

CUIMUN DIARY

The delegation of the MUN UZH team, which attended the Cambridge University International Model United Nations (CUIMUN), taking place from the 2nd to 4th of November, consisted of eight delegates (left to right): Tim Hetzer, Yagmur Gönç, Olivia Bianchi, Deborah Häusermann, Marina Haq, Amy Blaettler, Sarah Khanna and Luca Spreyermann.

Our group had arrived a day early to the official start of the conference in the United Kingdom to spend a day exploring London, before heading to Cambridge for the following four days, where CUIMUN took place. Alongside a full weekend of constructive debates and entertaining social events, we were given the opportunity to discover the beautiful city of Cambridge.

- Marina



Trip to Cambridge

After having arrived in London, we set off to settle in in our AirBnB. We spent the evening preparing for the conference, completing opening speeches and position papers, however, once everyone had finished, we all went for a drink in London and got to see parts of the city after all. We found a lovely bar in Covent Garden where we all enjoyed a beverage of our choice. The evening felt like the calm before the storm. The next day we got up early to catch our train to Cambridge. We could already spot some nervous students in suits, who were likewise on their way to the conference. Usually nervousness is very contagious, but this time we felt well prepared and relaxed. We finally arrived at our hotel, which was very conveniently located next to the main train station in Cambridge. After dropping our bags off, we rushed to the opening ceremony, which took place in an old building from the University of Cambridge. The atmosphere in the old university buildings was very unique: Everyone was dressed elegantly, taking pictures and meeting their first co-delegates from all over the world. The opening ceremony turned out to be very interesting; having involved speeches on controversial topics such as equality and European Integration

- Tim



Opening Ceremony CUIMUN 2018 - Speakers and their Message



The annual conference took place in the well-respected halls of the University of Cambridge and opened its 24th edition with two truly exceptional speeches. Both speakers stood out with their controversial opinions and topic and therefore left lasting impressions on the 500 participants of CUIMUN 2018.

Athene Donald – On the topic of Sexism and Gender in Academia

Athene Donald has had an impressive academic career. Having completed various degrees in natural sciences, as well as received awards, she started working as a Cambridge lecturer in 1985 alongside teaching experimental physics 1998 at the University. Since 2014, she has received recognition as the Master of Churchill College.

As a well-renowned feminist, she opened her speech with anecdotes of sexism taking place on campuses and in academic environments. She spoke about the struggles of being heard and respected in the same manner as her male colleagues and peers. During her scientific and academic career, she has tirelessly challenged, even fought against

these deep rooted patriarchal dogmas and has always encouraged young women to study natural sciences and work in the field. During her speech she touched upon the nowadays omnipresent “me too” debate and the changes that have taken place in the academic world as a result. Towards the end of the speech a few points were made regarding the necessary steps that need to be taken for the future. She closed with a plea to everyone to keep working on this issue in order to resolve any obstacles women



might face in the academic world, especially in the field of natural sciences. Having spoken to delegates of all genders after the speech, everyone agreed that Donald’s speech was outstanding. She approached the issue in a refreshing manner, without the tensed recapitulations that tend to go with these debates, while simultaneously offering a concrete and clear message. There is no doubt that she had left an inspiring impression on all of us.

Ben Harris-Quinney – With a rather unusual and controversial approach to the UN (and MUN)

The second speaker for the opening ceremony was Ben Harris-Quinney, Chairman of the Conservative Think Tank. The introduction by the Secretary General of CUIMUN already indicated that he might offer us an unusual stance on the United Nations and its development. This notion was certainly inaccurate.

Ben Harris-Quinney has been involved in both British and international politics for quite some time. From the onset of his speech, Harris-Quinney's manner was captivating, impressive and persuasive. Having not only worked with foreign policy makers, but also acted as an advisor on security matters for various governments, as well as oppositional parties, his speech addressed a certain sensitive topics, which many consider as taboos. He attempted to point out various flaw's of the UN: From the long ways of bureaucracy, to the lack of credibility and missing backing by member states. However, the point that struck me the most was with out a doubt that the representatives sitting in the UN councils, committee's and chambers should be representing their population's choices, beliefs and opinions and therefore act and represent accordingly. The rising level of academics and



requirements for delegates to enter the world of the UN leads to a separation of the ideals that should be represented and the delegates academic perspective, resulting in a rather counterproductive and hypocritical outcome, to say the least.

Attending one of the oldest and well-respected MUN conference, most of the delegates that were present naturally support the UN and its ideals: Advocates of transnational institutions such as the UN believe that these are necessary to bring long lasting peace and growth to all states, nations and ethnic groups. As an MUN-er, who has trust in the approaches the United Nations takes to tackle the world's big issues and obstacles, hearing such a straight-forward and well-justified critique was astonishing. Naturally the reaction to Ben Harris-Quinney's speech was very mixed. Delegates were left somewhat puzzled: Harris-Quinney's speech sparked a slightly naive obstinacy and perhaps even left a slight hesitation to defend the UN and its values. However, it inspired us to be the best versions of ourselves during the debates and to go against this rather negative view. The critical approach of his speech clearly broadened the horizons of many delegates present. Harris-Quinney ended his speech by asking us to reflect more carefully and critically on what seemed self-evident, backing the UN and its values.

-Olivia

Cambridge



Cambridge is the ideal city for an international Model United Nations conference. The traditional English town is manifested with charm and uniqueness. The town itself is rather small, and therefore almost every distance is walkable. This made it easy to navigate through the town and see as much of it as possible. I believe the city has a perfect balance between “traditional English” and touristy areas. Apart from the large university, which was magnificent to visit, one had the opportunity to go shopping and eat

great food. Cambridge is by no means “just English”, much like England’s capital, it appeared very cosmopolitan, but in a smaller manner. I found it very easy to move around in Cambridge: the bus service was simple to use, although we mostly travelled by taxi, as it was almost the same price for a large group. On these grounds, I can highly recommend travelling to Cambridge, whether it is for a conference, leisure, or business!

- Amy

What we saw during the conference was truly breath-taking. Students live, eat and socialise in one of the autonomous Colleges, the most famous of them being King’s College, which is known for its impressive alumni’s and visibly distinctive gothic chapel. It was founded by King Henry the VI in 1441 and five years later, King Henry himself laid the first stone for the chapel. The building was finally finished 62 years later and the college was named after its him. We walked past this chapel everyday on our way to the conference, which itself took place in a different, more modern college. Nowadays, the chapel is used for graduation ceremonies and for choir concerts, but it also serves as a regular church. Each college is represented by colours and students can be identified by the scarfs they wear, much like in the Harry Potter movies. The colours of King’s College are purple and white.



-Tim

Security Council

It was my greatest pleasure to be part of the advanced conference going to Cambridge in October 2018 – taking part in a simulation of the Security Council. To my great surprise I was assigned the role of the Russian Federation, one of the standing five members of the council, which counts 15 members. The agenda was set to the existing policies around every UN member states accountability and integrity: The Rule to Protect (R2P). R2P states in three consecutive pillars the responsibility of each state to protect civilians inside their boarders from genocide, war crimes, ethic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

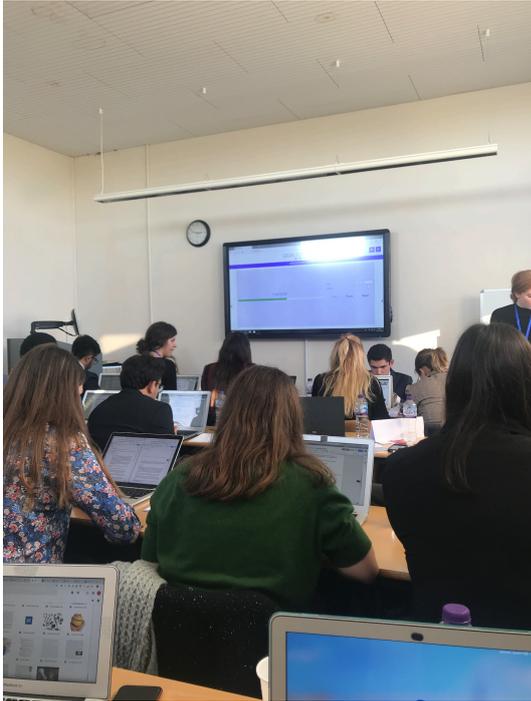
The debate took place on a very high level, both in academic aspects as well as regarding the deductive and rhetoric skills of my fellow delegates. In a very high pace we discussed the necessity of states protecting their populations – but when it came down to the third pillar and the right of the international community to interfere in case of a certain population being in danger, there were certain disagreements that hindered full mutual consent in the room. Both myself as the representative of the Russian Federation and the delegate representing China were rightfully and passionately defending our – and that of every other state's – sovereignty and autonomy, a right of every state not to be limited by the international communities guidelines and premises. Acting on this rightful claim of ours we put together a resolution, which, however, did not manage to pass the Security Council.

What stroke me as special — particularly as I have gained some chairing experience myself as the Head of Operations in our local team — voting procedures on resolutions were always held as division of the question, meaning each operative clause was voted upon individually. This in combination with all 5 veto powers being present - Russia, China, France, the United Kingdom and the United States – meant that no a single resolution passed as a whole, at maximum one or two single clauses in each resolution stood a chance of passing the Council. After some interesting conversations with our chairs and more experienced delegates, who have been part of multiple Security Council simulations, it became clear to me that this was no unusual way for debates to end: Due to some delegates holding veto power it is seen as a normality that no whole resolution gets passed during Security Council simulations.

Having closed the debate on R2P, we moved on to the second topic: The situation in the Gaza Strip. As we only began debating this topic on the last day of the conference, the debate and authoring of draft resolutions was somewhat rushed, to the relief of some exhausted delegates, counting myself as one of them. The same arguments began to repeat itself, with the same points being made over and over again. Overall, in spite of no passed resolutions, the debate held everyone in suspense with many fantastic speakers present, and very experienced and very reliable chairs. I really enjoyed being a part of this impressive committee.

- Olivia

Historical legal committee



The topic of the question of UN officials' and experts' criminal liability and diplomatic immunity has been a long-standing issue discussed in the UN and one that has yet to be effectively tackled. Multiple resolutions have been passed on the topic, however, the problem still persists as there is a lack of unified response on the topic. Each state has different views as to how to effectively combat the problem. Criminal accountability is a broad subject, awakening questions concerning immunity, jurisdiction, the rule of law and existing treaties. There are multiple factors which hinder the efforts to combat this problem and cannot easily be resolved. One of the most prominent problems is that of the difference of laws between states. Due to the varying laws in each country, each individual case is handled differently. Crimes committed by peacekeepers

should not go unnoticed, however, some countries do not have the legislation and capacity to exercise jurisdiction.

Unlike most other committees, ours was small and gave us the opportunity to work together as a team, rather than in split factions. We created a shared resolution and built on the common ground we could find.

Overall the historical legal committee was not my favourite committee experience, as the our topic was treated from a very theoretical angle and many delegates without a legal background felt lost. However, we still managed to have a good time, as the group dynamics were great and we all became good friends during coffee and lunch breaks very easily. I'm still in touch many of my co-delegates I made at CUIMUN and hope to see them again soon.

- Yagmur

Climate Change Conference (COP24)

This year, I once more had the privilege of returning to England for yet another high-quality conference, this time in Cambridge, participating at CUIMUN's Climate Change Conference (COP 24). We debated the vast topic of combating marine pollution for the majority of the time we had in session, eventually passing a resolution that addressed a large range of topics. Everything was accounted for, from microplastics to deep-sea mining to regional cooperation. Despite some chairing hiccups, I enjoyed my committee, was able to meet some interesting people, and had an overall good time at CUIMUN 2018!

- Luca

San Francisco conference 1945

My committee, the San Francisco conference from the year 1945 (founding the Security Council) was still quite empty when I arrived there. While waiting for more delegates to arrive, I started getting to know the chairs of our committee. Eventually, the session started and the nervousness had begun to settle in, resulting in a rushed opening speech. I tried to step up my game by proposing the right to veto as the next topic. That of course worked, as it was the elephant in the room. Nevertheless, we couldn't find a solution for this delicate topic on the first day. When I came back to the hotel that day I was eager to talk to the other people from Zurich so they could tell me how their first day went. Sadly, I came to hear that not all had enjoyed their first day as much as I did.

In the morning of the second day I still had to think of the great meal we had eaten the evening before, however after my second red bull began to show its effects, I began to argue as if something important depended on it. My position was quite strong seeing that the United Kingdom was still considered an empire at the time. Nevertheless, at the end of the day we were still unable to find an agreement with the smaller states. For the evening we had to dress up nicely as it was the delegate's dinner. We enjoyed a pretty good meal and some drinks all together. Due to the after party I ended up in bed quite late.

Tired but excited I started off the next day talking to smaller states how we could get them on board for the funding of the Security Council. It became very complicated as they wanted some sort of assurance that it wouldn't just be ruled by the big five states. The other delegates representing these big nations, such as the USA and the Soviet Union, didn't want to compromise, so at the end we founded the Security Council without them. This was an unexpected turn in world politics! To summarise, I really enjoyed the conference, having met great people in spite of debating for three days!

- Tim



Historical Crisis

I was part of the historical crisis, which centred around the year 1919. My sub-committee was the Paris Peace Conference, whose task it was to negotiate peace after the First World War and later went on to form the League of Nations, as well as create a just solution for the division of former colonies. Eventually we were able to debate all issues and write two resolutions. The first resolution was a peace



treaty and the founding document of the League of States - our own improved version of the historic League of Nations. The other resolution concerned the division of the former colonies of the imperialist powers in Africa and Asia.

As the delegate who represented the Kingdom of Hejaz, I additionally managed to pass two bilateral agreements: We made peace with the Zionist State, defined our borders and signed a mutual support agreement. We were also able to triple in size the Kingdom of Hejaz' territory, negotiate military help and initiate a trade deal with France and the UK.

This crisis was very enjoyable and challenging at the same time because the level of debate was high and the other delegates were equally as engaged and competitive as I was.

CUIMUN 2018 was a fantastic experience and I would highly recommend CUIMUN to another delegation in the future.

-Deborah

DISEC

I was assigned to the committee of DISEC at Cambridge International Model United Nations, representing the United Kingdom. From the onset of the debate, the atmosphere was friendly and welcoming within our committee. I believe that the chairs heavily influence the debate and also the climate of the committee. Alfie and George, our main chairs, did an excellent job at making sure we had interesting debates and stayed on topic, while at the same time making sure everyone had fun. Our first topic was Cyber Security in the international community. Passing a resolution was proven much harder than expected. I was vastly impressed at how well the delegate of the USA represented the current government, a job that was truly not easy. We ended up passing a resolution at the end, of which I sponsored large amounts of the paper. We also passed a second resolution on the second topic, Lethal autonomous weapons systems, of which I was also a main sponsor. My heavy engagement and activity during the debate was awarded with an honourable mention. My CUIMUN experience was overall unforgettable. I made new friends, and great memories at the socials, lunches and dinners. I can recommend anyone to apply to DISEC and go to CUIMUN!



- Amy

SOCIALS

CUIMUN offered three social events, all of which our delegation attended.

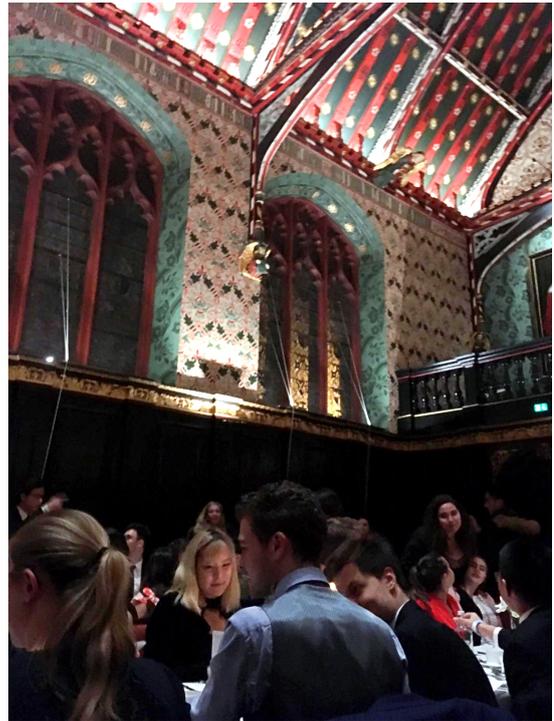
On Friday, after the opening ceremony and the first day of debate, delegates were able to get to know each other in a more informal environment and enjoyed a night out at one of the three student clubs in Cambridge.

On Saturday evening delegates were able to partake in the formal committee dinner.

As a part of the crisis committee, I had the pleasure of dining in Queens' College's historic Old Hall. The formal dining hall, which dates back to 1448, was a truly marvelous place to enjoy a delicious three course dinner. With its fireplace, decorated wood panelling on the walls and stained glass windows, the Old Hall provided a lovely atmosphere for delegates to discuss international topics, as well as our studies and experiences with MUN over dinner.

After the committee dinner, the CUIMUN had organised another club night. It took place at a Moroccan inspired venue and was great fun after another long day of heated debates in our committee.

Due to the fact that certain buildings (especially the colleges) and rooms were not clearly labelled and have multiple entrances, we sometimes got lost on our way to the socials. We would have enjoyed an escort delegate, which would have taken us in groups to the venues. Overall the social events at CUIMUN were a very enjoyable and added to the overall conference experience.



- Deborah

The weekend was filled with committee sessions consisting of debate and building allies. In addition, we had time to get acquainted with our fellow delegates and build friendships with incredible people. This was not only possible during, before and after the debate sessions, but also while enjoying the socials of the conference, namely two club nights and a committee dinner on the last evening.

Overall this conference was a great success. Not only did we grow as individuals from this wonderful experience by expanding our horizon, but it also strengthened our delegation as a whole. Attending these conferences is always a great opportunity to increase our abilities of debating, building allies and most importantly, connecting with people from all over the world that share the same interests. Therefore, I highly recommend to my fellow students to use this wonderful opportunity to experience what MUN has to offer.

- Marina



Endnote

CUIMUN was the first conference I, as the Chief Head Delegate, had decided on, based on the great reviews it had, as well as our association's pleasant experiences with it in the past. It was an opportunity for more experienced delegates to join a conference, as the level of the conference was overall quite high. We were lucky that exactly eight people applied for the eight spots we booked. The delegates were motivated, well prepared and ready to conquer their committees. Everyone gave their best and I am more than happy with our delegation's efforts.

I was torn between booking an Airbnb or a hotel when faced with the decision of our accommodation. In order to keep the costs as low as possible, I decided to stick with my preferred area of Cambridge. We stayed at the Ibis Central Station Hotel and were very happy with that choice, since getting around was very easy and the hotel gave us the needed rest after a long, exhausting day.

The conference ended with a closing ceremony at one of Cambridge's beautiful colleges. Three days after our first encounter with the other delegates at the opening ceremony in the striking big hall, everything seemed familiar - the Secretariat, the volunteers and all other delegates. There were a lot of heartfelt goodbyes, exchanges of numbers and a few final heated discussions about the topics. Even during the speeches, we could see a



few big smiles and waving hands across the hall. Two of our delegates, Amy and Tim got a special acknowledgement for their excellent efforts. Amy won an honourable mention, and Tim received a verbal mention. We are very proud of them and congratulate them on their great achievement.

We cannot end the diary without thanking our two sponsors, SwissRE and Stiftung Mercator, which made CUIMUN possible for our association!

I'm proud to say that our first conference of the academic year 2018/19 was a full success and I truly believe that everyone had a great time.

- Yagmur