

~Keynote Speakers~

The first day of the conference the delegates were able to enjoy some of the perks of an online conference. All committees were happy to welcome a series of keynote speakers, each of whom gave their insight on their committee's issue.



The **Disarmament and International Security** was honoured to have **Dr. Constantinos Filis**, Executive Director at the Institute of International Relations (Panteion University). He stressed that the current situation in Libya is both fluid and worrying, pointing out how unstable and inconsistent all attempts for stabilisation in the area have been.

The question of resolving the Israeli settlements in the West Bank was discussed in the Special **Political and Decolonization Committee** by **Sotiris Roussos** (Associate Professor at the University of Peloponnese) with delegates being particularly active with the follow-up questions they asked.



Stephen John Taylor (Cambridge Assessment English) was the keynote speaker in the **Social Humanitarian Committee**. Mr. Taylor “Racism in the face of the expanding viruses”. He spoke about how irrational the connection between pandemics and racial stereotyping is, and connected it to scapegoating as it deflects attention and blame and provides a sense of false relief. His advice was to track discrimination, promote equity, eliminate hate speech and stay informed.

Theodora-Iliana Papacharalampous (University of Athens) spoke in the **Legal Committee** about the role of the media against corruption and gave tips related to simulations.



Dr. Apostolos Vantarakis, (Assistant Professor at the Medical School of the University of Patras) was the quest speaker in the **World Health Organization (WHO)** Committee. His was one of the most useful speeches as he gave the delegate a comprehensive breakout of the current pandemic of COVID-19. He also mentioned way of spotting misinformation and even told the delegates how to fight the “infodemic” of misinformation.

Dr. Michael Paroussis (University of Patras) spoke at the **Young Delegates Forum (YDF)**. In his speech, he highlighted the interconnection between the state and society and the differences between autocracy and democracy.



The **United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP)** hosted **Dr. Panayotis Dimopoulos**, (sitting Vice Rector and Professor at the University of Patras). He cautiously explained to the delegates in a detailed outline the definition of Sustainable Tourism and he elaborated on the interaction of the Environmental, Social and Economic systems that define the development of tourism nowadays.

Dr. Giorgos Tsimouris (Associate Professor at Panteion University) spoke at the **Economic and Social Council**. His speech aimed at raising awareness of the less known matter of “environmental refugees”, providing the challenging definition of the term and illustrating the importance of politicians’ duty to protect human lives from climate change and natural disasters.

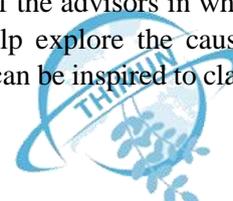


Dr. Constantinos Koliopoulos (Associate Professor, Panteion University) spoke at the **Security Council** and answered all the questions the delegates submitted to him, explaining policies from the point of view of an expert in strategies and foreign affairs.

The **International Court of Justice (ICJ)** this year deals with the issue of “Marshall Islands vs Great Britain, India and Pakistan” and is ran online by ICJ Coordinator of THIMUN Mr. Robert Stern.



On Sunday, **Mary Marin** (MUN Advisor) hosted a workshop for the rest of the advisors in which she demonstrated how works of art, advertisements and news reports can help explore the causes and consequences of race, gender and social class inequalities and how students can be inspired to claim and defend human rights.





What are the challenges of an online conference?

When we set off to host an online conference, we encountered many challenges. One of those was that we didn't know whether delegates would be interested in this type of conference. We thought, how are we going to make it interesting for participants to come to a conference without the added fun of travelling and meeting new people in person? We were also worried about how we would keep it interesting and long enough to have all the features of the ATSMUN, but also short enough to still be pleasant to join from one's computer. Choosing a platform was hard for us, as was training everyone for the platform, but we did our best to plan and this ended up even better than we thought.

How did your previous MUN experience help you in this year's online version?

Being in MUN means you meet many different people. You meet people who come from different countries, who have different religion, different cultures and political views, and you have to work with them. Being in an online conference, communication is even more important. You do not have the luxury to go over to someone's room and talk to them, you have to rely on different tools, and you have to make it work with your partners even when misunderstandings or different expectations make it hard. I would say communication and crisis management were the two top skills I gained in my MUN career that helped me in this web conference.

What will you remember the most from this year's conference?

I attended my first MUN conference some 9 years ago, and having always wanted to be the Secretary General for an MUN conference, I had thought that declaring the conference open in the Opening Ceremony would be my most unforgettable moment. However, the actually most unforgettable moment happened a few hours earlier than that, when I realised that all the preparations were complete and nothing was left to be done. It was a feeling of accomplishment in itself and also something to feel proud of along with my other team members, even if we had no idea if issues would arise the next day. After months of hard work, everything was done and ready for people to enjoy, and that was beautiful.

What advice would you give to your delegates?

The only advice I would give our delegates is to not be afraid to make mistakes. The mistake you make in this conference is one mistake you won't make in the next one. If you try asking your chairs, you will see that they may still make one mistake or two - in fact, we all do. The point of MUN is not about being perfect, it is about learning, gaining life skills and -most importantly- taking a stand. It is about finding sides of yourself that you never thought you had through your role as another country's diplomat. Therefore, I wish that everyone leaves ATSMUN this year having learnt something new about themselves.



When we began planning the 6th ATSMUN, none of us had imagined that our first conference since gaining the prestigious THIMUN affiliation would be this way. However, we made a choice and we stood by it; we chose to persevere, we chose to keep going, we chose not to let our delegates down.

Dear Delegates and friends of ATSMUN, nothing gives us more pleasure than seeing you, the citizens of a world in dire need of change, speak up and find your voice. No, this is not the conference any of us had imagined, but let that be a lesson to all: even in the most challenging of times, goals are set to be achieved and the world can only be changed by those who will inherit it.

The video shown in the opening ceremony, in true ATSMUN tradition, left everyone speechless and perfectly set the tone for the two-day United Nations simulation. At times, the world can feel overwhelming. It is our duty, however, to persevere, to keep going, to stand strong.

Thanking all of you for making this Web ATSMUN possible, we shall be honoured to see you all again in the **7th Hybrid ATSMUN, November 4 – 7, 2021.**



6th MODEL UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE (WEB EDITION)
NOVEMBER 7 - 8, 2020
CITY OF PATRAS

