

Model United Nations

Event Report

World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

400 students from 37 schools discussed disaster prevention!

Model UN - Believing we can change the world

Do you know about the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction(SFDRR)? This international framework, named after a Japanese city, plays a central role in DRR. However, despite living in Japan, we were unaware of its existence and significance. This lack of awareness made us realize that we, the younger generation, should take an interest in and seriously discuss the issue. We believe that our activities could help promote the framework more broadly. Under the slogan 'our learning can change the world,' we decided to hold the conference. We'd like to express our gratitude to everyone supporting us and report on the conference.

MUN Guide Map

Our guide map will navigate you through the world of Model UN.



Date: December 26, 2023

Venue: Otsuma Women's University

Participants: 400 people, 37 schools

Agenda: Disaster Risk Reduction/Resilience Building



Three Goals Set for Resilience Building

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| Goal 1 | Ensure all countries implement the SFDRR to enhance resilience to disasters. |
| Goal 2 | Promote inclusive measures that leave no women or vulnerable groups behind. |
| Goal 3 | Expand support and cooperation to developing countries. |

Merely discussing support and methodologies would not fulfill the mission of 'building resilience' and 'promoting SFDRR.' To render our conference a substantive and comprehensive forum, we delved into the various disaster risks and challenges that countries encounter, examining both the reasons behind these issues and the actions we must undertake to address them.



Creation of Background Guide

In Model United Nations, the Background Guide (BG) is shared among all participants to help deepen their understanding of the agenda. For this conference, a group of project members had worked on creating an original BG. This 63-page achievement, covering a wide range of disaster risk reduction issues, has received high praise from experts in specialized fields, including UNDRR.

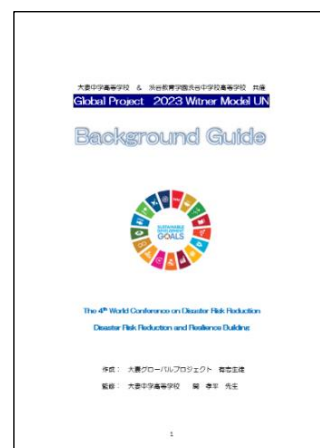


BG Team's Thoughts About Their 3-Month Journey

Our goal was to create “a comprehensive textbook enabling students to delve into disaster risk reduction issues at a higher education level.” We began from the ground up, engaging in weekly discussions with our teacher and delving into news articles and UNDRR reports. At first, we were navigating blindly, uncertain of our project's viability as a Model United Nations initiative. Nonetheless, we systematically categorized various issues, established three goals, gathered data, analyzed challenges, and distilled our findings into the text.

What we gleaned from the BG creation process is the profound complexity of disaster risk reduction, which intersects with a multitude of factors, including climate change, gender issues, disability support, poverty, and urban development. This epiphany fueled our eagerness to enlighten our readers about the issues we unearthed.

Following the conference, the BG received widespread acclaim. The collaborative effort of crafting the BG and deepening our collective understanding bestowed upon us a profound sense of achievement. It is with great joy and honor that we reflect on having convened a conference in harmony with all participants, grounded on the BG crafted through immense dedication and labor, thereby securing a lasting legacy.



The BG is accessible via the QR code above (for digital data, you can view it by clicking on the QR code)

Special Thanks

During the opening session, we had the honor of receiving messages from Ms. Matsuoka, the Representative of the UNDRR Japan office, and Prof. Ono at Tohoku University. Additionally, Mr. Murakami, the Cabinet Office's Disaster Management Commissioner, along with his team, and Mr. Hosokawa, the Head of JICA's Disaster Management Group, graced us with their visits. On the final day, we were privileged to receive their feedback. The opportunity to share our activities with such esteemed leaders in the field of international disaster risk reduction filled us with energy and inspiration for our future efforts.



Conference Report: From the Perspective of the Director

From the conference's onset, delegates engaged energetically, forming groups such as developed nations, emerging economies, and developing countries, centering discussions on "support" and "climate change measures." Developed countries were divided into EU and non-EU factions, while developing countries split along Asian, African, and Latin American lines. Moreover, emerging economies, including the BRICS nations and Southeast Asian countries, collaborated in discussions. In the larger developing country groups, innovative methods like sticky notes were used to facilitate understanding of various national policies.



The primary point of contention was "support." Developing countries, feeling unable to bolster their disaster resilience with their resources, sought assistance from developed nations. However, developed countries, already extending support beyond disaster prevention, were hesitant to commit to unlimited aid. This led to clear divisions and differing opinions on specific financial and technical support policies. On the issue of climate change, developing countries were divided between those demanding stringent actions from developed nations and those favoring compromise. Although diplomatic interactions between groups were noted, reconciling differing views within groups was time-intensive. By the first day's end, each session had submitted 4 to 6 working papers.



The second day featured question-and-answer sessions on the working papers and preliminary voting, a move that prompted delegates to dive deeper into diplomatic efforts, culminating in cross-group negotiations by the afternoon. This led to the consolidation into two major factions: the supporters and the supported. Intense negotiations over the resolutions' wording and specifics continued up to the last moment, eventually leading to the consensus adoption of two resolutions.

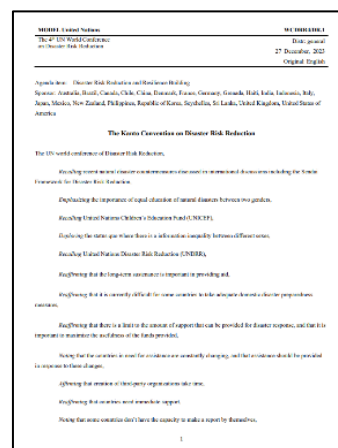
~ Adopted draft resolutions ~

This crucial conference, aimed at determining international disaster risk reduction strategies, required consensus (agreement from all participating countries) for the adoption of resolutions. Despite the conflicting positions and national interests, discussions converged towards a single goal, leading to the adoption of valuable resolutions.



General Conference

Japanese Conference



Message - Revisiting Model United Nations

Mikoto Tsukihashi, Secretary-General

When I first participated in Model UN during my third year of junior high school, I found researching my assigned country and drafting policies challenging, feeling overwhelmed even before the conference began. However, witnessing other students' lively debates was exhilarating. Envious of their enjoyment in persuading others and communicating, I quickly became enamored with the allure of Model UN.

We viewed this conference as an opportunity to "revisit Model UN." Aiming for prizes is important, but it's not the core of our involvement with Model UN. It has enabled us to engage deeply with social issues, resulting in substantial learning. We've not only gained new perspectives on news and enhanced our problem-solving skills, but also improved our cross-cultural understanding and communication abilities. Most importantly, we've learned the value and joy of debating with numerous peers. With this foundation, our project team came together with the goal of creating a conference focused on genuine learning and earnest engagement with international issues.

Our objective is not merely to learn for Model UN but to embody learning through Model UN. We believe that by participating in discussions and persisting in debate until mutual understanding is achieved, we contribute to world peace.

The actions we undertake following the conference are pivotal in making the peace discussed in Model UN a closer reality. Unfortunately, the Noto Peninsula earthquake struck five days after the conference, on January 1, 2024. As the student council president, I made a modest contribution by donating the cultural festival's proceeds as relief funds. Echoing Ms. Matsuoka's lecture, it's crucial for young generations to take the initiative. We are convinced that even our modest efforts can have a significant impact.

Passing this initiative and mindset to our juniors is also part of our mission. This winter conference marked my last as a high school student. I participated in organizing the conference, aiming to share the new perspectives gained through Model UN with younger students and hoping to inspire more middle and high school students to engage with the world and assume significant roles. Over 160 junior high students participated in the conference, engaging in two days of debate and producing meaningful resolutions. The opportunity to network with students from other schools beyond our region is another appeal of Model UN. We aspire for our efforts to extend beyond our school to the national and international stages, contributing to the growth of Model United Nations.



Video Report

We have compiled a video report showcasing the actual proceedings of the conference. This includes footage of the intense negotiations and discussions that occurred.



Report and Video Production: Otsuma High School Global Project
Supervised by: Mr. Kohei Seki (Teacher)