

PEACE BOAT GLOBAL UNIVERSITY || AUGUST 2017

Building Peaceful and Inclusive Societies in the Asia-Pacific



Peace Boat's Global University

Peace Boat's Global University is a short-term intensive education programme conducted in English. It offers a unique curriculum combining "exposure" programmes (field visits) in ports and workshops and seminars onboard that address a range of global issues, that include but not limited to peace, human rights, and the environment. Peace Boat's Global University aims to empower students to use knowledge as a tool, to take into account the voices of those directly affected by various problems, and to become leaders who can build solutions to global problems with empathy and passion.

OVERVIEW

OVERALL THEME & CONCEPT

Building Peaceful and Inclusive Societies in the Asia-Pacific

How do we achieve peace and justice in society? This question is more pressing today, when the tendency to secure safety by division and exclusion—rather than cooperation and inclusion—seems to be spreading globally. In 2015, the United Nations adopted the so-called Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The goals set out targets for the next 15 years, for countries to mobilise efforts to end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities, and tackle climate change, while ensuring that no one is left behind. Among the 17 goals that make up the SDGs, Goal 16 underlines that peace and justice, as well as effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions are at the core of sustainable development. Many countries in the Asia-Pacific region still face protracted armed conflict and violence, and far too many people struggle as a result of weak institutions and a lack of access to justice, information, and other fundamental freedoms. Drawing on actual case studies from the Asia-



Pacific region, the programme exposed participants to issues related to poverty and discrimination, environmental issues, migration, and conflict. Recognising that young people are critical agents of change, we aimed at nurturing future leaders who can promote social cohesion and human security as forces to build peaceful and inclusive societies.

DATES & ITINERARY

Thursday 10 August to Monday 28 August, 2017 (19 days)

Students met in Tokyo (Japan) on Thursday 10 August. After the two-day exposure programme in Tokyo, they set sail from Yokohama (Japan) on Sunday 13 August. On the way the group visited Xiamen (China) and Singapore. The programme ended in Yangon (Myanmar/Burma) on Monday 28 August.



PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The programme consisted of **online preparatory sessions**, **onboard seminars** (90 minutes each), and **exposure programmes** (field visits) in Tokyo, Xiamen (China), Singapore, and Yangon (Myanmar/Burma). **Navigators** facilitated the onboard seminars. Students also engaged in a series of **onboard actions**, in which students put what they had learned into practice by planning and implementing a range of activities onboard.

Time	10-Aug	11-Aug	12-Aug	13-Aug	14-Aug	15-Aug	16-Aug	17-Aug	18-Aug	19-Aug	20-Aug	21-Aug	22-Aug	23-Aug	24-Aug	25-Aug	26-Aug	27-Aug	28-Aug
08:00				9:00 Embark the Ocean Dream															
10:00					10:00-11:30 Seminar 1-1		9:30-11:00 Seminar 1-3	10:00-11:30 Kenzo's Communication Workshop	10:00-11:30 Seminar 3-1										
11:00				11:15-12:15 Emergency drill						10:00-11:30 Seminar 2-1	10:00-11:30 Seminar 2-2		10:00-11:30 Seminar 3-4						
12:00																			
13:00				12:30-13:00 Departure Ceremony			13:00-14:00 Guest Introduction												
14:00					14:00-15:30 Seminar 1-2		13:30-15:00 Seminar 4-1	13:30-15:00 Cross-Cultural Communication Workshop		13:00-18:30 Individual check-ins	13:50-15:00 Akira's Lecture on Nuclear Issues	13:50-15:00 Kwang Boon's Lecture	13:30-15:00 Group Work - Preparation for Action 2						
15:00				15:00-15:45 Programme Orientation		14:15-15:45 Seminar 4-4													
16:00																			
17:00				16:45-17:30 Ice-breaking Activities			16:00-17:45 Seminar 4-3 + Xiamen Information				16:00-17:45 Seminar 4-2								
17:00-19:00	Orientation			17:45-18:45 Orientation for Life Onboard	17:40-18:00 Departure Ceremony					17:30-19:00 Action 1 Tokyo Exposure Report			17:30-18:30 Singapore Information						
19:00-21:00	Welcome Dinner				18:00-18:30 Welcome Party	18:00-18:30 Welcome Dinner													
20:00																			
21:00				20:30-22:00 Celebration of Departure	20:30-22:00 Group Work - Preparation for Action 1	20:30-22:00 Group Work - Preparation for Action 1	20:30-22:00 Group Work - Preparation for Action 1	20:30-22:00 Group Work - Preparation for Action 1				20:30-22:00 Talent Show							
22:00																			
23:00																			
24:00																			

CHARACTERISTICS OF PEACE BOAT'S GLOBAL UNIVERSITY

DIVERSITY

Students come from all across Asia. In addition, nearly 1,000 passengers of all ages and nationalities travel with them onboard Peace Boat, making the learning environment uniquely diverse.

EXPOSURE

Global University values students' exposure to different local realities and to the voices of local people. Such exposure encourages participants to consider people-centred, context-driven solutions.

ACTION

"Think and Act" is the underlying philosophy of Global University. Throughout the programme, students try out their ideas by organising lectures, discussions, workshop, campaigns, and exhibitions.

GLOBAL ENGLISH

The entire programme is offered in English. At Global University, English is a tool. It is a tool to understand each other, to communicate with each other, and to collaborate with each other.

PARTICIPANTS

36 participants from **11 countries**, between 18 and 35 in age, gathered from across Asia.

CHAN Sophoan • Cambodia
 CHOI Hiuping • Hong Kong
 DEY Sreejita • India
 FUJIWARA Aozora • Japan
 FUKUOKA Ryuichiro • Japan
 HONG Jeong Seong • South Korea
 ISAJI Riho • Japan
 JAN Yui-Yau • Taiwan
 JO Seongmin • South Korea
 KIM Hyojin • South Korea
 KIM Hyunggeun • South Korea
 KIM Seong-Woo • South Korea
 KIM Soonsik • South Korea
 KIM Yuna • South Korea
 LEE Hwangyu • South Korea
 LEE Yen-Chen • Taiwan
 LEE Yulah • South Korea
 MATSUMOTO Tamami • Japan
 MAUNG MAUNG Sai Thurain • Myanmar/Burma
 MOON Geunbo • South Korea
 MORI Marina • Japan
 NAMGUNG Seokho • South Korea
 PARK Su Bin • South Korea
 RYU Taerim • South Korea

SAKAMOTO Yurie • Japan
 SEO Jisu • South Korea
 SHIMAKURA Eri • Japan
 SUH Inae • South Korea
 SUHAILI Nur Diyana Nasriah • Brunei Darussalam
 SUZUKI Nonoka • Japan
 TRIVEDI Chetna • India
 WEE Darwin Wally • The Philippines
 YAO Jiahong • China
 YEO Quan Yi • Singapore
 YONG Chuan Chee • Brunei Darussalam
 YOON Jeonghee • South Korea



INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

- ✓ TOKYO UNIVERSITY OF FOREIGN STUDIES (TUFS) [Japan] offered Global University as a two-credit course for their programme on conflict resilience. Five students joined.
- ✓ KYUNGHEE UNIVERSITY [South Korea] adopted Global University as a credit course for their liberal arts programme known as Humanitas College. Sixteen students joined
- ✓ The GLP-GEfIL (Global Education for Innovation and Leadership) Program at THE UNIVERSITY OF TOKYO [Japan] designated Global University as one of their abroad programmes. Three students joined.

SPONSORSHIP SCHEMES

- ✓ LUNG YINGTAI CULTURAL FOUNDATION [Taiwan] offered two full scholarships for participants from Taiwan. The two scholars were selected from over 50 applicants.
- ✓ THE BRUNEI PROJECT [Brunei Darussalam] offered two full scholarships for participants from Brunei Darussalam.

FACULTY MEMBERS

NAVIGATORS

Three **navigators** guided the students' learning as resource persons, facilitators, and mentors.

OSHDARI KENRO

Former Regional Director for Asia, United Nations World Food Program (WFP)
Worked with the United Nations for over 30 years, and was involved in various humanitarian assistance and development efforts. At WFP, he led many large-scale emergency relief works in Bosnia, Kosovo, Cambodia, and Sudan. From 2009 to 2014, Kenro was the WFP Regional Director for Asia and was responsible for aid projects in fourteen Asian countries.



KHIN OHMAR

Democracy and Human Rights Activist
Chair of Advisory Board, Progressive Voice

A devoted Burmese democracy activist. Played a leading role during the 1988 student demonstrations, and for the Women's League of Burma and Burma Partnership. Ohmar has spoken for the Burmese democracy movement whilst in exile on international and regional platforms such as the United Nations General Assembly and Human Rights Council.



LEE KWANG BOON

Vice President, United Nations Association of Singapore

Vice President and former Secretary-General of the United Nations Association of Singapore. He served as an Executive Committee Member of the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA), New York, from 2008 to 2015. He has 15 years of working experience in investment fund management in the public and private equities in several major financial institutions.



COORDINATORS

KAWASAKI AKIRA

Executive Committee Member, Peace Boat / International Steering Group Member, International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN)

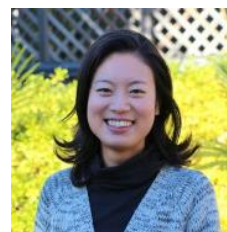
Born in Japan. Lectures at Keisen University and Rikkyo University, while being an activist advocating for peace and disarmament. In 2009-2010, he served as an NGO Advisor to Co-Chairs of the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (ICNND). He writes and speaks widely on nuclear issues.



TERACHI AMI

International Coordinator, Peace Boat

Born in Japan. Studied Latin American Studies, Education and Anthropology, earning a BA from Mount Holyoke College in Massachusetts, USA. Her interest lies in postcolonialism and critical pedagogies, and how to put alternative teaching philosophies into practice.



HATAKEYAMA SUMIKO

Coordinating and planning support

Born in Japan. Attended the United World College of the Adriatic (UWCAd) in Italy and later University of Cambridge, at which she received BA (Hons) in Politics, Psychology and Sociology. She is currently a PhD student at the University of Pennsylvania in the History and Sociology of Science department.



LIST OF PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

JAPAN

- ✓ East Japan Buraku Liberation Research Institute (<http://www.hblri.org/>)
- ✓ Sanyukai (<http://sanyukai.or.jp/>)
- ✓ Moyai Support Centre for Independent Living (<http://www.npomoyai.or.jp/>)

XIAMEN, CHINA

- ✓ China Mangrove Conservation Network (CMCN) (<http://www.china-mangrove.org/>)

SINGAPORE

- ✓ Transient Workers Count Too (TWC2) (<http://twc2.org.sg/>)

YANGON, MYANMAR/BURMA

- ✓ Generation Wave
- ✓ Center for Youth and Social Harmony (CYSC)
- ✓ National Youth Congress (NYC)
- ✓ Yangon School of Political Science (YSPS)
- ✓ Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma) (<http://aappb.org/>)
- ✓ Smile Education and Development Foundation

GLOBAL

- ✓ Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) (<http://www.gppac.net/>)

ABOUT PEACE BOAT

Peace Boat is a Japan-based international non-governmental and non-profit organization founded in 1983 that works to promote peace, human rights, equal and sustainable development and respect for the environment. Peace Boat seeks to create awareness and action based on effecting positive social and political change in the world. We pursue this through the organization of global educational programmes, responsible travel, cooperative projects and advocacy. These activities are carried out on a partnership basis with other civil society organizations and communities in Japan, Northeast Asia, and around the world. (www.peaceboat.org/english)



THEME 1: UNDERSTANDING THE SOCIAL COSTS OF DEVELOPMENT

Too often, inequality and discrimination become part of the system that sustains economic growth and development. Moreover, systematic efforts are made to make these downsides of development invisible. Starting with the exposure programme in Tokyo and throughout the seminars onboard, students were exposed to an array of examples where certain peoples are being left behind as societies at large became more developed.

EXPOSURE PROGRAMME IN TOKYO (11-12 AUGUST 2017)

GENTRIFICATION IN SHIBUYA: TOKYO OLYMPICS 2020 AND THE ISSUE OF HOMELESS PEOPLE



Shibuya is a typical example of gentrification, where low-income people are removed from an area due to urbanisation and re-development plans. With YUKI Tsubasa from Moyai Support Center for Independent Living (Moyai), students walked around the former Miyashita Park to see how the park has been closed. Homeless people had to relocate so that the area could be used for a high-rise building for the Tokyo Olympics in 2020. Tsubasa also explained, how, in this process, the government is selectively and unfairly prioritising a particular group of homeless people to be entitled to social security.

NIGHT WALK IN SHINJUKU

A number of students took part in the optional night walk of Shinjuku. Many were astonished by how the vibrant city of Shinjuku they are familiar with looks rather different once they step in the back streets and underground. With the guide of OHNISHI Ren from Moyai, students gave out flyers about the next scheduled life consultation service and soup kitchen to the homeless people in the area. During the walk, students learned that many of these homeless people have experience of applying for and in some cases even receiving social security, but for a variety of reasons, including miserable conditions in the shelter, had to come back to the streets.



PLATFORM FOR PROVIDING ASSISTANCE: SOUP KITCHEN IN IKEBUKURO

What kinds of support are available for homeless people and what can we do? In Ikebukuro, students joined a soup kitchen organised by TENOHASHI, a Japanese NPO. TENOHASHI is joined by six other NGOs and they work collectively to ensure that holistic support is provided to those in need. Students had the chance to hear from members of Médecins du Monde Japan, as well as from former homeless people working as volunteers in the soup kitchen. Some also volunteered and actually distributed food to the homeless people who gathered for the soup kitchen.



Students' Voice

"I learned that 'dark' places exist right next to shiny department stores and skyscrapers...."

– Mori Marina (Japan)

"We saw the situation in Japan, but I think it is not different in Korea. When I go back to Korea, I will look around the city of Seoul and try to care for those people who need society's care."

– Kim Hyunggeun (South Korea)

SYSTEM OF POVERTY AND DISCRIMINATION: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE



Students also learned that poverty and discrimination are often produced systematically and reproduced over time. During the visit to the Sanya district, YOSHIDA Tsutomu of East Japan Buraku Liberation Research Institute explained to the students, how, from the 17th century, the government had intentionally gathered outcast people, prostitutes, and more recently day labourers to the Sanya area, and how the area had been made invisible from the centre of Edo/Tokyo. YUI Kazunori from Sanyukai further explained the current situation of former day labourers in Sanya, and the kind of support they need.

REFLECTION & ROLE PLAYS

Onboard Peace Boat, students reflected on the exposure programme in Tokyo and discussed issues such as the structural forces behind poverty, the role that the culture of shame plays, and the kinds of support currently available by different stakeholders. Students then engaged in a role play exercise, in which they discussed policy recommendations from three different actors' perspectives, namely government, chamber of commerce, and homeless people. They came up with various policies to deal with the issues of homeless people, both towards the Tokyo Olympics in 2020 and in the long-term.



STUDENT PRESENTATIONS



Students from India, China, and South Korea presented cases from their own countries to further discuss the social cost of development. In India, development projects led by private companies are taking healthy landscape away from the local people. In China, disparity between urban and rural areas are becoming increasingly apparent. In South Korea, strong state-led development has resulted in poverty among young people. Comparing and contrasting these cases, students began to see that the case of Japan is not unique. In many places, certain people are left behind while others benefit from development.

NAVIGATOR'S SEMINAR

GLOBAL INEQUALITY THROUGH FOOD SECURITY

OSHIDARI Kenro helped broaden students' horizon by facilitating a session on global inequality and food security. Kenro encouraged students to think about "hunger" and "food security" in relation to development at large. He emphasised that there is no easy solution to issues such as hunger, and that a holistic approach to development is essential. This would include investment in education and infrastructure. Kenro also pointed out how conflicts often lead to hunger and *vice versa*. Strong leadership and coordination are essential.



THEME 2: SUSTAINABILITY IN ACTION—THE FUTURE WE WANT

Economic policies and strategies that ignore environmental impact lead to air and water pollution, which in turn adversely affect human well-being. Governments and corporations must realise that their choices and policies profoundly affect the future of the earth. It is also important that people take seriously the question of how we define quality of life. Students reflected on these issues both through the exposure programme in Xiamen and the series of lectures and workshops onboard.

EXPOSURE PROGRAMME IN XIAMEN (18 AUGUST 2017)

TEACHING SUSTAINABILITY: WORKING WITH PUPILS FROM HAISHAN PRIMARY SCHOOL

In Xiamen, students gave a lesson on environmental sustainability to pupils (age 10-12) from Haishan Primary School. Students had prepared a lesson in two groups, one group on deforestation and the other on air pollution. Since the pupils only spoke Chinese and most of the Global University students did not, students made use of visual materials and incorporated a wide range of interactive activities. Pupils coloured pictures and participated in quizzes. Teaching kids about sustainability was certainly not easy, but students learned what it means and what it takes to get an important messages across.



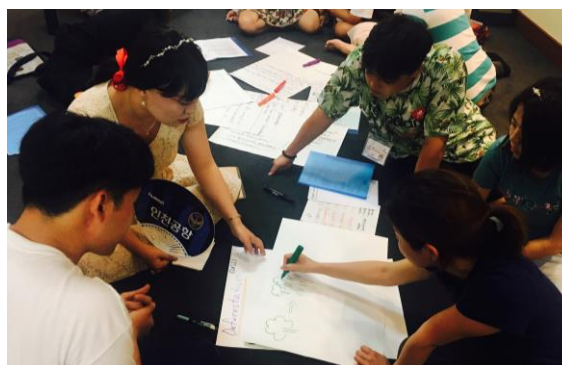
CONSERVING ECO-SYSTEM: MANGROVE PLANTING IN HAIMEN ISLAND



Mangroves in China have decreased by 73% over the past 60 years. Mangroves near cities like Xiamen have been damaged repeatedly due to urbanisation and construction of transportation facilities. With the coordination of China Mangrove Conservation Network (CMCN), students planted the mangroves on Haimen Island, 45 minutes from the port of Xiamen. Altogether, students planted hundreds of mangrove plants in extreme heat and humidity! The biggest takeaway for the students was that it takes so much physical efforts to put back the ecosystem once it is destroyed.

REFLECTION: WHAT IS “SUSTAINABILITY”?

The day after visiting Xiamen, students shared with each other, what they learned, how they felt, and what they want to do with what they have learned. Students initially exchanged their thoughts in pairs, gradually moving to a larger group based on the main questions they identified. Eventually, group discussions came to centre around the questions of the causes of environmental degradation and possible solutions. Many different solutions were proposed, but solutions also sparked further questions and discussions.



Students' Voice

“I was actually shocked by how shy the children were in front of our teams... In Korea, it is quite different. Is it because of the difference in social systems?”

– Moon Geunbo (South Korea)

“I learned about the challenges mangrove planters have to endure on a daily basis to improve the environment.”

– Yao Jiahong (China)

NAVIGATOR'S SEMINAR

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs) AND THE UNITED NATIONS

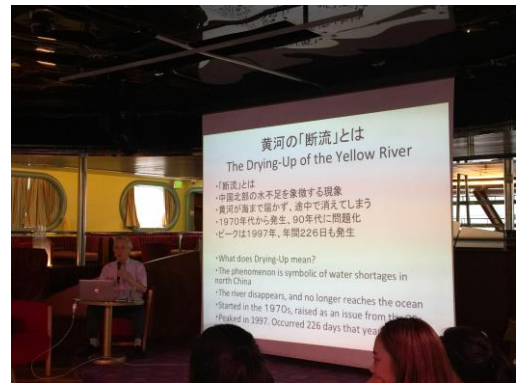


LEE Kwang Boon, Vice-President of the United Nations Association Singapore, introduced the work of the United Nations in relation to the SDGs. Kwang Boon explained the relationship between the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the SDGs, and how the SDGs take a more comprehensive approach to development. After Kwang Boon’s presentation, students exchanged opinions on how the SDGs can be successfully applied to different local contexts, and how countries can decide which goals are to be prioritised. Students also discussed the role of private companies.

GUEST LECTURE

CHINA’S ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS THROUGH THE LENS OF ITS “MOTHER RIVER”

As the ship sailed through the South China Sea, students welcomed KATO Chihiro, former Asahi Newspaper Editor, who talked to the students about China’s environmental crisis. Chihiro used the drying-up of the Yellow River as an example to discuss the environmental impact of economic and population growth in China. Chihiro emphasised that this phenomenon also has to do with global climate change. In the conclusion, Chihiro highlighted how the vicious cycle had been created with environmental issues now being the major obstacles to China’s economic growth. More importantly, he underlined that the same issue now affects the entire Asia-Pacific region.



ONBOARD ACTIONS

Two groups organised their Onboard Action on the theme of environmental sustainability. One group set up a booth to raise awareness about the importance of mangrove forests and raised funds for China Mangrove Conservation Network (CMCN). The other group took up the issue of food wastage. Other groups worked on sustainable development more generally. Using photographs, dance, and songs, they sought to make people more familiarised with the 17 SDGs.



Navigator’s Voice

“Thirty six students from eleven Asian countries came together in this year’s Global University hosted by Peace Boat. Each one of them proactively participated in discussions covering topics like environmental sustainability, peace building, international development and humanitarian issues. The Global University offers a unique educational environment where students also get a chance to advocate and pass on what they learned to over 1,000 passengers on the ship touring around the world. This is once in a lifetime experience that combines international learning with so much fun on the sea! “

—Oshidari Kenro, Former U.N. World Food Programme Regional Director for Asia

THEME 3: DIVERSITY FOR A BETTER SOCIETY

In many societies, migrant workers are integral to the workforce. Yet often, very little is done to ensure their quality of life. In fact, many societies continue to perceive migration as a threat and a challenge. Through the exposure programme in Singapore and sessions onboard, students discussed possible ways of managing migration, which respect migrants' human dignity and celebrating diversity. Students also contemplated more generally on ways to make societies more welcoming to diversity.

SINGAPORE EXPOSURE PROGRAMME (23 AUGUST 2017)

UP-CLOSE WITH MIGRANT WORKERS: "DAY SCHOOL" WITH TRANSIENT WORKERS COUNT TOO (TWC2)



Students took part in the Day School organised by Transient Workers Count Too (TWC2), a local organisation working on the issues faced by migrant workers. Debbie FORDYCE and Christine PELLY explained the situation of migrant workers in Singapore, who come mainly from Bangladesh, India, China, and the Philippines to work in the service and construction industries. Taking a walk around Little India, where most of the workers gather, students witnessed that a lack of open spaces, heavy fines, and constant patrolling, along with hostility faced from local residents, make it very tough for migrants to survive there.

REFLECTION: ROLE PLAY ON MIGRANT WORKERS' ISSUE

On the following day, students raised a number of insightful points as they reflected on their experience in Singapore. The session was further invigorated with a role play wherein the students were randomly given situations where they could think about the feelings and motivations of the divergent actors involved in the migration process. Students were assigned roles as migrant workers who are injured or overstayed, the employers trying to evade taxes, or the NGO workers trying to address the issues of these workers under a strict government.



STUDENT PRESENTATIONS: DIVERSITY AROUND US



Through a series of student presentations, students deepened their understanding of how different societies embrace diversity and what problems persist. Using the case of Singapore, students discussed the role of language in maintaining racial and religious harmony. Building on the exposure programme, the issues faced by migrant women in South and West Asia were also taken up. With a specific focus on Cambodia, there was also a lively discussion on how gender issues can be streamlined to address the critical issues affecting women, including sexual violence. Gaps between policies and reality were often pointed out.

Student's Voice

"I learnt that in order to create and foster peaceful and inclusive societies, we must acknowledge the presence of everyone in society, regardless of our ethnicities, religious beliefs or jobs. If we are not even aware of the existence of others who might be living entirely different lives apart from us, how are we able to understand more or take a step towards accepting others as part of the same society?"

—Yeo Quan Yi (Singapore)

NAVIGATOR'S SEMINARS

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN PUBLIC ADVOCACY AND ENGAGEMENT

Burmese human rights activist KHIN Ohmar began the seminar by presenting the innumerable challenges women in Myanmar have faced in the recent decades. Ohmar also emphasised that during armed conflict or violence, women and children are the most adversely affected. Sadly, governments often downplay the importance of addressing these issues. It is important that women themselves take the lead, and Ohmar introduced some of the efforts made by women's organisations. Women should be involved in the peace process, legal and political discussions, and documentation of sexual harassment.



ONBOARD ACTIONS

To promote diversity onboard, students engaged in a wide range of onboard actions. The students held an Intercultural Communication Workshop and facilitated communication between the diverse audience members via games and activities. One of the groups decided to use Mahjong—already very popular onboard—as a tool to promote intercultural exchange. Along the theme of diversity, a group of students led a series of interactive projects on topics related to gender. The group conducted a survey to explore people's gender stereotypes and organised a photo campaign to highlight some widespread gender expectations.



Student's Voice

"It was interesting to see the presence of some barrier fences and warning signs to prevent migrant workers' entry into the local housing area. If these isolation problems persist without permanent solutions especially with the increasing number of migrant workers, these tensions will continue to rise. And when they feel that they have nowhere to go outside their dormitories, these will eventually lead to more social problems and clashes with the Singaporeans?"

— Suhaili Nur Diyana Nasriah (Brunei Darussalam)

Navigator's Voice

'Students were exposed to areas and issues which they may not be familiar with as learning occurs through both small and large group interactions that encourage collaborative learning and discovery. This programme raises the participants' capacity as Global Citizens. The bonds of human compassion and solidarity that unite us across the divides of race and religion, gender and geography. This is absolutely critical for the collective ambitions of our world.'

—Lee Kwang Boon, Vice-President of United Nations Association of Singapore



THEME 4: SOCIAL COHESION AND RECONCILIATION TO COUNTER CONFLICTS

Absence of armed conflict is a necessary condition for peace. Yet, rebuilding societies and maintaining social cohesion involve much more. Platforms for dialogue must be created so that people from different religious and ethnic backgrounds can understand and trust each other. Starting with the case of Myanmar/Burma, students discussed how social cohesion can break down, and what can be done. Issues from other countries were also taken up, including the case of the Philippines and the increasing tension in East Asia.

NAVIGATOR'S SEMINAR:

CONFLICT AND DEMOCRACY IN MYANMAR/BURMA



Ohmar led two seminars, discussing the history of conflicts and fights for democracy in Myanmar/Burma. The seminar exposed students to the main political developments and social movements in recent years. She emphasised how attacks on ethnic minorities have been an ongoing issue, and that the recent crisis around Rohingya Muslims, although very important to address, is only one manifestation of a more fundamental trend. She urged students to look deep into the issue and to attend to the things that have not changed with the official end of military rule. Kenro talked about UN activities in Rakhine State.

EXPOSURE PROGRAMME IN YANGON (27-28 AUGUST)

THE POWER OF YOUTH: EXCHANGE WITH YOUTH ACTIVIST GROUPS

Students visited the office of Generation Wave, where they were welcomed by members of Generation Wave, Center for Youth and Social Harmony, National Youth Congress, and Yangon School of Political Science. Together with them, students discussed the role of youth, what they can do to mediate ethnic tensions, and how they can work with older generations. Later in the programme, students also had a chance to interact with members of Smile Education and Development Foundation (SEDF), another youth group active in Yangon.



ASSISTANCE ASSOCIATION FOR POLITICAL PRISONERS



Assistant Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP-Burma) works on the issue of transnational justice and national reconciliation. Their activities range from providing vocational training for former political prisoners and their families, to advocating to the government for amendments to oppressing laws, such as the prison law. In the Q&A that followed AAPP's presentation, AAPP staff underlined that the issue of transnational justice is deeply related to the issue of poverty and development. Students also discussed how the roles should be divided between government and civil society organisations.

Student's Voice

"Through different exposure programmes, I learnt and discovered that discrimination and social injustice exists everywhere throughout time and space in different eras."

—Yong Chuan Chee (Brunei Darussalam)

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS: SOCIAL COHESION FROM MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES

Students further discussed the issues of social cohesion through a series of student presentations. A presentation by a Burmese student built on Ohmar's sessions and focused on political and ethnic groups within Myanma/Burma. A group of Japanese students talked about the issue of Rohingya refugees in Japan and how Japanese people perceive the issue. The role of the media in constructing people's perception was discussed. Through a presentation on the peace process in Mindanao, students also considered social cohesion in a post-conflict setting. At what point can we say that social cohesion is achieved?



ONBOARD ACTIONS

Students implemented various initiatives to advocate the concept of social cohesion onboard. One group organised a talk session about Korea's unification to discuss what social cohesion may mean to the Korean peninsula. Another group organised a photo exhibition, featuring moments of social cohesion onboard.



ROUDBLE DISCUSSIONS

DEALING WITH THE PAST: PERSPECTIVES ON EAST ASIAN HISTORY



In this discussion facilitated by Akira, students discussed the issue of comfort women as a case study to think about what it means to talk about history in a way that is not confined to nationalistic viewpoints. Discussions highlighted how indifference on the part of people and the media has left former comfort women abandoned. Students also discussed in depth what "forcible" means. Would payment invalidate the notion of forcibility? How would we define choice in this context? Lastly, there was also a discussion on violence against women more generally, and especially in relation to the military.

CONCLUSIONS: BUILDING PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC

In the concluding discussion, each of the students was asked to write three words which could highlight the essence of the programme. The bevy of beautiful and inspiring words which came up during the discussion and the explanations which followed were truly inspiring. It was a room full of change makers willing to network and achieve the difficult yet realisable goal of having peaceful and inclusive societies in the Asia-Pacific. The closing night was celebrated with dance, music and the promises of being in touch with each other, to affect change, together.



ASSIGNMENTS & ASSESSMENT

PROGRAMME PREPARATION & ASSIGNMENTS

Before students met for the programme, three online sessions were conducted to familiarise students both with the programme scheme of Peace Boat's Global University and with the key concepts of the programme. The sessions were led by Peace Boat staff and Pascal RICHARD from the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC). Students were also provided with a list of suggested readings to prepare for the programme, as well as a few assignments that would prepare students for the programme.

POST-PROGRAMME ASSIGNMENT

After the programme ended, students were asked to submit two short essays. One asked students to critically assess the onboard actions they took part in. The other asked them to broadly reflect on the programme and to discuss how they think peace and inclusivity in societies can be achieved.

POST-PROGRAMME INITIATIVES

IN TAIWAN...

On 3 September, 2017, LEE Yenchen and JAN Yui-Yau, who joined the Global University programme from Taiwan, spoke in one of the sessions in "2017 Becoming Aces." This event was a youth festival hosted by The News Lens. Yenchen and Yui-Yau shared their experience of taking part in Peace Boat's Global University and their takeaways from the programme. More than 200 people joined the session!



IN SOUTH KOREA AT KYUNGHEE UNIVERSITY



On 19 September, 2017, students who joined Global University from Kyunghee University organised a fundraising event at their campus. They discussed their plan with Ohmar while onboard, and had decided to raise funds to help Burmese refugees in Mae Sot, a city in Western Thailand that shares a border with Myanmar/Burma. Through this event, they successfully raised around 100 US dollars to be donated to Mae-Tao Clinic.

IN JAPAN AT SOPHIA UNIVERSITY (TOKYO)

On 6 December, 2017, Sophia University's Institute of Global Concern organised a symposium entitled "Thinking Non-Armed Security from Okinawa." As a part of this, ISAJI Riho (University of Tokyo) and YEO Quan Yi (Tokyo University of Foreign Studies) shared with the audience their experience of participating in the Global University programme. The two students talked about what they learned in the programme, emphasising in particular how discussions with participants from other countries expanded their horizon. By drawing on their visit to Myanmar, Riho and Quan Yi also underlined the importance of getting out of the country if anyone wants to understand what is actually taking place in other parts of the world.



FROM THE PARTNER INSTITUTIONS

'It is the fourth time for Tokyo University of Foreign Studies (TUFS) to send students to this program. TUFS's students have a large stock of knowledge about the areas that they major in. They also hold respect for the people whose language they are learning. And what's more, it is nowadays necessary for them not only to improve their linguistic proficiency, but also to obtain practical skills that can help improve resilience in conflict-affected areas. It is equally important to nurture sensibility to the suffering of others. We believe this program offers our students such opportunities.'

—Iwasaki Minoru, Professor at Tokyo University of Foreign Studies (Japan)

'Global University aims to bring diverse perspectives together and create social cohesion from many differences. It offers a unique platform for participants from various backgrounds to discuss global issues which would reflect on their own societies. I am truly amazed by all the well-organized and sophisticated work being done by the Peace Boat team including the pre-departure preparation, the topics of the on-board lectures, design of field works etc. It's been a great experience working with them to bring our common goal of building peace and understanding in Asia.'

—Liu Ju-Fang, Senior Project Leader at Lung Yingtai Cultural Foundation (Taiwan)

'Humanitas College at Kyunghee University is a program that aims to expose students to crucial issues in our society, such as climate change and global inequality, as well as changes posed by aging society and technologies. We find Peace Boat's Global University as an ideal program that provides right opportunities to our students. Every year, many students apply to the opportunity to join the programme and we interview each one of them in order to select the best ones. Many of them have profound interests in global issues and are highly motivated. We hope to continue with our partnership in the future.'

—Michael HY Jeong, Professor at Humanitas College, Kyunghee University (South Korea)

GALLERY





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