 might actually come first. One realization is definitely that although during the suspension of the debate you are trying to find out what the other Member States position on a topic is, especially of your allies, nobody is truly willing to change their position. This was made abundantly clear in the case of the UK, historically and culturally speaking of course one of Australia's closest Allies. They did not change their position, however, we later enjoyed a very fruitful and productive cooperation on a working paper. But more of that later.

The topics before UNEA were:

- I. *Addressing Marine Plastic Litter and Microplastics*
- II. *Preventing and Reducing Air Pollution to Improve Air Quality Globally*
- III. *Promoting the Responsible Disposal of Electronic and Hazardous Waste*

At the end the agenda was set in the original order, much to our satisfaction. On that note, the first day ended, and the second day commenced afresh. On said morning I first joined a working group where I worked closely with Japan and New Zealand, two of Australia's most important regional partners. But in the evening, 45 minutes before the deadline to submit the working papers to the Dias for the first topic was due, the realization what it means to be at NMUN came crushing down. France approached me and informed me that no other working group is writing about Marine Protected Areas, short MPAs. Australia has the second largest coverage of MPAs in the world and encourages other Member States to follow.

After the Delegation of France, only consisting of one person, and me both had quickly jotted down 3 preambulatory clauses and 3 operative clauses, we had 15 minutes to find 28 Signatory Parties to our working paper in order to submit it to the Dias for possible consideration. We submitted it just in time, the rush, when we had to quickly convince a whole range of Member States and encourage them to join, was truly exciting.

On the next day the Delegations of Croatia, Finland, Germany, Poland, Sweden, United Kingdom all approached us, and we formed an outstanding working group. Diplomatic interaction, progress and effort were excellent, and we all thought of each other that it surely was not their first conference based on the level of courteousness and professionalism on display. Only when we passed the draft resolution did we find out that we were all first-timers at NMUN. This made it even more impressive. Grown just out of two Member States last minute realization, worked upon by a range of impeccable

delegations, the resolution was adopted as 1/4. This was beyond doubt the most fulfilling moment of the conference.

Below are some parts of the resolution that we worked on the hardest, all of them were written by us, discussed with fellow Member States and accepted into the resolutions. These preambulatory and operative clauses adequately reflect the interest and commitment of Australia in UNEA. They aim to accelerate the attainment of the *Agenda 2030* and their respective goals. Australia advocates *inter alia* for an increased knowledge transfer, scientific research and Augmentation of Marine Protected Areas.

Code: UNEA/1/4

Encouraged by the comprehensive protection of marine areas as guaranteed by the integration of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) in regional seas conventions such as the *Barcelona Convention* (1975) and *Noumea Convention* (1986),

1. *Endorses* the funding of MPAs by the Blue Action Fund and the World Bank to help the financial strains of developing Member States that aim to attain the Aichi Biodiversity Target 11;

3. *Welcomes* all Member States to commit to increasing the overall coverage of their MPAs as well as including ABNJ in their respective Regional Seas Convention;

Code: UNEA/1/2

Noting further the influence of regional seas programs in harmonizing universally applicable scientific standards,

Fully believing that the creation of an internationally agreed upon, scientific, empirical methodology of measurement of plastic pollution and microplastics into the marine world is indispensable,

3. *Encourages* all Member States to support, accept and harmonize the implementation of the UN Environment indicator methodologies for SDG 14 and the Target 14.1.1 Index of Coastal Eutrophication (ICEP) and Floating Plastic Debris Density;

4. *Requests* UN Environment to encourage an increase of data collection measures on marine plastic litter and microplastics to have a clear data set about the amounts of floating plastic debris density in all Member States by:

a. Calling upon Member States, with the partnership of United Nations University, to enhance research on devices capable of collecting data and monitor marine plastic litter presence in the water;

5.7 Australia at the Special Committee on Peacekeeping (C-34)

represented by Maximilian Beckmann and Darwin Vesper

Our Committee – an Overview

Role, Functions and Power

The C-34 is the only entity to review and evaluate peacekeeping operations at a broad operational level. The mandate and work of C-34 has developed over time and now also includes conflict prevention as part of peacekeeping. The goals of C-34 are the effective planning and managing of UN peacekeeping operations and effective controlling of those Security Council's mandates.

History

Since 1948, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34) is responsible for reviewing and evaluating current peacekeeping operations. More than 71 peacekeeping operations have been mandated by the UN since 1948 – there are 14 peacekeeping operations in 2019.



Membership

According to General Assembly Resolution 2006 (XIX), membership of C-34 is determined by the General Assembly President and the Secretary-General “after appropriate consultations.” The membership of C- 34 has expanded since its creation and

when the People's Republic of China became the 34th member in 1989, the name C-34 was created, though membership has expanded since that time. In 1997, the General Assembly expanded the membership of C-34 to include past and present personnel contributors to peacekeeping operations. Currently, C-34 is comprised of 153 Member States and 13 Observers including intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

Australia's Role

Australia has been actively involved in peace operations for over 70 years. It has provided military and police personnel to 62 United Nations and other multilateral peace and security operations since 1947. Acknowledging the strain on the peacekeeping system, Australia pledged at the September 2015 *Leaders' Summit on Peacekeeping* to provide strategic air lift support for UN peacekeeping operations in crisis situations, where and whenever it may possible. Australia also pledged to build the capacity of UN troop contributing countries in its region and increase regional expertise on countering improvised explosive devices. Australia is the 11th largest financial contributor to the UN peacekeeping budget.

Our Experiences

The proposed topics in the C-34 were the following:

- I. *Mainstreaming Gender in Peacekeeping Operations*
- II. *Improving the Use of Technology in Peacekeeping Operations*
- III. *Accountability, Conduct, and Discipline in Peacekeeping*

Even before the first meeting of our committee, or more precisely even before the Opening Ceremony of the conference, we were looking for our potential partners in order to coordinate the agenda with them. Fortunately, the impression that we had gained by reading various position papers was confirmed, because most of our partners, especially the United Kingdom, had the same ideas as us. Already after half an hour of the committee meeting it was clear that we would start with the topic Mainstreaming Gender in Peacekeeping Operations, in which Australia makes an important and partly pioneer contribution. In our first speaking time Darwin outlined our goals and positions, so that right at the beginning some states wanted to join us and cooperate with us. Together with European states such as Spain, Denmark and Sweden and others, we soon began to work directly on a first draft. Also through Max's strong speech our group continued to grow. At times we split up so that one of us could continue to work in the group while the other tried to explore potential collaborations. Soon – in the meantime on the advanced second day – a possibility opened up.

On the third day of the conference, after roll call and hearing some speeches by other delegates, we were finally able to merge our working paper with the other group, led by the Delegation of France. Now, our group was the biggest working group within our committee, counting over 30 nations, making discussions even more difficult, due to different national agendas. Nonetheless, Australia together with Spain, United Kingdom, Cuba, Canada and Bolivia, were able to stand their ground, defending the idea of the implementation of more female peacekeeping personnel in senior positions, within the United Nations itself, but in particular in the field of UN peacekeeping operations. Henceforth, Australia also gave a speech on this day, reminding the audience, that Gender Mainstreaming in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations is a topic, which should unite and not divide the committee. Once again, Australia stressed the importance of female officers in commanding positions in UN missions and expressed its appreciation of the recent progress being made throughout the last years. In particular, expressing its satisfaction over the first female Force Commander in a United Nations peacekeeping operation, Kristin Lund of Norway. Furthermore, Australia applauded the great milestone of the first all-female led peacekeeping operation, the *United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus* (UNFICYP), led by Major General Cheryl Pearce of Australia.



Unaware of these milestones, other nations congratulated Australia for its speech, assuring their support of its agenda, by sending various notes. However, the sentiment changed as we moved into another open debate, with some countries trying to push their agenda points relentlessly, to an extent some countries were unwilling to continue collaboration. However, the method of dividing our working group into three different smaller task forces, having worked on the days before, deemed to be successful once again. Australia was now in charge of the task force ‘empowerment’, as we established three fundamental

pillars, on which our resolution would be based on, each representing a different task force. Once again, working closely with its allies, Canada, Spain, Sweden, Denmark, UK and Spain, Australia was able to successfully integrate its policies into the working paper in the late afternoon, as our Delegation worked in two out of three task forces. (This can be seen in operative clause three, nine and ten in particular, see below). In the early evening we were also able to be added to Speaker's List once more, giving our last speech the following day.

The following fourth day was marked by stress and relief at once. As our working paper was one of the last to become a draft resolution, last ideas and policies were added, to the inconvenience of some rather stubborn delegates, which were eager to take over negotiations. In an effort to be mentioned directly as a role model country in our resolution, Canada and Australia were able to convince France and Germany, to integrate two clauses applauding the commitment of those two states. Before moving into voting procedure, a last speech was in order, thanking all our allies and partners and reminding that indeed "it is a man's world, but it would be nothing, nothing without a woman or a girl."

After the closure of the Speaker's List and the list running out, we finally moved into voting procedure. As our draft resolution was the 10th out of 15 documents in total to be discussed, voting took more than two hours. Interestingly, all resolutions would pass in the end, with our paper achieving 93 votes in favor, 12 votes against and 6 abstentions, the United States of America and the Russian Federation being among those abstaining.

Code: C34/1/10; Topic: Mainstreaming Gender in Peacekeeping Operations

[...] Perambulatory clauses 21 and 22

Applauding the work of Australia, the United Kingdom, and other states who have appointed women as field commanders of UN peacekeeping missions in Cyprus and South Sudan,

Expressing its satisfaction with the accomplishments which have already been made on the field of empowering women in leadership positions within the UN personnel, including the UN Forces in Cyprus (UNFICYP) being the first all-female UN peacekeeping mission composed of Australia, Canada, and Norway,

[...] Operative clauses 3, 9 and 10

3. *Calls upon* the Department of Operational Support (DOS) as well as the DPO to include more women on the field and at all levels, as they are key actors for the promotion of sustainable peace in conflict zones, by:

- a. Inviting Member States to consider the importance of bringing women into the peacekeeping process in leadership and operational positions;
- b. Encouraging all Member States to promote the empowerment of more women in leadership positions as Major General or Special Representative, directly within the United Nations and most importantly within the UN peacekeeping military and police personnel by:
 - i. Recommending the implementation of a UN gender-perspective training program for senior-level peacekeeping personnel to increase the employment of women in leadership and negotiation roles;
 - ii. Encouraging the adoption of a parallel-power structure, in which the person providing training is of the same level of seniority as those being trained;

[...]

9. *Calls for* strengthening multilateralism in pre-existing gender and peacekeeping training centers throughout the UN, and for:

- a. *Emphasizing* the importance of training and educating new experts in gender and security issues;
- b. *Advancing* training programs through the involvement of the United Nations University's Gender Equality Studies and Training Program (UNU-GEST);
- c. *Encouraging* Member States to invite multilateral participants to their national peacekeeping training centers for:
 - i. Promoting information sharing and education;
 - ii. Alleviating stress on UN-operated training programs to provide experts to Member States;
- d. *Suggesting* the creation of deployable teams of civil servants educated in women, peace, and security issues to assist Member States in training peacekeepers in accordance with Security Council resolution 1325 (2000);
- e. *Encouraging* Member States to appoint women to lead gender training initiatives;
- f. *Ensuring* that the training programs reflect the different realities of men and women in their similar roles, while acknowledging that different strategies are often required to address their particular needs, such as conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV);
- g. *Adapting* the training process in order to include relevant feedback and challenges stemming from the local level regarding the inclusion of women, which include reporting on the economic and cultural state where units are deployed;
- h. *Offering* post-conflict and stabilization training that includes the importance of female participation in conflict resolution, peace negotiations, disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) process;

- i. *Arranging* Gender Focal Point Training to provide service-members with the ability to use appropriate gender reporting routes, templates, and equip them with the skills to report gender-sensitive issues

10. *Recommends* a reform within the DPO fund allocation with a focus on empowering women and accommodating the particular needs of women military and civilian personnel by:

- a. *Increasing* the flat rate of TCC which are composed of a specific percentage of female agents;
- b. *Encouraging* devoting additional funding to the budget of the DPO in order to establish stipends for the purpose of better accommodating the specific health needs of women peacekeepers and childcare, thereby better enabling the inclusion of women in PKOs;
- c. *Providing* a budget exclusively for mental health and post-conflict care to serve as a basis for improving the work for women in peacekeeping operations in a long-term perspective.

In the end, Darwin and I were quite satisfied, not only with Australia's policies being acknowledged by our allies and partners, but that we were also able to meet some 'proper mates' in those allies and partners during the NMUN 2019 conference.



5.8 Australia in the Human Rights Council

represented by Leah Götz and Valentina Kleinsasser

Our Committee – an Overview

Role, Functions and Power

The Human Rights Council (HRC) is the main organ of the UN „responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe and for addressing situations of human rights violations and making recommendations on them and is located in Geneva, Switzerland. It is a forum for debate and dialogue on all human rights issues, including addressing violations and responding to emergencies, promoting cooperation and education on human rights as well as reviewing Member States’ history and performance. To fulfill these tasks, several mechanisms have been established: The *Special Procedures* enable independent parties to report, monitor and advise on country-specific or thematic situations; the *Universal Periodic Review* investigates the fulfillment of a state’s human rights obligations every four years and the *Complaint Procedure* allows individuals to submit complaints about human rights violations.



History

The HRC was established in 2006 after its predecessor, the Commission on Human Rights – established as early as 1946 – was deemed to be increasingly ineffective and a platform of unwanted politicization. However, the basic idea, protecting human rights on the basis of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and the *Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action* on a global level, has remained the same despite the reform. It was also given more power to promote them.

Membership

Members are elected by majority vote through the GA for a three year term and shall not be eligible for immediate re-election after two consecutive terms. The elections are

staggered, thus one third of the seats are elected annually. The HRC consists of 47 Member States and those seats are distributed in regional groups: 13 from Africa, 13 from Asia, 6 from Eastern Europe, 8 from Latin America and the Caribbean and 7 from the Western European and Others Group. Elected Member States shall uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights, fully cooperate with the HRC and still be reviewed under the Universal Period Review.

General Issues

In recent years, the HRC has particularly struggled with the role of Israel in the international community. It also increasingly had to deal with human rights of minorities such as women and refugees as well as digital rights and water as a human right. Furthermore, it has been criticized for its members not having the highest standard of human rights protection on a national level.

Australia's Role

Australia has been elected to the HRC for the term of 2017 until 2020 for the first time since the Council's establishment. It represents the Western European and Others Group. With view to the current Council Members, the United Kingdom is expected to be Australia's strongest ally. Previously, Australia has served in the Council's predecessor, the *Commission on Human Rights*, four times (1991-1993, 1994-1996, 2003-2005, 2006). However, Australia's appointment to the Council has been criticized by some due to its controversial policy towards asylum-seekers.

Our Experiences

The topics discussed at the conference were:

- I. *Equitable Access to Safe Drinking Water as a Human Right*
- II. *Human Rights of Unaccompanied Migrant Children and Adolescents*
- III. *The Human Rights Situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*

The Agenda, set in the first session of the Council, remained the same as given by the organizers of the conference. Although we were looking forward to introducing the Agenda Setting 1), 3), 2) due to Australia's controversial migration policy, we still got to discuss the topic "Equitable Access to Safe Drinking Water as a Human Right" first. As a major power in the Indo-Pacific region and as a country which is struggling with water scarcity itself, Australia has a comprehensive approach to realize the human right to water and SDG 6 - proclaiming safe water and sanitation for all. Thus, we were in a good position for constructive discussions while particularly focusing on women empowerment in line with Australia's human rights policy.

At first, we approached the Delegations of Japan, the United Kingdom and South Africa as they shared many of our ideas and strategies. During formal session, we heard many interesting speeches and Australia also managed to give some of them, however, real progress was made in informal sessions. In suspension of the meeting, several working groups formed. We quickly started to get involved in a group focusing on infrastructure with states like Egypt, Japan, South Africa and the United Kingdom, as well as another group focusing on equality, formed inter alia by South Africa, Spain, United Kingdom and Venezuela. In the infrastructure group, we focused on including aspects like knowledge exchange, capacity building, human development aid, the priority of non-discrimination in water distribution and water recycling, as they are key points of Australia's water strategy. In the equality working paper, we successfully integrated SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and SDG 17 (Partnerships on the Goals) by focusing on the protection of marginalized groups like children, women, indigenous people and people with disabilities in regard to water distribution. Moreover, we worked on including aspects of climate resilient solutions and crisis prevention.



During discussions, we tried to establish ourselves as a mediatory voice, bringing together diverging positions. Furthermore, we tried to mainstream the SDGs and the aspect of non-discrimination into every clause. In the end, our two Working Papers were merged into one Draft Resolution. This Draft Resolution managed to get the most sponsors in the whole

committee. We were particularly proud of some parts of our suggestions being adopted verbatim in the final Resolution, which you can read below.

Preambular Clauses

Noting that rights are inherent to all human beings, regardless of age, race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language or religion, further ensuring equal access to safe drinking water for all, [...]

Further recognizing the need to work towards the realization of SDG 5, achieving gender equality, and SDG 10, regarding the reduction of inequalities in water distribution, and SDG 17 that encourages partnership for the goals of sharing and transferring knowledge in the water sector, [...]

Bearing in mind the HRC resolution 33/10, and the HRC resolution 39/8, that underlines the detrimental effect the lack of access to safe drinking has for women and young girls, [...]

Operative Clauses

Urges Member States to recognize the special vulnerability of disadvantaged groups like women, children, people with disabilities, the rural poor and especially local farmers regarding equal access to safe drinking water; [...]

Recommends the Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation to establish indicators that refer to degree of equity in access to drinking water in every Member State and report to the HRC on them regularly; [...]

Condemns discriminatory practices in the field of water distribution infrastructure due to gender, age or social status and calls upon Member States to address such actions accordingly; [...]

Speeches

As equality is a core value of Australia's human rights policy, Australia supports initiatives like the Water For Women Fund. This fund supports women and girls in the Asian-Pacific region to gain access to water and thereby improve their living conditions. Australia wants to underline the importance of the topic in the light of World Water Day three days ago and the Agenda 2030. Equitable Access to Safe Drinking Water fosters the targets of SDG 6, 8, 5 and 10 - especially for women and girls. Multilaterally, we can work towards the realization of the Agenda 2030 - that is Australia's firm belief.

[...]

The Delegation of Australia further appreciates the consensus that has been reached in our working group together with United Kingdom, South Africa, Spain, Ukraine, Egypt, Japan and many others. We hope to find general support in this forum for our inclusive ideas, especially on vulnerable groups regarding water distribution. To put it in the words of this year's World Water Development Report "We are leaving no one behind!"

On the third and final day of the conference, it was time for the voting procedure. The Resolution supported by us was one of four adopted Resolutions and passed by acclamation. Unfortunately, the Council was only able to discuss the first topic due to the shortage of time. At the end of the session, we were furthermore awarded a Position Paper Award, a surprise that we were very happy about. In the end, we were proud that we could include many aspects of Australia's human rights policy into the passed Resolution. Over the course of the conference, we have found many great delegates to cooperate with. All in all, we feel like Australia was an integral part of the Committee Sessions that were filled with many interesting speeches and discussions.

5.9 Australia at the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees

represented by Jasmina Eminić and Arianna Morales

Our Committee – an Overview

Role, Functions and Power

UNHCR is a global organization dedicated to saving lives, protecting rights and building a better future for refugees, forcibly displaced communities and stateless people. The Statute, as defined by General Assembly (GA) Resolution 428 (V) of 14 December 1950, stipulates that the High Commissioner “acting under the authority of the General Assembly, shall assume the function of providing international protection ... and of seeking permanent solutions for the problem of refugees.” The mandate of the UNHCR was further expanded by the GA and the ECOSOC as well as “good offices” arrangements. The High Commissioner’s core mandate covers: refugees and asylum- seekers; returnees; and stateless persons. The internally displaced persons are not part of the general or exclusive mandate, however the GA has authorized the High Commissioner to enhance protection and provide humanitarian assistance through special operations and under certain circumstances. Additionally, the High Commissioner can extend his “good offices” to assist different groups of persons outside his mandated functions. The nature of the mandate of the High Commissioner is non-political, humanitarian and social. UNHCR is

governed by the GA and the ECOSOC. The High Commissioner is appointed by the GA and reports annually to both GA and ECOSOC and is governed by the Member States that make up its Executive Committee.



History

To tackle the issue of refugees in the aftermath of the WWII, the GA established the UNHCR with the Resolutions 319 A (IV) of 3 December 1949 and 428 (V) of 14 December 1950. In 1956, during the Hungarian Revolution, 200,000 fled to neighboring Austria. Recognizing the Hungarians as “*prima facie*” refugees, UNHCR led efforts to resettle them. This uprising and its aftermath shaped the way humanitarian organizations would deal with refugee crises in the future. During the 1960s, the decolonization of Africa produced the first of that continent’s numerous refugee crises. UNHCR also helped uprooted people in Asia and Latin America over the following two decades. In 1981, UNHCR received a second Nobel Peace Prize for what had become worldwide assistance to refugees.

Membership

UNHCR is an Executive Committee with representatives from 102 Member States.

Main Task

The main activities of the agency are: advocacy; engagement with migration issues that affect refugees and other persons under its mandate; cash-based interventions; coordination of quick and effective response in emergencies; education; providing access

to adequate shelter in humanitarian emergencies; protection of the basic human rights of uprooted or stateless people; providing access to life-saving and essential healthcare; etc.

Australia's Role

Australia works with the *United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees* (UNHCR) to provide life-saving humanitarian assistance and safeguard the rights and well-being of refugees, asylum seekers, stateless and internally displaced persons globally, including in the Indo-Pacific region. In 2016-17, Australia provided \$25 million in core funding to UNHCR to provide critical life-saving assistance; protect vulnerable displaced persons; strengthen international protection for refugees and internally displaced persons; promote refugee resilience and self-reliance through livelihood support and vocational training.

Our Experiences

After an extensive preparation in Berlin and various briefings at the UN Headquarters we were prepared and more than eager to commence the work at the committee. The topics before the committee were:

- I. *Providing Adequate Shelter for Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons*
- II. *Supporting Sustainable Return and Reintegration of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons*
- III. *Strengthening the Capacity of Refugee Resettlement Countries*

As the position of Australia regarding refugees is quite contentious, our goal was to keep the focus on positive aspects of Australian migration policy and work with our traditional allies as well as countries with similar policies and values. The first session was held on Sunday afternoon and was to determine the agenda. We have aimed to discuss the topic 2 first, followed by 3 and 1. It became very clear at the outset that the Committee was divided on the issue, with one big group promoting the topic number 1 and other delegations divided between topics 2 and 3. We have managed to hold a speech in which we invited all delegations to discuss first the topic 2, emphasizing it is crucial for the sustainable salvation of the refugee crisis.

During numerous informal debates we have tried to connect with our allies and convince other delegations of the importance of the agenda starting with the topic 2, but with no avail. At some point we hit the deadlock, but at the last moment the delegations favoring the topic 2 supported the motion to set the agenda as follows: 3, 2 and 1. Our goal was not completely reached but at least we managed to dodge the topic of Adequate Shelters which was least favorable.

After the initial session the work at the committee focused on the resolution writing. We tried to connect with our traditional allies which was not as successful as we expected; in the end we were working predominantly with Canada, Egypt, Malaysia and others. We didn't manage to hold any speech anymore, but we were sponsoring one resolution and have contributed to several articles and even mentioned Australia in one of them:

Recalling the success of Australia's Community Refugee Sponsorship Initiative that encourages local communities to help resettle refugees on a community-based funding approach;

The biggest challenge was the merger; our group merged with 3 other groups which took a great deal of compromise and was a big organizational task. We have worked in different groups and managed to finish the merger successfully before the deadline. The Committee accepted 7 resolutions by acclamation, among them the one we worked on. Everything didn't go the way we planned, but in the end, we were very satisfied with the outcome.

5.10 Australia at the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

represented by Łucja Bojek

My Committee – an Overview

Role, Functions and Power

The *Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific* (ESCAP) is one of the five regional commissions of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). There are 4.1 billion of people living in the Asia and Pacific region, two thirds of the world's population, which makes ESCAP the most comprehensive regional commission of the United Nations. The role of the commission is to provide a multilateral forum for its Member States for cooperating to achieve inclusive and sustainable economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific. The activities of the commission concern the following areas: macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and financing for development, trade, investment and innovation, transport, environment and development, information and communications technology and disaster risk reduction, social development, statistics, subregional activities for development, and energy.

Nowadays, the most important task of ESCAP is to support the cooperation between its Member States while pursuing the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and the Sustainable Development Goals. ESCAP encourages especially the smaller and developing countries to active participation. One of the most important challenges is to improve the economic situation of the region's 680 million poor.

History

Originally, the commission under the name *Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East* (ECAFE) was established in 1947 in Shanghai, China, to support the post-war reconstruction. The Headquarters was moved to Bangkok in January 1949. The current name of the commission, ESCAP, was introduced in 1974. The purpose of the change was to emphasize both the economic and social aspects of development and the geographic location of its member countries. ESCAP's tasks were extended in 1977 by the General Assembly. The regional commissions have since then been the main UN economic and social development centres within the five different regions.



Membership

ESCAP currently has 53 members, which not only include Asia and Pacific countries, but also former colonial powers like the Netherlands or France. Furthermore, there are 9 countries represented as associate members.

Australia's Role

Australia was among the first 10 countries that joined ESCAP on 28th March 1947. Since Australia actively participated in international discussions to create the *2030 Agenda*, the implementation of 17 Sustainable Development Goals in the Asia and Pacific region is considered to be a significant issue.

My Experiences

The proposed topics in ESCAP were the following:

- I. *Transitioning to Sustainable Energy: Meeting Growing Energy Demands*
- II. *Information and Communications Technology for Disaster Risk Reduction*
- III. *Promoting Climate Resilience*

The first challenge at the conference was to set the agenda. Australia's proposal was to focus on the second topic, since natural disasters are becoming more and more severe in the region. It seemed obvious to me that *Disaster Risk Reduction* (DRR) should become our priority and in the first place we should protect human lives. Especially that Australia is working hard on developing DRR and eager to share experience with other Member States. I was against discussing the third topic because it's very general and wide, so it was quite risky that we sketchily touch many aspects, but in the end achieve less outcome. The first and second topics were a guarantee to concentrate on one specific issue what I thought to be more efficient.



Setting the agenda took the whole evening and we finally agreed to discuss the first topic at first. It was not my first choice, but I gladly accepted the compromise, since Australia considers the transition to sustainable energy a matter of utmost importance.

What happened next was for me the greatest surprise of the whole NMUN. It turned out that, besides agenda setting, there were no conflicts or controversies among the Member States during the whole ESCAP session. At first, the participants who had enough luck to

be at the top of the Speaker's List, held speeches and presented the topic from their perspective. It became immediately clear that we all pursue the common goal: to provide access to sustainable energy for everyone. Of course, there were many different approaches and issues related to the topic, but the conference reminded rather a friendly brainstorming session than a fierce political debate, what I actually expected after the first evening.

The first partners to start writing a resolution were New Zealand, Japan, Indonesia and Solomon Islands. Over time, our group grew to about 15 countries. The most challenging part was merging resolutions with other groups, which was a very tedious task because it lasted so long to rewrite most of the paragraphs. Meanwhile, I was able to hold two speeches. I encouraged the Member States to work closely with the private sector and promote the investment in sustainable energy sources among local businesses. For that purpose, I suggested to adjust domestic tax policies to give the entrepreneurs a positive impulse to change. While writing resolution that was my priority as well.

At the end of the conference, we had three resolutions on the floor and all of them were unanimously adopted. There were altogether two abstentions, but no one voted against. It was a fantastic feeling to know that we all strive to achieve the same goal and debate only to present all perspectives finding the best solutions. I wish the politics were the same in the real life ...

5.11 Australia at the World Health Organization

represented by Celia Bähr

My Committee – an Overview

Role, Functions and Power

The *World Health Organization* (WHO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN) trying to improve the international cooperation concerning health related topics. The WHO is a member of the *United Nations Development Group*, a consortium of many United Nations agencies, created by the Secretary-General in 1997. The head of the WHO is the Director-General, appointed every five years by the World Health Assembly. The World Health Assembly (WHA) is the legislative and supreme body of WHO. The main function of the WHA is to set the policies of the organization mainly through approving the WHO work program. The Assembly furthermore elects 34 members to the Executive Board for three-year terms. The board is able to submit draft resolutions to the WHA for consideration and has a special committee consisting of 14 members for program, budget and administration (PBAC). The Executive Board, which meets at least twice a year will

be simulated during NMUN in March 2019. The 72nd *World Health Assembly* will take place from 20 to 28 May 2019 and the upcoming Executive Board meeting is scheduled for the beginning of 2019. The current Director-General of the WHO is Tedros Adhanom, an Ethiopian politician. The Headquarters of the WHO is located in Geneva, Switzerland, however, there are six regional offices and 150 country offices around the world.



History

The WHO was established on 7 April 1948 after its constitution was signed in 1946 by back then all 51 members of the UN and 10 additional states. It was the first specialized agency of the UN to which every member subscribed to. The first meeting of the *World Health Assembly*, where the Member States decided on a budget of US\$ 5 million for the year 1948, was finished on 24 July 1948. Its first priorities were to control the spread of malaria, tuberculosis and sexually transmitted infections. The WHO played a big role in the successful eradication of the smallpox in 1980. Before they decided in 1967 to spend US\$ 2.5 million annually, 2 million people were dying from smallpox every year. In 1974, the WHO developed an important partnership with the *Food and Agriculture Organization* (FAO), the *United Nations Development Programme* (UNDP), and the World Bank. In 1986, the WHO started its global programme on HIV/AIDS. The first World Health Report was published in 1995.

Membership

The WHO has 195 Member States, which are organized in 6 regions (Africa, Europe, South-East-Asia, Eastern Mediterranean, Western Pacific and America). Each region has a Regional Committee, which meets once a year. All WHO Member States except the Cook Islands and Niue are members of the UN. The WHO also grants certain countries, for example Palestine and Taiwan observer status. Liechtenstein is currently the only UN member not being presented in the WHO. A state becomes a full member of WHO by ratifying the Constitution of the World Health Organization adopted by the International Health Conference held in New York in 1946.

Main Tasks

The WHO is urging all Member States to work together to achieve universal health coverage. Its goal is the eradication of non-communicable disease and the prevention, treatment and care of communicable diseases. A prompt response to international health emergencies is another objective of the WHO. They are promoting good lifelong health and consequently define health as state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease. The extreme importance of WHO's work can be highlighted through the fact that the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) contain nearly 50 health related targets.

Australia's Role

Australia is a member in the Western Pacific region, being the largest and most diverse of the 6 regions. This region is home to roughly one fourth of the world population with nearly 1.9 billion people living in the 37 countries. Australia was a founding Member State of WHO. In 1956, the first WHO representative office in the South Pacific was opened in Sydney. Australia currently is home to 46 WHO collaborating centres. As described in the *Australia-WHO Country Cooperation Strategy 2018-2022*, Australia deeply values collaboration and will engage with its national expertise.

My Experiences

The issues at NMUN 2019 were:

- I. *Antibiotic Resistance as a Threat to Global Health*
- II. *Addressing Mental Health in Protracted Humanitarian Crises*
- III. *Strengthening Global Resilience against Outbreaks and Epidemics*

Australia's preferred agenda setting would be 1 to 3, so the order suggested by the NMUN-Team, however the Committee decided for 1, 3, 2.

Australia got to deliver several speeches, concerning among other things agenda setting, the importance of Antibiotic Resistance in the food production industry, the power of education and the need of strong border screening programs. Since the WHO worked on one single resolution Australia cooperated with all Member States, however the collaboration with the United States of America was the strongest.

Excerpt of Australia's Position Paper on Antibiotic Resistance (written by Celia Bähr)

“The rapidly alarming problem of antibiotic resistance will have tremendous effects, if it is not tackled immediately. If bacterial infections can no longer be cured with antibiotics, the spread of infection will fasten and the symptoms of various diseases will worsen. Australia recognizes that antibiotic resistance is a major threat to global health.

There are already several strains of bacteria, which no longer respond to antibiotics. In this regard, Australia particularly emphasizes the relevance of *Critical Antimicrobial Resistance* (CAR), which means that the organisms have become resistant to last line antibiotics. Australia established an alert system for CARs on March 2016. Generally, the causes of antibiotic resistance have been identified and with this knowledge the issue can be combated effectively. One main reason for antibiotic resistance is the over-use and over-prescription of antibiotics. Hence, Australia prohibits over-the-counter sales of antibiotics. The necessity to provide a prescription by a health care professional has proven effective to reduce overall consumption.

Australia suggests broadband educational campaigns for the national population. An inspiring example campaign is the *Antibiotic Awareness Week* in which Australia participates annually since 2012. In these campaigns Australia welcomes the interdisciplinary *One Health Concept*. Furthermore, Australia encourages a better training of medical staff in order to recommend alternative healing strategies. Regarding the training of professionals, since 2014 the *National Safety Quality Health Service* requires every Australian hospital to implement infection prevention and antibiotic resistance programs.

Australia also welcomes and supports research efforts to develop new antibiotics as a short-term solution with immediate effects on human health. Australia welcomes a thorough surveillance of infection rates. The program *Antimicrobial Use and Resistance in Australia* (AURA) enforced in 2016 is an outstanding example of a surveillance system, which closely monitors recent developments concerning this issue. By that, AURA identified the overuse of antibiotics in aged care facilities as problematic.

Australia calls for international cooperation in order to monitor antibiotic resistance on a global level. Moreover, Australia believes that especially developing countries have to

improve their infection control through implementing better hygiene. But antibiotic resistance is not only an issue in the sector of human medicine. Australia therefore encourages cooperation between the WHO, the *Food and Agriculture Organization* and the *World Organization for Animal Health*. This approach is needed immediately due to the fact that the extensive use of antibiotics in the meat production is a major source of antibiotic resistance. Australia is one of the world leaders in combating inappropriate antibiotic use in food production. Australia has been ranked as the country with the fifth lowest use in this sector. Australia decided not to use antibiotics for growth promotion. Furthermore, no antibiotics that have been determined by the WHO to be critically important in human medicine are used in the chicken industry. In contrast to many other countries, Australia is not using fluoroquinolones, colistins and fourth-generation cephalosporins in food production. Australia is also continuously working on the development of new vaccinations for animals in order to reduce the need of antibiotic treatments. Successes can be seen for instance in Tasmanian aquaculture.

Australia encourages the collaboration of different Member States in the combat against antibiotic resistance. Therefore, Australia supports global cooperation via forums as the *Asian Pacific Leaders' Malaria Alliance* which was co-chaired by the Prime Ministers of Australia and Vietnam in order to develop a cross-border political commitment and an action plan for diseases like Malaria, which does not stop at borders. Hence, Australia calls for all Member States to fight the global threat of antibiotic resistance together.”





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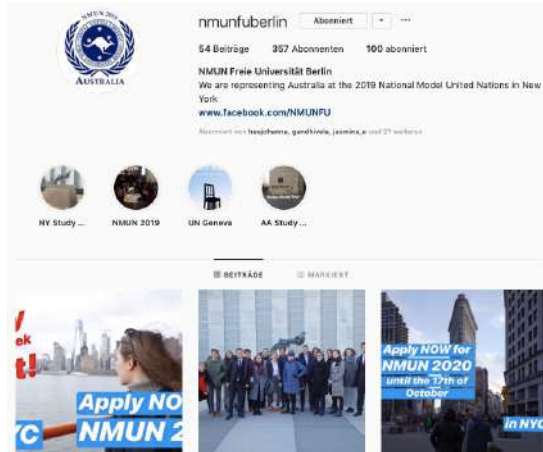
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