



BEIMUN WATCH

BEIMUN XXVIII

ISSUE 1

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Opening Ceremony



By Asher Sevy

“We must continue seeking out discourse in a fragmented world,” implored Shawn Teh, Secretary-General, while opening the BEIMUN XXVIII 2021 Conference. As a response to all of the hardships the world has faced during this difficult time, Teh raised a call-to-action: “We must consider potential implications of our actions, understand what needs to be prioritized, and learn to collaborate effectively.” Following this, Teh brought his gavel swiftly down onto the podium, officially opening the Twenty-eighth Annual Session of BEIMUN, and the first ever virtual BEIMUN conference.

After listening to the moving United Nations Hymn by W.H. Auden, delegates welcomed to the virtual stage Mr. Patrick Hurworth, the International School of Beijing’s esteemed Head of School since 2017, to make his opening remarks. Preceded by an introduction from Gina Yoo, Deputy Secretary-General, Mr. Hurworth expressed his gratitude for all of the delegates and their “time and energy put into preparing for the conference.”

Then, the Middle and High School Choirs entertained the delegates with their pre-recorded rendition of “A Path To Each Other” by Tim Takach and Jocelyn Hagen. This soothing, melodic blend of ISB voices reflects the real goal of BEIMUN: building a “path to each other” through finding resolutions to the world’s problems.

Eric Xie, Deputy Secretary-General, had the great honor of introducing this year’s keynote speaker, Mr. Jaime A. FlorCruz, Former CNN Beijing Bureau Chief and Correspondent. Interestingly, Mr. FlorCruz is “also a fellow parent of two ISB alumni,” as Xie mentions. He had studied and worked as a journalist in China for over forty years, so he had extensive knowledge of China’s history, society, and politics. Being the “longest serving foreign correspondent in China to date,” he witnessed many of its significant events of the past three decades. In his speech, Mr. FlorCruz emphasized the importance of ensuring information accuracy and reliability, as he commented, “we now live in a dangerous time, a time when reporters are

more accountable than ever for providing truths instead of spreading falsehood”. Mr. FlorCruz also mentioned that while listening to the news keeps us updated on the happenings of the world around us, we should also regularly “hit the pause button” to ponder and process the massive gush of information.

As a conclusion to the opening ceremony, participants had the opportunity to hear a recording of ISB’s High School Jazz Band performing “Thad’s Place” by Tim Fisher. This piece was recorded in the recently built recording studio, one of ISB’s several newly-constructed facilities. The Jazz Band has been working diligently since the start of the school year, and many would agree that it is an exciting and upbeat way to commence the opening ceremony. Between the uplifting, inspirational speeches and the musical entertainment, this grand opening sets the stage for another BEIMUN conference that will never be forgotten.

Keynote Speaker



By Emily Parker

As the opening remarks of the Opening Ceremony were coming to a close, BEIMUN's guest speaker Jamie A. FlorCruz, former CNN correspondent (2001-2014), responsible for strategic planning of the network's news coverage of China, currently teaching a media course at the school of journalism and communication at Peking university, delivered a sobering warning to today's youths: in the rapidly changing technological age, the polarization of media threatens the ever so tenuous voice of truth.

Jamie A. FlorCruz emphasizes how we have come to live in a dangerous world, as we become blanketed by a deadly pandemic. Stranded in Manila himself, he feels deeply regrettable for the severe consequences of COVID-19, such as the massive casualty, the unprecedented rate of unemployment, and the omnipresent mist of concern and fear that clouds everyone. Along with the rest of the world, news media outlets have also begun to suffer, as thousands of employees have been laid off, furloughed, or have had their salary reduced.

Jamie A. FlorCruz is an experienced journalist who had been working in China since 1980s, witnessed China's rapid development throughout these 40 years of vicissitude, and, in the process of which, he remarked that he learned tremendously and was deeply fascinated by China's cultural traditions, socio-economical policies, and technological advancements. In this complicated, dark time, Jamie A. FlorCruz, acknowledges the critical role

of ensuring effective communications media and press agencies undertake in terms of crisis management and global cooperation. Media groups have employed various platforms to forward authorities' announcements and words of consolation and condolences. Jamie A. FlorCruz observes, "Journalists working 24/7 covering stories from different angles, doing inspiring stories of medical workers risking their life on the front line and producing uplifting video clips of resilient people coping with the pandemic". He also appreciates those reports that focus on debunking falsehoods, separating myths from reality, and informing the public with timely news.

As a Journalist and Media professor, Jamie A. FlorCruz touches on how Journalists jobs are rapidly changing, getting more difficult as technology has dictated ways through which news are disseminated and consumed, essentially making anybody with a click of a cellphone have access to spreading unreliable information and misleading truths that instill fear into the audience. "There is a killer virus of COVID-19, but there is also the virus of fake news. We all stand for freedom of speech, freedom of education, and freedom of information, as they are fundamentally important in lives and we must fight and protect them as best as we can, but there exist huge ethical and legal differences between a whistleblower and a criminal, or fraud, who maliciously spreads lies for nefarious motives." (Jamie A. FlorCruz)

In the face of Jamie A. FlorCruz's urgent message about the polarization of media, BEIWATCH hopes that delegates continue to show unwavering resolve and determination to change the world presently and in the future for the better.



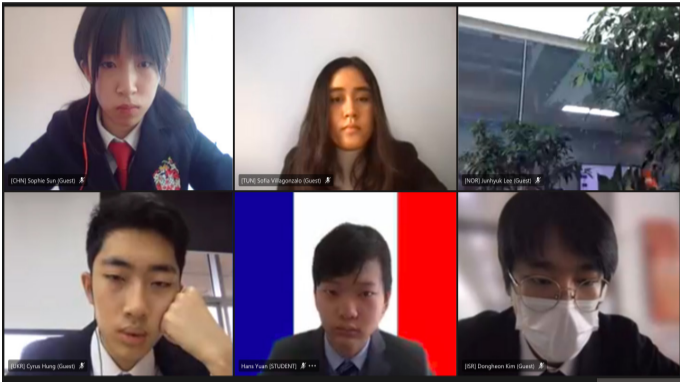
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COMMITTEE RECAP

GA1

By Sophie Bai



Underneath the skies of the twenty-first century, the society dwells with disarmament, global challenges, and threats to peace that nations from all over the globe are conflicting with. As the world evolves in an erratic pace, new technologies have become a tool for dominance, which consequently created a problem in maintaining a secure and harmless milieu for every individual. Undoubtedly, these issues have raised concerns for international security.

Diving into the first day of BEIMUN XXVIII, delegates of the first committee of General Assembly committee one (GA 1) congregated to discuss serious issues about alleviating the polarization of discourse in public spheres, measures to regulate the artificial intelligence arms race, and measures to inhibit cross-border money laundering.

Delegates gathered to devise measures to inhibit cross-border money laundering, which is an issue with crime involving tracking down large criminal organization with suspicion of illicit, money-laundering activities. Hans Yuan, the delegate of the French Republic, indicated that “the French Republic is willing to take drastic measures to ensure this crisis is solved.” Their main strategy combating this issue is “encourag[ing] international cooperation and elucidating financial data” and continuing to develop resolutions regarding such strategies.

Some delegates addressed the rising issue of using artificial intelligence for military purposes. Melissa Teo, the delegate of Estonia, expressed that Estonia’s stance on the issue is to “regulate the lethal autonomous weapons (LAWS) and to promote peace talk between the three main nations involved (China, USA, Russia).” Moreover, the resolution of “set[ting] regulations on the trade and production of LAWS as well as sharing information about the development of AI” will be considered during their debates in the next few days.

Furthermore, delegates will continue merging solutions and actively participating in discussions. Hopefully today will be the beginning of a successful conference that raises awareness of the upcoming threats to our globe.



SC

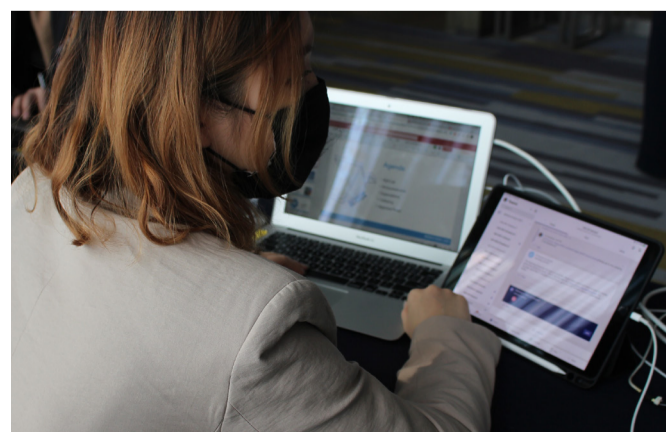
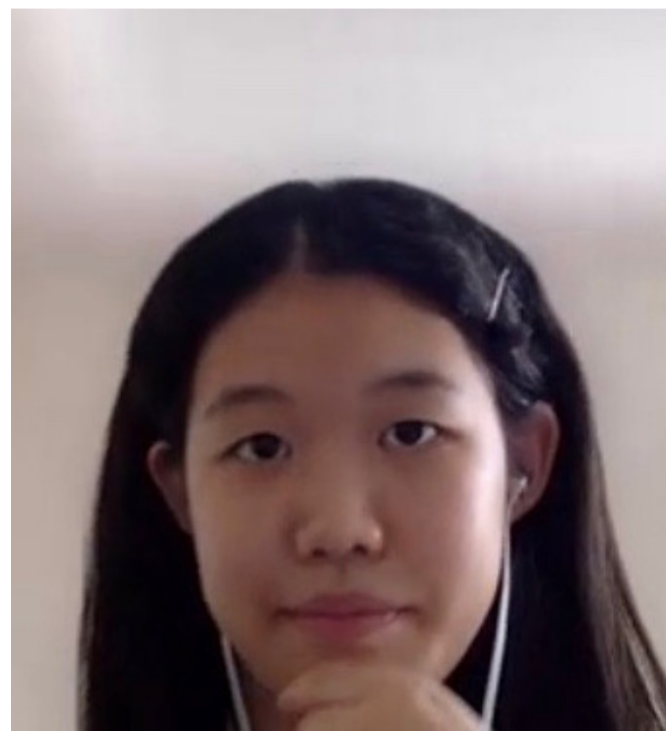
By Sophie Bai

As the first day of BEIMUN XXVIII officially started, delegates representing nations around the world gathered to discuss the world’s most complicated problems to not only construct resolutions, but also to successfully persuading other delegates into supporting their delegation’s opinions. Working in smaller groups, delegates in the Security Council (SC) work towards resolutions aimed to solve issues threatening international peace and security.

Delegates convened to discuss the question of the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh, the situation in Lebanon, and combatting organized crime in the Northern Triangle.

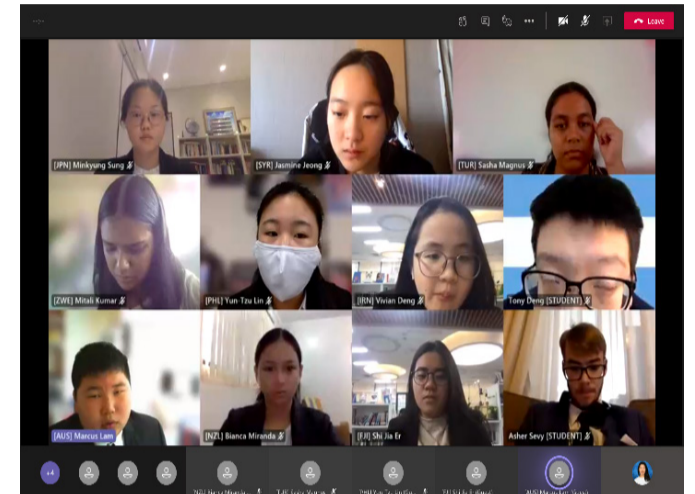
Lebanon is suffering from a socioeconomic crisis involving corruption, debt, and inflation, which is aggravated with the addition of COVID-19 and the Beirut explosion. Chelsea Choi, the delegate of Ireland, conveyed that “Ireland has a neutral stance on this issue and is devoted to helping Lebanon find a way out of this crisis and regain its stability.” Facing the unenthusiastic problem, Choi devised a resolution aimed to “create economic plans and as well as providing humanitarian aid in response to the COVID-19 crisis and the Beirut explosion.”

Delegates will resume to find an optimal solution to these issues through debates on these resolutions in the next few days. Seoyeon Yu, President of SC; Safal Aryal and Seongjun Choi; Assistant President of SC will be overseeing the delegates’ discussions and speeches. Of course, our chairs are also looking forward to some splendid resolutions.



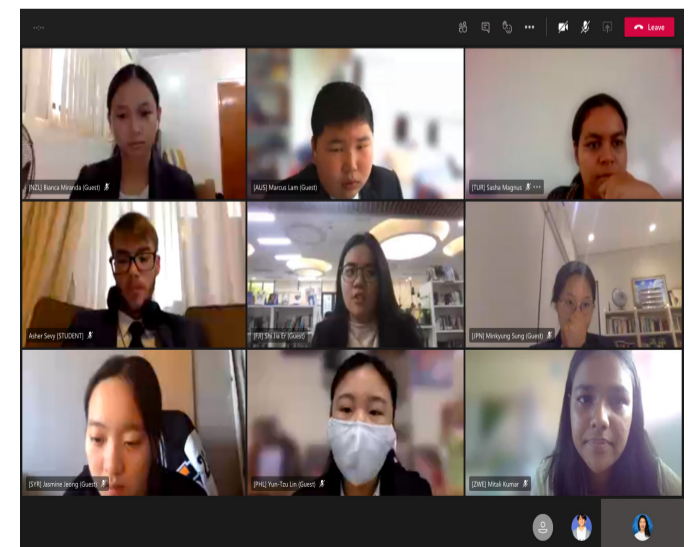
ECOSOC

By Asher Sevy



During the first day of lobbying, the Economic and Social Committee (ECOSOC) discussed establishing a sustainable post-pandemic economy, along with the question of universal basic income and measures to de-escalate the US-Trade war. In particular, some delegates gathered to focus on the measures that nations could each take to improve the current economy despite the multitude of trials caused by COVID-19. During the lobbying session, delegates discussed attainable resolutions to take all precautions for COVID-19 such as vaccine access, emergency provisions of money, and so on. To address the question of universal basic income, delegates suggested decreasing taxes, the construction of cheaper housing, and so on. Through presenting such ideas as a whole, the committee has been hard at work to compose their final resolution to be approved by the approval panel.

Delegates from the ECOSOC committee also continued to passionately discuss technology and innovation that they could implement to effectively establish a post-pandemic economy. Marcus Lam, the delegate of Australia, posed some possible global remedies such as improving digital infrastructure, ensuring the normal operation of small and medium-sized businesses, and improving resilience against future disasters and pandemics. Through the next few days, delegates will actively participate in debates on their well-rounded resolutions in both committees, in hopes of reaching a diplomatic resolution.



US Elections

By Emily Parker

As American citizens home and abroad casted their votes for the next President of the United States of America, the world waited upon the results. The period of anticipation stirred anxiety, causing countless theories and controversies. World leaders, citizens, and many more keenly awaited for the results, since a second term for Donald Trump versus a Joe Biden administration could impact trade, economic, social, and foreign policy.

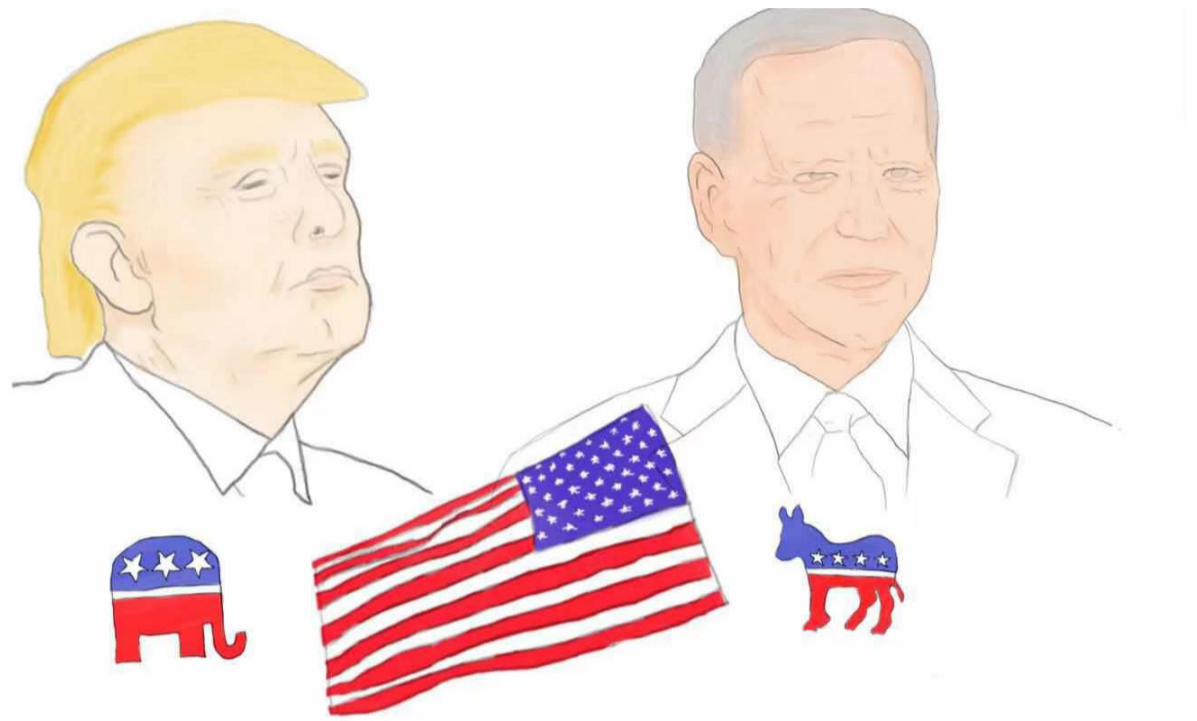
In present-day, China and the United States (US) are the world's two leading economies. China joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001, contributing to rapid international and internal trade. By 2019, bilateral trade had nearly reached \$559 billion between the US and China. The advantage of the trading relationship, however, was not reciprocal, as the US trade deficit grew exponentially, which became a major topic of controversy during the US Presidential Campaign in 2016.

Amid his campaign, former president Donald Trump centered on lessening the exchange shortfall with China. He claimed that exchanges with China were out of line and ill-conceived, posting different unjustifiable practices such as mental property robbery and unfair household industries' subsidization. Trump provoked the US-China Exchange War on July 6, 2018, forcing taxes on Chinese imports as he considered them as the exchange shortfalls that expanded China's profit. China reacted to the Exchange War through striking back, claiming that the US was endeavoring to abridge China's ascension within the worldwide economy. Yet, the Biden administration is expected to change tactics towards China and their tariffs. The harsh split

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between the two parties have been exacerbated due to the polarization of US media, as critics of Trump opposed of these approaches, while supporters proceeded to energize expanded protectionist approaches.

Along with the beginning of the pandemic, in January 2020, the phase-1 bargain between China and the US was made. However, the widespread of COVID-19 also has severely influenced China's ability to execute on the deal within the stage-one bargain. This increased the pressure and has risen the tension between the US and China. Trump had shown a change in mind of the phase 1 bargain a few times and threatened to increase tariffs on China, he has not committed to removing them

once his predicted time in office begins. In spite of the fact that president Biden has criticized Trump's taxes on China, he has not committed to evacuating them once his time in office starts. Biden too said that he will not enter new trade agreements until there is enough domestic investment to leave Americans "equipped to succeed in the global economy." Furthermore, "After four years of Trump pushing the limits, Biden faces the task of rebuilding trust from the people and other countries as well as move away from Trumps' approach of pushing fundamental issues aside for quick wins." As Biden's first term commences, the world hopes for changes that can improve the diplomacy of the US.

INTRODUCING A NEW COMMITTEE: WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

By Dorothy Du

Starting in December 2019, the COVID-19 pandemic quickly spread, taking over the world and resulting in a devastating economic and social disruption: an additional 88 million people will be pushed into extreme poverty, a predicted accelerated economic downturn will be likely, and low-income countries are at high risks of debt distress. COVID-19 has certainly triggered a global healthcare crisis as well, the urgent need for effective, accessible, and affordable healthcare more prevalent than ever before.

As the world endeavors to repair the destruction COVID-19 has caused, BEIMUN XXVIII responds to the unprecedented health complication by adding a new committee: the World Health Assembly. BEIMUN Secretary-General Shawn Teh hopes that this committee "will deliberate public health policies, [discussing] issues like emergency global health responses, post-pandemic economic recovery, and media bias."

Renee Kuo, the Assistant President of the World

Health Assembly, said that the assembly's aim is to "create the best solutions possible to a variety of public health issues." She explained that "delegates will do this by discussing and merging ideas, debating resolutions, and making constructive amendments to better these solutions."

The World Health Assembly aim to discuss the following topics relating to public health: the opioid epidemic, a long-standing drug problem spanning countries, and the highly relevant anti-vaccine movement that affects entire populations. In addition to that, Kuo also expressed that they "will also be debating the COVID-related topic of emergency global health response frameworks." Generally, all topics discussed will showcase the many sides of current public health issues.

Through engaging and productive debates, the World Health Assembly hopes to achieve many high-quality resolutions. Kuo wishes "everyone will enjoy being in the World Health Assembly and that [they] all take something good away from this

experience despite being online."

The addition of the World Health Assembly to the current committees is certainly a judicious decision. We need, now more than ever, for leaders to tackle the rapidly changing world with ambition and urgency. Maybe for many BEIMUN participants, this is just the beginning.



Responses to COVID-19

By Dorothy Du

Initially surfacing in the Chinese seafood and poultry market in December 2019, the COVID-19 pandemic—now with around 112 million total cases worldwide—has defined 2020 as one of the worst transitions into a new decade. Success for nations scrambling to contain the virus with lockdowns, quarantines, and travel bans depend highly on a country's wealth, scientific prowess, and history of public health successes.

Yet, the US, who enjoy all these advantages, is often listed as the country with one of the worst COVID-19 response—over 26.3 million cases and 443,355 million deaths. The United States initially responded to COVID-19 by various declarations of emergency followed by some travel entries bans. As the pandemic's severity rapidly worsened, social distancing measures were implemented followed by business closures. However, a journalist for The

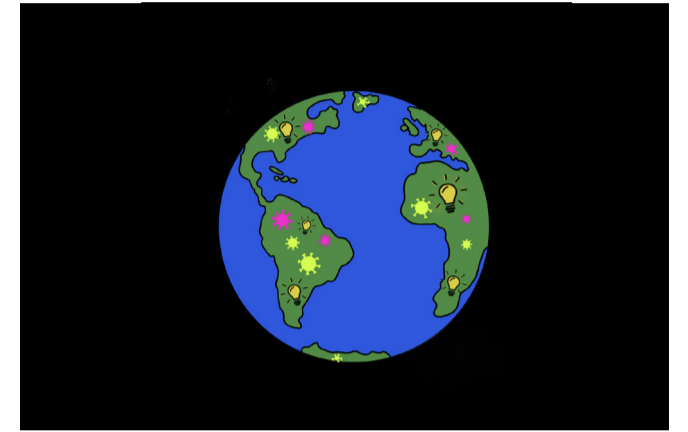
Atlantic interviewed over 100 experts to conclude that the US Covid responses are criticized as “sluggish,” and that the “chronic underfunding of public health neutered the nation's ability to prevent the pathogen's spread.”

On the other hand, Taiwan, which was recognized as the region with the best COVID-19 response. Taiwan quickly halted flights from much of China, quarantined travelers, stopped cruise ships from docking, implemented widespread testing, and quadrupled the production of face masks within a month from the discovery of the virus.

Moreover, Liberia learned from the Ebola outbreak in 2014, took effective preventive measures to limit the number of infection cases. It was one of the first countries to start screening for COVID-19 at airports and other control measures such as tracing and quarantining. The result is that there is only 1

Atreported COVID-19 death per 55,040 people.

Overall, methods to control the highly contagious, lethal COVID-19 are generally universal, and different nations are selectively applying those deemed optimal to their specific government system and economical state.

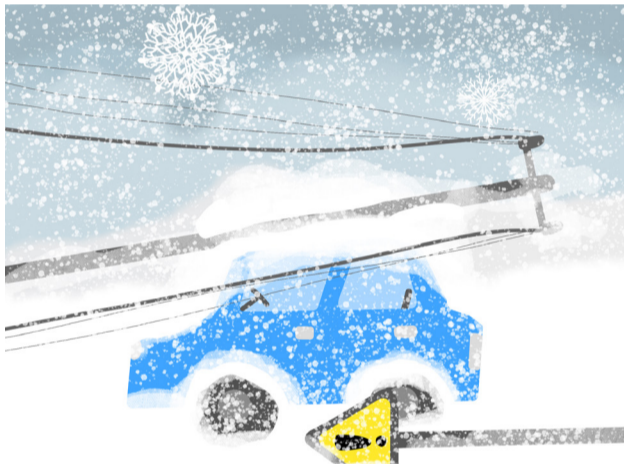


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Winter Storms in Texas



By Ivy Yang

On a regular snowy day, crystalline-shaped snowflakes fall on the streets, on rooftops, on cars, covering everything with a white, glistening blanket, infusing a sense of purity and peace to the world. On

these days, children rush outside to build their own snowmen, with carrots as noses and sticks as hands; lie on the snow and make snow angels with the motions of their arm and leg; to find the perfect hill for sledding with friends.

Unfortunately, instead of becoming a winter wonderland that mesmerizes people, the devastating winter storm was considered a nightmare for those in Texas. In February, Texas faced record-low temperatures, affecting more than 100 million Americans and deprived many of the access to electricity and power. The chilling weather has damaged more than 1,200 public water systems, including but not limited to the problems of bursting of water pipes and drinkable water contamination, leaving 8.6 million people, nearly one-third of the state's population with water shortage problem. Over the weeks of February, nearly 60 lives were lost from the winter

storms, and many more were injured.

Facing this natural disaster, and complaints voiced by discontent people who are suffering the plight, Texas government declared a state of emergency concerning this outburst of systematic dysfunctions caused by the winter storms. Other than being a serious caveat about defects in Texas's infrastructure that demands immediate attentions, this incident also prompted many to doubt the involvement of potential corruptions. Republican Governor Greg Abbott remarks, “Texans deserve answers about why the shortfalls occurred, and how they are going to be corrected and Texans will get those answers.”

Luckily, temperatures finally begins to rise, and recoveries are being made, alleviating the pernicious situation. BEIWATCH wishes the best to all the citizens that are being affected by the winter storms and hopes everyone will be safe.

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By Dorothy Du

Artificial Intelligence—an intelligence demonstrated by machines that do not involve the humane aspect of intelligence like consciousness and emotionality, has already become a notable aspect in our daily lives. AI is designed to free human workforce from repetitive and dangerous tasks, promoting progressed by allowing humans to dedicate their energy and time to create, research, and discover. However, artificial intelligence is also seen as a representation of national power due to its potential to be incorporated into military and espionage actions thus developed into tools for dominance, creating what is known today as the AI Arms race, a symbol of the hostilities between nations.

The race has already begun, with China releasing its New Generation Plan in 2017, outlining its

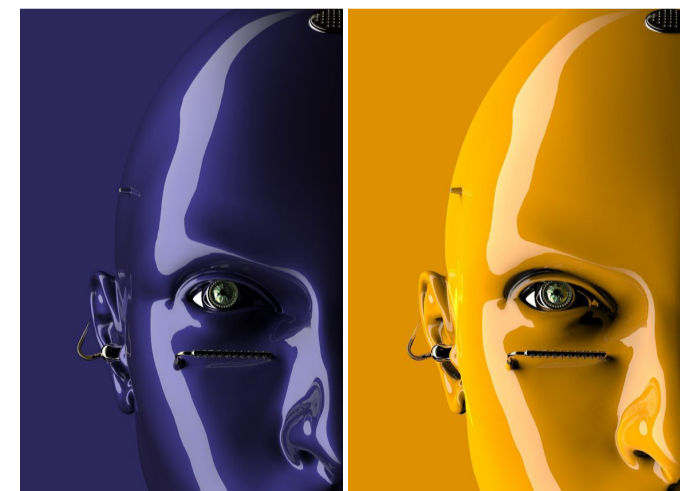
The AI Arms Race

strategy to lead the world in AI by 2030, and former President Donald Trump signing the American AI initiative—an executive order that the US will join other major countries in pursuing national strategies for AI development in March 2019.

The topic of AI is described as a “fraught landscape,” with each country responding to their “unique economic and military situations,” it is uncertain where the AI arms race will take us. China is focused on pursuing advanced AI that will strategically make decisions. The US is trying to produce computers that will assist, but not make their own, decisions. Russia is creating military hardware that incorporates AI, though decisions are still at the hands off the generals.

It is uncertain how the AI Arms race will advance.

Will efforts be made to halt this nascent arms race? Or will countries put aside their issues to cooperate? Only time will tell.



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SUPERLATIVES

By Ivy Yang

Starting off the 28th BEIMUN conference online, delegates and directors are all dressed in their best suits and dresses. Here at BEIMUN, representatives of different nations gather together to discuss problematic issues across the globe. This year, BEIMUN online adds a new spark to the conference, as delegates have the opportunity to fully represent their nation with virtual backgrounds in addition to sharing political views and meanings. Although interactions are online, delegates' excitement and respect is portrayed through neat ties and bows, elegant dresses, and clean shirts. Each delegate's dressing style carries the emotions and confidence they bring to this conference.



"I chose this outfit because this is what I wore to my first MUN conference (SHASMUN) in 2016. That conference was where my MUN journey began, and since then, I have been wearing this shirt for every single MUN conference."

— *Kate Yin*, Assistant President of Economic and Social Council



"The outfit I am wearing is simple blue collared shirt and a black blazer. The blazer is the one that I wore to my first MUN conference and it brings me confidence wearing this again this year. I chose to wear this blazer because it acts as my good luck charm for MUN."

— *Melissa Teo*, a delegate from the Canadian International School of Beijing.



"For this conference, I am dressed up very formally with this suit and blouse underneath and I got this outfit from my mom. Wearing this outfit makes me feel more confident, and I feel more prepared for the debate."

— *Yan Qi*, a delegate from Canadian Academy.



"I chose this background because the United States has endured years of turmoil with a previous president with rather extreme and demanding views. With this background, I hope to convey the message to the committee that the USA no longer holds those demanding views, and is ready to properly negotiate and make compromises. Furthermore, I thought it would be more interesting rather than a plain flag. Overall, I just wanted to emphasize that the United States has just turned over a new leaf, and it's a fresh new start."

— *Cheyenne Owee*, a delegate from the Western Academy of Beijing.



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8 ENTERTAINMENT

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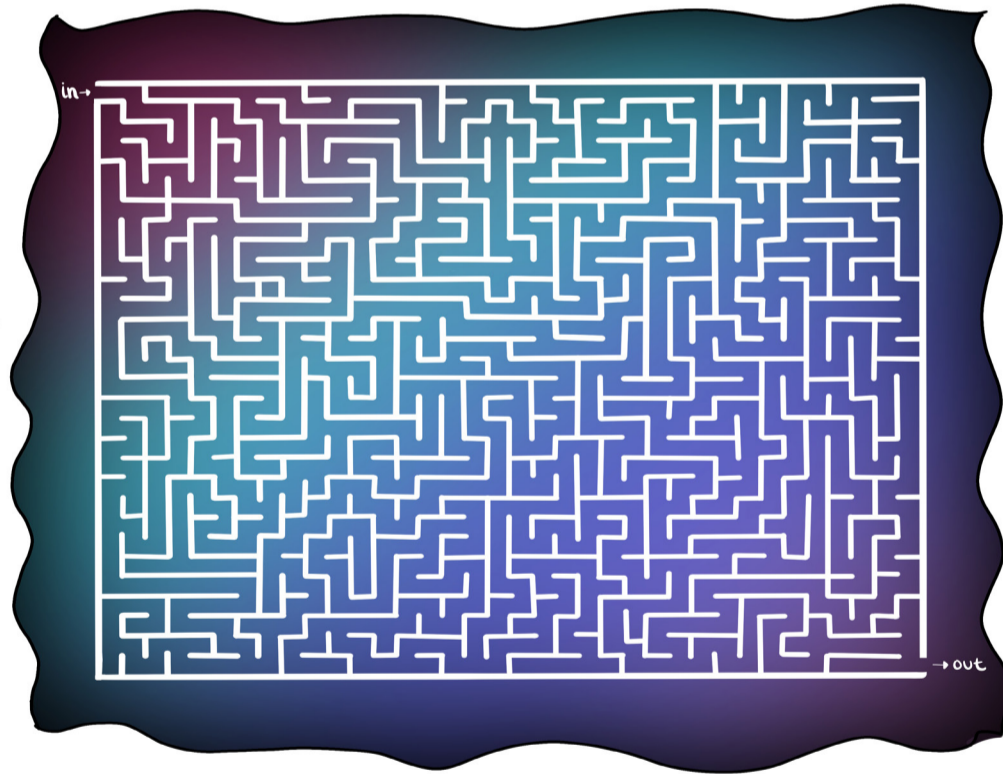
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yesterday.



Maze Game



ARTWORKS BY TRACY HO, BERNICE CHAN AND GIGI SHUM

LAYOUT BY ANN KWEN

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