Welcome to THIMUN 2015

THIMUN Qatar is one of the largest MUN conferences for high school students in the Middle East. Participants come together from all over the world to discuss international conflicts and work to create resolutions for these issues.

Junior MUN offers this opportunity to middle school students as well and 2015 will hold the first ever JMUN ‘It will plant the seeds for what will eventually become a very large middle school conference, first in the middle east. Not only that but it is also a good opportunity for QA students and other students in the country to prepare themselves for student officer and executive roles’ as Lisa Martin said, it is also a great way to train high school students for executive roles.

After the very successful Qatar Leadership Conference, DCMUN Conference and Singapore MUN MUN Director Lisa Martin has great expectations for this years THIMUN Qatar she says it will be bigger and better than ever before.

Alongside that, BEIMUN will also be taking place this year, and when asked about her previous BEIMUN experiences Martin she said it was ‘a very well run conference, with exceptionally strong chairing, the delegates took it extremely seriously and the level of inspiration was incredibly high’ And she hopes to see the same spirit in this years BEIMUN conference.

Mrs. Martin is anticipating the THIMUN Qatar conference ‘My goal is to continue to build onto one of the best MUN programmes in the world and to expand it and to find ways to highlight the work of individual students.’

By Emily Barlow and Habiba Sal-
What THIMUN is all about!

MUN is a great way to improve your leadership skills.
- Razan Kahlout, Chair

It’s a great way to improve your public speaking skill as well as the debating skills.
- Dana Mahmoud, Delegate

MUN is the key to public speaking.
- Yousef Hallawa Delegate
I think it’s a really important activity in the students’ education and will help them in their future years as it will prepare them for the politics of the world and different issues they might encounter.

- Dania Nassir, Delegate

MUN is a platform for open-mindedness and allows me and my peers to think on a global level.

- Hossam Khattab, Delegate

I think MUN is a great opportunity to interact with other people on the diplomate level.

- Mohammed Al-Taji, Delegate
“MUN has given me the opportunity to broaden my horizons and learn what it means to represent a country on an international level.”
- Jeneane Jaber

“MUN? More like FUN.”
- Abdulrahman Al Mana

“MUN is more than just a club, it’s a community.”
- Tamim El Moatassem
“Of course we had hope; even though we knew in our hearts that this would be inevitable; we just wish for once that we were treated like people” - anonymous bystander present in protests in Ferguson on 6th December 2014

9th August 2014 saw the barbaric shooting of black teenager Michael Brown. Passionate debate has been speculating about whether or not he was armed or unarmed. Either answer would completely transform the public opinion; completely transform the facts. But most important of all, this crucial fact would influence and completely transform the perception of Justice of the event.

Following the extensive investigation into the disturbing; yet worryingly common cases of the police shootings of unarmed black teenagers; the facts all point in the same direction; a stubborn organization unwilling to review its outdated practice. 

Or in other words; the case of an outlawed unarmed teenager. Outlawed as an eligible target for the merciless blood lust of a white policeman. Outlawed for not being white.

Such as the case of Michael Brown.

18-year-old Brown had been enjoying his summer with his grandmother; and was just two days away from starting another chapter in his life at Vatercott College. Having recently graduated from Normandy High school; his whole life was ahead of him.

Unfortunately; his hopes and aspirations were ripped away from him; as he was mercilessly shot in cold blood. Surrounded by police; the teenager raised his hands in the universal sign of surrender. However

the policeman for whom this was directed; somehow mistook this for a sign of aggression. As you do of course…

And the result was abhorrent.

In any event; the death of a child is always a tragedy.

A young African American girl passionately expressed feelings of disappointment towards the lack of response to her pleas for justice.

“We are living in this country, not only as Americans; but as human beings; we deserve equality; but obviously our voices don’t matter; our voices are not listened to; justice is just a far fetched concept which we will have to continue to dream about” – anonymous bystander present in protests in Ferguson on 6th December 2014

Her emotional words; are but a snippet of the relentless suffering the black community of the United States face on a daily basis.

The solemnity behind her message; hung heavily in the air; the crowd silently stood still; momentarily at a loss for words.

Silent; yet fervent

The esteemed website; propublic.org recently published information on the Ferguson case. The worrying figures; reflect the severity of the situation at hand; 1,217 deadly police shootings from 2010 to 2012 captured in the federal data show that blacks, age 15 to 19, were killed at a rate of 31.17 per million, while just 1.47 per million white males in that age range died at the hands of police.

Justice and equality at their finest
The ratio of the black shootings to the white shootings; is absolutely appalling.

Prior to the inhumane ruling of the jury; hundreds upon hundreds of individuals; white and black; joined hands under the common cause of providing justice for Michael Brown. Men women and children; common members of society vastly different in their appearances; exemplified and represented the idea of humanity; when policemen; supposed role models of society; failed to do so.

At this point; one fundamental question must be asked; if the supposed role models of society are no different to the criminals of society; what hope is there for the next generation; for the generations that are to come?

What hope is there for the future posterity of the world?

The solution to this? Equality in justice. One of the most disturbing aspects to this solution; is that is a reminder of the failure of the US to overcome the same problem for centuries.

The tragic; yet realistic answer to all of these questions; is that there is none.

No hope for the next generation; or for those; which are yet to come. In particular there is no hope for the future posterity of the world.

One of the most disturbing aspects of this case; is how deliberately Justice has been ignored as a human right.

The fact that there is currently an International court of justice in place in the United Nations; exemplifies the importance; the relevance; of justice.

In fact; it is also plausible to state that the denial of justice; is a violation of an individual’s human rights.

Another take on the story is that Michael Brown; had been walking along a street with his friend; when the white police officer assaulted him with verbal abuse. Subsequently; ordering them to get off of the sidewalk. When the two did not move off of the sidewalk; the police officer physically assaulted Brown; threatening them that he would shoot them.

It is of no surprise that the two took off running for their lives. Unfortunately; the police officer took this opportunity to shoot. This resulted in the death of Brown and the severe injury of his friend.

“We wasn’t committing any crime; bringing no harm to nobody; but my friend was murdered in cold blood”. Michael Brown’s friend- “Johnson”

Arguably the situation taking place in the USA is similar to the former situation of Apartheid in South Africa- A complete lack of justice for the populace of black skin tone

The significant difference between the two; is that South Africa recognized the error; and abolished apartheid; whilst in the US; the same lack of justice is continually repeating.

Bringing along destruction; pain and suffering in its wake.

By Hannah Akhtar
Many of us take MUN for granted, but not so if you are a new delegate from Kabul. Sulaiman, one of the TQ delegates from Afghanistan, explains why MUN is important and the challenges his delegation faces in starting their MUN careers.

Afghanistan is the country which has passed three decades of war. After the war Afghans decided to rebuild their country. We started from the beginning. We don’t have good equipment and resources, so it is hard to do MUN at school. There are three or four top schools which have computer labs and other facilities. The other big challenge to do MUN for us is security problems. We need to get together to do MUN but we can’t guarantee our life for even an hour. Doing MUN in Afghanistan is harder than any other country.

There are three important reasons to do MUN well. The first one is getting a lot of information, and updating yourself about world and collecting a lot of information about countries of world. The second one is inspecting those countries that have come out of big problems and that have experience solving those problems and experience is the mother of knowledge. The third basis to do MUN better is learning how to decide well for the future, because leaders are solving problems. By learning how to decide well we can find good solutions to the problems.

Students all over the world are learning other important issues and more skills beside their school; Afghan students are also trying to change the current education system and they are participating in different programs to learn hard and important issues. Skateistan and MUN are good examples of this in which students can improve their other skills.
TQ-Afghanistan Initiative: Afghan delegate shares thoughts on THIMUN Qatar

Madina, one of the first students coming from Afghanistan to participate in THIMUN Qatar, checks in and shares what makes this such a special delegation.

In the last couple of years MUN youth have represented countries of the world as a real member of the UN (United Nations) and shared the important issues facing their countries. Fortunately this year youth of Afghanistan have the chance to participate in MUN representing the country of Djibouti, which is located in the horn of Africa. Afghan youth will be able to show their talents, share their opinions and also talk about their experiences in Afghanistan. This Model United Nations conferences brings students together from around the world to learn and share ideas from a diverse set of experiences and backgrounds.

I had never heard of MUN before in Afghanistan, all the students in Afghanistan are just going to school, memorizing the text books that they have to do that. They don’t have any critical thinking, creativity and activities. They have a subject by the name of sport but there is no area for sports even. Students don’t have the things for sport. Most of the students are going to school just because of the pushing of their parents. If their parents don’t tell them to go to school, they are not going because they think that they are just wasting their time in school. It’s just because of the old and useless method of studies and education in schools in Afghanistan. I think it’s a big opportunity for students in Afghanistan to do MUN. when I first heard of MUN it was very exciting for me cause it was my first time doing MUN.

It has been great working with other students from around the world which is my first time doing it in our country. Doing MUN with students from different countries and deferent cultures is interesting for all Afghan students, and it will be a great experience for all of us. The much exciting and important part of MUN is that we are doing it online and siting it up by our self.

We are the only ones doing MUN in all of Afghanistan, and we are the luckiest of students in the country for doing this, because most of the children are working on the streets for their families to earn money for their sisters and brothers. They are not going to school; they are not having fun- just working and working.
An American Delegation in Qatar: Why QMUN?

For the past 30 years our school, John Burroughs school, has always attended THIMUN in The Hague. We typically take one language class in school, jokingly counting our acquired tongue as “half” a language in our communication arsenal; on the trams at in The Hague, however, we hear fellow “MUNers” speaking two or three languages fluently. We bemoan the hours we spend on Advanced Placement courses, the most rigorous academic tracks our school offers, but are stupefied and humbled upon learning of the workload required for the International Baccalaureate courses many international students must tackle. Even in a place whose culture and lifestyle are relatively similar to ours, surrounded by peers who grew up in American households, we constantly gained more insight on the astounding breadth of the world and how little, perhaps, we Americans have been willing to explore it. Attending a THIMUN conference abroad has enabled us not only to explore Model United Nations’ purpose of fostering communication and empathy in a large forum of delegations, but also live it after we set foot outside the conference center.

It seemed purely logical, then, for our MUN team to step even farther away from what we have always known and accept an invitation this year to attend THIMUN Qatar and travel to The Middle East. Our THIMUN directors have encountered many concerned parents who are uncertain whether to let their children travel to a region so commonly perceived as “unstable.” Since applying to the MUNITY Qatar press delegation in October, I have become accustomed to the question of “But will you be safe?”

For many in the United States, Middle Eastern travel carries connotations of danger and unease. News reports of insurgent groups and deadly firefights in Iraq and Afghanistan perpetually flash across our television screens. But we seldom witness programs on Islamic art, Middle Eastern cuisine, and cultural festivals. Our media portrays the gulf region as a land of blood and oil.

Despite the doubts of parents, our school administration refused to rescind its decision. John Burroughs School prides itself as an institution designed to expand our intellectual horizons, undaunted by the media-generated mirages of peril pervading the Persian Gulf. “We’re going global,” read a weekly newspaper from the school administration to the community.

To prepare for the conference, our delegation has spent three hours every Sunday researching elements of Qatari culture and familiarizing ourselves as much as possible with a system and way of life alien to
us. When I began the process of applying for MUN, I, too, had doubts about the safety and the feasibility of cultural communication between groups so ostensibly different. I, too, had been exposed to images of American soldiers incinerated by roadside bombs in Iraq and Afghanistan. As we attended an increasing number of meetings, however, the superficiality of the media’s portrayal became apparent to me. Unstable countries exist in the Middle East, but the region does not consist of a single battle zone. There are distinct countries with distinct customs, and many of these countries exhibit stability comparable to that in European and North American ones.

To many in Qatar and across the Middle East, this revelation may seem self-evident. But too many Americans do not get to experience the Middle East as we will. They will see only CNN reports of the American wars.

I hope that traveling to Qatar will shatter more of our preconceptions. Xenophobia and insularity result from a lack of exposure to others more often than from unfavorable encounters. We hope to enjoy the country’s culture and hospitality, sample the food of Qatar, and create friendships that will endure across the distance separating America from Qatar. We come with open minds and truly look forward to having an international MUN experience in a land so unfamiliar to us.

By Emily Zhao and Joshua Kazdan
Booming Africa

Humans are chronic stereotypers, and most of us are probably familiar with the particularly unsavory set of images typically associated with Africa: emaciated children with swollen bellies reaching out for assistance, tribal peoples in bright traditional garb standing in the foreground of a zebra-strewn savannah. In the past few months, these have been supplemented with shots of foreign doctors, almost alien in their white hazmat suits, walking through villages carrying Ebola-stricken people.

This backwards representation is, of course, severely misrepresenting the continent’s development in recent decades. Africa is home to six of the world’s fastest-growing economies: Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d’Ivoire, Mozambique, Ethiopia, and Sierra Leone.

Part of the oncoming boom is tied to Africa’s youthfulness. 60% of people on the continent are under the age of 25, 50% under 19, facilitating rapid integration into today’s most up-to-date technological fields. This makes the absence of continuous technological development in Africa itself a boon rather than a burden; there are no old models to overhaul, no engrained ideologies to overcome. The latest, fastest, most flexible communications technology is being adopted by the youngest population in the world.

Many of the world’s major powers have taken notice: China extended over $62.7 million in loans between 2001 and 2010, and sent a record number of immigrants. And unlike in the centuries-old story of African natural resource exploitation, much of this money has gone into the industries of financial service, IT, manufacturing, communications, and energy, indicating interest in the African market itself rather than the continent’s raw materials. The Middle East has also played a large role, with corporate giants Dubai Investment Corporation and Qatar National Bank pouring funds into African

This is not to say that all momentum comes from outside sources. Many outside investors partner with Africa-based investment groups. And in the first days of December, Nigerian billionaire Tony Elumelu’s foundation launched a $100 million entrepreneurship initiative that offers training, funding, and mentoring, and aims to ultimately generate 1 million jobs and $10 billion in annual revenue.

Of course, global leaders still face many obstacles along the route of Africa’s development to its fullest potential. The largest of these impediments include corruption, wariness of inter-regional trade, and, most recently, the Ebola crisis in West Africa. Furthermore, much of the growth told by the numbers has failed to make a real dent in Africa’s poverty rates or raise standards of living for a significant sector of its population. “It is clear that if business as usual persists, Africa is likely to continue seeing growth that will not impact on widespread poverty levels and economic structures will likely remain the same,” said Dr. Stephen Karingi, director of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA).

The road to the permanent infrastructure and business overhauls needed for the permanent changes Karingi alludes to, like any of long-term and drastic change, will be long and fraught with pitfalls. Market development, technological expansion, and Africa-focused initiatives like Elumelu’s are, however, are among the first crucial steps. And along the way, we will hopefully all be able to outgrow stagnant perceptions.

By Emily Zhao
Martin’s Memorable Model United Nations

Don’t be paralyzed by your fear. You never know what you will be missing out on.

Tuesday 18th November found two eager journalists interviewing Mrs. Martin; the current MUN director for Qatar Academy. To say that they were inspired is quite the understatement.

Mrs. Martin was the MUN coordinator in Jordan, and recently came to Qatar. She has found Qatar to be a remarkable country. “I am finding MUN to be an outstanding and a very active country for MUN; during my short time here, it is an incredibly established pro-

The passionate way in which Martin commended the MUN program was extremely touching to us at the press team.

MUN has kickstarted with a bang; two conferences have already come and gone; conferences which Mrs. Martin has excitedly spilled the details on. The QLC conference which took place in October particularly held a special place in her heart.

“This is my favourite event of all time” she paused for a second before breaking into a chuckle, clearly remembering the wonderful experience.

Qatar Leadership Conference has many wonderful aspects; but the cherry on top of the pudding was meeting such a diverse community. She explains, “I love connecting with students all over the region. People were very inspired by the messages communicated at the Leadership conference. By those standards I think that it was an overwhelming success.”

Mrs. Martin attended her first ever DCMUN conference in 2014, and it fully met her expectations. “I thought it was fantastic students got much out of it; it was very well organized; charing was strong, a lot of new students; directors said that they left experienced.”

Mrs. Martin held a final and empowering message for all future MUN-ers. “If there is something about MUN that interests you don’t let the other things that make you fearful drive your decision to participate.”

She concluded with words of great anticipation: “This years THIMUN is going to be bigger and better than ever I have inherited a great program from Mr. Janzen and I’m hoping to contribute to it positively. It’s going to be a great conference.”

There you have it! Don’t forget to sign up next year!

By Hannah Akhtar and Habiba Sallam
Basil Abdelmonim is a senior in Qatar Academy. He is a Canadian citizen of Sudanese origin. He is also the president of the Model United Nation club in Qatar Academy. Basil states in his interview that he is currently enjoying being the MUN president and despite it being a lot of work, it is completely worth it. He has participated in THIMUN since it’s creation and THIMUN has always been his favourite conference that he has participated in. He has attended six delegated related conferences. If you include QLC, it makes seven.

“People often say to start off by being in ADMIN or Press but I feel that’s not necessarily the only way you can go, because the best way to learn something is by doing it. Just take that first step and become a delegate right away it’s not something to be scared of.” Basil’s biggest piece of advice to delegates is to always be confident and to try and inquire as much as possible during and after the conference.

“Model United Nations is a great way to get up to speed with current events and global happenings. It’s also a great way to meet new people from around the world and to see their point of view on the same topics.”

By Emily Barlow
Few foreigners understand the magical appeal of Arabian camel races. Although these lumbering beasts look encumbered by their massive humps, they can actually reach break-neck speeds of up to 50 km/h, making for a riveting race that keeps you on the edge of your seat.

Unlike football or hockey, camel racing is not a spectator sport. In fact, during many events, the stadiums stand empty, serving a more decorative than pragmatic function. Camel lovers witness the races in trucks, trailing the sprinting beasts along the perimeter of the six-kilometer track. These few spectators must wake up early to catch the races, which often begin just after sunrise to avoid the scalding desert heat.

Winning camels receive aromatic ceremonial honors: women apply a saffron paste to the camels’ neck. High cash prizes are also awarded to proud camel-owners. The one and two-humped victors of these competitions have become household names in some Gulf-Region countries. Shaheen became one of the most renowned camels after he won the 2014 World Cup, and folklore suggests that Shaheen’s high number of wins causes him to smell faintly of saffron even months after the races.

As wonderful as it seems, camel racing in the Arabian Peninsula has a more sinister side. In order to optimize speed, camels require lightweight riders. Until new legislation a decade ago banned child jockeys, three to five thousand children manned the camels during races, some as young as two or three years old. Horrific incidents of child abuse and trafficking to provide riders for the camels accompanied the races.

In order to replace these children, camel magnates were forced to be innovative with their solutions. Qatari laboratories headed up the effort, creating lightweight remote control robots that cost $300 and currently serve as the most popular camel commanders. These humanoid figures are completed with whips and occasionally speakers, which allow the owners to talk to the camels during the races. Camel drivers make clicking noises, which the camels associate with reward and encouragement.

Despite this not being a common sport to watch, try to switch on the television when you have the time and watch it. The thrill of watching a camel race never fails to disappoint, and you may never have the opportunity to experience speeding camels again.

By Joshua Kazdan