



The Courage Humanity Needs - by OLMUN alumnus Dennis Kirsch

Wherever we look there is conflict. It has shaped the course of human history and brought us here. Revolutions have created the world's first democracies, colonial powers have reshaped the composition of the world and wars have caused victims in the high millions. According to the New York Times, out of 3,500 years of recorded human history, we were at peace for only 268 years, a mere eight percent!

When thinking about conflict in the past decades evidently both world wars come to mind. The biggest atrocities which are known to humankind seeing the genocide of six million Jews in the Holocaust, the death of approximately 120 million people in both world wars, and the deployment of nuclear weapons in Japan. Acknowledging the failure of the world in preventing these horrendous crimes, the United Nations were founded to maintain international peace and security and ensure that these wars of the 20th century would never repeat themselves. Nevertheless, conflict persists.



Today, conflicts are about identity, ideology, beliefs, equality, and justice, but also about access to natural resources, subjective security interests, and nationalist dogma. Our current world continues to be conflict-ridden and conflicts are multi-faceted. The past decade has seen civil wars around the globe, cartels taking violence to the streets, jihadist terror attacks, and states turning into autocracies. The Democracy Index recorded 21 full democracies in 2021 while 59 countries were authoritarian. In 2008 there were still 30 full democracies and only 51 authoritarian states.

Besides, social conflicts are growing intensively. The global poor lack access to clean water, adequate housing, and education while the richest people see their wealth growing. The gap between rich and poor might even grow

further with the acceleration of global climate change drastically impacting the Global South. Future conflicts will hence be about access to food, water, and space in cooler parts of the world. It seems as if humanity is not on a path to adding more peaceful years to its history.

The 24th of February 2022 is a historic break. 21st century Russia started a highly illegal war against Ukraine with the ideology of the 19th century nation-state and the military methods of the 20th century. Russia is without question the superior military power, however, they underestimated the fierce courage of the Ukrainian people who have fought for their freedom and right to determine their own peaceful ways since the Euro Maidan protests of 2013, or even since the Revolution on Granite of 1990 marking the start of a second independent Ukraine and breaking ties with Russia.

The Ukrainian people show the world day after day that in order to overcome conflict and establish peace one must not give up but have the courage to stand up for principles of peace, justice, and the right to self-determination. These should be lessons to all of us in solving the current and future conflicts that lay ahead. Only united we will bring about peace.

A former teacher and MUN director of mine once quoted Gandhi: "Be the change that you want to see in the world." This requires courage but perhaps that courage is what humanity needs acting together as "We the peoples of the United Nations".

TIMETABLE

09.00-12.30
Committee Session

12.30-14.00
Midday Break

14.00-16.00
Closing Ceremony

CRISIS IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Early Thursday morning the Security Council received a threat concerning a hostage-taking by the Houthis, one of the parties involved in the Yemen War. Prior to that in their first committee session, the committee had intensely debated about finding an end to the war in the region. This unforeseen crisis made the topic and finding a solution even more urgent!

Because the delegation of the United States of America and the United Arab Emirates were actively threatened by the Houthis, the delegates were no longer safe at their venue. Therefore, the entire committee had to be evacuated with a column of eight vehicles including police and ambulance.

After arriving at the safe venue, the President of the General Assembly and the Deputy President of the GA explained the situation and showed a video they received of a hostage in great danger, filmed by the Houthis.

The delegates were under great pressure to deal with the situation, try to restore peace and work out a resolution until midday. Due to this unforeseen crisis the resolution they had previously worked on became obsolete.

The session again started with policy statements, among them an emotional speech by the delegation of the United Arab Emirates, emphasizing the importance to stop the Houthis. The United States on the other hand strongly argued for a ceasefire in order to assure further negotiation between the Houthis and South Arabia.

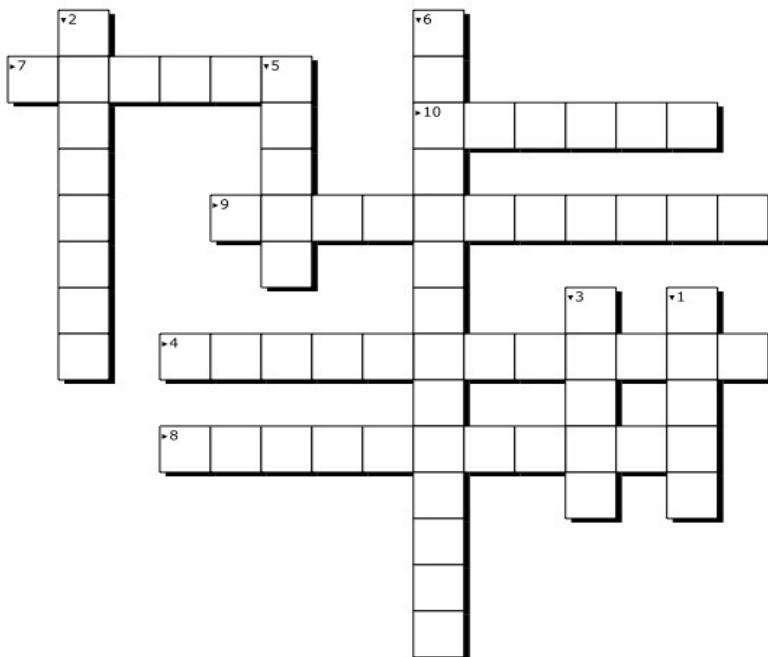
However, the Russian Federation used their veto right to...



The President of the General Assembly and his deputy explaining the crisis situation



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1. How many committees are there?
2. What is the surname of the first guest speaker at the opening ceremony?
3. Continue: „Causes of Conflict and Proposals for...“
4. Where did Wednesday's evening activity take place?
5. Other than Ukraine which country's war was often mentioned in the opening ceremony?
6. Where in Oldenburg is the venue of the GA1st?
7. When is the closing ceremony taking place?
8. What is the name of the group organizing OLMUN? (two words)
9. What do you have to work on in your committee sessions?
10. What happened on Thursday in Security Council?

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