

An SMUN 2016 Publication

# TORCH

Thursday, 16 June 2016

Issue No. 3

## PRESS ARTICLES

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## MEET THE TEAM

Interviews with NATO Head Chair Hakim, OIC Chair Amirah and Crisis Director Ryan!





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# *Torch Issue 3*

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# *APEC: 2<sup>nd</sup> Committee Session Raises Concerns over TPP*

BY TANAY PALEKAR | PRESS DELEGATE, ASAHI SHIMBUN

Yesterday's debate saw countries such as South Korea being very open and vocal about their views regarding the Chapter 24 of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement, which establishes a Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SME) Committee that will meet regularly to review how well the TPP is serving SMEs, consider ways to further enhance its benefits, and oversee cooperation or capacity building activities to support SMEs through export counseling, assistance, and training programs for them; information sharing; trade finance; and other activities. Today however, various countries were vocal about their concerns over the TPP, which meant that the session was largely devoted to reassuring or convincing other countries to join the TPP, making agreements to change certain laws.

China raised its concern, stating that it would not join the TPP unless and until the TPP agrees to operate according to China's terms. China also stated their goal differed from that of the US. They stated that their goal was to enhance regional economic integration in the East, and it accused the US of making continued efforts to reduce China's influence by intentionally introducing policies that deliberately excluded China. The exclusion of the People's Republic of China from the discussion was seen as a subtle political slight to China's abilities.

Concerns were also raised by Indonesia, who felt that the strict rules regarding transparency and anti-corruption were "over the top" and "unreasonable", according to the representative. The delegate of China also stated that if offered a more reasonable deal, Indonesia would consider joining the TPP.

The Asahi Shimbun also interviewed the delegate of New Zealand, who expressed concerns surrounding the demonstrations which were occurring against the implementation of the TPP in New Zealand. Therefore, New Zealand's main opposition comes from within the country and not from external pressure. Although the New Zealand government strongly believes that the TPP will bring vast benefit to their economy; they also believe that the happiness of their people matters more, which means it is unlikely that New Zealand will ever implement the TPP in their country.



# *UNCSW: Continued Deadlock at UN Discussion on Women Migrant Rights*

BY HOH KAH YEE | PRESS DELEGATE, ASAHI SHIMBUN

The United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW) convened for their second session today on the topic of women migrant labour rights, as more delegates joined the heated debate. Following yesterday's agreement to establish guidelines governing the protection of women migrant rights, today's discussion revolved around the responsibilities of host countries. Delegates agreed that female migrant workers should be given access to formal education.

However, some delegates from countries such as Equatorial Guinea and India pointed out that this would not be possible for their countries as they face economic constraints. In addition, for many economically less developed countries, existing social infrastructure for their own citizens remain lacking and therefore should be prioritised over social infrastructure for migrants.

On the other hand, countries such as Russia and Japan asserted that the host country should not rely on those excuses. Japan sees migrant workers as assets as they take up unpopular jobs which are essential for the growth of the country.

Delegates then brought up collaboration with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) for assistance in terms of healthcare services,

education and protection against abuse. Specific details on the roles and funding of NGOs continue to be a point of debate as delegates disagree on the extent and degree of their involvement.

Delegates were torn between the introduction of short-term and long-term measures such as increasing transparency on the gender pay gap in the immediate future versus establishing an educational framework for migrant workers and changing the minds of locals. In addition, source countries considered increasing access to rights education for potential migrants in order to increase awareness of migrant rights.

The council is currently divided into 3 different blocs with 3 working papers underway. Despite this, all were able to agree that unequal treatment toward female migrant labour is rooted in gender and social stereotyping, making constant reference to the past framework outlined in the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers (ICMW).

It would be illuminating to see how NGOs attempt to reduce discrimination and protect women migrants where the individual governments have failed.



# *JCC IJA: Assault to Kedah Successful?*

BY CHRISTINE LOH | PRESS DELEGATE, ASAHI SHIMBUN

## *More Japanese men dead too!*

As Asahi Shimbun's correspondent entered the conference room, the great Japanese generals were already hard at work, attempting to capture Malaya and bring glory to Japan! However, when the generals were observed to be scrambling with their strategies when faced with any setbacks, General Takuro Matsui's words "this is an extremely successful assault" appears to be slightly misplaced.

Here are several quotes from our honourable Japanese generals:

"Please tell me if there is any action, because I am not paying attention."

"Please, I beg of you, inform me before there is a big disaster."

Polite as they were, the generals remained clueless and idle as more Japanese sons died in vain. All this bloodshed stemmed from their indifference to new reports on the battlefield and the sheer lack of communication between generals.

Asahi Shimbun has learnt that communication is not the only thing missing in the conference

room. Realism cannot seem to find its place as General Chuichi Nagumo stated that he could not "as much as (he) would like to, share General Yamashita's optimism" on navy issues; demonstrating only the lack of a cohesive vision within the Imperial Japanese Army.

More Japanese men died due to the successful British bombing. This was despite the British soldiers' unfamiliarity with the Malayan terrain, which is precisely why they were intelligent enough to use air forces rather than sending ground troops. While Japanese men were sent for training in guerilla fighting techniques, their enemies tucked themselves comfortably into the convenience of the pilot seat.

However, Japanese sons are not dependent on the Imperial Army for everything. As they are on Malayan soil, the option of getting the locals to supply basic necessities such as food and oil remains. However, it is questionable if the locals would provide for the Japanese – the very individuals who destroyed their homeland.

As Japanese men die for a greater cause, the generals continue to bicker among themselves. As wrongs unfold, the generals blame each other until someone finally decides to admit that "it is all our fault". Accountability seems to be a problem amongst the generals.



Asahi Shimbun deeply regrets the present situation where Japanese men risk their lives for our nation. Our correspondent has confronted General Yamashita on his generals' childish bickering while many more Japanese sons die under their reckless order.

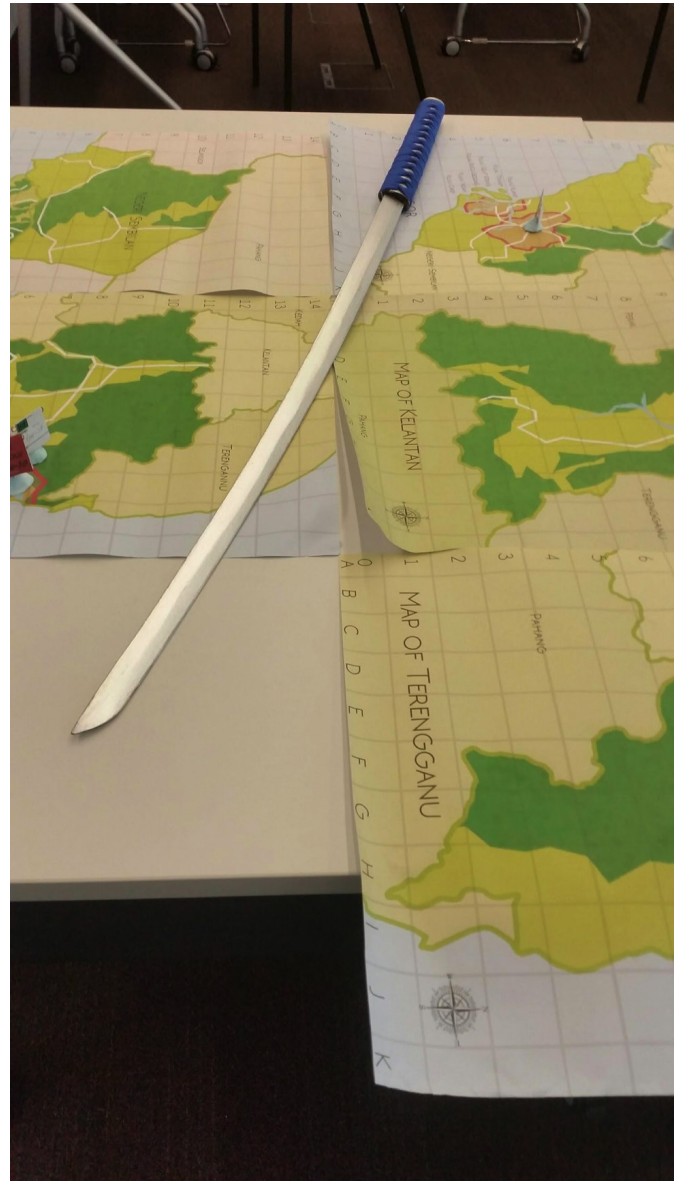
AS: How do you think that you can win the war when there is miscommunication within generals?

GY: We are totally coordinated! I refuse to believe that there were any miscommunication. In fact, I made it a point to information immediately. Anyone who does not send their directives to me is gonna get it!

AS: What do you mean by 'get it' when the Japanese is dwindling in number? What punishment would you propose?

GY: Putting my faith in other commanders and reducing the capacity of commanders that act on their own initiatives by transferring units to commanders that can do their job.

Apparently, the existence of miscommunication is entirely dependent on one's belief, and for a powerful man like General Yamashita that wields power to order men under him, it just does not seem to matter to him.



*The correspondent was afraid that one of the generals might be shocked at his responsibilities and commit Sepukku during the conference*



# *SPECPOL Debate Goes in Circles*

BY BUDDY NG | PRESS DELEGATE, FOX NEWS



It is the second day of SMUN 2016, but the delegates of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (SPECPOL) are still unable to find their footing in the debates. While their speeches are clearer than before, a new problem has arisen: the debate itself is going in circles.

The day started off with speeches reminiscent of those from the day before, that is, vague and leaving the issue barely explored. However, the pace of the debate gradually picked up with humorous quotes from delegates of various countries. “The only mines we own are those of the explosive kind”, Iraq, for one, mentioned good-naturedly. Good speeches by Azerbaijan and China also brought up the point of regulating the mining industry in order to protect miners, and even of the possibility of constructing a framework to stop environmental damage such as global warming. Such productive exchanges were, however, short-lived. Shortly after these

speeches, the council broached the topic of balancing both domestic and foreign interests while regulating the mining industry, but ended up looping around the topic.

Most delegates stated only the importance of balancing interests, but failed to elaborate further. “The council is stagnating on this topic”, Russia’s delegate revealed in an unmoderated caucus. Despite this caucus being called for in hopes of avoiding stagnation, it was to no avail and ironically, ended up further confusing the delegates. In the end, they could only reiterate what they had said about closing down “illegal” mines, which would leave workers not only jobless, but also infringe on their individual right to earn money.

To reiterate, Fox News believes that mining rights is not an issue, and that SPECPOL is nit-picking on such a trivial issue of mining rights.





corruption. However, Poland was more focused on the military reality in Afghanistan, that it was not due to lack of training that continued Taliban's reign, it was likely due to demoralization and fear of Taliban by the Afghan troops. This is further worsened by the "lack of trust and cultural sensitivities for NATO commanders."

One thing that all delegates agreed upon was however the importance of promoting basic literacy among the citizens and troops. This is so that the troops can better understand and use the technology that NATO provides them. In addition, increased literacy would also improve the interconnectedness between NATO members, facilitating the dissemination of information to Afghan security forces.

After months of debate, the US is moving toward a decision to expand the military's authority to engage with terrorist forces such as the Taliban. When asked whether military presence should be increased in Afghanistan, a US delegate however still provided a firm dissent. "The US would currently not undertake such action", she states and adds that like President Obama promised, there would still be a limit of 10, 000 active US troops in Afghanistan despite the growing terrorism threats.



## *OIC Barking Up the Wrong Tree?*

BY NIGEL WONG | PRESS DELEGATE, FOX NEWS

In another tedious 3-hour session, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) continued their discussion on solutions for Islamophobia, which they deemed as a socioeconomic injustice, especially in Western countries.

The entire duration of the debate was hardly short on tension and mistrust amongst the nations, with few delegates willing to be straightforward with their arguments. Many of the delegates implied that other countries in the OIC were to blame for Islamophobia by “funding and legitimising Islamic extremists”. Several delegates took it one step further by demanding for ties with such extremist groups to be cut immediately.

Under Obama’s administrated immigration laws, we have witnessed a spike in crime rates, and even one of the bloodiest massacres within the last few years (Thanks Obama). Perhaps, it is indeed time for some change in the United States immigration laws.

Other delegates took a different approach, proposing secular education to provide their people with opportunities to succeed. In turn, they hope this will help reduce the incidences of radicalisation. “If a country has as low a literacy rate as Somalia (37.8%)”, its delegate argued, “radicalisation of the uneducated and unemployed is inevitable”.





However, the council questioned the feasibility of such a proposal, pointing out that many of OIC's member states are barely able to feed their people. Furthermore, delegates raised the issue that the OIC is technically unable to craft legally binding resolutions, and can only provide suggestions for solutions.

The highlight of the debate was perhaps when Yemen proposed to allow "regula[ting] sales" of the Quran, to ensure that it would not be desecrated. This suggestion was quickly shut down, however, when Guyana's representative provided a quip in the form of "the Internet".

Ultimately, the OIC has made little progress regarding this so called issue of Islamophobia. This is perhaps a predictable situation, especially in Western nations that remain somewhat wary of Muslims. For the same reason people are cautious of people of colour, there remains a reason for people to be cautious of Muslims. The OIC could do well to approach this "issue" from a different angle.

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# *SOCHUM: “Mental Ewness” – Tackling the Global Issue of Mental Illness in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

BY ELISABETH FONG | PRESS DELEGATE, RUSSIA TODAY

Day two of the Singapore Model United Nations conference opened with delegates excited to resume committee sessions. In the slightly cramped Lecture Theatre 51 of the Stephen Riady Centre, delegates of the Social, Cultural, and Humanitarian (SOCHUM) Committee discussed the issue of mental illness.

In Russia, mental illness is taken very seriously, as reflected by the Russian government’s care and concern towards its citizens. Many reforms in the mental health sector have been implemented to promote social inclusiveness. It was, therefore, hardly surprising that Russia had a strong voice in this session.

As the debates and discussions progressed, the need for concrete solutions was time and again emphasised. Two problems (among many others) that urgently required resolution were: social stigmatisation of the mentally ill, and the Less Economically Developed Countries (LEDCs) that lacked the infrastructure to aid the mentally ill.

With regards to the problem of social stigmatisation, the committee saw a host of ideas being shared. China noted the cultural superstitions pervasive in its society, and encouraged the use of scientific research to quell fears. Poland argued for a strong emphasis

on the importance of education to change judgemental attitudes.

While the delegate of Russia agreed with many of these proposals, he drew a clear line when it came to national sovereignty. Russia prides itself on its autonomy and jurisdiction; it believes strongly that each individual country makes the best decision regarding policies involving its own citizens.

Secondly, the issue of LEDCs without sufficient infrastructure to support the mentally ill was a topic Russia motioned to discuss, having noted the number of LEDCs in the committee who had voiced their concerns. Russia pushed for the Most Economically Developed Countries (MEDCs) to support the LEDCs, and to establish an international forum promoting mental health awareness. This forum would be key to developing up-to-date and relevant solutions.

Delegates were reminded once again, as Russia had emphasised throughout the course of the debate, that the rights of all people matter. With great reluctance (especially and exclusively from the delegate of China), the topic closed and debate was adjourned.



## *UNSC: Kosovo's Independence?*

BY ASJAD AL MAMOON | PRESS DELEGATE, RUSSIA TODAY

While Kosovo struggles for independence from Serbia, many countries have rejected its status as a nation, despite the United States having stated the optimality of Kosovo's independence to its future.

During the council, it was suggested that the government of Kosovo should guarantee minority rights for all communities in its constitution, and effective mechanisms should be taken to uphold these rights, especially in Northern Kosovo. It was also proposed that the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) have a stronger presence in issues regarding Kosovo, and that it should reiterate Kosovo's and Serbia's commitment to the Brussels dialogue.

Countries were split in their views regarding NATO's military involvement in Kosovo, with Russia and the United States agreeing on the lack of a need for a larger military presence. The Chinese delegate pointed out that NATO is already heavily involved in Kosovo, as seen not only from the approximately 4,600 NATO troops already stationed there, but also from the missiles within range of its borders. Nevertheless, he expressed that he would only have faith in NATO "if [the] Rule of Law is established in Kosovo".

Russia firmly supports Serbia's stance and believes that if Kosovo continues to push for independence in spite of its insufficient abilities, the only result would be more bloodshed.

The council will further discuss the topic in the upcoming sessions.



# *NATO: What Happens in the Grapevines of Afghanistan?*

BY ANISH BHATTACHARYYA | PRESS DELEGATE, THE ONION



A moderated caucus proposed by the delegate of Slovakia took a more fiery turn as delegates debated on the topic of radicalizing Afghanistan in the second conference session held yesterday morning. This passion was belied when the delegate from Canada expounded upon the Syariah Law, incognizant of the fact that there is no book on Syariah Law. Another excellent point raised by this delegate, amongst a myriad of other ideas, concerned “shutting down the opium farms in Afghanistan”.

In a second moderated caucus, it became evident that Afghanistan’s future is in good hands, as delegates discussed this extensively and passionately. Netherlands, for one, tackled the issue of “regulat[ing] Private Military Corporations (PMCs) in Afghanistan” by commenting that “some potato chips are

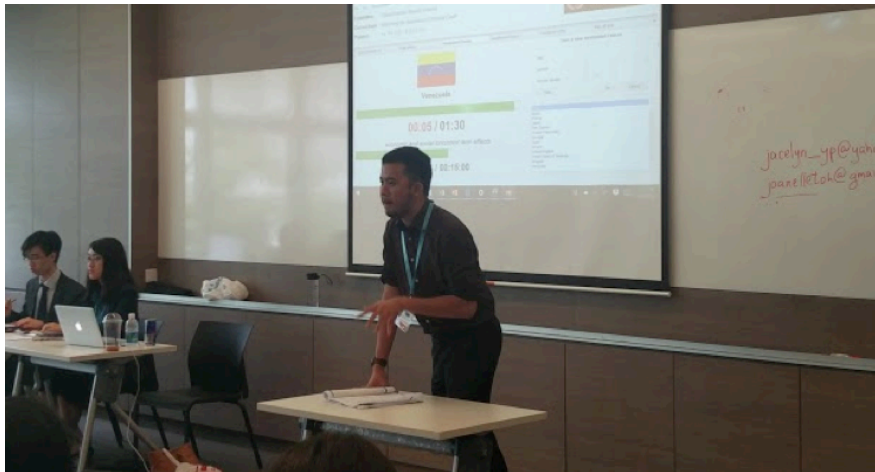
called potato chips, but are not made out of potato”. This certainly contributed as well to the humorous atmosphere already created by the emissary of Czech Republic, who declared at the very beginning that “I’m not a lumberjack”. Denmark’s delegate, however, has the potential to be one, since all he did was nod to the points of others.

Things picked up after the working paper was introduced, as delegates began to throw ideas across the floor with enthusiasm. USA even provided an excellent metaphor, by equating the inaccessibility of PMCs to his “ex-girlfriend’s Instagram account being private”. In no time, an unmoderated caucus was raised and it was passed, which made the room rather chaotic, yet presented a scope for the enthusiastic delegates to make strategies and allies.



# *UNSC: Venezuela Accuses USA of Using the Façade of Freedom Fighting to Exploit Weak State's Natural Resources, International Community Taken Aback*

BY ANG DE REN | PRESS DELEGATE, THE ONION



*Montero Trejo, the Venezuelan delegate who made the shocking claim.*

At the latest UNSC meeting in University Town, the delegate of Venezuela accused the USA of pretending to fight for Kosovo's independence when she was in fact only interested in exploiting the oil resources there. Many of the distinguished delegates were visibly taken aback by the unthinkable accusation, with many raising their left eyebrows and some covering their dropped jaws.

The Venezuelan delegate had based his claim on how oil could be taken from Kosovo to a US-friendly port in Albania through the \$1.1 billion AMBO pipeline.

"I am entirely unconvinced by Mr Trejo's claim... The USA came to my country solely to save us from Saddam. It had nothing to do with oil," said Nasir Abdullah, an Iraqi diplomat contacted by The Onion to give his

views. Another diplomat contacted by The Onion, Henri Brou of Ivory Coast, said that the Americans had always been completely sincere about trying to improve stability in West Africa, and that it "just so happened that they were interested in the diamond mines in the region". The only person contacted who did not seem surprised by the claim was British historian George Simons. "The UK owes much of its success to such practices, and I'm not surprised that other countries would try to follow our model. But I am a little disappointed that the US would have this little respect for originality," he said.

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# *Galaxy Breaks Out into Full-Fledged Civil War*

BY SOPHIE ANG | PRESS EDITOR

Planetary senators<sup>1</sup> convened in an emergency meeting to address the galaxy-wide disarmament policy, amidst an interplanetary crisis threatening the very foundations of the New Republic.

Space armies<sup>2</sup> were first outlawed under the implementation of the Military Disarmament Act (MDA). Under the MDA, a galaxy-wide disarmament was enforced to avoid the possibility of any armed force building up its strength in an attempt to conquer the whole galaxy. This was intended to prevent history from repeating itself, when the old Galactic Republic crumbled and fell under the dictatorship of the Galactic Empire.

The Republic was enjoying an extended period of peace and prosperity when disturbing rumours surfaced. It was heard that the remnants of the First Order<sup>3</sup> intended to rebuild their forces

1 Senators: the term used to refer to delegates from SMUN 2016 adeptly roleplaying as inter-galactic ambassadors from each planet.

2 Any military force capable of launching an offensive against another planet.

3 The First Order was a space army driven to the fringes of the galaxy; believed to

in preparation for an invasion of the galaxy to recreate it in their image. Spurred by this new development, the senators of the Galactic Republic held an emergency meeting.

Though all were deeply united by their desire to uphold the republic, senators from the various planets were largely divided on what course of action to take. Senator of Kuat, Redorik Lassiter, believed that the best course of action was to abolish the MDA so that planets could legally re-arm themselves and fight against the threat of the First Order “terrorists”. Other planets, including Corellia, Jakku, and Kashyyyk, were similarly seized by a fervour of patriotism and made rousing speeches offering plans in the same vein. A few planets, like Coruscant, felt that the other senators were “jumping the gun” and acting too quickly, and believed that force should only be used as a last resort.

Unfortunately, action was not taken quickly enough to stop the First Order in its invasion route into the Core Worlds. As the army destroyed planets deemed useless and captured useful resources, including the planet Ilum – a have been disbanded for being obsolete.





prime source of light sabre crystals – and even captured a Star Destroyer, the senators continued to bicker amongst one another without making any declarations of action.

The emergency meeting rapidly devolved into a weapons trade show: Mustafar peddled cheap weapons and offered free disposal services in their native lava pits, while Jakku offered guns at unbeatable prices (buy 1000 get 1 free!). Kashyyyk was even offering its Wookiee people as soldiers and guards to defend other planets.

On the other hand, planets with way too much money had no qualms shopping around to

upgrade their defence systems. In a particularly memorable display of his planet's massive, wealth, the senator of Chandrila scattered wads of (fictitious) money during his speech in front of the entire council.

The senators seemed to have completely forgotten that they had met to address the threat of the First Order and its current policy of disarmament. In fact, had they stayed on topic, they would probably have been capable of containing and vanquishing the threat posed by the rogue space army. Unfortunately for us all, the senators seemed more preoccupied with plans to purchase weapons and train troops, as if every nation was going to be sucked into an interplanetary war. Unless, of course, war was what they really wanted in the first place – in that case all the senators were extremely successful in achieving their aim.

While senators were negotiating weapon deals, Corulag was quick to switch sides and rapidly declared its newfound allegiance to the First Order, even offering itself as a safe haven for First Order members and sympathisers. The senator of Corulag seemed pleased as events unfolded in his favour, constantly beckoning the other planets to join his planet in the Dark Side.

Meanwhile, Kuat's senator was elevated to the position of chancellor in his home planet. Upon his new appointment, he quickly ordered a slew of defence measures, arming Star Destroyers and sending in a legion of troops



to reinforce the temporary capital of the New Republic. However, as he imposed increasingly authoritarian measures, his support in the council waned. The implementation of interplanetary martial law was regarded as an infringement of the sovereignty of other planets, and rumours that he had sent bounty hunters to eliminate all opposition further alarmed the other senators.

With the First Order forces on the rim of the Core Worlds, the senator of Kashyyyk promptly declared the creation of the Second Order. But before anyone could fully assess the situation, the First Order merged with the Second Order, forming the One-Point-Fifth Order and sweeping up Chandrila and Corellia, with a few other planets voluntarily switching sides as the tide turned. As other planets led by Kuat remained staunchly on the other side, the entire galaxy was now in the throes of a full-fledged civil war.

As everyone in the senate was elected in their respective planets and elevated to the position of chancellor, a tragic number of assassination attempts ensued. At this point, the prospects of restoring interplanetary peace were indubitably bleak.

Eventually, the meeting concluded with the chancellor of Kuat being impaled by a couple of light-sabre-wielding executioners, with the support of the overwhelming majority of the

chancellors of the Republic. It seemed that though war was raging on, democracy was still very much alive.

At any rate, it came as no surprise that the One-Point-Fifth Order was successful against the Galactic Republic. Given the highly questionable qualifications of the chancellors, one can only marvel at the sheer stupidity of the people from the various planets who voted for them in (presumably) free and fair democratic elections.

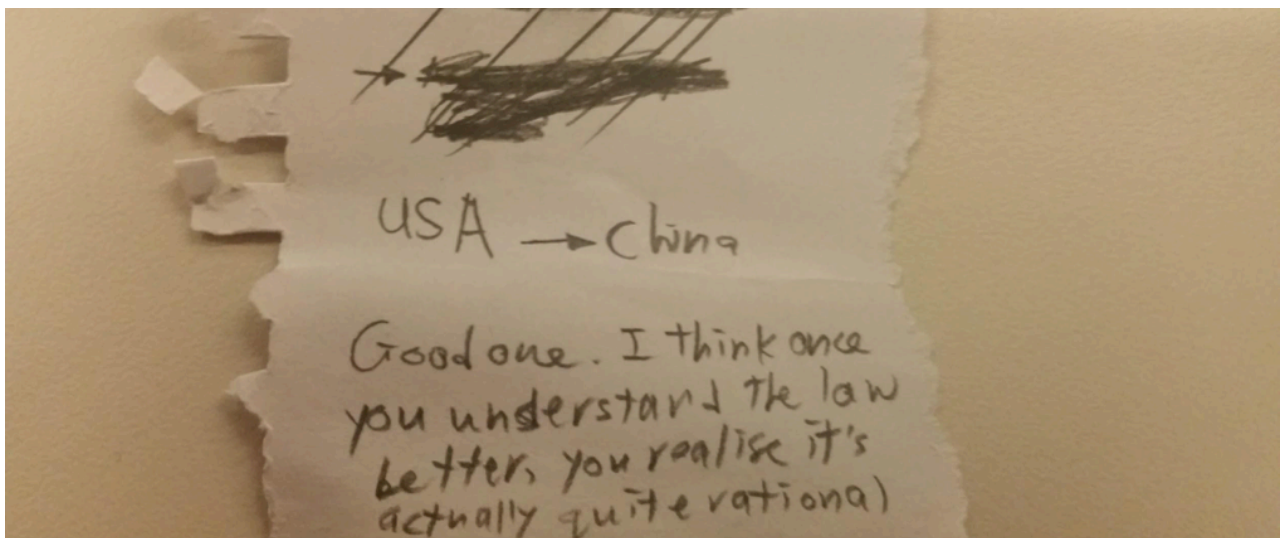
Among other errors, the chancellor of Jakku was unable to find her planet on the map of the galaxy, while the chancellor of Brentaal IV had to search the Internet to learn about its planet's greatest asset. Worse still, the senator of Kashyyyk's utter lack of body hair made one question if he was even a Wookiee – the native species of the planet – and doubts were further reinforced when he declined an invitation to give a speech in his native language.

Therefore, it hardly seems surprising that these planets were attacked by the One-Point-Fifth Order and were unable to defend themselves. Perhaps, this illustrates the survival of the fittest and we should thank the One-Point-Fifth Order for improving the quality of our galaxy's gene pool.



# *APEC: Peace Possible Between America and China*

BY CHRISTINE LOH | PRESS DELEGATE, ASAHI SHIMBUN



*Is that an arrow of peace or Cupid's?*

Though China and America are at each other's neck with Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) respectively, both countries still sit down together to talk through important treaties. During the heated debate of whether an investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) would benefit or destroy the economy and countries involved, many countries fought for their points

fiercely. Amidst the passion however, many seemed to have misread or misunderstood some parts of the caucus. But that's alright, because big brother America is here to school everyone around. Though China may be hit hard, America is present to console the dame and compliment the beau.



## *An Insatiable Love for Debate*

BY ELISABETH FONG | PRESS DELEGATE, RUSSIA TODAY



How many delegates does it take to suspend debate? Well, as the delegate of China found out, being on the opposing end means a crushing defeat.

When the chairs of SOCHUM announced that they would look favourably upon motions to suspend debate in view of the fact that lunchtime beckons (we could all hear the cries of hunger from the dais), only the delegate of China boldly dared to resist the thronging crowd. When asked by the chairs to give a reason for his objection, he

could only honestly reply, “I love debate”, drawing mocking laughs from the crowd.

Russia Today is incredibly heartened by his enthusiasm and insatiable love for debate and applauds him for it, but urges him to yield to the cruel hunger that spares no man (or delegate).



# *SMUN participants each receive generous Food Grant worth \$15, Astons forecasts 67% profit growth*

BY ANG DE REN | PRESS DELEGATE, THE ONION



In an act of saintly generosity, SMUN organisers provided all participants with \$15 of food coupons to be used for lunch throughout the four-day event.

The move has been warmly welcomed by the vast majority of participants, except a handful who found that the wad of coupons were so abundant that they could not close their wallets after placing their coupons in them. Many participants were observed using their newfound wealth to purchase the choicest food options available at FoodClique.

One such participant, Joshua Teo of SOCHUM, was seen at lunch with an \$8.50 meal from Astons. “People call a meal at Astons a casual dinner, but I’ve always felt a little stressed eating there because of the high prices. Today, I can

finally enjoy some grilled meat without suffering any heartache – and it’s all thanks to the food grant provided by the SMUN organisers,” he told *The Onion*, before requesting to be left alone to enjoy his much-anticipated meal.

A spokesperson from Astons confirmed with *The Onion* that the profits recorded from 13 to 16 June were “astoundingly, unbelievably high”, and are projected to cause a 67% profit growth for June 2016. “The food grant was given to SMUN participants, but the benefits of the organisers’ generosity have certainly spilled over onto us here at Astons. I don’t know if they’ll ever see this, but I just want to say this to the organisers – thank you, thank you so much,” he said, choking back tears.



# *Interview in the Imperial High Command Backroom*

BY NIGEL WONG | PRESS DELEGATE, FOX NEWS



*For most, what goes on behind the scenes remains shrouded in mystery. Today however, I was fortunate enough to be joined by the Crisis Director of the Malaya 1941 Committee, Ryan Ang, to shed some light on what actually goes down in the Crisis Backroom.*

**PD: How has the backroom coped so far with the conference?**

**R:** Very, very, very stressfully. At any one time, there are at most 4 of us here in the backroom and we have to handle a theoretical maximum of 76 directives from delegates every 10 minutes!

**PD: How much of your work has been prepared beforehand and how much is done on the fly?**

**R:** We've all put in well over a hundred and fifty hours into this, but the most of the work is during council itself, so it seems more preparatory. That being said, if we did not have all that work prepared, we would have been unable able to run council in the first place.

**PD: Did anything unexpected happen?**

**R:** Yes, but I would rather not elaborate for... decorum reasons.

**PD: What kinds of developments have you come up with so far?**

**R:** We haven't had to largely, mostly due to the nature of the crisis. Most developments are created by the opposing sides for each other. So, our job is mostly to handle the flow of conflict.

**PD: So far, which team has made better strategic decisions?**

**R:** Japan. They are working together as a team, and they have a clear understanding of what they are doing and trying to achieve. They have a unified goal and are working to achieve it together.



The British have been far less united, so their overall strategy has been slightly more fragmented and confused. So in overall, I would say the Japanese were better from the start.

**PD: What is the most “evil” thing you have done so far?**

**R:** Us? Not...much? I mean, we let the Japanese shell towns to rubble and then convince the people of these towns that they were friendly liberators, but that’s not really our fault...I guess?

**PD: Tell us about the most ridiculous event that has happened so far.**

**R:** *[Crazed laughter]* What is the most ridiculous event? There are so many. There was the command to issue all troops with lemongrass scent to deal with mosquitoes. The demand to seize all essential supplies from civilians for pieces of paper... Well, vouchers actually, but “pieces of paper” just sounds more dramatic. There was even a request to paint rickshaws to make them look like AA guns!

**PD: Are there any particular events you are looking forward to?**

**R:** *[Crazed laughter intensifies]* Bedtime, I am really looking forward to bed!

**PD: Without saying his or her name, describe the hottest person in this conference!**

**R:** Female. That’s the furthest I can go. *[Pauses]* She also has a nice smile, long hair, and is very pretty. I’m vague, I know.



## Interview with Siti Amirah, OIC Chair

BY OUTREACH DIRECTORS



*Siti Amirah is a first-year undergraduate at Nanyang Technological University, majoring in Linguistics and Multilingual Studies. Siti first started out in the MUN circle when she was 15 and has since went to a variety of conferences such as The Hague International MUN SG. After a hiatus from the MUN scene in 2015, Siti decided to delve back into the world of MUN as a vice-chairperson in Nanyang Technological University MUN 2016 for the Organisation of American States; SMUN 2016 is her second chairing experience. Aside from MUN and academics, Siti enjoys learning new languages and trying out new dessert spots. To offset her unhealthy sugar intake, she also enjoys doing yoga and running. Siti also volunteers at The Cat Museum, a social enterprise, on Sundays that aims to help rehome stray cats.*

**D: Could you summarise how the debates have progressed thus far?**

**SA:** For the OIC, we have debated on the topic of Islamophobia and am currently on the topic of the Hajj and The Pandemic. Debate has been rather good despite how most of the OIC consists of first-timers. Delegates have been extremely enthusiastic in participating which makes the conference thus far exciting.

**D: Do you foresee any resolutions being passed soon?**

**SA:** We have recently passed a crisis resolution and am looking forward to seeing more working papers and resolutions to be debated in council tomorrow!

**D: Are there any major blocs which have been formed in the course of the debate?**

**SA:** There have been two major blocs, one being led by Cameroon and Saudi Arabia and the other being led by Egypt and Yemen.

**D: Any memorable moments from the committee sessions so far?**

**SA:** I think one memorable incident occurred during crisis today where the council had to come up with a resolution in 25 minutes and it was rather hilarious to see them scramble!





**D: Have there been any crises/ sudden developments in NATO so far? Tell us a little about them!**

**SA:** The crisis that we had was that there was a virus outbreak that was deadly. However, the virus was then found to be linked to Iran and to the UAE.

**D: Any concluding statements for our readers?**

**SA:** For the first-timers, don't be too afraid to speak up on your opinions and your ideas! Try to make the best out of all the MUN experiences because it is honestly a really great platform to meet like-minded individuals!



# Interview with Hakim Ahmad Kamal, NATO Head Chair

BY OUTREACH DIRECTORS



*Having grown up between Singapore, Montreal, and Jeddah, Hakim's experience going to school with people of different cultures led to an interest in global affairs and later on Model UN. An avid MUNer since 2010, he spent the majority of high school in the European MUN circuit. During the course of his studies at NTU, he has also served as Director General for NTUMUN and chaired conferences such as SMUN, YMA, and YNCAP. His passion for history and international security puts this committee's topic well within his area of interest. While MUN is one of the most indoor hobbies ever, he also enjoys the outdoors – hiking, trekking, camping, and backpacking – anything to get him a quick respite from city life. His pet peeve is having to write short write-ups about himself for*

*interviews and he enjoys a good social just as much as he enjoys debate. [Editor's note: Hakim is also one of the 4 (unwitting) photogenic cover models featured on TORCH Issue 2]*

**D: Could you summarise how the debates have progressed thus far?**

**H:** I was surprised at how incredibly strong the delegates were at my committee, and to begin with, when there are so many strong delegates in the committee sometimes the debate gets stuck because of so many strong opinions all vying for a place at the top. However, in the long run, it makes things a lot better because we ended up with a really strong declaration which we haven't passed yet because it was a draft declaration. The downside of it is that we have taken longer to do everything, and the upside of it is that the quality of everything has been absolutely superb.

**D: Do you foresee any resolutions being passed soon?**

**H:** *(laughs)* There's only one committee session left to do it, and there was a crisis that really put a dent in the process. But at the end of the day, perhaps when everyone tries very hard tomorrow, we'll probably pass one resolution, at least.



**D: Are there any major blocs which have been formed in the course of the debate?**

**H:** Definitely. There's no way that delegates of this strength and level are going to agree with each other when they have studied their stances so extensively. So we've definitely had blocks forming, for example during today's crisis, when everyone voted to completely kick Turkey out of NATO. However, at the end of the day everyone exercised reasoned judgment and called it off. There was no way that Turkey could ever be kicked out of NATO because it is such a valuable asset.

**D: Any memorable moments from the committee sessions so far?**

**H:** One of the delegates of the US (who happens to know all sorts of weird pop culture) came up and started singing during his speeches. For example, he sang a line from Hamilton, the musical, which was oddly relevant to our debate, and I think that got everyone's attention.

**D: Have there been any crises/sudden developments in NATO so far? Tell us a little about them!**

**H:** We had a crisis today, which was that Turkey was involved with ISIS – that led to the extreme idea of kicking Turkey out of NATO. In fact it came to a point where Turkey themselves agreed to kicking themselves out! This was probably because in NATO, everyone has to come to a consensus on issues, so even Turkey was convinced of this solution.

**D: Any concluding statements for our readers?**

**H:** This is definitely one of the most competitive committees I've ever chaired and I'm impressed with the level of enthusiasm and the room for improvement these delegates see for themselves. After every committee session, the delegates will come over and ask how they can do better, and what it was about them that was good. It's nice to see a group of delegates so passionate and so eager to learn.



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