



Spimun 2019- Security Council

This year's MUN conference was held in St. Petersburg in the Gymnasium 157 from 25th to -27th March. I was part of the Security Council as the delegate of Ethiopia. This one was a THIMUN affiliated conference, so it had its style. The differences between SPIMUN and CWMUN were quite significant. The SPIMUN Security Council conference began immediately with lobbying. Delegates discussed the issues and realised who were their allies and who their foes. Afterwards, the focus was immediately shifted into amending resolutions. In the Security Council Committee there was just one resolution for each issue. Amendments were submitted to the chairs to be debated and later voted. During the first day lobbying on the issue “Keeping peace and ensuring security in the Arctic region”, the delegation of Ethiopia got to know France and Qatar’s position quite in depth while listening attentively to the opinions of the other delegations, particularly of the USA and Russia. It should be noted that the issue was very divisive amongst the delegations and the prospect of a resolution to be passed looked grim from the beginning. Nevertheless, Ethiopia proposed 3 amendments (others were not selected due to time restraints), especially regarding the assessment of territorial claims in the Arctic and the protection of the region from climate change but, due to the divisions in the committee, the only amendment passed was the following which was included as point 5:

Endorses the collaboration of Arctic nations regarding the use of the North-Eastern passage and North-Western passage.

The remaining 2 amendments, referred as point 4th: and 6th were both vetoed by Russia and some other countries did not agree with them. The former proposed the creation of a no-extraction zone of fossil fuels in the international waters of the Arctic region, outside the exclusive economic zone, in order to protect the environment both in the Arctic itself and in the entire world and the latter the creation of a international laboratory in the Arctic in order to conduct studies about its geology, marine life, the impact of climate change in the region with the intent of giving humanity a better understanding of this crucial area of our planet and suggested the laboratory be financed by a certain percentage of the GDP of every Arctic country and by private donations. Other than that, the delegation of Ethiopia did many points of information and spoke once in favor of an amendment submitted by France. In the end, though there was some common ground, the resolution did not pass and the issue was not resolved.

“The situation in Syria” was debated during the second day of the Conference. As usual, the conference began with the lobbying and the delegations got to know each other’s position on the issue. This one was much more interesting and there was much more activity amongst the delegates, including Ethiopia, but yet again there were many differences amongst countries, especially the Big Five. From the amendments submitted by Ethiopia only 3 were selected:

5. Calls for the creation of a demilitarized zone between Turkey and the Syrian territories controlled by the Syrian Democratic Forces and suggests the DMZ being controlled by United Nations Peacekeeping Forces,
6. Endorses the creation of a Syrian Constitutional Committee that will create a new Syrian constitution and will be comprised by 150 members representing the different factions and it's impartiality will be guaranteed by United Nations observers,
8. Declares that on warring parties responsible for the violation of international specific weapons use bans should be imposed sanctions and that trials against the offenders should be held at the International Court of Justice.

The first one [5] was rejected by the council because most members considered it a reiteration of a previously rejected amendment of a ceasefire. The delegation of Ethiopia explained that this operative clause was proposed in order to avert further catastrophe by the opening of a new front in this conflict and it had nothing to do with a ceasefire. But the council chose not to accept this explanation and ignored the fact that most of this land was uninhabited and subsequently would not create any problems, only avert them. In regards to the second amendment [6], the proposal was met with rejection by Russia and China who supported the Assad regime. The last one [8] was passed quite easily due to its generic nature, meaning that it could be interpreted in many ways.

In the last day of the conference a burning issue was introduced, the issue being “The situation in Venezuela”. One of the chairs chose to give up his position and became the guest delegate of Venezuela. This issue was not debated a lot since there were more time restraints than before and there was a lighter tone between the delegates. The conference was dominated by a treaty proposed by the delegation of Peru that targeted Russia with an ultimatum. The ultimatum said that either Russia accepts Guaidó as the president of Venezuela or there would be a state of war between Russia and the cosigners of the treaty.

Because we were on a lighter tone, Ethiopia signed the treaty immediately. The only ones that did not sign the treaty were Russia, China and Bolivia who openly supported Maduro (Venezuela being a guest delegate had no right to vote). The day ended with the most dramatic imaginable way: Russia took a copy of the treaty and tore it into pieces. World war 3 had just begun...

This year's MUN was really enjoyable, constructive and provided a lot of fun. In my opinion there should be no comparison between last year's conference and this one. One excelled in some aspects, the other in others. In last year's I had the opportunity to experience the Conference in a much more realistic way being it held in the UN headquarter while this year I had the opportunity to be more actively involved in the conference and make many more new friends.

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