

THE DAILY CHRONICLE

Model United Nations

(ERMITAGE VERSION)

This year, the honorable Ermitage delegation was once again lucky to be part of the Haarlem Model United Nations (HMUN for short!) conference, in the cute little town of Haarlem, Amsterdam. Between our meeting in the Gare du Nord very early on Thursday 25th of March morning until our separation very late the following Sunday, many ties were made, many memories were created and experiences were lived... In this very first edition of The Daily Chronicle (Ermitage Version), we hope to give you a sense of what our trip was like and hopefully interest you in signing up for MUN next year!

As the delegates have been using this very particular MUN lingo for a while now, it may seem completely natural to them. However, here is your own little MUN dictionary to help you read through the articles ☺



Committee: a bunch of people who get together to discuss topics that they strongly believe will change the world

Delegate: A delegate is a representative of a country. This year, students from l'Ermitage were either delegates of China or Luxembourg.

Delegation: A delegation is made up of all of the delegates from one country. It can also refer to all of the students from a same school

Ex: Delegation of China or Delegation of l'Ermitage

Admins: Admins basically pass notes from one delegate to another during a committee debate, when speaking in front of everyone is either impossible or really inappropriate... (We never said we were note passing about the subject discussed!)

Veto: Power all P5 countries (Russia, China, United Kingdom, France, USA) have to fail a whole clause of amendment despite the general vote. This is only valid in the Security Council.

Clause: A solution suggested to the issue at hand.

Resolution: All the clauses put together make up a resolution. In order for a resolution to pass, it must have a majority of votes in favor from the delegates of the committee.

RED, a dominating color

The color red was proven to be the most significant color on our MUN trip to Holland. Firstly and most importantly, it symbolized the communism that most of us represented being delegates of China. Timour made this very clear with the little red book that he carried around along with his burgundy Buddha. Likewise, Tristan's Buddha helped him be awarded "delegate most likely to become a conceptual photographer".



The day of our arrival in Amsterdam, after several hours of admiring Van Gogh and Gauguin's work intensely and successfully finding Anne Frank's house, our final "tourist attraction" happened to be the Red Light District. We did not spend too much time exploring though since we were expected shortly in Haarlem... Well also because Mr. Wall and Mr. Hager were not too keen on us hanging around in the area. But we nonetheless all got

several good laughs over there!

The following day, after we had all made ourselves at home with the wonderful host families and after a long, hard-working day in our first conferences, we decided to celebrate. We all went to what we referred to as "the red place" for a couple of drinks. Not everyone made it but it was here under its red roof that Brandon the turtle was discovered.

Then, a little bit later, was the encounter with "the man in the red shirt". While we were all trying to enjoy our cokes and tonic waters, this man insisted on talking to us. An entertaining conversation came out of this which led to many inside jokes during the remaining of the trip!

And finally on the train ride back, Cecile found blood on her finger. Assuming, like most people, that it was her own blood, she licked it off her



finger only to find a cutless, healthy finger before her eyes leading her to panic. It was only until much later that the source of the blood was discovered, and it was not someone else's but from her lip. Overall red was more than just the communism, the Red Light District, the man in the red shirt and the blood; it was, in the Chinese sense of the term, a symbol of "happiness and prosperity" that most definitely applied to all of us.

HMUN party: points for kisses at the Stalker

Points for a kiss?! Only at the HMUN party! This annual tradition was held at the Stalker club, just around the corner from the school. The trendy club has two floors: on the bottom one, DJ Addik was spinning his records while DJ P Jones was playing some golden oldies upstairs. Delegates therefore had the choice to bust a move to the likes of Rihanna and Beyonce or to the legendary Michael Jackson. At the entrance of the club, HMUN staff handed out glow sticks to contribute to the theme of colour. Delegates proved themselves to be original and creative by making glasses and belts out of them.



Our very own Rachel Collie giving all delegates a run for their money!

The crowds were cheering loudly as some fellow French delegates began battling it out on the dance floor! Students got to shine and show off their moves! The adults present preferred the more retro moves, such as the robot and the shovel (if you are feeling clueless, just ask your parents for a demonstration!).

We know you're just dying to hear more about the kissing game! This year the points came in the form of little sugar heart candies instead of last year's lollipops. These points inspired many sweet-tooth delegates to show their romantic side for a night. The HMUN party was a whole lot of fun. Everyone from delegates to the MUN directors was having a great time! Delegates relaxed and took their minds off the conference. After the party,



some delegates went home, while others chose to enjoy the nightlife in Haarlem

Security Council: Because we're just that cool!

You may have heard of the Security Council as a committee where a bunch of serious people make important decisions regarding some of the most complicated issues in the world. Now that sounds like a lot of work!



At HMUN, Security Council means you get the biggest room with big, expensive-looking paintings hanging on the wall. It also stands for comfy chairs, a guest area for people to admire us "hard at work", and mics to make us sound important! Last but definitely not least, for Ermitage MUNers, being the delegation of China this year, Security Council is associated with...Veto Power! It is the only committee where we can declare war on other countries, or fail a whole clause or resolution just because we say we don't like what is states, even if every single other one of the 15 countries are in favor.

This may sound like lots of MUN lingo and you may think we're freaks for actually getting excited about this... But it actually feels cool to pretend to be this hot shot delegate who has the fate of the world in his hand! Do I hear any seconds? Objections? Perfect, this motion has passed!

Mr Wall in a whole new way...

On this year's HMUN trip, we had some memorable quotes that we would like to share with you.

Mr. Wall, legendary energetic and highly-inspiring English teacher was the source of many of these quotes. This trip really introduced us to a whole new side of Mr. Wall and revealed some quite unexpected alter-egos; "I was just talking with the Dutch secret police" who knew that our beloved English professor had such high connections with the Dutch authorities!

While Mr. Wall can prove to be very passionate with English literature he also know how to be stern when needed, "only 7 minutes for kissing and NO TEARS"

"Are the IB's trying to do me?" Again Mr. Wall finds the perfect combination of words to make us smile politely and repress a giggle. Now before your twisted minds make any assumptions you should know that the cause of Mr. Wall's distress in this situation was that the IB's had not paid for their metro tickets and Mr. Wall was simply expressing his suspicion and nothing else was meant by it!

If you know Mr. Wall like I do readers, you would know that in general he is known to be a quiet humble person, but from time to time he cracks and lets us flatter him as he smiles and blushes like a teen age girl "Pose Mr. Wall, Pose!" "No, that's just silly!".

Mr. Wall was terribly on his guard that week end (as he never fails to be) "beware kids of the Dutch hooligans!" Yet this great cautiousness comes with a bit of paranoia; "I think those guys are following me"

Although his beard may be gray Mr. Wall was the embodiment of youth as he sat in a Dutch café sipping a glass full to the brim of bright bright orange Fanta with the look of a child caught with the forbidden candy and confessing with eyes full of crazy greed "I like my fizzy orange."

But the hour of our departure arrive and Mr. Wall got nervous and took to running back and forth through the line counting us feverishly over and over again and making sure we were all coming to class early on Monday morning. The trip is over now but I think my fellow MUN delegates will agree that we will severely miss that unique pink balding head bobbing in and out of the Dutch crowd and the feverish "What the hell!" every time he hears something that does not agree with him while Mr. Hager represses a smile.

Thank you Mr. Wall for your priceless eccentricity and thank you Mr. Hager for making all of this possible in the first place!

The opening ceremony...again!

The opening ceremony was, well... interesting.

I think that everyone was thankful for a little break, especially the new delegates, this might have been a time to cool down, to quiet ones nerves. Well for cooling down, the cathedral was more than ideal. I think that it would be fair to say that the temperature couldn't have been much higher than 0, at most. Although characterized by an undeniably uncomfortable chill, the cathedral was probably one of the most memorable parts of the ceremony. Situated in Haarlem center, Sint Bavokerk was erected there in 1735 in a much less elaborate version. It is renowned for its colossal, silver red and golden pipe organ which was played by the likes of Mozart (at the tender age of 10) and Handel. We were graced with an infatuating piece nearing the end of the ceremony, and I wish to stress the brilliance of this music for those who were sleeping, or were quite eager to show their impatience for that magical moment to end by clapping before the end of the piece, or were perhaps distracted by the ball part of the golden fixture hanging overhead, or playing 'I spy'. I won't give any names because you know who you are.

The tone of the event was overall very official. It would be very difficult to ignore the striking accumulation of the elements of this opening ceremony: a veiled woman, giving quite an interesting speech on the International day against racial discrimination, in Wilderian Holland, from the same pulpit at which two years prier the ever so tactful Secretary General of 2008 discoursed on how intimidating the veil was. Overcompensation? The cherry on the cake was the tremendously enlightening speech by HMUN's Secretary General of 2010. Having been



privileged to attend my 4th HMUN conference, and therefore my 4th HMUN opening speech, I think that I can say with authority that Haarlem MUN has been plagued with painfully bad speeches. It truly breaks my heart. With "regret "I must admit that I tuned out pretty quickly, perhaps someone else was listening on how to remedy prejudice. This article is obviously polluted with much critical opinion, perhaps some

of you found that little lesson on tolerance useful, and not the littlest bit naive. However the guest speaker was quite interesting and it was quite inspiring to see that a practicing Muslim woman was chosen to be the youth representative of the Netherlands to the UN. Perhaps this lady has intrigued you and you may be interested in looking into this position, than please visit:

www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/infokit.pdf .

Well other than that, the ceremony was like any other, some people were paying attention, most weren't. I think that the kid standing by the pillar at the back, hugging himself to keep warm, between somnolence and consciousness at very irregular intervals, and almost falling over onto the row of equally as dormant delegates in front of him during his moments of absence, truly exemplified the general mood. But all in all, the ceremony wouldn't have been anywhere near what it was without the likes of you. Thank you all for a great trip.

General assembly plenary session

After 2 days of lobbying and debating in each of the four GAs (General assemblies), the delegation of China (that's us!) was to take part in what is known as the General assembly plenary session. Basically, all four Ermitage students who were in the GA (GA 1 - Louise Jobard, GA 2 - Nicolas Koch, GA 3 - Sophia Durand, GA 4 - Amber Ehler) were to meet up, alongside every single delegation that took part in the GA to globally debate one chosen resolution from each individual committee.

The four committees and their respectively chosen resolutions were:

- GA 1 : The Disarmament & International Security Committee

Question of: The Question of the nuclear threat of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

- GA 2 : Economic And Financial Committee

Question of: Stimulating the independence of economies in LEDCs by increasing agricultural diversity

- GA 3 : Social, Humanitarian And Cultural Committee

Question of: Reducing drug abuse and addiction in MEDCs and LEDCs

- GA 4 : Special Political And Decolonization

Question of: Improving global monitoring of elections.

The debate starts with the Chair or deputy Chair of each committee taking the floor, and reading out the operative clauses to the assembly as a whole, in addition of a Resolution booklet with the resolutions that are handed out to each delegate. After the operative clauses are read out and debate time is set, the main submitter of the resolution, meaning the delegate who actually wrote up the clause during lobbying time in their committee, usually asks for the floor and reads a policy statement (what their opinion on the issue is). After stating their position, the chair will ask the delegate if they are open to any points of information (in normal English: any questions). Sometimes, an annoying delegate who just feels like talking or like showing off their un-impressive debating skills will ask a question: sometimes, the questions are pointless, and make the whole assembly laugh and at other times, it can be very interesting.

For instance, during the debate on the issue of GA 1, the delegate of DPR Korea wanted to retaliate and was continuously asking for the floor, but after some time, the chair of the plenary started ignoring the



delegate, causing him to simply talk though he was not permitted to (usually with "points of personal privileges"). After a couple of hours debating, it is true that it gets slightly hard to continue

concentrating, which is why note passing is essential! There are about 10 admins during the GA plenary (13/14 year old kids who are students of the school) who have to pass notes from one delegate to another. Obviously it is simple when only 35 delegates in one committee, but during the plenary session, there are "filters" which are just 2 chairs who read every single note and judge if it can be passed on or not. Most of the time, the two Chairs (one of GA 2 and the other of GA 3) let most of the notes be passed on, but were not too keen on the hangmen and tic tac toes so they threw those notes out.

A certain "filtering chair" even answered on a note that was destined to the USA about war, and started a conversation which ended up along the lines of "nuking the world" and a "pregnant walrus in the arctic sea". Needless to say, even the filter Chairs weren't concentrating too much. Occasionally, a delegate would take the floor and bug, as in, could not talk. You must understand, it isn't easy going on stage in front of 150 people, representing a country and often, speak with no notes, so "au feeling" or "freestyle" like the French say. Two particular delegates were very memorable, because the first was unable to formulate a sentence without any "ums" or 10 second pauses every other word, and sounded like he was rapping more than anything else.

Another delegate, representing the Russian federation, was yelling into the mic, and sounded as if she were quite angry at something, making every single delegate and chair laugh to the point where the Chair had to take the floor away from her.

In conclusion, the GA plenary was successful, seeing as all the resolutions were passed. It also allowed us to meet many people from all over the world, have a good laugh and practice our "master debating" skills ;)

Meets and memories



Haarlem, a city crowded with speeding bicycles and a towering cathedral, was not only home to this year's mind-boggling MUN conference, but also to Aad. Though questionable at first, house 27 was in fact an abode of great wisdom and revel. The Vermagen household was truly an experience beyond imagination, like defeating a leprechaun in tic-tac-toe. The head of the house, a thick skulled Dutchman named Aad, was a source of

great inspiration and debate, with conversations ranging from International Relations to social issues. For example, Aad, international man of mystery, illustrated the conflicts in the Middle East to have started after "an Iraqi fly farted on Iranian soil". For "Timour Manzor Lalanne and his partner in crime Elliot Worth", as referred to by Aad, the euphoric laughter transcended the debating floor and social scene. The Dinner table, Aad's hunting-ground, was filled with moments of interest, such as his moving and vivid description of losing his job, to Elliot; laughter, with his cartoon like personality: "I am a carnivore! I eat meat! I don't want that vegetarian *****!" ...lets censure him a bit; and, to speak quite plainly, moments that were downright creepy, the Spiderman kiss being a perfect illustration. But don't let his unemployment and hairless pulsating cranium fool you, for the Wizard of Aad is one to treasure Let it be the unexpected half-naked wake up conversations at seven in the morning, accompanied by harmonious whistling and phlegm filled coughs, or just his subtle way of saying "gentlemen" when least appropriate, Aad's joyful camaraderie is one we'll never forget. Even when we were lost in the haze of the night with both bicycles damaged to an audible extent, his tender voice and ambiguous intention guided us through the overwhelming darkness. As if branded to the heart, Aad's memories shall stay with us until the finest hour. So for any future delegate who fears the possibility of a host-family, do not! Rejoice! As you might



have the exceptional chance to come across Aad

Although Aad was the highlight of the trip for the "gentlemen", other life-changing meets and memories were made! One of our delegates found himself bunking with a rather green fellow named Branden! Corentin found a friend in this shell of a man and made his unfortunate situation of being alone more enjoyable! Another encounter was the one of Tall Paul, in a cozy Dutch café. This over-enthusiastic squatter explained to us the art of dancing and gardening, two great passions of his. He also presented to us his boyfriend Small Paul, this is too crazy to have been made up! SP told us about his adventurous life, and most of all his travels around Europe. Last but not least, on the last night, while stopping for the best burgers of our lives, we came across a famous American singer, who for copy-right related issues we will not divulge the name. This Jazz singer made us Americans feel at home, most of all with his gentle generation of our national anthem.

Although we met plenty of people, old friends and new, the best encounters we made was within our group. This trip allowed us to become friends with people that we would have crossed in the long cold hallways of the Lycée without noticing. Now, we meet every two weeks to recreate the Haarlem ambience and recall various events that had occurred during our trip. Today, we hold a strong bond that has become the foundation of our friendship and that will remain, even after the seniors leave for university.