

# THE NMUN KOBE TIMES



Kobe City University of Foreign Studies

## The Delegates' Voyage Finally Comes to an End



The delegates of ECOSOC making a placard vote at the last session at the Kobe City Chamber on Nov. 26, 2016.

A week after the National Model United Nations (NMUN) in Kobe was over, some 30 delegates gathered at Kobe City University of Foreign Studies (KCUPS) to reflect on what their four months' journey had brought to them. In the final session on Dec. 3, of the six course sessions to prepare for the NMUN, they discussed for the last time in groups by country and committee, not about their policies, but about their experiences they had had since the first class took place on July 9.

The class began with a comment by Professor Lori Zenuk-Nishide. She first expressed her thanks to all the people who were involved in the NMUN. She mentioned that students had learned to respect those who were different from themselves in many ways, by nationality, university and personality, who

were different from themselves in many ways, by nationality, university and personality, through this NMUN. "What can I do to empower myself, how can I empower others? I'm hoping you will take this up in your life, not only in the NMUN but forever," Prof. Zenuk-Nishide said.

The delegates then separated into country groups, where they mainly shared how much preparation they had undertaken and what they did to gather information. After that, the students went into each committee group—the General Assembly (GA), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Security Council (SC), the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) —where they talked about not only about the good memories they had shared, but also about the challenges they had confronted.

### Challenges Built Us Up—GA

Taichi Maemura, a Serbian delegate, had a hard time because he and his partner could not find a suitable working group (WG) for their policies. Nevertheless, he was able to create one through strenuous efforts. Although the group's working paper (WP) was not accepted in the end, Maemura said that the process had helped him grow. Juri Ishida, a Ugandan delegate, realized the importance of cooperation. At first, she thought her speaking skills were not good enough, but gradually she realized that sharing information for a Draft Resolution was more important. Eventually, this made her feel comfortable talking with other delegates in English.

### What NMUN Bought to Us—UNHCR

Through the NMUN, each delegate appeared to have become more confident, improved their English communication skills, and had a lot of discussions. Six delegates in the UNHCR shared their challenges during the conference. They said that finding a WG that matched their policy was difficult. Following the discussions and responding promptly was also a challenge. Summing up, they suggested that it was very important to have adequate communication with their partners.

### Thorough Preparations Paid Off—SC

A pair of New Zealand delegates—Miyu Higashi and Dai Danyan—reflected on the NMUN



with the Assistant Secretary-General Hidekazu Tanaka. While preparing for the conference, they thought they had done enough research. They also thought that speaking better English would make them more comfortable, so they practiced making speeches in turn, listening and giving advice to each other. In the conference, however, they did not feel confident enough to negotiate or discuss things adequately, as 60-70 percent of committee delegates were native English speakers, some of whom had also experienced NMUN before. It was hard for them

to keep up with fast conversations and to respond promptly. Still, they did a good job giving their speeches. In the end they agreed that critical thinking was one of the most important elements in the NMUN.

### Tough but Fruitful—ECOSOC

Looking back at the conference, the delegates of the ECOSOC shared their experiences of the committee sessions. Many of them said that one of their best memories was making speeches at the Kobe City Chamber, which no other committee members did. They discussed both good experiences and challenging ones. For example, Koyo Hayakawa, a Ugandan delegate, mentioned that it was difficult to articulate policy effectively to other delegates. Still, he tried to present his country's policy in general to specific terms, which was his strategy for gaining supports from other countries.

After a short break, the delegates formed a large circle and freely shared their experiences over the last four months. Many of them said that the NMUN was a tough experience, but one that made them more mature. Fuyuko Kobayashi, a Serbian delegate of the ECOSOC, noted that after graduation she was going to become an English teacher in Kobe city. "I want to tell my students that the MUN is the greatest way to learn about global issues," she said. Mariko Baba, a Ugandan delegate of the ECOSOC, thought that NMUN taught her how to be an international citizen. She was very glad to see everyone trying to cooperate with each other. Risa Katto, a Serbian delegate of GA, said that she could recognize how small she was. She also noted that her partner was the best for her, and he was always cool and supportive.



After the delegates spoke, the professors who had supervised them made some comments. “I just want you to say it was really hard, but really great to work with all of you,” said Prof. Donna Tatsuki. “Seeing the work you’ve done and how much you care about the future, I’m not as worried about it anymore,” she added. Prof. Zenuk-Nishide encouraged the delegates not to see this as an end. “Whatever your sphere of influence, you can carry NMUN and work towards making the world a better place in terms of environment, human rights, peace and security. I think that really is our mandate,” she said. At the end of the session, certificates of participation for NMUN were given to the delegates and student journalists who had covered the course and the conference.



Nakayama (left) and Kaede Ueda

### Two Teams and One Pair Win Awards

At the end of the NMUN conference on Nov. 26, Australian and Somali country teams from the Consortium of Foreign Studies in Japan (Gaidai Rengo) and the Consortium of Universities in Hyogo were given the Distinguished Delegations Award and Honorable Mention Delegations Award, respectively. The two delegates that represented Ghana in GA also won an Outstanding Position Papers Award. The NMUN Kobe Times heard from these award-winners.

Shinju Nakayama, a delegate in ECOSOC from Hyogo Consortium and one of the six-member Australian team, realized that listening to and respecting others’ opinions is very important—though at first she had thought she had to be aggressive at the conference. In the conference, she could achieve her goal: explaining her ideas effectively, and negotiating with other delegates. As a next step, Nakayama mentioned that she wanted to take part in the next NMUN in Canada as a delegate of ECOSOC. Taking this experience into account, she wanted to work “with Japanese goodness.”

Motoko Akabe, a representative of ECOSOC and member of the Somali delegation, believes that teamwork led to winning the award. She thought that the six delegates played their roles well and that their work was appreciated. During the conference, she made a point of speaking to the delegates of the committee every day. She tried to impress on others the special circumstances of Somalia, because its actual profile in the international community seemed lower than other countries. “It was important to convey to others what Somalia could do. I didn’t want delegates from other countries to feel the difference in power between their countries and ours.”



Motoko Akabe at the center

“Unbelievable” was how Nao Takato and Ayaka Yamane—delegates of Ghana (GA)—recalled the moment when they were called at the ceremony. They said they were especially grateful to Prof. Zenuk-Nishide and their mentor Ryoichi Shigeno, a senior of English Studies Department, for their unfailing assistance.



Yamane (left) and Takato

As it was for Takato, Yamane’s image of Ghana was that of a cacao producer. As she continued to do research, however, she realized that Ghana was also active in world peace, officially calling for the elimination of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs). The country is proud of its leading role in Africa, although its achievements often receive less worldwide attention than that of developed countries. The team was happy about winning the award, and that Ghana received attention it deserved, at least in the NMUN. Both Takato and

Yamane want to join the NMUN again, eager to perform better next time.

## Special Interview

For the last issue of our newsletter, the NMUN Kobe Times staff writers interviewed Secretary General Sachiho Tani, Assistant Secretary General Hidekazu Tanaka, and two out of four Assistant Directors of UN organizations, which the NMUN Japan simulated. Let's hear what they say as they look back on their NMUN experience.

### Repaying for What She Learned from NMUN

Few dreamed the NMUN in Kobe would become real. However, the same people worked hard to make the event come true, and for Sachiho Tani and everyone else it was a moving experience. As Secretary General, she had been preparing the conference from scratch, setting the agendas for each committee, planning the cultural tours, and training the delegates and student volunteers among many other things. According to Prof. Zenuk-Nishide, who had been looking for a good Secretary General for the Kobe conference, she thought Tani would make a great leader right away after meeting for the first time, back when Tani was just a freshman in the KCUFS International Studies Department.



Prof. Zenuk-Nishide's hunch proved right. However, last three years were a bumpy road for Tani, there being no precedents for the job of Secretary-General in the whole country. At the last session on Dec. 3, Tani remarked that she was envious of the delegates, wishing she'd had such an assistance three years ago. It was also Tani's wish that those who follow her would learn and realize the sense of achievement that she gained from NMUN. Over the three years, Tani participated in several NMUN conferences, including ones in NY, Prague and Rome, and clearly appreciated what she learned on those occasions. Working for the NMUN was thus one way to return the favor. Tani hopes now for just two things: for the delegates to build on their experience in the NMUN, and for the others to understand the potential and usefulness of this activity.

### A Secret MVP Recalls His Three-Years for NMUN

Although he received little media attention, Hidekazu Tanaka was a real hero—the secret MVP of the NMUN. As the Assistant Secretary-General of NMUN Japan, he not only organized the conference, but also took charge of supporting the students' Organizing Committee, himself serving as a volunteer guide in a Kobe tour and sitting at the information desk to help delegates from around the world to enjoy their stay in Kobe. The English Studies Department senior also worked as a simultaneous interpreter for the Japanese audience at ECOSOC's last session in the Kobe City Hall Chambers on Nov. 26. For the last three years, Tanaka and those around him had focused on just one goal: the success of the conference.

His three years were filled with both sweet and bitter memories. As a sophomore, the NMUN in New York had been a fiasco due to the language gap. Working hard to improve his English and learn more, however, he felt more confident and comfortable in the 2015 NMUN in the Czech Republic, as well as in the New York NMUN the following spring. He was especially happy when he gained the appreciation of his team members for having been a competent leader.

Initially, Tanaka was unsure about the role which an Assistant Secretary-General should play. He thus resolved to do anything and everything he could for Team Kobe. Looking back on his three years of devotion to the NMUN, he believes that it was like a classroom for him—a place to learn how to work with other people for one goal. Speaking to the last class on Dec. 3, Tanaka implored the delegates to treasure the human relationships they had made there.



## Once in a Lifetime Experience

Emily Johnson spoke of NMUN in Kobe as “once-in-a-lifetime experience.” As the Assistant Director for UNCHR, she worked with the Director, an American, and supervised working papers and draft resolutions submitted by working groups of international delegates who represented designated countries. “NMUN truly offers a life-changing experience, enabling participants to see diplomacy and international issues from another perspective,” Johnson said. Like Tanaka, Johnson also cherished the teamwork experienced during the NMUN conference. “The bond forged with members and the memories shared with them were very special, having gone through challenging times together, supporting each other,” she said.

As a senior in the International Studies Department, Johnson is expected to graduate in March 2017. Still, she hopes to continue her involvement with NMUN in one way or another. For the next NMUN conference, she hopes to see more students participating from Asia, Africa and South America—just like the people who comprise the real world. At present, the NMUN is run mainly by North American, European and Japanese participants. It would also be desirable for other countries to host the conference. Compared with the previous NMUNs, Johnson felt that the delegates at this one were kinder, and more cooperative with each other than competitive.



Johnson (left) and Director Tsesa Monaghan

## Message to the Next Generation

“It was a blissful, extremely educational, deeply meaningful and memorable event,” said Tomomi Hashimoto, a senior in the International Relations Department, who played the role of Assistant Director of the Security Council. The successful cooperation of large number of student volunteers not only helped delegates weave closer ties and forge stronger friendship, but also trained and tested the abilities of many to become capable individuals. The participation of Asian delegates, especially from the Philippines, contributed much to a sense of equality in the propagation of ideas, conversations and understanding, and truly made the event international.



Hashimoto (right ) and Director Kristina Mader

much more complex than one might imagine. The issues of today are strongly connected to decades of prior history, and were shaped by many players. Most of the time, the reality of a situation is uglier than one would expect: war, famine, human traffickers and other international crimes,” she contemplated, adding that “The world needs more help than one might think, and we can help it more than we realize. Understanding international issues helps us see the big picture and how our actions can affect the world. Sometimes we can connect the dots when addressing major issues.”

## Journalists Speak At Last

From the first class on July 9 of the NMUN special preparation course, 11 student journalists joined the delegates to receive training for covering the conference. Let's hear them speak about what the last four months have meant to them.



From the first class in July, I sometimes thought of giving up the job of journalist. Professors, other journalists, and delegates helped me a lot. I realized what a small thing I can do. I am a freshman, so I want to try everything actively and expand my world, with this experience as the first step. --**Tomomi Yamazaki**



With a lot of people who supported us, we successfully published 13 newsletters. The job was not easy, but it gave me a lot of precious encounters, which will be my treasures in my life. I'm really happy to have worked as a journalist of the NMUN Kobe Times!

--**Nanami Takano**



I really appreciate the people who supported us. Through being a journalist, I really recognized I could not do anything by myself. I realized that to believe in others and do the best with them is the most important thing. --**Takahiro Kamo**



I learned that it is very hard to inform correctly and give beneficial information, but it was the duty of the journalists. During the conference, I had mainly been in charge of layout, and I learned how to place articles and photos on pages for readers to read easily. --**Shione Shiraishi**



Actually, I didn't have much confidence in my English, so I was not sure as to whether I could write good articles in a journalistic way, or submit the articles on time. Thanks to the people who helped me, I enjoyed this conference—including the difficulties! --**Honoka Morita**



These five months of experiences taught me a lot about the fascinating things of NMUN. I haven't figured out how to utilize my NMUN experiences yet, but I'll be trying to find the answer to this question from now on.

--**Ayami Tomae**



Honestly, it was really tough to publish articles every day without delay, but I had a sense of accomplishment in the end. Best of all, I was honored to participate in the conference as a journalist and work together with the great members. --**Hiroko Shiotani**



I could feel the passion of many people through their activities, which drove me to write articles, and motivated me to improve my English. The NMUN Japan broadened my perspective as a global citizen and taught me about the real situation in the world. --**Hiroka Abe**



I was so happy to get involved in such a great event. Should the newsletters give you something, our efforts will pay off! I appreciate all the people who kindly supported us. Thank you very much. --**Sae Oishi**



To tell the truth, I was unwilling to work as a journalist before the actual NMUN conference. However, I totally enjoyed it. Thanks to this work as a journalist, my English has improved a lot, and now I feel more confident with it. --**Ryo Ueno**