

## **ZABMUN 2014: Post Conference Report**

### **Academic Partnership Between Bolo Bhi and the SZABIST Model United Nations Society Conference 2014 (ZABMUN)**

The Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Institute of Science and Technology Model United Nations Society (ZABMUN) was initiated in 2007 and hosted its first national conference in 2008 with 450 delegates. ZABMUN 2014 was held from October 9-12, 2014 at the Pearl Continental Hotel, Karachi, and it attracted over 1500 delegates. The venue also included the Sindh Assembly where delegates part of the Pakistan National Assembly conducted their last session.

Bolo Bhi entered into an Academic Partnership with ZABMUN, providing academic material and guidance. Our staffers prepared relevant topics of discussion for committees, delegate study guides, conducted trainings and chaired sessions.

The purpose of the Academic Partnership was to spread awareness regarding core issues Bolo Bhi works on by engaging students in research and discussion. The Draft Resolutions passed by each of the committees at ZABMUN are a reflection of the discussions over the course of four days at ZABMUN.

The following committees discussed core issues Bolo Bhi works on with regards to freedom of expression, online freedom and gender.

- 1. Disarmament & International Security Committee**
  - 1.1. Significance of Information Technology & Telecommunication in the Context of National Security
- 2. Social, Cultural & Humanitarian Committee**
  - 2.1. Honor Killings
- 3. Pakistan National Assembly**
  - 3.1. Censorship Within Pakistan
- 4. United Nations Human Rights Council:**
  - 4.1. Preserving the Physical Integrity of Women
- 5. United Nations Security Council:**
  - 5.1. Global Surveillance: The Snowden Revelations and the need for National Security
- 6. Crisis Cabinet:**
  - 6.1. Series of Crises which revolved around internet surveillance and cyber warfare

## **Committees and Discussion Synopsis**

### **Social, Cultural & Humanitarian Committee (SOCHUM):**

Agenda: Honor Killings

SOCHUM discussed the lack of motivational factors behind protection of women from 'honour' killings in developing nations. The committee then proposed the introduction of incentives such as improved humanitarian index ratings leading to improved aid packages. Furthermore legislative safeguards were discussed by the committee to ensure stricter checks over incidents of honour killings. The legal safeguards were further supplemented by initiatives to improve policing in these states to protect potential victims and act as deterrents. In the long run the need for social upheaval and education were largely focused upon.

### **United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC):**

Agenda: Preserving the Physical Integrity of Women

The UNHRC set the protection of the bodily integrity of women as its agenda. The topic not just encompassed female genital mutilation but also other forms of physical violence such as rape, forced marriage and marital rape. The committee utilized the existing United Nations framework such as the United Nations Development Program and substantiated their claims using the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The delegates quickly grasped the context that international law lacks binding authority and recommended amendments to domestic legislation to protect women from various forms of violence. The committee paid special attention to cultural constraints with regards to reproductive education and spoke about tribal and religious leaders being agents of change.

### **Disarmament & International Security (DISEC):**

Agenda: Significance of Information Technology & Telecommunication in the Context of National Security

DISEC chose to discuss the significance of information technology and telecommunication in the context of national security. The committee began by defining cyberspace, cyber terrorism and cyber warfare, and then began advocating the rights which each member state of the UNGA possessed in the realm of the cyber world. The committee, in general, appeared to be pro-surveillance and failed to address the issue of citizen privacy with regards to establishing a criteria which would warrant obtaining information by accessing user-data. Moreover, the committee also failed to address the issue of the collection of meta-data.

### **Pakistan National Assembly (PNA):**

Agenda: Censorship Within Pakistan

The Pakistan National Assembly followed a unique format at ZABMUN. Delegates not only represented political parties but particular individuals from those parties. Their role playing involved representing the stance of their respective parties with reference to online censorship in Pakistan. Delegates debated both online, print and electronic media censorship, focusing also on the ban on YouTube. The committee stressed upon the need for an established criteria for censorship to be followed by the agencies responsible for carrying such activities out. The PNA however, did not rule the matter of censorship out entirely as various delegates in the committee touched upon the point of protecting public sentiments by preventing material which could prove to be culturally or religiously sacrilegious. The committee was unable to pass a resolution due to certain time and logistical constraints.

### **United Nations Security Council (UNSC):**

Agenda: Global Surveillance - The Snowden Revelations and the need for National Security

The United Nations Security Council is the only international body where resolutions have a binding effect on member states. With regards to the rapidly evolving issue of national security in the face of wanton cyber surveillance, delegates did not deem the issue of such surveillance as illegal, nor viewed it as breaching essential freedoms. In fact they argued it was necessary to tackle the growing threat of terrorism. Delegates did not refer to the area of domestic surveillance instead focused on the matter of cross-border cyber attacks and ensuring international policing of the cyberspace.

### **Crisis Committee:**

Agenda: Rolling Crisis

The Crisis Committee discussed various fictional situations all which involved cyber attacks between states and nations at the brink of an all-out war. The Crisis Committee enjoyed the status of a Security Council however, the delegates took some time to grasp the volatility of the committee and the situations which they had to deal with. The individual crisis situations are attached as an annexation to this report.

## Areas for Improvement

The platform of Model United Nations is quickly gaining momentum and 1500 delegates at ZABMUN VII is evidence of that. This growing trend displays an added interest of students to take part in such ventures which revolve around discussing issues of international concern in an academic environment.

However, the academic quality has been steadily diluting given the vast numbers of delegates who take part in these conference with only a handful of them having received adequate training. Among the 1500 participants, only 10%-15% were avid MUN-ers while the rest were exploring the platform for the very first time and their participation within the committees was minimal. Bolo Bhi feels that this points towards a lack of training, which is in no way evidence of a lack of planning by the Organizing Team or the Secretariat of the Conference, but a shortcoming that must be remedied by institutes that send delegates to these Conferences. As of now, schools do offer MUN and Public Speaking training but these schools do not represent the vast majority of institutes that attend MUN Conferences. Without adequate training, the academic quality of MUN Conferences will slowly stagnate.

We recommend that there be a three-month training program implemented by institutes before the start of the MUN Season in order for students to be well prepared by the time the Conference comes around. An MUN requires a specific procedure and manner in which the delegates are to conduct themselves. Without proper guidance, students will not be able to learn the tools of how to conduct themselves and represent their respective states, hamstringing the purpose of an MUN. Additionally, the pre-conference period is the time for them to acquaint themselves with global issues and develop their research and debate skills; the MUN conference should be a platform to hone those skills and polish them - not learn them.