

A Lively Start to the UNHRC (Middle School) Committee

The middle school UNHRC is assiduously underway this evening. Starting off with an exhilarating ice breaker to get the delegates warmed up and comfortable in the environment. The delegates were asked to state their name, their school, and a fun fact about themselves. All the delegates excitedly stepped up to the task. The delegation of Canada happily accomplished this task, stating that her “favourite time is Christmas”. Another delegate that undertook this task with trepidation was the delegation of the US, who stated that he is 12 years old, attends GNS, and “likes to play video games”.

There was never a dull moment throughout the discussion, with many sparatic technical issues, accidental camera malfunctions, and lots of entertainment from the lively delegates. Many laughs were shared and amusement showed bright from the delegates’ faces. Eager with the thought of debate, the ice breaker elapsed and the motion to open debate was hurriedly put forward.

The committee quickly jumped into their first topic, and motions were put forward passionately. All young delegates displaying obvious intellect and amazing education on their first topic. The votes slowly rolled in for the highly interesting motions. Specifically, Bangladesh’s motion for “expansion of space in prisons” was passed with a sufficient amount of votes and Bangladesh started off speaking, claiming that prisons are “highly overcrowded”. The delegates quickly adapted to the topic and soon began a lively and highly impressive debate between countries’ respected perspectives.

Very quickly, blocs started to appear, an obvious incline for all human rights to be accessible and strictly implemented in prisons criminals was displayed by Canada and reassured by Bangladesh. Through talk of prison overcrowding, sanitation, and education in prisons, the common opinion of this bloc became heavily apparent.

Only in talking of sanitation in prisons did a pronounced counter bloc start to slowly appear. Haiti leading the charge, it seemed, with strong opinions about placing concern on innocent citizens not receiving full human rights and the prejudice of violent criminals receiving primary rights above these citizens. Many countries seemed to take Haiti’s concerns in stride, some even siding with Haiti on these intellectual perspectives and points.

As the discussion moved through education, Canada took a strong position on enforcing full and extensive education for staff and inmates, correlating with the bloc’s idea of human rights for all people including criminals. Haiti’s exciting counter-argument talked about their apparent bloc’s concern for innocent civilians’ human rights over dangerous criminals’ rights.

An impressive moderated caucus on sanitation in prisons started to elapse and Bangladesh shared a riveting speech on the UN’s definition of human rights and proceeded to argue how the definition applies to all people, regardless of social boundaries. These views were echoed by Canada in a previous speech, direct correlation of the potential bloc forming between Canada and Bangladesh.

As the debate trudged on, all delegates continued to make interesting points and rebuttals. A resolution seems to be significantly underway through these differing blocs, although there is still much to discuss in the UNHRC committee regarding human rights in prison. A very lively start to the great debate.