

# THE NMUN KOBE TIMES



Kobe City University of Foreign Studies

## After a Summer of Preparation, Delegates Meet Again to Move on to the Next Stage



Photo: Delegates compete to raise their placard upon a call for a motion by a chair

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The summer vacation is finally over, but for the three-dozen students at KCUFS who are delegates for the National Model United Nations to be held in November, vacation meant days of the seemingly endless toil of research and writing. With the conference less than two months away, they got together to confront the mounting task ahead.

The second NMUN session was held on September 24 — over two months after the last session in July. Using background guides (source literature that helps delegates to prepare for NMUN) of the four UN committees — General Assembly (GA), Security Council (SC), UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) and ECOSOC (Economic and Social Council)—which were announced on August 1<sup>st</sup> by National Collegiate Conference Association (NCCA), the delegates set out to write their position papers (PP). Over the last month, they submitted their preliminary drafts twice, which were looked over by their mentors, KCUFS students, 22 in total, who have been to previous NMUN conferences. The delegates are expected to finish writing their third and final draft by Oct. 15, the day next class takes place.

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The Saturday's class opened with lectures by three experienced delegates. Taichi Maemura, a delegate of Serbia (GA) who is a sophomore at KCUFS's Russian Studies Department, spoke on the topic of making policies. Delegates need to prepare to take part in NMUN by researching in order to write a Research Paper (RP), Position Paper (PP), and prepare their Working Paper (WP) policies.

Maemura explained how to prepare the RP, which includes basic information about each country the delegates are representing, and transforming their RP into a PP, which outlines their country's policies in terms of the agenda topics. Since many first-time delegates had difficulty figuring out where to start, Maemura suggested they take four steps — find a problem, find the cause of the problem, set a goal and lastly come up with policies to solve the problem. He recommended that they research past plans, e.g., confrontation between US and Russian Federation, or the Yugoslav War, in order to solve similar present-day situations, e.g., Syrian Civil War. If the plan failed, Maemura said, "think why it failed and then improve the plan to take actions to solve" the current problem.

Determining a minimum goal is the first step to achieve a maximum goal, so delegates should start making policies that may reach a minimum goal before expanding to a maximum goal, Maemura said. "If you find difficulty to achieve the maximum goal in your committee, please try to achieve a minimum goal first, which is a compromise." He said it is important to have a unique viewpoint. If they could have that, they could make good policies.



Taichi Maemura

Takumi Nakamura, a delegate of Australia (GA) who is a sophomore at KCUFS's International Department, explained how to make "working paper ideas" in his lecture. The WP is preparatory material for the discussion on deciding what actions to take. All the delegates will discuss and negotiate which ideas should be included in the WP, which will be a Draft Resolution (DR) when admitted by the *Dias* (Chairs). While the PP is all about the delegates' country, the WP will eventually involve not only the interest of their country but also that of the other countries. "So you have to propose what you want, but sometimes you have to compromise to accept the idea of other delegates," Nakamura said. He went on to point out, "You have to negotiate with other delegates to keep your idea alive. As you represent your country, you will also have to persuade other delegates to accept your idea."



Takumi Nakamura one's committee, represent the position of one's country, and improve the situation. And the last step is to "put the policies into clauses," which are like sentences in resolutions. Delegates need to know how to write their ideas in a resolution-style, he said. "From now on, you must work on your working paper until the very end of the conference."

Miyu Higashi, a delegate of New Zealand's Security Council who is a senior at KCUFS's English Department, explained how the conference proceeds. In the conference, every process is initiated by a motion — a formal request by delegates — from setting the agenda to suspending meetings. The conference also switches from formal debates — where delegates sit and listen to other delegate's speeches or make their own speeches and vote — to informal debates — where delegates can leave their seats and freely discuss and negotiate their policies with others to make their WP (but only when a motion is raised and approved by majority).



Miyu Higashi

The aim of this conference is "to pass resolutions unanimously through consensus" and that is why all delegates have to obtain as much support as possible for their WP. Once their WP is completed, delegates have to try to collect many signatories as possible from among other delegates to submit their WP as a DR. "We have to do revisions and merge WPs two or three times... and finally it will be admitted as a draft resolution," Higashi said. But it is not easy as it involves many other delegates who are eager to make their own wordings stay in the document.

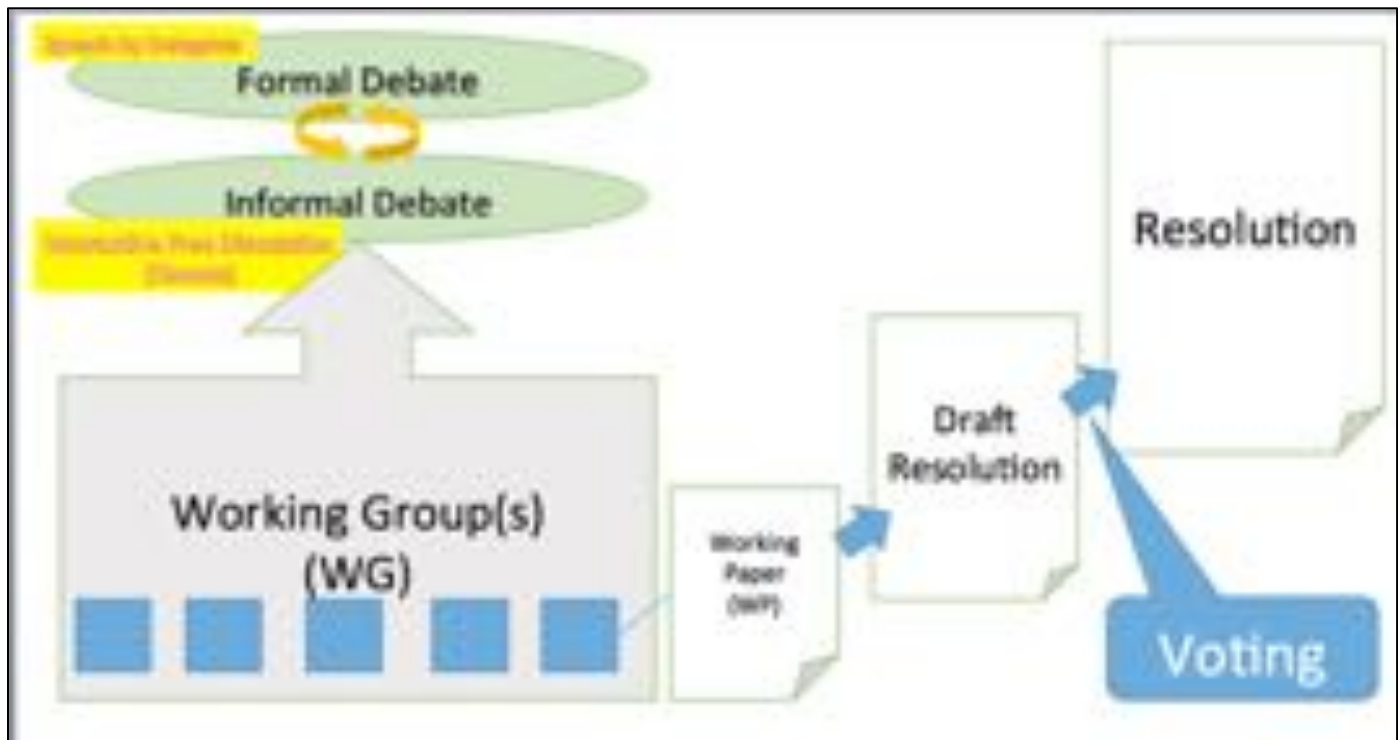


Diagram courtesy of Sachiko Tani

After a short break, delegates practiced making motions. To make a motion, delegates have to raise their placard when the *Dias* asks the floor whether there are any motions. The *Dias* then chooses a delegate to make his/her motion. It is usually a competitive process as delegates are eager to get involved in the conference.

At first the delegates seemed to be hesitant

to put their placard up quickly, but gradually they got used to act quickly in an assertive way. As Prof. Lori Zenuk-Nishide told them, "You have to be aggressive because everybody wants to make a motion" in actual NMUN conferences. If you do not act quickly, Prof. Zenuk-Nishide explained, "you will never get picked. The chairs will never look at you."

After the motion training, the delegates were divided into groups by country, for informal debate in country groups—Ghana, Australia, Serbia, and New Zealand, as well as Somalia and Uganda. They exchanged their opinions on the positions or conditions of the country they are representing. For example, a delegate of Ghana (ECOSOC) pointed out the need to improve public sanitary facilities especially when the country's infrastructure suffered from recent floods. A delegate of Serbia mentioned the dilemma of the country that is eager to join the EU, while it cannot

accept refugees that the EU encourages member countries to accept.

Then the delegates were divided into committee groups. In the GA group, the difficulty of achieving the agendas was pronounced, as holders of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) tend to be countries that occupy lofty positions in the global hierarchy along with being many of the member countries responsible for the sales of 875 million small arms and light weapons (SALW) currently in circulation in the world.

## NMUN Committees and their two agendas for Kobe Conference

### General Assembly (GA)

- The Elimination of Weapons of Mass Destruction
- Implementing the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Asia-Pacific Region

### ECOSOC (Economic and Social Council)

- Meeting the Sustainable Development Goals for All Nations and Peoples and All Segments of Society
- Building a Resilient World Through Disaster Risk Reduction

### UNHCR (High Commissioner for Refugees)

- Protecting Children in Crisis and Conflict
- Addressing and Adapting to the Effects of Climate Change on the Environment

### Security Council (SC)

- The Situation in North Korea
- Conflict Prevention and the Empowerment of Women and Girls

In the UNHCR group, a delegate of New Zealand called for cooperation to the country to decrease the number of refugees generated by rising sea level in the Pacific countries. A delegate of Somalia mentioned the importance of establishing the government system, lack of adequate food providing system and the issue of child soldiers in the country.

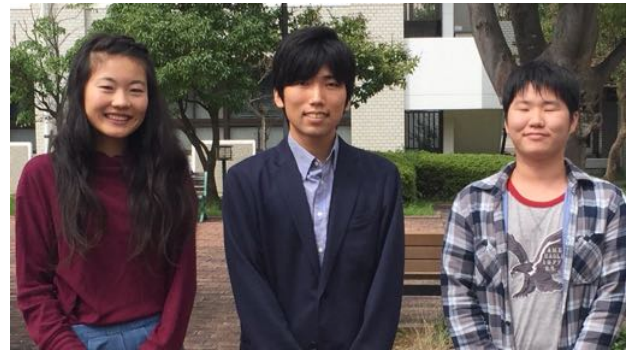
During the discussion, delegates also exchanged information on what they researched in the summer, and discussed how to improve their final PP draft. Some of the delegates were apparently overwhelmed by their tasks; however, they seemed to have been motivated and stimulated by each other through active

discussions and encouragement by their mentors.

All of the 36 delegates in the two teams of the Consortium of Universities in Hyogo and Consortium of Foreign Studies in Japan (Gaidai Rengo), which include 23 KCUFS students, participated in the Saturday's class. The session was also joined by three German students from Duisburg-Essen University in northern Germany who are studying in KCUFS's Japanese Language Program (JLP) from this September. They are participating in the upcoming conference as delegates of Japan. (Takahiro Kamo, Hiroka Abe, Honoka Morita, Nanami Takano, Ryo Ueno, Sae Oishi, Shione Shiraishi, Tomomi Yamazaki, Yuzuri Funabashi contributed to this article.)

### Grateful for the Mentor's Unequivocal Assistance

Two of the delegates who spent the hardest time writing their PP were Hiroko Kurimoto, a senior of Nagoya University of Foreign Studies, and Shoya Tani, a freshman at Kyoto University of Foreign Studies. They are partners as delegates of Uganda (UNHCR). However, they could hardly meet with each other as they go to different universities. Kurimoto said it was also difficult because the PP needs political facts and provisions and also should be supported by financial data. If she only wrote her opinions, she pointed out, it would no longer be a PP.



From left, Kurimoto, Uramachi, Tani

Kurimoto and Tani were at a loss before the summer. However, there was a savior: their mentor Naohiro Uramachi, a senior at KCUFS's International Studies Department and a veteran of NMUN Czech Republic. He helped the two many times through emails during the summer. "I just want to help them lay the groundwork for the conference so that they will get the most out of it," Uramachi said.

"For me the hardest part of writing PP was when I could not find the information I needed. Mr. Uramachi taught me not only what to research but also how to research, which was so helpful," Kurimoto said. "It feels great that someone like him, a mentor, is always there when we need him." (Ryo Ueno)



Tina Inoue

### Turning a PP into Reality

"Teaching sustainable farming can be a clue to solve refugee problems created by climate change," said Tina Inoue, a freshman at KCUFS's English Department and a delegate of Republic of Ghana (UNHCR). She has been dealing with the issue of the effects of climate change on the environment in Ghana.

After months of researching, she found a farming project at the United Nations University that can likely be adopted to the harsh climate in Ghana. Due to its semi-arid condition, northern Ghana is influenced by climate change easily and suffers droughts and floods often. That's why farmers in Ghana can neither ensure a steady supply of food nor accept refugees; they may even become refugees themselves.

The project is still in a research phase but Inoue is convinced that when this project is completed, it will contribute to solve the problem of food shortages in semi-arid areas, and furthermore to reduce the number of refugees around the world. (Hiroka Abe)

"Start searching for national implementations first as it is difficult to come up with creative ideas so suddenly."

"Become familiar with UN style writing as soon as possible."

**Nanako Ueda** (ECOSOC Assistant Director, a veteran of NMUN Czech Republic & NY)

### Suggestions from Mentors

"Do not be afraid to ask a question."

"Be informed on both agendas by sharing information with your partner."

**Emily Johnson** (UNHCR Assistant Director, a veteran of NMUN NY)

"Read the background guide. It is essential to write PP."

"Do not rely on others for information to write papers."

**Saeko Yoshimatsu** (GA Assistant Director, a veteran of NMUN Czech Republic & NY)