As delegates wrap up with their debates, finalize resolutions, and congratulate one another on their accomplishments over the last few days, it has come time to reflect on all that has happened at THIMUN Qatar 2017 - the pressure and the frustration, but also the satisfaction and the success. Anyone who has ever been involved in any aspect of THIMUN Qatar knows the immense amount of work that goes into having a successful conference, and so we should take a moment to celebrate all that work.

As we close on THIMUN Qatar 2017, Ms. Martin's advice for the future comes to mind: “What problem do I most want to see solved? How can I make a career out of what needs to be done?” By working through the various issues presented at this conference, each participant of THIMUN Qatar 2017 has begun to visualize the tangible ways in which they can start to carve out a path for themselves - a path that will allow them to continue to work towards resolving the issues that were discussed and debated at this year's conference in meaningful and important ways.

Because this year's theme was "Employment and Decent Work", delegates, particularly those in the Committee on Employment and Decent Work, have worked tirelessly these last few days to attempt to begin resolving issues related to this theme - understanding that "all people deserve to have employment and decent work". The process of working with these issues during lobbying and merging, debating and voting, has undoubtedly left them all with a greater understanding of the work that still needs to be done, and hopefully, a greater sense of urgency and passion for seeing it through as well.

As we leave THIMUN Qatar 2017, take a moment to reflect on all that has been accomplished here in the last few days - not only the resolutions that have been debated, but also, all the collaboration went into the conference, the memorable conversations that have been had, and the inspiration this conference has instilled within us.
THIMUN Qatar hosted the Hela and Emirates meet and greet session on its second day, 26th January, which was organised by the delegates of Afghanistan. This session included a presentation about Hela, what it stands for, its goals, and accomplishments. The meet and greet was attended by directors from a number of countries, and was conducted by the delegates of Afghanistan. Directors witnessed an incredible presentation that tugged at their hearts, and left quite a few teary eyes. The shockingly emotional stories that were unveiled promoted promises of support and help from many of the directors.

One of the stories that brought the directors to tears was about how, two years ago, five students from Afghanistan attended a conference, and, upon returning back to the country, established an organisation. Today, two of those students are here, and providing an opportunity to their own students to represent the organisation - to demonstrate what they stand for. Heart-rending stories of the Hela students were told - the difficulties they faced, how they joined and the differences that were made. The strength, courage, and determination of these students was clear to everyone who heard their stories, and their acts greatly appreciated.

Mutual collaboration between the directors from the vast number of schools, along with the different organisations that assisted Hela in achieving further goals, was the fundamental aim of this meet and greet. It’s safe to say that it was met. Receiving assistance for delegates from Afghanistan to attend future conferences in Qatar and to organise conferences in Afghanistan itself were other goals of the meet and greet.

One director was moved by what the delegates had to say when asked a question about how the girls made it to THIMUN Qatar. The situation was so bad that it was difficult for the girls to even step out of their houses. A girl answered the question by saying that of course it’s difficult beyond imagination, but that they need to take risks to overcome any barriers thrown at them in order to make the changes that they want to see.
I am a Pakistani Muslim by birth, enjoying home in a multilingual city [Abu Dhabi], a part of an opulent post-Ottoman and British reigned empire, attending school where the collective community has travelled Pole to Pole [American Community School of Abu Dhabi], and live up to my 20th century birth, fashioned by events of 1947 [Independence Day in Pakistan] and 1971 [Independence day in the UAE].

This was a writing assignment I completed for my Literature class, during which we had to craft a sentence about where we think we're from, modelling an example from Richard Rodriguez’s novel, Brown: The Last Discovery of America. I clearly had a hard time picking just one country.

The sentence reminded me of a time when I was in London, and a shopkeeper asked me where I was from. “The UAE,” I responded. I was later asked by someone else what my nationality was. "I'm Pakistani," I said. I began wondering why my responses weren’t the same.

“In my own mind, what makes me brown in the United States is that I am Richard Rodriguez. My baptismal name name and my surname marry England and Spain, Renaissance rivals”.

To claim myself Emirati would indicate a sense of belonging to the culture, and being entitled to the privileges associated with the nationality itself - like having an Emirati passport, or getting to live in the UAE for as long as I wanted, and would be treated by the same standard as any other “Pakistani”. I have my ethnicity to thank for this;

I have, however, always felt compelled to say that I'm from the UAE. I have to be; I've lived here for my entire life - it's the only place I've ever called my home. Most of my earliest and fondest memories, all of my learning and maturing, my notable successes and failures, have been experienced in Abu Dhabi. My school has been the defining factor that has shaped me and my personality.

Rodriguez was right in claiming it difficult, and almost impossible, to consider yourself a part of one culture while completely rejecting others. "In my own mind, what makes me brown in the United States is that I am Richard Rodriguez. My baptismal name name and my surname marry England and Spain, Renaissance rivals". I agree with Rodriguez - I am a "brown" individual, and I'm proud to be so.
*All photos were staged
Ominous Anglo-American Relations

Rameen Dogar
ACS Abu Dhabi

There is a lot of tension building up internationally regarding British Prime Minister, Theresa May, and her impending meeting with Donald Trump, after she made a comment stating that both the United States and the United Kingdom have the ability to “lead [the] world again,” and renew their “historic relationship.”

“She proclaimed that Trump and her could become powerful world leaders together to ‘defeat evil’.”

As a way of background, Trump had recently stated in an interview that “waterboarding works,” insinuating plans to increase torture as a form of interrogation in the United States. One of the issues Prime Minister May has been urged to discuss during the meeting is her stance on torture. Everything is still very obscure. People have been reminded that former POTUS, Barack Obama, has sanctioned torture, and that to actually execute torture in an interrogational context within the United States would entail breaching American law. May has also explicitly stated that she condemns torture as means of ensuring political security, and she “won’t be afraid” to confront any views that are antithetical to that of Trump’s. There is also expected to be discussion about women’s rights in addition to embracing the Muslim community on a national scale, both of which May has expressed her support for, and have been undermined by Trump.

May has been cautioned by fellow British esteemed individuals to keep the United Kingdom’s best interests in mind as she embarks on her journey to the United States; British Labor Party leader, Jeremy Corbyn, bluntly tweeted, “When you meet Donald Trump you must put our values, not America first. Say no to waterboarding. It’s torture”. British author, J.K. Rowling, also tweeted, “History’s watching, Theresa”, on the day May was travelling to the United States, epitomizing the ominous atmosphere of the entire situation.

So what does this indicate about May and her plans for the United Kingdom? At the moment, people around the world can only default to conjecture, but the prospect of working with another leading world power, who has views that are in stark contrast to that of May’s, has proved enough to drive them into a frenzy.

In such a tense atmosphere, where uncertainty and anxiety prevail, people are eagerly awaiting each nation’s leaders’ response to the meeting in order to understand just exactly what May meant when she proclaimed that Trump and her could become powerful world leaders together to ‘defeat evil’.

Illustrated By: Alina Ali Rawji

More From The Chairs

Anna Brenner
International School of Beijing

General Assembly 2nd - Social, Humanitarian and Cultural
Amna Salatt: Deputy Chair: “Hello, I am Amna and I am the Deputy Chair of GwA 2. So far, THIMUN Qatar has been hectic and exciting at the same time. It is an exhilarating feeling to be able to meet different people from different parts of the world, and to be able to see a committee actually come alive.”

General Assembly 5th - Administration and Budgetary
Jaideep Singh Sudan: Deputy Chair: “THIMUN is a very big conference. It is a really good experience. There are many nationalities, many different delegates with different opinions. There are some delegates that are negative that really want to prove everyone wrong, but we have seen some others who are positive and want to really construct and bring about solutions. It really gives the experience of different types of people we can find in the world.”

Committee On Employment and Decent Work
Charles Chang: President: “Throughout the conference we have been debating on how the United Nations should be proceeding in terms of providing decent work for everyone that is safe and acceptable. One of the key issues that we discussed was preventing and alleviating child labor, and I am proud to say that our delegates have worked extremely hard to combat the issue”

General Assembly 6th - Legal
Ahmed Ibrahim: Deputy Chair: “Everything has been going incredible so far, the quality debate this year has been amazing. I came here last year, and this year I feel like it has just got so much better. Three out of five resolutions passed which just shows the quality of debate.”

Special Regional Committee Middle East and North Africa (Arabic)
Tala ElChami: Deputy President: “At first, it was a bit difficult to get the procedures right with everybody, since most of the delegates in the committee—it was their first time. The first resolution was a bit rough, but afterwards we did a mock resolution which helped them a lot. We are a fun and energetic group.”
First and foremost, it must be made clear that any legitimate dress code is the key to a well oiled and well run machine, especially one of a magnitude as large at that of THIMUN. Violation of cultural traditions, as well as an appearance in inappropriate clothes at the event should be handled justly, this conference is respected, and must be handled as such. However, when the legitimacy of such a rule begins to be put into question is when it is deemed important for investigation.

Making the rules clear in an organized dress is the first step in enhancing its legitimacy, describing a dress as “Modest” is both subjective and changes drastically when put in THIMUN’s context. In a room with 87 different nationalities, is the term “Modest” not subject to variation? Furthermore, describing the dress as “Formal” once again opens up room for differentiation.

These issues would not be so drastic had it not been for the lack of consistency in its enforcement. Almost as if it moves with the Director’s mood, spending even a brief moment at the Spider, one can find individuals wearing pale colored clothes, a “treason” that another local delegate was stopped for.

This is by no means an attack on the dress code, all levels of formal work contain dress codes, but more a call to action. A dress code exists to elevate the general mentality present in the work force, but expression is a part of that. No legitimate dress code needs its own workshop to be understood. Five minutes with any delegate makes it very clear that sometimes, they just don’t know what they’re doing wrong.

To an extent, each of us has a piece that gives us that little bit of confidence that we need to get through our day, whether it be a bowtie, or that colorful shirt that you love. We each find a way to reach that moment, and, for the most part, that may fit the dress code, but when even that is limited, that is when you begin to see the negative consequences. All bounds can stretched, that is what makes them powerful, this same boundary should also exist in that same space.

If THIMUN wants to expand even beyond its already ridiculous space, then it needs to realize that, at an international level, dress codes are never quite the same. These students do not enter this conference in an effort to break down this dress code, but they do enter these potentially intimidating walls in an effort to be as comfortable as possible. Is it fair to limit this comfort? Three days into this conference, and it is obvious that the next great leader of our world is present among us, but she just might be wearing a light pink skirt, that lands just at the knees.
"This isn't Pakistan's fault. It never has been." This was said to me by my father in response to a question about Pakistan's role in the Kashmir Conflict. The conflict began with an issue that arose following the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947 in regards to the accession of the state of Jammu and Kashmir to either newly-founded, neighboring country. As I continued questioning him, drilling him on all the facts, and all the things that he had been hearing on the television as a kid, his voice progressively grew louder - he was practically shouting about the atrocities committed by the other side, and the injustice he believed so assuredly to have occurred. I finally decided to interrupt his flustered tirade, asking whether he thought that might not be the full story, that perhaps his source of information might not be presenting the other perspective on the conflict. He was quick to dismiss - moving on to outline how Pakistan was victimized as a result of India's antagonistic role in the conflict. That's when I politely thanked him and made my getaway.

This kind of response isn't uncommon - especially when discussing conflicts between countries that have such antagonistic relationships. Pakistan and India have been engaged in a contest of ideologies and a struggle for power since their partition, the addition of nuclear weapons to each country's arsenal did not help in diffusing tensions between the two nations. The media industries in these countries operate only further perpetuates the animosity that exists so prominently among their people. To begin to overcome age-old animosity, conversations need to be started by the people of these countries - average, ordinary people, people like my father.

Why is this? Why is that, when Pakistanis and Indians find themselves in close proximity to one another, the tension is often palpable - glares are exchanged and sometimes shouting matches even break out? The finger can neither be pointed at India, nor at Pakistan. Instead, it must be pointed at a complete and utter lack of communication. Republicans and Democrats, Israelis and Palestinians - the way the media industries in these countries operate only further perpetuates the animosity that exists so prominently among their people. To begin to overcome age-old animosity, conversations need to be started by the people of these countries - average, ordinary people, people like my father.
The TQ Heroes series is highlighting the work of the special individuals and organizations that work tirelessly behind the scenes to make THIMUN Qatar events happen. In this edition, we will highlight those who make sure all ambassadors are present, lead the publication of the local press paper, and make sure those in the press room do their job successfully.

Tessa Kellen is volunteering as a diplomatic liaison for the first time this year, she is responsible for the vast connections present in this conference with local embassies:

What comes to mind when you hear the words “Model United Nations”?
“A wonderful programme that teaches participants so many skills - research, public speaking, negotiation, seeing others’ point of view - as well as a really fun way to meet people from all over the world. Unforgettable!”

Did you ever do MUN while you were in school? Do you know others that have done MUN as an after school activity?
“I was in THIMUN The Hague over 25 years ago (Oops!) and was also in MUN Croydon, Dublin and Paris. I represented Oman, Pakistan and Israel and had to manage those very diverse foreign policies. I had such a great time. I will never forget. I am thrilled that my daughter, Hannah, is participating in THIMUN-Q for the first time this year.”

If you could say one thing to young people today, what words of advice would you have for them?
“Get to know yourself. Feed your talents and hone your challenges. Seize every opportunity to expand your horizons. The future of the world is yours to shape and we need people who are open-minded, critical and willing to stand up for their beliefs, and one very practical piece of advice: When you are preparing to represent a country, try and make an appointment with the Embassy to get more in-depth and “real” information. Believe me, most Embassies are more than happy to meet with you, a fact which is underlined by the presence of more than 30 Embassies, including over 20 Ambassadors, at today’s Opening Ceremony. I am willing to help you out!”

What specific role have you played in supporting the THIMUN Qatar office/program?
“The press team is a vital part of every conference. As the head of press I’ve made sure that our publication process is going as smoothly as possible, and that were fully active on social media before, during and after the conference. I believe that the real credit goes to the rest of the team. This year, we’ve also worked with QF communications prior to the conference so that we can ensure that we have coverage from distinguished news media companies.”

What comes to mind when you hear the words “Model United Nations”?
“Honestly, I just think of the spider, and the good lighting under the spider that makes for great pictures. I love the spirit, the vibe of the press room, and the way different people work together in different ways to make sure that the conference runs smoothly.”

Did you ever do MUN while you were in school? Do you know others that have done MUN as an after school activity?

When I was young, my school didn’t have MUN. I was in a US school in Ohio. I had never heard of it until I went overseas. I started in China and that’s where I heard of it. Every single school that I’ve worked at overseas has had it.

THIMUN is a student-run program. What are your viewpoints on student-run programs?
We have a gorgeous newspaper that is full of good, solid content, fantastic pictures, good design and all kinds of neat ideas going on. I have an extremely high opinion of student-run programs. In fact, I think the best way for anyone to learn is to do.