

Press release: WFP Welcomes the MMUN Rome 2017 Conference



Rome, Italy: The Montessori Model United Nations program (MMUN) hosted more than 500 student delegates, teachers and parents from 18 nations at its 5th annual MMUN Europe Conference, April 25th-28th. Committee meetings were held at the Marriott Parc Hotel in Rome and the Closing Plenary was held at the World Food Programme's magnificent Assembly Hall.

Keynote speakers at the moving Opening Ceremony, which began with MMUN's traditional Parade of Flags, included Andre Roberfroid, former Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF and past President of Association Montessori Internationale, and Celine Fearnley, formerly an MMUN delegate and MMUN NYC Chair and now a MMUN volunteer leader. Keynote for the Closing Plenary was Harriett Spanos, Secretary to The Executive Board of the WFP who said that it was her Model UN experience that led her on the path of humanitarian service.

During committee sessions, participating student delegates, 9-16 years of age, assumed the roles of Ambassadors of a country other than their own. To accomplish this, they studied their selected country's politics, culture, history and geography to learn the reasons behind their country's position on a global problem currently on the UN agenda. At the two-day committee sessions, the delegates debated real issues confronting the UN and its member states seeking to generate a resolution to which they could all abide. "The negotiations, compromise and drafting that takes place is as meaningful to the delegates as if they were actual members of the UN," said MMUN Executive Director, Judith Cunningham. She added, "Their work and their resolutions are real, because we ask the delegates to forward them to the Ambassadors whose country they represent. This helps give them a voice in world affairs, and it gives the Ambassadors a viewpoint they may not have considered".

When asked, “What’s next for MMUN?” Ms. Cunningham responded, “A conference in Hangzhou, China October 2nd-5th with an optional tour. This is an incredible opportunity for all students because the Ministry of Education is subsidizing the conference. For only \$695, a participant receives 5-star hotel accommodations, all their meals, their registration fee and an optional 2-day tour of this historic city, which includes the UNESCO West Lake area.



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Background: In its 12th year, MMUN is the largest Model UN program meeting the needs of students 9-16 years of age. In 2018, it will be adding a High School conference to its international conferences, which include New York City, Rome, Fort Wayne and Hangzhou.

MMUN’s accredited Teacher Training Workshop and speaking schedule for 2017-2018 includes Berlin, Germany, NYC, Lima, Peru, Hangzhou, China and the AMI Prague Congress.