



Perspectives

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The beat of HRC is getting more intense : working papers, informal sessions, and maybe even a resolution?

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Avec le nouveau document de travail de la part des pays du bloc de l'Union Européenne associés à l'Australie, un nouveau point de vue, davantage axé sur l'aide aux pays en voie de développement, s'offre aux discussions en cours dans le Conseil économique et social.

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Les débats d'ECOFIN avancent vers des projets concrets

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Wine, cheese and La Bamba

It appears quite simple: bread, wine and a pot of melted, smelly cheese. All you need to do is break the bread up into small pieces, stab your fork in it and dip it into the cheese pot - mmmh. At this point you don't usually expect anything exceptional to happen. However, not only committee sessions, but also dinners seem to follow specific rules of procedure. As it seems, an unwritten law of fondue says that if someone drops their bread whilst dipping, they have to sing(h). Well, of course you can come up with alternatives – dance, tell a joke, or kiss a complete stranger.

An infamous staff member considered the first option to be the most humiliating one – as it turned out, he was right!

After their first day at the Palais de Nations, all GIMUNers were tired, exhausted and hungry. Halfway through the meal, it was evident that their motivation to party had been left at the Palais.

Then, however, the aforementioned member of the staff took the initiative to break the ice: he kindly requested the unlucky delegates who had dropped their bread to sing. After a several glasses of wine and an

excellent musical performance by the Russian group, the mood was clearly swinging. It reached its peak when a group of Mexicans decided to take control of the guitar and started singing: “para bailar la bamba...!”

That was the point at which all initial timidity disappeared for good – for the rest of the evening, the microphone was passed on from one delegate to the next.

Unfortunately, many party goers and singers had to leave early because of the lack of public transport during the night - a point that definitely needs to be raised with the Swiss authorities.

The ones that stayed in spite of this inconvenience were then asked to leave by the restaurant staff – but this didn't just as yet mark the end of the party: hours later they still found themselves on the streets of Geneva singing: “Para bailar la bamba, para bailar la bamba, se necesita una poca de gracia, una poca de gracia, para mi, para ti, ay arriba arriba...!”

*Tanja Spanovic,
Perspectives,
Switzerland*

United Nations Peacebuilding Commission

La part du gâteau

Des signes encourageants mais les alliances donnent des raisons de s'inquiéter.

Alors que les débats de la Commission de consolidation de la Paix (CCP) prennent plus d'ampleur et que des solutions sont enfin proposées concernant le Sierra Leone, d'autres événements, se déroulant dans la discrétion la plus stricte, risquent de changer la donne des prochains jours. Un groupe de délégués, sous l'égide des États-Unis, a proposé hier matin une série de dispositions qui permettrait d'offrir des mesures concrètes pour le développement futur du Sierra Leone.

Cette série de propositions a pour but de réintégrer de façon effective les groupes les plus vulnérables après la guerre civile qui déchira le pays pendant plus de dix ans. Ce qui est réjouissant est la façon dont ces propositions sont structurées ; en effet, celles-ci se concentrent sur les crises les plus aiguës qui touchent notre pays. Notamment, ce 'document de travail' met l'accent sur le soutien aux anciens combattants et un développement modeste mais efficace des régions les moins développées du pays. Les propositions se veulent également une solution qui laisse une large marge de manœuvre aux agriculteurs et investisseurs locaux (développement des petits et moyennes entreprises (PME), accords de microcrédit...).

Malgré tout, certains pays ont trouvé des choses à redire à ce programme. Le délégué de la Fédération de Russie, par exemple, estime que « les propositions offertes par les États-Unis ne sont pas viables. Je ne lis que des dé-

compositions et des titres de sous-parties, mais rien de véritablement concret ». Pour la Russie, la tâche la plus importante est de conserver le statut-quo et de prendre en compte en priorité la volonté du Sierra Leone. La Russie est prête à « soutenir toute proposition faite par le Sierra Leone, et d'accorder une importance première au *Agenda for Change* proposé par son gouvernement, et soutenu par le Conseil de Sécurité. ». De plus, le fondement à tout débat devrait être la résolution 1889, adopté par le Conseil de Sécurité en octobre 2009, qui se préoccupe de la réintégration des femmes meurtries par le conflit, estime la Russie. Celle-ci compte faire des propositions en se basant sur cette résolution en allant dans le sens opposé des États-Unis.

Pourtant, même si des frictions se font clairement ressentir au cours des débats, il y a lieu d'espérer. En effet, la division du comité en trois groupes chargés de trouver des solutions à des problèmes spécifiques s'est révélée très fructueuse, et un large terrain d'entente a permis l'avancée rapide des discussions. Le groupe se chargeant du développement des infrastructures (tant sociales que politiques) a fait des propositions très constructives et assez concrètes pour permettre de convaincre de leur praticabilité. L'accent mis sur l'éducation et le besoin d'universités locales pour permettre le retour de l'emploi dans les régions les moins développées,

accepté par tous, est un excellent point de départ. Le délégué de l'Afrique du Sud, partage ses « espoirs ». « J'espère que ça avancera, que l'on va trouver des solutions. Mais nous prenons le bon chemin. Il faut maintenant continuer. »

Ce qui est malheureux, ce sont les événements subalternes ayant lieu en marge des discussions officielles. Il faut dire que chacun veut sa part du gâteau. Des pactes se forment entre les partenaires les plus inattendus, ceci pour assurer que leurs intérêts soient préservés. Un délégué proche des discussions, parlant sous le couvert d'anonymat, révéla que « deux *leaders* nets sont ressortis des débats, les États-Unis et la Russie. Cette dernière joue un double-jeu pour ne pas perdre. En s'alliant avec tout le monde, elle ressortira forcément gagnante. » Allant encore plus loin, le délégué affirma que « chaque 'Grand' veut occuper le devant de la scène et donc prendre les devants. La Chine, de même, fait tout pour peser et ne battra pas en retraite. »

En ayant pour but le développement et la stabilisation du Sierra Leone, il ne reste qu'à espérer que ces accords égoïstes et malhonnêtes n'empêchent pas le bon déroulement des débats.

*Ariel Litke,
Awareness Times, Sierra Leone*

General Assembly Second Committee Economic and Financial

De la parole à l'acte

Mardi matin - Le deuxième comité, économique et social (ECOFIN) a entamé les dialogues entre nations. Le but : concrétiser des accords internationaux sur le blanchiment d'argent et le financement du terrorisme. Les débats se sont ouverts dans une atmosphère tendue. Le plus important : des accords semblent se confirmer pour les prochains jours, notamment en matière de blanchiment.

Quelques idées généra-

Une base de données internationale, plus vaste et plus facile d'accès, sur les clients des banques est une autre ambition de tous les représentants à cette conférence GIMUN. Le Comité cherche également des solutions pour partager des informations clés entre pays concernés. Des stratégies moins coûteuses mais plus efficaces pour combattre ces activités sont le but ultime de toutes ces propositions.

Pour cette conférence, les Nations-Unies peu-

les sont sorties du lot. Notamment, une coopération au niveau international serait nécessaire pour contrer le blanchiment d'argent, non seulement entre les puissances économiques, mais aussi avec les pays en voie de développement et entre les divers blocs. Un agrandissement et un pouvoir plus flexible du Groupe d'action financière sur le blanchiment des capitaux (GAFI) pour tous les membres participants est aussi en discussion.

vent espérer des projets concrets en fin de semaine pour un sujet où, par le passé, les progrès étaient difficiles et qui, pour la suite des événements, sera déterminant pour le système bancaire et la diminution du terrorisme.

Michele Mastro

Prospectives, Switzerland

An inside look at Columbia and illicit activities

Tuesday morning in Geneva, delegates of the General Assembly Second Committee began discussions on anti-money laundering policies. As discussed in the Committee, terrorism is known for targeting the bigger, more powerful nations of the globe, but its roots are usually found in smaller countries with developing economies. In these nations, money laundering has far more consequences than for any superpower as it is closely linked to terrorism.

Today it causes dismay and misery; this is an opportunity to have a quick inside look at Columbia's resistance against money laundering and challenges that the country may face in the future, all of which depend on the ongoing negotiations.

Columbia, which is Latin America's fourth biggest economy, has taken many steps over the years to battle both terrorist-funded activity and money laundering within its boundaries. Money laundering itself has been broadly criminalized by the government; financial institutions must by law keep a database of all their customers. Regulations and new bills have been passed in the past few years in order to detect any suspicious money activity.

However, there is still much progress to be made in the country, as most of the economy is driven by illegal activities -- most notably the cocaine and heroine industry -- from which most of the money is laundered. Corruption also continues to thrive in the government, though cooperation with the U.S.A has cracked down on internal fraud.

Michele Mastro

El Tiempo, Columbia

Security Council

Not another day in paradise

Tuesday's session - the disrespectful and noisy Delegate of Libya, a staged walkout during Libya's speech and Libya's slip up when referring to the Russian Federation. The rather obvious common denominator in this respect was the Libyan Delegate, clearly the trouble-maker of the Council.

Until now, the delegates of the Security Council seemed to understand each other perfectly. To compensate for this over-harmonic start of the conference, Libya was seen to be playing games on his cell phone, with complete disregard to others. As the American delegate was in the middle of his speech, Libya provocatively indicated its disinterest and disagreement with the US delegate, which was diplomatically ignored.

The United States, France and the United Kingdom answered Libya's behaviour in kind, staging a coordinated walkout, leaving the room when the delegate of Libya

started to discuss his working paper.

The cherry on the top was undoubtedly when Libya addressed the delegate of Russia, saying, "Thank you for this point, dear Soviet – oh I mean Russian delegate". Feeling insulted by this he urged Libya to apologize for his error. Although the Libyan delegate officially excused himself twice during session, Russia still felt very insulted by the obviously ironic and sarcastic apology and categorically states that Russia supports any Libyan Proposal for the duration of the conference.

The once harmonious Security Council has now fallen into discord, as usual...

*Tanja Spanovic
The News, Pakistan*

Combat de bac-à-sable au Conseil de Sécurité !

Le délégué libyen a fait preuve hier d'un comportement puéril et enfantin...

Cela fait bien longtemps que les relations entre les Etats-Unis et la Libye n'ont pas été au beau fixe. De plus, hier lors de la réunion du Conseil de Sécurité, leur mésentente a pris une nouvelle dimension. Pour montrer son désaccord avec certains propos « irrespectueux » du délégué états-unien, le délégué libyen s'est mis à jouer avec son téléphone, au beau milieu de la prise de parole des Etats-Unis, le tout sans le mettre en mode

« silencieux » ! À cet égard, *Perspectives* tentait un entretien avec le représentant libyen :

Perspectives : « Quel était le sens de votre action ? »

Délégué libyen : « J'ai voulu réagir à l'irrespect que les Etats-Unis ont fait preuve à notre égard, comme lorsqu'ils ont décidé de soutenir la Suisse lors du récent conflit qui nous a opposés. Ma volonté était aussi de me manifester plus généralement contre la politique impérialiste des Etats-Unis dans le monde. »

Perspectives : « Pensez-vous que cela pourrait nuire à vos liens avec les Etats-Unis ? »

Délégué libyen : « Je ne pense pas que cela puisse davantage nuire à nos relations, vu qu'elles sont déjà quasi-inexistantes... »

Perspectives : « Quelle image de la Libye pensez-vous que cela risque de donner ? »

Délégué libyen : « Cette action montre tout l'intérêt que la Libye porte envers les mensonges américains. En effet, ces derniers livrent un message déguisé ; ils parlent de paix et de droits humains, mais il suffit de voir ce qu'il se passe en Irak et en Afghanistan pour comprendre qu'ils se contredisent ! ».

Malgré le côté puéril de son action, le délégué libyen a envoyé un message fort et sérieux sur ce que sera la position libyenne dans les relations qu'elle compte entreprendre avec les Etats-Unis dans le futur

*Jack Jewsbury,
Perspectives, Suisse*

*Jack Jewsbury
Perspectives Switzerland*

Economic and Social Council

G(24)uidelines for PPP

Yesterday was a busy day for the ECOSOC delegates, as the G-24 was attempting to push through its revised working paper. In order to understand the G-24's motivation, it is interesting to take a brief look at its history.

The Intergovernmental Group of Twenty-Four on International Monetary Affairs and Development, more commonly known as the G-24, was established in 1971 in order to coordinate the position of developing countries regarding monetary and development issues. As its name indicates, it consists of 24 members and is divided into three regions: Africa (Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa and the Democratic Republic of Congo), Latin America and the Carib-

bean (Argentina, Brazil, Columbia, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, and Venezuela), and Asia and developing countries of Europe (India, Iran, Lebanon, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Syrian Arab Republic) (ed: *Perspectives* is aware that none of these countries belong to Europe).

The G-24 holds regular meetings on various subjects which concern its members, and although any country of the G-77 (coalition of developing nations, more commonly referred to as *the South*) may attend its meetings as an observer, the People's Republic of China holds a "Special Invitee" status, which allows it to address the plenary sessions of the G-24. Hence, after some debate, the focus of yesterday's G-24 working paper has shifted towards a more regulated legal framework in

Public-Private Partnerships (PPP). Thus, in order for a public sector company to get involved in such a partnership, it would have to submit to strict government control and taxation regarding its profits. For instance, a company would be penalized if its profits exceed "reasonable" amounts. The proposal has also introduced the idea of a Health Fund, which would help to promote global and affordable access to medicine. Additionally, more emphasis has been placed on drug research, scientific cooperation, and exchange of knowledge and resources between countries. Last but not least, the additions to the working paper brought the improvement of women's and children's health situation into the spotlight.

*Iaroslav Gaponenko,
Perspectives, Switzerland*

La synergie comme seul mot d'ordre

Le document de travail proposé par le bloc du G24 a suscité un certain nombre de réactions, de la part de pays comme Cuba ou le Brésil, mais aussi du côté des pays « riches » que représentent le bloc de l'UE, associé à l'Australie. Hier en fin de journée, ce groupe s'est réuni de manière informelle dans les couloirs entourant la salle XVI afin de s'entendre sur la proposition d'un nouveau document de travail, substantiellement différent de celui proposé par le bloc du G24.

Les initiateurs de ce nouveau document désirent axer les débats sur l'aide aux pays en voie de développement, en encourageant l'échange entre les pays, surtout dans le domaine des savoir-faire (par exemple entre les universi-

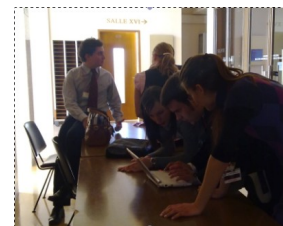
tés). Ils souhaitent aussi travailler davantage avec les organisations à but non-lucratives (NPO) et les organisations non-gouvernementales (ONG), et ainsi faciliter l'entrée de ces NPO dans le secteur sanitaire. En bref, un seul mot d'ordre : la « synergie ».

Selon la formule bien connue, reprise par l'ambassadeur de France : « donnez un poisson à un homme et il mangera pour un jour, apprenez-lui à pêcher et il mangera toute sa vie », la position de ces pays est claire : il ne faut pas seulement « financer » les programmes de santé, mais avant tout améliorer durablement la situation sanitaire des pays en voie de développement. C'est pour cela qu'il n'est pas suffisant selon eux de s'en tenir à la stricte et seule défense des partenariats public-privé (PPP), mais faire un pas supplémentaire auprès des NPO et ONG. « Nous sommes persuadés que notre position peut être suivie par la plupart des nations, et nous avons

bon espoir que le Conseil économique et social arrive, dès mercredi, à l'adoption d'une résolution allant de ce sens » commentait hier à nouveau l'ambassadeur de France, très impliqué dans les négociations.

Lors de la dernière session de travail d'hier, les modératrices du Conseil ont cependant calmé toutes ces ardeurs en reportant le sujet à aujourd'hui, en demandant aux pays concernés de préciser leurs points de vue et d'ajouter plus de détails lors de leur réécriture du document.

*Romain Roustant,
Currents,
UNIFEM*



les délégués de l'UE et de l'Australie en pleine mise au point d'un nouveau document de travail.

Economic and Social Council

Hasta la victoria siempre!

As a sea cliff stands strong in tempest, Mario Leonel Avila Flores, the Cuban Delegate to the ECOSOC, stood up against the countries in favor of Private-Public Partnerships (PPP) in Health. *Perspectives* caught up with him during a break between two sessions on Monday and managed to get an interview from this singular character.

During your opening statement, you harshly criticized the UN system, saying it is “s u b j u g a t e d” and “perverted”. Can you please elaborate on the reasons you said this?

When I said this, I was actually referring to imperialist and rich countries, such as the United States of America or the members of the European Union. I did not criticize the UN system itself, but the way these countries manipulate and distort the real objective of the conference for their own benefit.

Recently, H.E. Dr. Ricardo Alarcon de Quesada, Speaker of the People’s Power National Assembly of the Republic of Cuba said, “Greed, selfishness and irrationality will visit catastrophe upon ourselves, and those who refuse to accept the possibility of a different world, [...] A world without hunger or poverty [...]”. Don’t you think that the world described by H.E. Dr. Ricardo Alarcon de Quesada is being built here, in this same building?

The world as he describes it is not really happening within these walls. In my point of view, what happens here is only hypocrisy. The only way to build a world as he describes it would be between South countries themselves and countries that have a genuine will to help, such as the ALBA group (ed. Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas, an international cooperation organization based on social, political and economic integration between the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean).

This morning, Henry Both, the G-24 bloc coordinator, insisted on the vital importance of PPP, under the guidance of “efficient control mechanisms [...] to guarantee that private firms do not interfere with organizational priorities of the public agenda”. In your opinion, would such control prevent the corruption that the private sector could bring into PPP?

I don’t think so, because most of the time, the control mechanisms as he describes them don’t really work. It is well known that private companies, especially pharmaceutical companies or private health companies, are only looking for profit. They just try to get into the market, since otherwise they wouldn’t have any interest in such partnerships. Thus, I don’t believe this type of proposal will work in real life.

What viable alternative to PPP can your government propose, keeping in mind the world’s current financial and humanitarian crisis?

Given that the world crisis was caused by the capitalist system that reigns over the world, the Cuban government proposes a cooperation between the governments of different countries which have a good health system, such as Cuba, and the countries that have a lot of problems by sending doctors, teaching at universities or giving support programs to help develop their health system. This will benefit the country, as opposed to the private sector coming in and disrupting the whole system.

On Tuesday, the debate was still in progress, and Cuba appealed for the rich countries to propose a viable working plan, as the G-24 working paper did not satisfy its expectations.

*Iaroslav Gaponenko,
Perspectives, Switzerland*



General Assembly First Committee Disarmament and International Security

Une résolution peu « folle », pour des objectifs qui restent « flous »

C'est une avance certaine qu'à fait le DISEC, ce Mardi, sur le thème du désarmement, de la démobilisation et de la réintégration au Sahara occidental. En effet, la commission a su rattraper son retard en faisant éclore trois projets de résolution qui vont être, indubitablement, réunis en un seul.

La résolution qui en ressortira pourrait bien faire l'unanimité et ne pas poser trop de problèmes au moment de son adoption, donnant ainsi satisfaction aux pays en voie de développement qui attendent impatiemment le prochain sujet concernant la réglementation du commerce des armes légères.

La clé de ce probable consensus réside dans le consentement du Maroc et des pays de la conférence islamique qui le soutiennent. Le premier veut bien tolérer une autonomie relative du Sahara occidental, à condition que la souveraineté marocaine sur celui-ci ne soit pas remise en cause.

Or, les documents de travail stipulent qu'un référendum devra être organisé sur cette portion litigieuse du Nord de l'Afrique pour déterminer qui aura les clés de l'administration territoriale, c'est-à-dire le détenteur de la souveraineté. Cela ne semble pas inquiéter le Maroc,

et pour cause, la procédure de vote est bien loin d'être définie, dans ce projet de résolution, qui risque donc de rester une coquille vide. Ainsi, sans efforts supplémentaires du DISEC pour préciser l'interprétation de cette potentielle résolution, les deux jours de travail fourni jusqu'à ce jour pourraient n'avoir été qu'un outil supplémentaire de frustration pour les pays du tiers-monde, qui voient leurs intérêts s'enfuir de la table des négociations.

De plus, cette résolution pourrait n'être qu'un avatar abstrait de la *Mission des Nations Unies pour l'organisation d'un référendum au Sahara occidental* (MINURSO), prévue par la résolution 690 du conseil de sécurité en 1991.

Alan Marzo,
Perspectives, Switzerland

Substantial progress in DISEC

On the issue of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of Western Sahara, the Committee decided to cooperate with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the UN commissions. The Committee also stressed the importance of the implementation of DDR through other conflict and post-conflict peace-building and peace-keeping programs, including referendums, elections, security sector reforms, rule-of-law and economic development programs.

The Committee recognized that the implementation of DDR cannot succeed unless it takes into account the best interests of the parties involved, including the regional powers and the international community for, respectively, local technical supervision and international supervision. The Committee decided to create a new position for a rapporteur to liaise between the regional and the international level.

In a working paper, the committee agreed that the pre-planning and preparatory assistance for the DDR must take the following actions:

- Establish a DDR program based on thorough political analysis, including an evaluation of the risks involved.
- Evaluate existing capacity and how this can be boosted so as to respond efficiently and effectively.
- Provide technical advice during the peace process.
- Undertake exploratory pre-program assessments and surveys, including on key issues such as: sexual and gender-based violence; special needs of women, youth and children; disability and HIV/AIDS; in-country United Nations, national institutional and civil society capacities; and the early engagement of donors and other international and local stakeholders.

Justin Oliver Zinda,
morocconewsonline.com

Human Rights Council

„Pierre qui roule n'amasse pas mousse”

Au sein du Conseil des droits de l'homme, la problématique concernant le conflit israëlo-palestinien paraissait très appréciée par les ambassadeurs présents à la conférence. En effet, après la visite du représentant de l'OCI, c'était au tour de l'ambassadeur de Russie de s'intéresser au travail du Conseil des droits de l'homme.

„Pierre qui roule n'amasse pas mousse” - c'est ainsi qu'il a exprimé son inquiétude envers le fait que les négociations concernant cette affaire semblaient n'aller nulle part, et cela depuis des années. Il a donc appelé les délégués à travailler sur le projet de la résolution préparée par la Chine et la

Russie. Dans ce document favorable à la Palestine, les auteurs encouragent vivement l'État d'Israël à quitter le territoire palestinien, à arrêter toute action militaire et à ouvrir les frontières.

Jusqu'ici, les délégués ont commencé à discuter des questions relatives au futur de Jérusalem comme capitale de l'État palestinien. Certains pays islamiques, tel l'Algérie, se sont vivement sentis concernés par la question de l'accès à la mosquée Al-Aqsa, enjeux liés au deuxième thème de l'agenda, celui de la liberté religieuse. Par contre, l'Ukraine a suggéré que la ville soit protégée par une force internationale et a proposé

d'ajouter ce point à la prochaine résolution. L'autre thématique abordée ce mardi concernait les élections en Palestine. Tous semblaient être d'accord qu'une victoire du Fatah aiderait à atteindre la paix, cependant, la Russie a clairement affirmé que la société internationale ne devait pas s'engager dans les affaires intérieures palestiniennes.

Un débat informel modéré concernant ce document continuera de se dérouler aujourd'hui et les résultats sont attendus pour les prochaines sessions.

*Natalia Kita,
Perspectives, Switzerland*

A resolution by Wednesday?

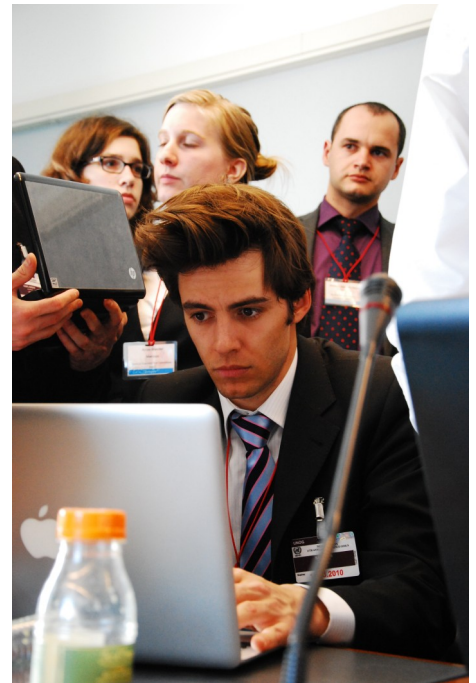
Things have started to move at a quicker pace in the Human Rights Council. Working papers are at the core of all discussions. The first working paper proposed by Palestine underscored thirteen key points: from economic stability to rehabilitation and compensation of war victims. A second working paper, proposed by Chile, co-sponsored by the Rio Group as well as the G-24, proposed a working group to write a resolution *“demanding Israel to open their borders to all Humanitarian help”*. To encourage Israel, the working paper mentioned that *“the UN Mission would ensure that no material endangering the lives of the people will be allowed to pass. This includes arms, weapons, and all others materials harming lives”*. The last paper is on the initiative of the Federation of Russia and China and is also asking for a resolution close to the one pro-

posed by Chile.

The first point of the Palestinian working paper highlighted the recommendations about the blockade and the closure of borders that was being discussed. On Monday, Israel was pretty passive, as if Violations of Human Rights in the Gaza Strip was not of its concern. Members of the HRC and observers like Palestine were trying to defend the opening of the borders, while he expressed his weariness. The debate was a waste of time for him because it was useless to have this debate “again and again” with the same participants, and the same accusations. One of the main condemnations made by those supporting the opening of the border is the blockade of humanitarian help, upon which Israel stated *“We left the Gaza*

strip in 2005 with enough resources to create its own state and the only thing that happened is that a terrorist group took power”. Also mentioned was the worrisome declaration by a certain group that one of its primary goals is the destruction of Israel. So letting humanitarian help arrive in Gaza would imply taking the risk that the aid would be diverted to help terrorists and extremists. On this last point Palestine immediately replied *“How can we use food and medicines for terrorist purposes?”* - access to food, medicine and basic necessities and social services are fundamental rights and the continuing violation cannot be accepted under any circumstances.

*Margaux Moulin,
The New Statesman,
United Kingdom*



„The key is to work together“

- an interview with Dr. Albrecht Schnabel

Yesterday, Perspectives had the honor of meeting with Dr. Albrecht Schnabel, guest speaker at the 11th annual GIMUN Conference.

Albrecht Schnabel currently works at the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces

Since 1789 and the creation of the nation state, the sovereignty incumbent to the definition of a country indicates that no authority can rule over sovereign states. How can we expect any cooperation on security issues?

First of all, the situation since the 19th century has changed. Countries cannot do whatever they want anymore and, through international law, their actions can be regulated. When a country signs a treaty, it freely accepts to behave itself accordingly and be true to the promises it made. However, this cooperation is difficult to enforce, since no one can act against disobedient states. This is where the UN Security Council steps in. Indeed, it is the only official organ that can vote sanctions and intervene militarily in countries, if international peace and security are deemed in danger.

Another obstruction to cooperation is the fact that every country has different interests, and will only act in accordance with the support of those interests. However, one must not forget that a country has two sets of interests: its own interests, in which case it will not cooperate with others; and common security interests that overlap with that of other countries. The best strategy is to cooperate: not only does it save efforts and money through the sharing of intelligence and resources, but a country cannot afford to confront security threats on its own (if we leave out the USA, the only superpower in the post-Cold War world). The key is to work together in the resolution of common menaces and dangers

Carl Schmitt defined a new kind of war in his 1962 “Theorie des Partisanen”, one that can barely be identified or understood and that relies on the imbalance of resources and on

unconventional methods. How can we respond to such threats?

This fits into the ‘old war-new war’ debate, of which terrorism is the perfect example. New wars are unpredictable, present novel characteristics and show different methods of fighting. These ‘new wars’ described by Mary Kaldor are opposite to the Napoleonian idea of war, in which two army with an equal amount of resources fight each other in a ‘regular’ fashion. To fight these contemporary volatile threats, the focus should be put on local communities. The deprived need to be given enough resources to survive in their environment: it is the idea of empowerment, which gives local populations the means to develop viable infrastructures. This long-term strategy is the best yet to fight the increase in popularity of terrorist groups. With education and political stability, communities will turn their back on terrorism.

What are your hopes for the future on the subject of Comprehensive Human Security?

Nation states need to be responsible and be held accountable for their actions. Nowadays, despite big efforts by the international community, some countries can still get away with a lot without any consequence. There is an urgent need for the prevention and resolution of security threats through diplomatic and non-violent means. Countries need to understand (and some, such as China, already have) that they can benefit from their investment and the help offered to alleviate local communities’ woes, and that by doing so they also answer to potential threats to themselves. The emphasis should especially be put on the fact that states could prevent major conflicts, which would act as a moral drive to effectively help other countries.

Thank you for your time.

*Ariel Litke,
Perspectives, Switzerland*

Random Ramblings

Overheard in the Palais

Staff member: is the Estonian delegate hot?

A member of the UN staff holds the door open for 15 people: This is my new job!

Ambassador to staff member: tu as des monstres suçons sur la nuque!

Outside, two peacocks are walking around, ambassador: those birds probably give good blow-jobs!

Delegate: point of order, point of order!

Everyone is quiet, looks at him

Delegate: oh no, actually I just have a question.

17 March



-3/12 °C

18 March



-1/15 °C

- Weather -

From yesterday's boredom box:

Ways to give the UN a more modern image

- create an action game on the UN missions for playstation 3, wii etc
- organise UN-Flashmobs
- design women's underwear (fair trade!) and present it at the Paris Fashion Week
- have a UN-bus at the street parade in Zurich

Boredom box: doodle, write or sketch anything, take it to our office on the 5th floor or hand it to the journalist in your committee and find it in tomorrow's paper.

Commemoration

Salle des Pas Perdus – A young man’s boulevard of broken dreams

I once had a dream of making a real impact in world politics; of changing the world

Four years ago, I first had the chance to participate in GIMUN as a Secretary of the Conference on Disarmament. I was young back then – I had just come to Geneva to study International Relations and was ready to save the world. I felt this overwhelming motivation; everything was new and incredibly interesting. Finally, I got the chance to see the United Nations live! Walking and talking where world leaders do, eating in the same cafeteria as UN diplomats from all over the world. Good times.

At the end of the week I was slightly disappointed, though, not because of GIMUN, but because of the institution we were simulating. When I looked at what was being achieved, the UN turned out to be a place where idealism has no place and controversial problems cannot be solved easily - a place where every initiative, however strong, ends in endless speeches full of blabla that are never followed by actions. Back then, the Conference on Disarmament did not even manage to set an agenda for a total of twelve years in a row. I never knew diplomats were so childish. Or at least that is what I thought back then.

It was only later that I realised: most aspects of the world around us are a lot more complex than one might think. Of course it makes sense not to have a stock of nuclear weapons, big enough to destroy the whole world hundred fold; they are old, dangerous, and certainly not of too much use in daily live.

Thus, there was a day when the only logical conclusion I was able to come to was that these stockpiles would have to be reduced as fast and as much as possible. Any other reasoning escaped my imagination. Only much later I realised that also the *how* and *why* of a reduction mattered, that decisions are only worth as much as the spirit they are made in. This is especially true for the UN. Resolutions are only worth the paper they are written on. It is solely the intentions which bring resolutions into being that can translate into specific action. Meeting in the UN can easily become a debate that is very distant from reality. It almost seems like there is no urgent need for food or medical support when you are dining in the nice restaurant on the 8th floor of the Palais des Nation’s main building, or for disarmament of nuclear weapons for that matter. Sometimes it makes you lose faith and shatter your dreams that inaction is caused by the sheer distance between where needs arise and where they are supposedly satisfied.

Eventually, every time I come back here I discover a new layer of reality, and previous ideas get replaced. The *Salle des Pas Perdus* has become my boulevard of broken dreams. I am fine with this now, because every time I lose faith I remind myself what I am doing this for. To change the world for the people who live in it. Don’t forget!

Daniel Walter

President of the GIMUN association

Impressum

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