

MUNJOURNAL

Soraya Walli
representing
Libya at the
South African
Model United
Nations
Competition in
Cape Town,
South Africa



Left: Sarrah Sheikh
and Devangi
Vaghela, the co-
chairs of the 3rd
Annual Aga Khan
Academy MUN
Conference

Right: Rahim
Daya delivering
his policy
statement for the
World Bank at
the EAMUN
Conference

A Word from the MUN Journal Editors...

By Soraiya Merali and Sarra Sheikh

My co-editor, Sarra Sheikh, and I have attended the EAMUN Conference for two years now. I think we can safely say that the MUN programme has been an experience of a lifetime – one that gives us an amazing feeling of accomplishment.

From SAMUN to the 3rd Annual AKA,M MUN Conference, from Geneva to the MSMUN and EAMUN, there has been a lot of hard work and commitment involved.

I must give credit to Sarra Sheikh and

Devangi Vaghela for successfully running and chairing this year's AKA,M MUN Programme. According to advisors Mr Kassam and Mr Bardai, this year's group has been one of the most hard-working in terms of preparation for the conferences. However, I'm sure they would agree that there is some room for improvement on the schoolwork side.

On behalf of all delegates, my co-editor and I would like to thank our advisors and teachers, Mr. Naheed Bardai, Mr. Zubair

Kassam, Mr. Rafiq Ahmed and Mr. David Ochieng for guiding us through the entire programme.

As editors, we must say that it has been quite fascinating to read about the various experiences the delegates have had. Editing their reflections has been a real pleasure. We would like to thank all of you for your efforts and inputs in making this journal a success.

The MUN Journal Team. From left to right: Soraiya Merali (Editor), Zilna Shavdia (Layout), Rhoda Namboze (Layout), Sarra Sheikh (Editor).



The Aga Khan Academy, Mombasa 3rd Annual MUN Conference

By Immaculate Koigi

On Thursday the 4th of November 2009, The Aga Khan Academy, Mombasa hosted its 3rd Annual AKA,M Model United Nations Conference. This Conference included the East African Model United Nations (EAMUN) teams in collaboration with the Middle School Model United Nations teams. It was a very active event, as many countries around the world were represented such as the US, UK, Nigeria, Bahrain, The World Bank and many more. All the participants worked really hard to prepare for the event as we all had to write resolutions and debate them at the Conference.

I represented the United States of America with my fellow delegate, Sarah Yusuf (DP2). In preparation for the Conference, we spent a lot of time researching issues that the USA could present to the MUN. It was difficult because being the US, we didn't have major issues that needed to be dealt with in the UN so we had to look for problems our allies had instead. We finally decided to write a resolution on behalf of the Democratic Republic of Congo



Left: Sarah Yusuf preparing her notes for the debate

Bottom: Immaculate Koigi reading her country's policy statement

(DRC) to be able to implement a pilot programme to allow it to recover from being a failed state. Unfortunately, our resolution failed because we were not able to turn in the resolution on time. This resulted in our resolution not being debated at the Conference. At first, we were really disappointed because of all the hard work and effort we put into it, but that did not stop us from actively participating in the debate.

In my opinion, the Conference was fun. We were able to effectively debate issues that really mattered and also prepare the people that wanted to go to Nairobi in February. Being the USA, we had a lot of advantages; we were a powerful country and we were able to have something to say for nearly all the resolutions. However, the most challenging part in this Conference was when we had an 'emergency session' and had to split up into three groups to write a resolution in 10 minutes, bearing in mind that it took some of us more than a day to effectively write a good resolution! We were able to work as a team and wrote a good resolution and debate it.

The Conference ended with a prize giving ceremony in which all the participants received certificates of participation. In addition to that, a few chosen delegates won certificates for best newcomer, best resolution, best country and best speaker.

Overall, it was a very fruitful Conference. Not only were we able to debate important issues, but some of us also managed to develop our public speaking skills. It was an unforgettable experience and I highly encourage anyone reading this to consider participating in next year's AKA,M MUN Conference.

South African Model United Nations

Debate I - A Global Responsibility Towards Failed States

By Zilna Shavdia

After an intense day of going over rules and regulations, meeting other participants and their respective teachers, the time for the first debate had finally arrived. All the delegates were smartly dressed in formal clothes and were looking their best. There were sparks of nervousness and excitement in the air as we all entered the conference hall. Delegates were busy revising their speeches or discussing their final points. The energy in the room was unbelievable, especially when the guest of honour, the Mayor of Cape Town, walked in and delivered an inspirational speech.

The debate started by delegates presenting their speeches to the rest of the participants. Each delegate had a maximum of 5 minutes in which they had to mention their country's view and stance on the topic being debated. Thereafter, we went into 60 minutes of formal caucusing where countries supported, explored and poked holes in each other's speeches. The main argument here was whether or not there should be a universal definition of the term 'failed states' and how aid can be provided to such countries, whilst respecting their sovereignty.

Soon after, two delegates from each team stepped out of the conference hall for a lobbying session in order to come up with a working resolution. Simultaneously, the two delegates that were left remained in the conference hall and debated further on the topic. Lobbying was truly one of the best parts of the whole conference. Representing their respective countries to the fullest, delegates chased each other like in a game of cat and mouse in order to negotiate, present their views and eventually try and persuade other delegates to side with them so as to create a strong resolution in the end.

It was very interesting to see students internalise their countries' policies and portray their countries' policies through their debating skills.

At the end of the lobbying session, countries had to produce closing statements that summarized the debate and their general feelings about the debate from the perspective of the country they were representing.

The following is a copy of our speech given as the delegation from Libya on the topic of Failed States:

Bismillah.

Honourable delegates and distinguished chair,

The delegation of The Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya brings greetings from our leader of the revolution, president of the African Union, King of Kings of Africa, Colonel Gaddafi. As our leader for the past 40 years, Colonel Gaddafi has transformed Libya from a colonial state to one that is now independent, resilient and dynamic.

It is against this backdrop that Libya feels particularly compelled to comment on the phenomenon of the 'failed state'. The 'failed state' is a concept fabricated by meddling Western powers who continue to ignore the dominant roles they played in dividing and colonizing developing countries. Decades ago, they colonized countries in Africa to exploit her resources and impose a supposedly superior culture and governance structure, thus creating, and now perpetuating, the cycle of Africa's difficulties. Borders were created arbitrarily and without regard for the cultures, backgrounds and beliefs of the people in these regions. These borders were created in the interest of the European powers, not in the interest of the people of Africa. As a result, these states were doomed to fail. But when they have failed, the blame has been unjustly placed on them. In this assembly, powerful Western countries brand these states as 'failed', without taking into consideration the root cause of their 'failure'.

Today, you will hear the statements of many other countries. Several of these countries may provide you with many of the clichéd reasons why some states, particularly in Africa, are failing. These will include reasons like bad governance, corruption, war, civil unrest, and tribalism. These factors can contribute to the failing of a state, but are more so the by-products of the failure of colonization.

The goal of Western powers is neither to create peace nor to engage in humanitarian nation-building, but to establish an economic foot-hold in our region for the sake of oil and other natural resources. As Western

nations compete for economic supremacy, they rarely try to understand the true needs of these countries and disregard the rich diversity and history that have moulded the identities and values of the people. We cannot allow the UN to be used for such short-sighted intervention. Instead, the UN must be used for its original, honourable purpose of collective security where all nations, large and small, are equal.

We call for investment and aid-packages for previously colonized states without any ulterior motives or political strings attached. Western nations

give aid and demand that we create electoral democracies and multi-party systems. These can work in the West, but not necessarily in Africa. Therefore, the nature of the problems faced by supposed failed states on the African continent and elsewhere must be carried out locally. Regional organizations can use this aid more wisely because they understand the needs and values of their neighbouring communities. From a political and security perspective, regional organizations better understand the political landscape and can

provide a more trusted stabilizing force. Only under these conditions can sustainable economic development be achieved.

The delegation of Libya hopes for the creation of a favourable compromise from this Assembly.

Thank you.



From left to right,
Soraya Walli,
Zilna Shavdia, Mr.
Naheed Bardai,
Varun Korla and
Meekaeel Kurji
after the debate

SAMUN Debate II Information and Telecommunication in the Context of International Security

By Meekaeel Kurji

The topic of our second debate was 'Developments in the Field of Information And Telecommunication in the Context of International Security'.

In a modern world that seems to be getting smaller and smaller by the day, information is shared much quicker and easier than ever before. The internet has broken physical boundaries and allowed people from all over the world to be able to interact with each other.

In adjustment, many governments have put in place filtering systems to limit what their citizens are allowed to view. Most claim that this filtering is only to protect children from harmful sites like pornographic ones. A few others, like Libya, did it to prevent information from the outside world from corrupting the minds of their own citizens.

For example, last year, China initiated a new program called the Green Dam Youth Escort Project where it was mandatory that all new personal computers, even those imported, should have a compact disc or setup files attached or have the software pre-installed. The announcement from the government claimed that this software would limit access to pornography and that it was essential, especially for younger users. However, the software soon created an outburst from the citizens, as they claimed that it monitored their behavior and blocked politically sensitive information. It was later revealed by Colin Maclay, a Harvard academic, that the filter at that time was made up of 85% political keywords and only 15% pornographic keywords.

Governments have long been under fire from citizens and various institutions for limiting

press freedom and oppressing the true views of the people.

Representing Libya, we had to take a fairly unorthodox view on the topic given Libya's policy against privately owned media. Not everyone agreed with us, but we stuck to our country's policy until the end. Here is a copy of our speech:

Bismillah.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Members of the General Assembly,

On behalf of the African Union, the delegation of the Great Socialist People's Arab Jamahiriya and its leader, King of Kings of Africa, Muammar Gaddafi, the Libyan delegation would like to send our warmest greetings to all delegations present.

Every government seeks to protect its citizens and each must do so to the fullest extent of its ability. Working to protect one's citizens is not a method of oppressing freedom of speech, but rather a means of preventing dangerous and destabilizing influences from harming our people.

While the role of the media should be to unite the nation, foreign and private media tend to do the exact

Meekaeel Kurji (left) reading a resolution during the second day of debate at the SAMUN competition.



opposite. Private media is set up with a selfish profit motive which overrides all other motives. As a result, private media spreads misinformation, alien values, baseless claims and tabloid scandals for entertainment purposes, which violate the trust of the people. This dangerous and trivial entertainment promotes negative influences that have no place in society.

Similarly, foreign media often makes false accusations and spread malicious rumors about our government in an attempt to incite violence and pit our own people against each other. All of these harmful influences cause the erosion of our country's rich culture and values.

Libya's Revolution in 1969 brought about a true state of the masses, a people's state. The government is represented by the people. There is no distinction between the two. Libya's government consists of the People's Congress, which is made up of various People's Committees that change frequently and are elected by the public. This is the form of a true democracy. Only our government represents the will



Left: Libya's table at the Awards Ceremony on Robben Island

Bottom: Meekaeel and Varun seated at the Awards Ceremony



of the people and works in their best interest at all times. As the press is a means of expression of society as a whole and the government is an extension of the people, state-owned press is then the only legitimate voice of the people.

No other organ or body can claim to represent the true views of the people.

Libya continues to embrace technology and new media with open arms, but it must be used responsibly.

However, the notion of international guidelines on information access is generally not supported by Libya.

These international standards would likely represent the interest of Western states that widely differ in values and traditions from Libya. Countries like Libya would be forced to adhere to guidelines inconsistent with their own values. The flow of information and telecommunications technology would be best monitored at a regional level due to the mutual understanding and respect the countries have for one another.

If Libya is to develop more advanced information and telecommunications systems, it will need better technology and expertise. The root cause of this technological gap between developing and industrialized nations is colonialism. Colonialism stripped Africa of its chance to catch up with the West in terms of technology and development. Despite this, Gaddafi has ordered 1.2 million \$100 laptops with the hope that every child in Libya would own a laptop. Western powers must compensate for their actions that still stifle African countries today by providing all of the necessary IT and telecommunications technology needed to combat the continuing effects of colonization and imperialism without any preconditions or political strings attached. In this way, African nations may run the systems in a manner best-suited for themselves.

We look forward to having a very engaging discussion with our fellow nations on this issue.

Thank you.

Robben Island

By Soraya Walli

After two days of intense debating, we embarked on a journey that changed our lives forever.

Having been awoken early, we packed up and left the comfort zone of our hotel to board a cruise to Robben Island, which was about a half hour ride from Cape Town.

As we disembarked the cruise, we were utterly dismayed by the bareness and bleakness of the island. The shore shone grey from the thick covering of concrete which engulfed the rest of the cold and barren island.

It seemed difficult to believe that people survived on such a lifeless island. The weather also reinforced the depressing atmosphere, as it was windy and very chilly.

We were then met by our 'prison warden' who made us sit in uniformed rows and forced us to look up at the sun; he also mentioned that it was a punishment for many inmates. He shouted rude Afrikaans words at us that were used earlier to distinguish a prisoner's race. We were amazed by the extent of racism through such crude words.

Thereafter, we were split into two groups and led to the bottom of an old and deteriorated boat where we were locked in for over 2 hours. With no water, bathroom facilities or much walking space, we were stranded and left helpless in the claustrophobic room. This experience was rather demeaning as we sat aimlessly waiting for something to happen.

We were released after the long and tiresome wait; however, a more challenging task awaited



Left: Soraya Walli practicing her speech on the second day of the competition

us. Having been put into pairs, we had our hands and legs tied to our partner and we were made to hop in straight lines towards the cells in the cold weather.

As we walked through the compound, we came across wildflowers, penguins and white tailed bunnies that hopped around.

When we got to the cells, we realised the brutality and harsh condition endured by all the prisoners. We were again sorted into groups and put into the public cells, where we sat on the cold concrete floors for another 5 hours.

During this period, we made friends we wouldn't have made if it weren't for our encounter in the cell. We also shared our experiences and talked of Nelson Mandela and how hard his life had been on the island. As a group, we chanted a South African freedom song and this brought us together; we were finding our purpose in

becoming leaders that would continue to change the world.

Dusk fell across the sky and it was nearing darkness. The weather got colder and we could hear the howling of the sea breeze. We were finally let free and rejoiced when we met the others. By this time, everyone was exhausted, hungry and cold.

Thereafter, we were given tags with former prisoners' numbers and it determined the food we received for dinner. The walk to the cafeteria was mysterious yet blissful; having been a part of the prisoners' experiences that were embedded within the cell walls was most touching for me.

The food we received was exactly what the prisoners had; however, we had the privilege of eating meat. It was rather bland, soggy and wasn't the least bit appetizing.

Then we had a reflection session where we poured out our feelings of the experience in the jail cells. Everyone expressed



Left: Former prisoner giving a talk to the delegates on Robben Island, showing a sample prisoner's card

Bottom: Meekaeel and two other delegates from South Africa participating in morning exercises on Robben Island at 5am



how grateful they were and this was most satisfying to hear.

We were then escorted to our dorms where we spent the rest of the night.

The next morning, we were again awoken at 5 am and made to engage in sporting and team building activities.

We finally got a chance to tour the island. We visited the detention cells, the churches, libraries and the areas where the prisoners were forced to work. However, the most moving encounter for me was when we visited Nelson Mandela's cell. It was a tiny cell with a thin mat and basic cutlery. There was nothing else. It was bare and appalling.

Some students were very emotional as they recalled the harsh conditions he endured and his passion for his country.

We then had a talk with a former prisoner who had been at the island for 11 years. He told us about the past events and the severe conditions he lived in. It was very sad and we now understood the extent of his suffering and brutality.

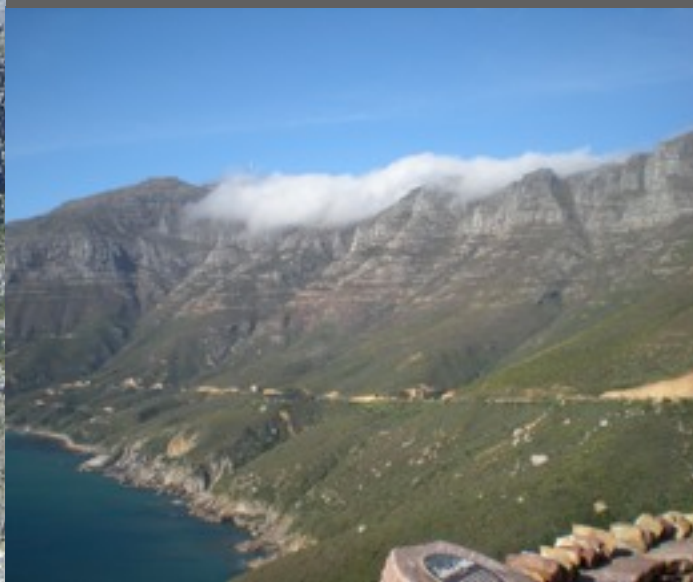
After the Awards Ceremony, we left Robben Island as changed people who viewed life in a different and broader manner. We understood the value of life and we were able to empathize with people who had suffered. We learnt forgiveness through Nelson Mandela and how it is so important in life today.

This definitely was a learning experience where we were able to appreciate the determination and strength portrayed by all the prisoners, and for that we are grateful to have been a part of their lives, even if it was only for two days.



Left: Zilna Shavdia at the top of Table Mountain

Bottom: Scenic view from Chapman's Peak



My Cape Town

By Zilna Shavdia

Staying in the city of Cape Town in South Africa was an amazing and truly memorable experience. The city is filled with breathtaking and mesmerizing scenery, magical monuments and unbelievable natural features. After staying there for almost a week, it was about time that we went out to explore this miraculous city.

On the last day of our trip, we woke up early to a delicious breakfast overlooking the gigantic Atlantic Ocean, mountains, beach and historic fishing harbour. We set out to discover what the city had to offer. We started the day by hiring a fancy metallic blue Ford Focus car. Full of excitement and anticipation, the first stop on our list was Table Mountain, one of the city's most well known assets. Once there, to get the

top of Table Mountain, we had to use a cable car. The ride to the summit was overwhelming; moreover, as we went higher and higher, the scenery became even more incredible. Everything below us looked like little lego pieces, such that it was almost impossible to spot our shiny blue car. Situated at the south-western tip of Africa, Table Mountain National Park (TMNP) encompasses the incredibly scenic Table Mountain Chain stretching from Signal Hill in the north to Cape Point in the south and the seas and coastline of the peninsula. The view from the majestic mountain was simply breathtaking, with beautiful valleys, bays and beaches magically surrounded by the sparkling blue waters of the Atlantic Ocean. The park on the mountain was filled with extraordinarily rich, diverse

and unique fauna and flora - with rugged cliffs, steep slopes and sandy flats.

Thereafter, next on the list was Canal Walk, the most comprehensive and compelling lifestyle shopping experience in South Africa. Soraya, who was sick all morning, suddenly had all the energy in the world when we drove into the mall. Like a child in a toy store, she went bonkers as soon as she ran in. The site of seeing over 400 stores was absolutely electrifying; all we could hear were the cash counters “cha-chinging” everywhere. Soon after shopping, till Soraya dropped, we satisfied our stomachs with Big Macs, french fries and a generous amount of Coke. We then set off to Chapman’s Peak. The bright sun, long sandy beach and majestic sea brought nostalgic feelings about home. The lookout point on Chapman’s Peak was a never ending sight. Beleaguered with excitement, Meekael decided to try out his new bright red trumpet that he brought from Canal Walk. Fighting against the cold strong winds, Meekael struggled to stand on the huge boulders. He blew all the air out of his lungs into the vuvuzela like a messenger. To our surprise, the loud sound from the instrument attracted a Blue Whale!

Thereafter, we went for a long drive around the Greater Cape Town area, among yellow wood, palms, wild olives and lemon trees. The greenery around us was astounding, as

we drove past luxurious bungalows, each one of us claiming one. The ride was so smooth that all of us fell fast asleep. Who knew teachers could drive so well? From then on, Mr. Bardai treated us to mouth-watering ice cream, the perfect way to end the ride.

As we watched the sun, we made our way to yet another mall for some more shopping and to get take away for dinner. Whilst Meekael and Varun ate their last Big Macs, Mr. Bardai and I went fishing for some sushi! Back at the hotel, whilst the boys fought over which football match to watch, Mr. Bardai, Soraya and I were busy munching on our scrumptious dinner.

All in all, our trip to SA was filled with memories, fun and enriching experiences. The sand, sea and sun reminded us of Mombasa. We were at home, although we were miles away.

Left: Meekael blowing on his vuvuzela

Right: Mr. Bardai with view from Chapman’s Peak





Left: From left to right, Mr. Zubair Kassam, Devangi Vaghela, Nafisa Abdulhamid, Terry Waiganjo and Omar Malik in Geneva

Below: Terry Waigajo and Nafisa Abdulhamid meeting with a Human Rights lawyer in Geneva



Geneva

Rethinking the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

By Devangi Vaghela, Omar Malik, Nafisa Abdulhamid, Terry Waiganjo and Mr. Zubair Kassam

Mesmerising, cold, exquisite, luxurious, delicious are all the adjectives we could think of when we heard the word, "Geneva". We were well aware of what lay ahead in terms of work to prepare for the Conference; nonetheless, the excitement still lay within us.

The Conference in Geneva concerned the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the amendments to it. The Earth Focus Foundation was looking for ideas and ways to modernize the Declaration, as it was written 61 years ago. We chose to tackle education as we thought that times had changed and the Declaration had to be modified in order to address the present. We amended Article 26 to encompass pluralistic education, targeting all areas of life and all places in the world.

With the high expectations set by Mr. Kassam and Mrs. Nicola (who is with Earth Focus in Geneva) we

made our speech in good time to present it to Mr. Bardai for feedback.

Excitement was high among the delegates, especially as we were attending the Conference in a city that is so influenced by the UN:

"It has always been my dream to visit the United Nations in Switzerland, so when I was selected to represent my school at a Human Rights Conference in Geneva, I was thrilled. This was no ordinary experience, as we were given the opportunity to do some incredible things like visit the UNHCR, the UN building itself and even experience a local festival celebrated at that time. Being able to interact with other people interested in human rights was absolutely enlightening, as we got to share our views on the matter, especially since we come from different parts of the world. All in all, I am blessed and indeed very

lucky to have had this opportunity to attend the Conference in Geneva. It really broadened my horizons on different global matters.”

- Nafisa Abdulhamid

Aside from the formal and engaging Conference we had to attend, we knew we were in the most beautiful city in Switzerland. We were drawn by the mesmerizing lights and decorations for Christmas, the annual tradition celebrating l'Escalade which is the festive celebration commemorating the victory of Geneva against the French.

We were especially interested in seeing the marching which took place on the streets in the town. Many men were dressed in historical clothing and some were dressed in army uniforms. The women were dressed in handmade Swiss dresses. The march went on with songs and instruments being played. There were guns being fired during the march which set the tone and beat for the whole experience. The festival was spectacular and was something which the Swiss in Geneva hold dear to them. It was amazing for them to share and teach us the history of their culture.

This trip gave the participants a chance to grow as delegates and better understand human rights laws that our lives and governing systems are centered around



Left: Devangi Vaghela and Terry Waiganjo at a restaurant in Geneva

“My trip to Geneva was a brilliant and maturing experience which gave me the opportunity to interact with different students from around the globe and understand their perspectives on issues that are currently affecting our world.

I was able to voice my opinion concerning the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It was an intellectually stimulating experience.

Outside the Conference, I had the opportunity to visit numerous

monumental buildings such as the United Nations and had the chance to experience the beautiful city of Geneva. All in all, it was an incredible experience and one I will never forget.”

- Oamar Malik

We would like to thank Mr. Kassam, Mr. Bardai, Mrs. Azina and Mrs. Nicola from Earth Focus for making this trip such a memorable, educative and exhilarating trip for the four of us.



Above: Students enjoying the (fast) food in Geneva

The food!

By Devangi Vaghela

It is virtually impossible to forget the food we had in Geneva. The patisseries, le chocolat, fondue ... were among the fine cuisine we had in Geneva. With the experience of Mrs. Nicola and Mr. Kassam, we were in good hands and ensured of the best of the best. We dined at ‘*Chez Ma Cuisine*’, which, according to all of us, was one of the best places we had dinner at.

Swiss food is very different from Kenyan food. It was fascinating trying new and peculiar dishes, as it added on to the whole experience and enjoyment of the trip. It is what will remain with us, especially when we only had one chance to try certain things. We went full on and ate anything that came our way! We could call ourselves true tourists. With no regrets felt, we had the best time of our lives!

Presentation made at the Human Rights Conference in Geneva

By Devangi Vaghela, Nafisa Abdulhamid, Terry Waiganjo and Oamar Malik

His Highness the Aga Khan to the School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University, on the 15 of May 2006 said, "If better communication is one part of the answer, better education is another. This means, above all, developing new curricula which will meet new demands – especially in developing countries. We must do more to prepare the leaders of the 21st century for economic life in a global marketplace, for cultural life in pluralistic societies, for political life in complex democracies."

Good Morning Ladies and Gentlemen. I am Nafisa Abdulhamid and these are my colleagues: Devangi Vaghela, Oamar Malik and Terry Waiganjo. We are here today from The Aga Khan Academy, Mombasa, Kenya, to discuss the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Imagine un monde où près d'un milliard d'habitants de la planète ne savent ni lire ni même écrire leur nom ; un monde dans le XXI^e siècle, où la plupart de personnes ne savent pas utiliser un ordinateur ou un calculatrice ; un monde où les pays ont une rapide baisse d'économie parce que les citoyens, qui sont le force vive de toute pays, n'ont pas assez des qualifications pour travailler et produire un maximum d'effort. Abominable n'est pas ? Et ce pour ça l'importance d'éducation naître. Mais pour quoi est-il une grande emphase de promouvoir l'éducation ?

Le but d'éducation dans le monde c'est d'équiper les jeunes pour l'avenir en développement de ses pays. Tous les pays veulent développer pour protéger et donner leurs populations un bon niveau de vie. De pour cette raison Les Nations Unies a établi et implémenté le droit humain fondamental : le droit à l'éducation.

Cet article a vraiment aidé les personnes dans les pays moins développés pour l'augmentation d'alphabet mais seulement dans l'éducation de base. L'éducation primaire s'est ne pas suffit, spécialement dans les pays plus développés ; parce que qu'est on peut fait après ça ? Ce n'est pas suffit juste pour savoir les bases d'une éducation. Il y a une croyance que c'est important pour prendre un changement dans la déclaration universelle des droits de l'homme pour inclure le droit de l'éducation secondaire gratuit pour tous les jeunes.

Il y a beaucoup de raisons de l'importance d'éducation pour les jeunes, comme aider de réduire la pauvreté, de prévenir les maladies, d'éradiquer la violence et de lutter contre l'instabilité politique.

Oui l'éducation gratuite est nécessaire mais c'est important de prendre en considération l'aspect de qualité que les jeunes

recevront. Ce n'est pas très efficace pour avoir un professeur et cinquante élèves ; ou un système que n'incorporer quelque chose de culturelles et d'éthiques.

La fondation du monde est dans les mains de nos générations ; donc, c'est à nous de promouvoir le droit, l'égalité et le gratuit de l'éducation primaire et secondaire.

As my fellow colleague, Nafisa, mentioned, education is an essential foundation that supports individuals through the time of life, which ultimately means one is well-learned about the society that they live in. However, it appears that this education is not available to all schools across the globe, and a clear example is reflected by the recent crisis in Kenya.

We are all aware that Christmas and New Years are joyous events since they are times of celebration with family and friends; however, during this period in the year 2007, international broadcasting channels across the globe showed Kenyans transforming these wonderful moments to times of anguish, grief, sorrow and mourning. Rather than coming together, an image was created whereby Kenyans tore apart families and fought against their own friends; Kenyans metamorphosed into savages, as they brutally killed their own brothers and sisters by burning them alive or beating them to death. They raped women and young innocent girls. They showed a total lack of foresight as they destroying property, leaving hundreds of thousands of citizens displaced and losing numerous businesses which were at the very heart of the country. Were they really seeking to give the country the image of viciousness and barbarity? Or was it a representation of the simplistic generalization that news reporters had made?

Ladies and gentlemen, education is a fundamental necessity in today's world. Not only does education provide a healthier understanding for the rapid development of technology today, but more importantly, it enhances an improved perspective towards global issues, tribalism, different cultures, traditions and values and above all else, the notion of pluralism. Who am I? Who are you? What can we do together?

On that note, we must take into consideration that there is more than the stereotypic image created by the media. Kenya has largely accepted pluralistic ideas. Kenya is diverse and has an exceptional sense of culture: it is home to 52 tribal communities with 69 distinctive spoken languages, ALL of which are living. Moreover, the literacy rate has risen to 74% and the primary school enrollment to 76%.

However, does it really matter if the youth today have access to educational facilities, when the education they receive does not achieve its sole purpose of facilitating a path on which generations, both young and old, understand the need and importance of co-existence? What is the usefulness of education when individuals have been deprived of the knowledge of other ethnic groups and vast cultures that are alive and living in their very own countries? Do these individuals know what really exists in the real world or are they only aware of the thriving stereotypes that have formed and been passed down over the past centuries?

Ladies and gentlemen, let us pause here and think. Would the citizens of our country, Kenya, have reacted the way they did if they had learnt and accepted their ethnic and racial differences? Would we, as spectators, have accepted the descriptions from outside “informants” if we only knew a little bit more about Kenya and its great potential?

One of the remarkable aspects of the Kenyan nation is the number of tribes and races present; therefore, we should take optimum advantage of this. Instead of showing weapons at each other, there is no doubt that they ought to have come together as one unit— Kikuyus and Luos, Masaai, and Kalengin, colored and non-colored – they should all collaborate and collectively give their marvelous nation what it truly deserves and the only way to achieve it is through educating them and others about the different cultures, tribes and religions that co-exist not only in Kenya, but the entire world.

The incorporation of a learning scheme which entails and promotes the idea of cultural awareness and pluralism within the local community, during the fundamental stages of education, is an idea which would effectively empower and alert the upcoming generation at even the most basic level.

The idea of learning about pluralism is, to an extent, included in the Declaration of Human Rights. However, the Declaration was unsuccessful in effectively incorporating the idea of an approach to learning to be specific and molded towards the cultural differences of the local society; of an education that recognizes the current issues of a society in order to teach the idea of pluralism (in specific context to the local society) as effectively as possible.

There is already current initiative and effort being made towards this cause since the Millennium Development Goals hope to achieve universal free primary education by 2015. Commendable progress has been achieved as 570 million children have already been enrolled in primary school globally.

In many of the current educational systems, like in Kenya, the education in the free fundamental stages does not include the teaching of pluralism. The majority of Kenyan children are raised with cultural prejudices without being aware of the rights that they are entitled to or the context in which

they learn about different societies is not relevant to the conflicts that are being faced within the local region. Thus, such prejudices are passed on to the next generation.

Therefore, pluralistic learning (at all levels) should be unique to every country, and relative to the specific cultural conflicts being faced within the society. Also, free government provided education should be adapted to the domestic lifestyle while still following the Declaration of Human Rights’ ideology as a measure to appeal to, and involve, a larger spectrum of students.

The achievement of such a goal would effectively combat the segregation and pre-judgments that youth are subjected to at an early stage. Thus, broadening their minds to include acceptance in a manner which never would have been possible before.

It is our belief that if the youth of a country learn to understand and accept each other, then the possibility of discrimination and cultural conflicts will die out, cultivating an upcoming generation of citizens and leaders who share a collective mindset for co-existence and eliminating the very cultural discrimination that has plagued our world with hatred and war.

If such ideology were to be integrated into the Declaration, the United Nations could endorse the idea and influence countries around the world to incorporate such a scheme into their educational structures. As it is our belief, and the belief of many leaders around the world, that the most effective way to change the world is to educate the youth.

Although free primary and secondary education is important, one must also consider the quality of that education.

If every citizen had the same rights and duties, then ethnic or regional problems would not arise. If the education system included the learning of different cultures in the context of pluralism and the regional environment, then the children would be provided with a foundation of the idea of oneness since I exist because you exist, and you exist because I exist.

As said by my fellow colleague Devangi, the post election violence in Kenya erupted due to the lack of respect for others. The inner hatred felt by the violent citizens affected the country. This could be traced back to the absence of cultural and pluralistic design in the education system.

Here are some common stereotypical photos of what people view Kenya as. How many of you are equipped to handle these stereotypical images? What is the first thing you think about when you see these pictures? (Slideshow)

Is this really what Africa represents? We must take into consideration that individuals are subconsciously driven by a bias, hence, selective interpretation. Therefore, it is important that yours, mine and everyone's education encompass learning of the societies that exist in order to overcome this bias.

If we had better knowledge then we would realize that education was not the only cause of such a disaster; however, it was a contributing factor to the conflict that arose. If their education system integrated such pluralistic ideas, would the conflict have been as devastating as it was?

The incorporation of these ideas into the education system will enable children to understand each others' backgrounds, perspectives and what they believe in. Without this, the children will grow up in an environment where they are not aware of each other and will not live as a whole community.

From now on, we must look after the present, learning from the past in order to prepare for the future.

The following is what Article 26 currently looks like:

- (1) Everyone has the right to Education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.
- (2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
- (3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.



Devangi Vaghela, Oamar Malik and Nafisa Abdulhamid in front of the United Nations Building in Geneva.

This is our vision of what Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights should look like in 2048:

- (1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary, **primary** and **secondary** stages. Elementary, **primary** and **secondary** education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and accessible to all on the basis of merit.
- (2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall **encompass** understanding, tolerance, friendship and **pluralism** among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
- (3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children. **Governments shall embrace a curriculum which is culturally relevant while maintaining the Universal Declaration of Human Rights ideology as a measure to appeal to and involve a full spectrum of students.**

Dignity and the human personality give an individual a sense of value and worth. The existence of human rights demonstrates that human beings are aware of each other's worth. This is the reason why everyone should have the right to pluralistic education.

Geneva Reflections - A Faculty Perspective

By Mr. Zubair Kassam

I was fortunate to be able to take a group of students to Geneva for the Earth Focus Conference for the first time in April of 2008. At that time, twelve of us, ten students and two faculty members, embarked on an incredible adventure. For weeks prior to our departure, the students worked on their presentations for two different Conferences – one on Endangered Species and the other on Human Rights and the Environment. The trip was an incredible experience for the students and faculty. When I returned to Mombasa, I did not think I would ever have the opportunity to undertake such a trip again.

Imagine my pleasant surprise, therefore, when I was offered the chance to take a group of four immensely talented students to Geneva in December of 2009 for the Earth Focus / Project 2048 Conference. It was an opportunity I could not pass up, especially as I felt I would be returning to a place that conjured up wonderful memories for me, a place at once familiar yet with much still to discover, a place of great friends and colleagues. Once it was confirmed that I would be accompanying Devangi, Nafisa, Terry and Oamar, the real work began!

On the one hand, there was the hectic work of ensuring that our Kenyan students would be able to obtain visas as soon as possible. This involved making miracles happen and, indeed, miracles took place. The students had their visas in their passports in just under a week! On the other hand, there was also the exciting, though intense, preparation that needed to take place so that the ‘team’ would be ready to make their presentation during the Conference – a presentation that would be available over the internet as a continuous feed and would link students in Geneva with their peers in the United States, Ghana and Kenya. Naturally, this put pressure on all of us!

I must say, the students handled the pressure extremely well. I do not know if it was the prospect of missing the December exams or the adventure that awaited them, but the team worked tirelessly to put together an incredible presentation – at once engaging and thought provoking. We spent the first few meetings considering human rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights from multiple perspectives. We also examined the UDHR in order to determine if there was need for change; the students definitely felt there was and it related to Article 26, the right to education. Now the real work for the students began, as they had to create a presentation in which they had to make their case for change.

During the Conference, Devangi, Nafisa, Terry and Oamar made their presentation to students from in and around Geneva as well as students from Germany and Ghana (via the internet). Their presentation was very well

received and provoked an interesting discussion amongst delegates and faculty in attendance. I recognize that I can hardly be considered an unbiased observer; nonetheless, I believe the students did an outstanding job, not only in terms of their presentation, but also as ambassadors for the school. Their professionalism and politeness won them many fans and they easily made friends with many of the student delegates and conference participants.

Once the Conference was over, we had a wonderful time taking in some of the great attractions of Geneva. We definitely had to visit UNOG (the United Nations Office in Geneva). It was a real treat to be able to visit the UNHCR offices, to take in a day of shopping (how could we ever return to Mombasa without Swiss chocolate?) and to spend a morning at Collège du Léman. Along the way, we made many new friends – Jesse at Earth Focus Foundation, Sofi at UNHCR and Marie Claire from Collège Voltaire, all of whom made our visit to Geneva so memorable. The person we would miss most, of course, was Madame Nicola from Earth Focus, without whom the trip could not have taken place. As always, she remained our ever-gracious host, ensuring that all our wishes were fulfilled throughout our stay in Geneva.

We returned to Mombasa feeling bittersweet. We missed our AKA,M family, but also knew we would miss our new Geneva family as well. We certainly imagined ourselves ‘missing’ the flight from Zurich to Nairobi just so that we would have the chance to stay in Switzerland a little bit longer. However, honesty prevailed and we literally ran across Zurich’s airport (including successfully passing through three security checkpoints and taking a train to the departure gate) to make our flight to Nairobi!

I returned to Mombasa convinced, more than ever, of the value of the Geneva trip. The Earth Focus Conference provides our students with exposure to a world so different from the one in Mombasa. They are exposed to diverse viewpoints and, as presenters, must think critically about the issues to be able to defend their points of view. Similarly, they are able to experience learning at a school that contrasts in many ways with their own. The Geneva trip is a trip of a lifetime and we, at The Academy, are fortunate to have Earth Focus as a partner in this exciting venture. Through our combined efforts, I believe we go a long way to fulfilling the IB mission statement’s objective of creating “inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people [who] help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.”

Middle School Model United Nations

Reflections

By Keshni Haria and Isabelle Wenger

The 16th Annual Middle School Model United Nations Conference was a “once in a lifetime” experience, which we, the AKA,M MSMUN students, will never forget. If we were to describe the experience using three words, it would be intriguing, memorable and remarkable. During the 3-day Conference held at UNON, we had an opportunity to actually put ourselves into the shoes of real UN delegates, by participating in the debates and behaving like them. This exposed us to current global issues and we could also suggest possible solutions to solve these issues. Furthermore, the Conference enhanced our social skills, as we were able to interact with people from all around the world and make new friends. However, in the beginning, some of us sort of felt nervous to speak up because it was a whole new environment with new people. Moreover, we did not all go into one room together to debate - we were separated according to our committees, and into different rooms. Each room consisted of about 100-200 people! In this situation, it was difficult and quite rare to be chosen to give opinions or suggestions, as the Chair tried to give almost everyone in the room a chance to speak up.

Not only did this experience improve our public speaking and social skills, but some

Year 9s who attended the MSMUN Conference had an ‘advantage’ in their Humanities class! Since their unit in Humanities this term was on the United Nations, their class was required to write resolutions and then debate them later on. Being in the MUN club taught us how to write resolutions and attending the MSMUN Conference enabled us to understand the structure and format of the UN. The Year 9s were able to apply their knowledge gained from MUN to their Humanities course.

We appreciate all the effort put in by Mr. Ochieng in preparing us for the Conference and teaching us new concepts we were unaware of – thank you! We would also like to thank Mrs. Nyandieka and Mr. Rafiq for accompanying and supporting us throughout the experience.

For all those wishing to attend the Conference next year, we hope you have a fruitful and memorable experience. All the best!

Left: Ziana Mitha and Shivam Vyas (front); Rayyaan Kurji and Riaz Lota (back) representing Sweden at the MSMUN conference in Nairobi

Right: General Assembly conference room



A Word from the MSMUN Patron

By Mr. David Ochieng

Like all other Model United Nations Clubs, the MSMUN seeks to model debates as they happen at the United Nations' key stations worldwide. They use diplomatic language, procedure and etiquette in all their deliberations.

The MSMUN helps students develop sharp research and analytical skills as they pour over their relevant country information to come up with position papers. In a bid to present their facts, they must analyze and synthesize their country's position regarding various issues raised for debate. The students develop tolerance, public speaking and negotiation skills. They enhance their social skills by meeting peers of diverse backgrounds and nationalities. The students learn diplomacy at an early age and get acquainted with the origin, purpose and role of the United Nations in the world.

The Club compliments academic growth in various disciplines as well. This year, the majority of the delegates were drawn from the Year 9 students. The MSMUN Club gave them a head start in their Humanities unit that required them to write a resolution for debate as part of the assessment at the end the unit. These resolutions were debated. Suffice it to say that the Language Departments must

equally have had a fair share of the benefits derived from participation in the club!

The Middle School Model United Nations has grown by leaps and bounds in the last two years. Whereas in 2009 the number of delegates to the 15th Annual MSMUN Conference at United Nations Offices in Nairobi (UNON) was only six, this year's 16th Annual Conference had close to triple this number. From the look of things, the MSMUN Club has become so popular that we will definitely need rigorous mechanisms in place to help us choose the next delegates for 2011.

The countries we represented included Nepal, Niger, Mexico and Sweden. Mexico was represented ably by a strong delegation consisting of Amira Sihag, Keshni Haria, Karan Malde and led by Abbas Palkhi. Being a Security Council nation, their resolution nudged the world to attend to piracy in the Indian Ocean urgently. This resolution was passed in the Security Council Committee, but could not muster enough votes at the General Assembly. We congratulate the Mexican Delegation!

As a club, we acknowledge the support and help that Mr. Rafiq and Mrs. Nyandieka gave us throughout the MSMUN Club season this year.

Left: Mr. David Ochieng listening to the debate taking place

Right: Keshni Haria, Amira Sihag, Abbas Palkhi, Karan Malde and Shaqeel Jiwa representing Mexico



East African Model United Nations

The 'Real' MUN

By Immaculate Koigi

Even though there was a lot of fun that was involved during our whole MUN experience, it was a process that we had to take seriously. The reason that the Model United Nations began was to give students the chance to become leaders in the future, by helping them to tackle current world issues and giving them a chance to debate them in preparation for the real United Nations.

Resolutions had to be written using clear diplomatic language. Research had to take place in order to write a reliable, accurate resolution. We had to learn all about the current issues that were taking place in the countries that we were representing, thus allowing us to know what to expect when people are either debating for and against it. In addition, we had to know the basics about the country that we were representing, for example, the capital city, the GDP per capita, etc. Personally, what I thought was difficult was learning about a country that I did not know about. For example, in the EAMUN Conference that took place in Nairobi this year, I represented Bahrain and I did not know anything about Bahrain before the Conference. Therefore, I had to research the country and all the major issues that it was facing.

Furthermore, the Conference was serious to a

certain extent. No applause was allowed and there were strict uniform regulations. For the girls, they were not allowed spaghetti tops and the sleeves had to be at least four fingers thick and the skirts were not allowed above four fingers distance from the knees. For the boys, they had to wear suits and it was compulsory to wear ties.

There were four people representing each country and four committees; hence, each person had to represent the country on a specific committee (Ecology, Economics, Human Rights and Politics). I represented Ecology and I gained a lot from this because I became more aware of the environmental issues that we face currently in the world. I think that Ecology was a difficult committee to represent because all the resolutions were written in good faith and they all had good intentions. Thus, I had to pick up on small problems like the funds delegates were looking for

Left: Immaculate Koigi with her notes ready for the day's debates



or the technique of tackling the issue to be able to see whether the resolution was effective as a whole.

In my opinion, we all learnt a lot through the Conference. For those that had no experience in MUN before joining MUN at the beginning of the academic year, they were able to gain a lot out of the experience. I joined MUN in 2009 and I joined lacking any MUN knowledge. I have learnt a tremendous amount, as now I am aware of many things around me and many of the issues that are facing the world currently. For me, it was an experience that has changed the way I see the world. In addition, MUN has given all of us the encouragement to strive and change the world and help to make it possible for us to do so.

An Insight on the Whole EAMUN Experience

By Soraiya Merali

Some people out there feel that MUN is all about work, resolutions, and even more work. My job was to interview two very different people with different levels of experience in the MUN programme. I agree, it does require commitment and hard work, but MUN is not only about writing resolutions, researching and dressing formally. There's a lot more to the trip.

I interviewed Sarra Sheikh, a highly experienced MUN participant. She has been for the EAMUN twice in her Diploma years, and has also attended the Geneva Conference. Furthermore, she was Chair of the programme this year. She has grown quite attached to the programme over the years.

So, this was your last time at EAMUN. How do you feel?

It's been the best session I've had out of all of them. Although I didn't get to participate as actively as I would have liked to, the debate was amazing!

What was it like being Chair of the AKAM Conference?

Hard work, definitely, but it's also very fulfilling. I really like it when I can see the talent that comes in, the new ideas.

But it can't be all good, can it? What are some of the challenges you face?

One of the worst things about being Chair is reminding everyone about deadlines... It gets incredibly annoying when people don't meet them. But at the end of it all, the experience is worth it!

(Delegates take note: the Chair is throwing you a hint – learn to hand in your work on time. It can't be that hard!)

If you had to go back and re-live one moment in this trip, what would it be?

Tough one! I'd like to say... the bus ride on the last night when we were all chilling as a group, not stressing ourselves out about the resolutions, or our countries, or which country we would have to support or go against the next day. It was great!

There you have it – Sarra Sheikh's experience – first-hand. The second person I interviewed was a UK-raised, first-time MUN delegate, Immaculate Koigi. Take a

look at her thoughts and feelings on the MUN experience:

Immaculate, how did it feel to be at EAMUN for the first time?

I don't know what to say!! (Nice answer, Immaculate!!) Okay, it was nerve-wrecking! There were so many people there... I think it was a really challenging experience, but after all the hard work, it really was worth it. It gave me a good sense of accomplishment.

You went there as a delegate representing the Kingdom of Bahrain. What was your role?

It was a difficult position for me as I'd never heard of Bahrain before then. It was good because I got to learn about a "great" country. As a member of the Ecology committee, I basically had to debate resolutions that tackled environmental issues.

Okay, what was your favourite memory of the trip? Whoa, don't look at me like that, it's the last question!!

Oh my God, there are so many. The ones I can think of are: the bus rides, the let's-watch-scary-movies-until-we-are-traumatised night, the amazing outings we had each night... Am I forgetting something? Oh yes, of course... the famous "Mafia" games! It was a good laugh!

So, as you can see, there is a lot more to the whole MUN experience than just work. MUN does a lot more than just helping to enhance your public-speaking skills, boost your confidence and teach you about the United Nations. Whether at the Conference or just within the school, it creates bonds between delegates, some of which are so strong that they may last a lifetime.



Left: Terry Waiganjo and Rhoda Namboze outside of the UNON building

Below: Female Academy delegates inside the UNON building



The (Not So) Secret Life of a Diploma Student in MUN

By Rhoda Namboze

The most common opinion people have about MUN is that it is just a club that demands too much time and entails too much work for the members. I fully agree with this assertion – let us face it, MUN is anything but a walk in the park. Nonetheless, I think the benefits one reaps from the experience deserve all the time that is put into the club. We all know, or at least have heard of, the demands and immense pressure that DP2 students are under. I've been asked why I chose to join the club at the peak and most hectic time of my high school academic experience. At first, I decided to see the club through to the end simply to prove a point. I wanted to prove to everyone that had warned me against joining the club wrong. I also

wanted to prove to myself that I was able to rise to what was expected of me by both the club and my work. However, before I realised it, MUN went from a challenge to an experience I'll never forget.

One of the most challenging aspects of MUN is the writing of a resolutions. Even though there may be grounds for worrying, this would only apply to people who have not fully dedicated themselves to the club. For the select few who have, writing resolutions is like simply putting on paper probable solutions to problems being faced in the real world. The reason I found writing resolutions so interesting is because, for a moment or two, it feels like you have the authority

and power to do something, to make a change in the world.

My fellow DP2 classmate, Sarra Sheikh, and I shared a room that made the experience all the more opportune since we were both faced with the same situation. Fortunately, none of us had to pull all-nighters because the teachers had set aside evenings that were dedicated to doing homework, which I found invaluable. The important thing I found about dealing with my assignments was striking the right balance between school work and MUN work, and the experience as a whole. I found that if it were all work and less 'play', the trip would hold nothing entertaining. On the other hand, if it became less work and all 'play', I would end up being swamped with work by the time I got back home. Do not get me wrong by misunderstanding me when I refer to the MUN experience as 'play'. It held the prospect of being both work and play, but when compared to my assignments, it was inclined more to the 'play' side. This balance enabled me to thoroughly enjoy all that MUN had to offer because I was on the right track, in terms of keeping track of my assignments.

Each day at the Conference, delegates had to face and discuss issues that we had researched thoroughly. Having something to say or ask during time allocated for

debating a resolution was one thing, but actually getting the chance to speak was an entirely different matter. If we were lucky, the Chair would see our placard atop the sea of similarly expectantly raised placards and perhaps we would get our 15 seconds of fame. A delegate that sat next to me would confidently put her placard up without having anything to say because she knew full well that the chances of her being chosen were slim.

At this point of our lives, we, DP2s, are expected to know the career path we hope to follow. I had always played with the idea of working in the UN, but I had never taken myself seriously – not until the Conference. While most of us went through the motions of procedures because it was part of the requirements, I analysed the prospects of making a career out of it. I see myself not necessarily as a delegate arguing in the General Assembly or one of the committees, but working behind the scenes or in one of the agencies and commissions. The MUN experience not only made the first and second terms of my final year in school all the more enjoyable, but it also helped affirm my career choice.

Left: Rhoda Namboze and Salima Mitha at Village Market

Right: Academy delegates posing outside the UNON building



Life at KIE An Insider's Perspective

By Tadge Holding-Fay

Our stay at the Kenya Institute of Education was, on the whole, a good one. The rooms were spacious and warm and the showers had hot water all the time. The rooms were cleaned every morning by an unfortunate member of the Institute's cleaning staff. I would say the only grievances any of us had were that every time the showers were used, they flooded the bathroom and the food was only just edible, oh, and one of the rooms had no lights.

KIE is a fairly modern building that is made up of several blocks on a large compound. It has several spiral staircases, no lifts, and mirrors covering the ceilings which were of great interest to the girls who used them to take interesting pictures. When we first arrived, we were assigned roommates. There was two of us to a room. As we lugged our heavy suitcases up the seemingly endless spiral staircases, the boys and girls parted ways.

Every morning started with a hurried scramble to get dressed, fed and on the bus on time. You could see girls going from room to room to locate lost items and borrow forgotten ones. After the first breakfast, some clever students and teachers bought their own breakfast from Nakumatt or the Artcaff  for the next day.



Left: Tadge Holding-Fay, all smiles

The evenings saw us preparing for the next day and doing homework in one of the conference rooms at the Institute, before we relaxed for the rest of the day. Well, when I say relaxed, it was more like got our game faces on before we played some exciting rounds of Mafia and Charades. We found out who were the sneakiest Mafia and who watched the most movies during those sessions, and let me tell you there is no better way to get someone to make a fool of themselves than getting them to play Charades!

Those who didn't play games the whole evening could be found crowding around a laptop to watch a movie in one of the rooms. The movie program consisted of *St. Trinian's*, *Angus* and *Paranormal Activity* (after which everyone jumped whenever a door opened).

So on the whole, I would recommend staying at KIE, but eating out would probably be a good idea.



Above: From left to right, Joshua Williams, Nausheen Sumar and Atiya Harunani at Village Market

Fashion Do's

By Nausheen Sumar

The dress code during the Conference was formal. To avoid confusion, the dress code rules were clearly stated on the first day of MUN. For gents, business attire was expected. Strictly no t-shirts and no denim were permitted during the Conference. Although there was some flexibility between wearing short sleeve and long sleeve shirts, no delegate was allowed to enter the assembly without a tie. "Ladies, no skirts shorter than the width of your four fingers **while seated** will be tolerated during the Conference," repeated the EAMUN Securitaries

from time to time. Like the gents, no ladies were allowed to enter the General Assembly (GA) with casual clothes. Furthermore, we were also not permitted to wear leggings as they are regarded as "informal"!

The one rule that all delegates were bound to was wearing their badges at all times in the UNON building. If one was seen without a badge, or even defying the dress code, his or her badge was clipped. One of the Senior Chairs at the Conference made it clear that "ANY student who has his/her official EAMUN name badge clipped a **SECOND TIME** for ANY REASON will be expelled from the programme!"

The Bus Rides

By Salima Mitha

“Bring back, oh bring back, oh bring back my soda to me!” This was the theme song for our journey on the 20-seater which was with us throughout our trip to Nairobi and back, as well as for our night outings and our trips to the actual MUN Conference. We grew rather fond of the off-white vehicle, more so because we had some of our best memories in it.

Going back to our theme song, it was a special remix of “Bring Back my Bonny to Me” by our Year 10 boys. I still wonder what inspired it.

Our group was a rather peculiar combination – all the Year 10s were boys and all the DPs were girls, and to balance it all out we had a boy and girl from Year 11.

I think I can safely say that the bus was like a second home to all of us. More than 4 hours a day were spent on the bus in Nairobi thanks to the horrendous traffic in the city! This called for a range of entertainment and we definitely got creative.

The first was a rap free-style with a teacher and student, ‘rap collaboration’ as they liked to call it. Our very own Terry Waiganjo and Mr. Rafiq got us started, and, even better, we had Mr. Bardai and Immaculate beat boxing!

We bet these guys could have out run all of the contestants at *AKA, M's Got Talent* with their creativity to come up with utter nonsense. We always knew they had it in them.

Next came the singalongs, taking off with Celine Dion's Titanic theme song and then more by Elvis Presley, Beyonce, T.O.K (Mr. Bardai loved that one), and Linkin Park.

Saving our precious and tuned voices for the evenings, we played quite a few games during the daylight hours. Most of you have probably already played this before, but just to remind you of what you and your siblings used to play when you were ten or so, this is how it went. Everyone playing has to name a country or city beginning with the last letter of the one mentioned by the person before. Following the same rules, we played the game using names of famous actors, singers, tennis players, footballers, you name it!

I can assure you that the title Mafia isn't reserved for those running the black market. We certainly had a few professionals in this game of Mr. Bardai's. I do not want to spoil the game for the next MUN group of people, so all I'll say is beware. MUN doesn't only train people to become a group of diplomatic delegates...

Left: Students and advisors showing their ties on the last day of the Conference

Right: All Academy delegates at the UNON building in Nairobi



A Word From the Observers Box

By Mr. Rafiq Ahmed

As I settled into my seat at the back of the UNON Conference room, the first session of the EAMUN Human Rights committee was about to begin. The delegate representing the United States stood at the podium to introduce a resolution proposing measures to prevent the exploitation of Latin American mine workers. Even before the delegate could finish elaborating on the benefits of a pilot program, a sudden piercing shout from the audience interrupted her speech: "Objection to consideration!"

"Please state your objection."

"Ethiopia believes that there are far more pressing human rights crises in the world, and that we should focus on those issues instead of workers' rights. We should not debate this resolution at all."

I was shocked. The UN has an obligation to examine human rights issues of all kinds. Discussion of one issue does not prevent the discussion of other pressing issues later. In any case, shouldn't an "objection to consideration" motion consist of more than a complaint about timing? In my experience, only a substantive argument that points out critical flaws in the resolution can prevent the subsequent debate on that resolution. Ironically, the Ethiopian delegate at the Conference was demonstrating the type of obstructionism usually associated with the U.S. representatives to the UN.

I suddenly felt an urge to defend the resolution from this unfair criticism and allow a more developed discussion of the issues to take place. Instinctively, I reached for a placard to raise in the air, but I could do



Left: Faculty advisors of the EAMUN Conference. From left to right, Mr. Naheed Bardai, Mrs. Azina Jiwa, Mr. Rafiq Ahmed and Mr. Zubair Kassam

nothing! There was no placard for me to raise. I was now at one of my first MUN Conferences as an advisor instead of a participant. As an observer, I could now appreciate both sides of the debate on each resolution without the need to constantly think about the views of the country I was representing. Yet at the same time, the lively and sometimes heated debates were so exciting that I often wanted to march up to the podium and make my own impassioned pleas to the General Assembly.

As our AKA,M delegates participated in debates about issues as diverse as protecting workers' rights, improving access to education, subsidizing medicines to developing countries, and saving monkeys in Nepal, I started to recall some of the great MUN experiences I was able to take part in during university: working late into the night on resolutions and speeches, negotiating compromises and voting agreements with fellow delegates, and chairing committee sessions. Even detractors like the various "objections to consideration"

motions or the antics of the notorious delegate from Vietnam show how dynamic and unpredictable an MUN Conference can be. Now as an advisor, I was thrilled to witness how much our AKA,M delegates were able to delve into important issues and make their own memories from this MUN experience. After this Conference, I know I won't be surprised to see some of our own students playing important roles in the United Nations in the not so distant future.

In Summary...

By Mr. Naheed Bardai - Dean of Students

This has been a tremendous year for the various Model United Nations programmes at the Academy. Over the course of the Academic Year, MUN students participated in at least one of several events, including the AKA,M MUN Conference, the MSMUN Conference, the EAMUN Conference, the Geneva Conference and the SAMUN Competition. In total, over 60 students participated in MUN, dedicating over 3000 hours to research, skills development and participation in conferences. The commitment of our students has been outstanding this year. As advisors, nothing touches us more than seeing our students, who have put in countless hours of preparation, stand in front of a podium and present their perspective on an issue impacting our world. For many students, it was their first time speaking in front of a large audience (sometimes numbering 400). For others, it was their first time writing a speech, or having to take a stand on an issue of global importance. Seeing these students demonstrating the confidence and charisma to do what they have done makes us so proud.

Students who are seasoned veterans of the MUN programme have the opportunity to participate in either our Earth Focus Conference in Geneva, Switzerland or the SAMUN Competition in Cape Town, South Africa. Both of these Conferences provide opportunities for students to research, in depth, topics of concern. In this year's Human Rights Conference in Geneva, students took a critical look at the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and proposed amendments that could make the Declaration more relevant to tomorrow's world. We were fortunate to have four outstanding students representing our school: Devangi Vaghela, Nafisa Abdulhamid, Terry Waiganjo and Omar Malik. In this year's SAMUN Competition in Cape Town, the Academy was representing Libya. Students engaged in two days of debate, first discussing the issue of failed states and second discussing information technology and global security. Again, four exceptional students represented the Academy: Varun Korla, Zilna Shavdia, Meekael Kurji and Soraya Walli. Both Conferences provide opportunities for our students to excel at a global level intellectually, and to develop socially and culturally.

As an Academy, we are concerned about giving students the opportunity to develop as ethical leaders. MUN provides many such opportunities. However, in order for our communities to develop, the intellectual and personal enrichment that MUN provides our youth must also be accompanied by action. We encourage all

participants in MUN to think about how their intellectual experiences can be translated into sustained change – whether it is with regards to the environment, human trafficking, poverty or corruption. Debating the issues is excellent; however, translating those conversations into meaningful change is humanizing. In many cases, students struggle because they do not know where to start. Often, they think they are too young, or that no one will listen to them. Let the starting point be your passion. Let it be something you believe is important to you, your family and your community. Once you've identified the area of interest, discuss your ideas with your friends, family and teachers. Consult widely to get ideas and advice – and then, get started!

This academic year, three students had a significant impact on our MUN community: our Chair, Devangi Vaghela, Deputy Chair for Skills Development, Sarra Sheikh and Deputy Chair for Fundraising, Adil Safdar. Without their hard work and dedication, this year would not have run so smoothly. Next academic year, we look forward to having a new team of students leading the MUN programme. Our Chair is Zilna Shavdia, Deputy Chair for Skills Development is Tadge Holding-Fay and Deputy Chair for Fundraising is Pralin Mehta. We look forward to more learning and success next year.

Our team of faculty advisors has been relentless in their dedication to the programme and in encouraging students to persevere and always do their best. For this, the school is indebted to these fine professionals. Mr. David Ochieng, along with Mrs. Kheirunnisa Walijee, inspired our younger MSMUN students to engage actively with challenging issues of global import. Mrs. Mary Nyandieka gave her expertise by accompanying the students to the MSMUN Conference. Mr. Rafiq Ahmed, our first Teaching Fellow, brought a wealth of experience and enthusiasm and contributed significantly to the students' preparation for the SAMUN Competition, and the MSMUN and EAMUN Conferences. Mr. Zubair Kassam has worked tirelessly with students, supporting and encouraging them throughout the year. In addition to coordinating the AKA,M MUN Conference and playing a leading role in preparing students for the EAMUN Conference, Mr. Kassam spearheaded the Earth Focus Conference in Geneva.

Overall, it has been a year of tremendous learning. I am looking forward to another exciting year of MUN activities next academic year!