



SOFIMUN
Sofia International Model United Nations

Edition: I I/2009
Period: 18-25 July 2009
Location: Sofia, Bulgaria

Website: www.sofimun.org
Foundation: www.if.sofimun.org
E-mail: info@sofimun.org

"Search Of Future Ideas, Models Us Now"

REPORT
ON THE WORK OF
THE SOFIMUN NEWS
NETWORK



SOFIMUN NEWS NETWORK

at

Sofia International
Model United Nations

2009

Official Report

CONTENTS

Main	1
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Contents	3
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The Editors

Mr. Simon Walters - Editor-in-chief 2009 of SNN	4
---	---

Miss Petya Genova – Vice-editor-in-chief 2009 of SNN	5
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The Report

SOFIMUN News Network at Sofia International Model United Nations 2009 - Official Report by Mr. Simon Walter	6
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The Team

SOFIMUN News Network 2009 team	10
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The Idea and Actors

SOFIMUN News Network at Sofia International Model United Nations 2009 – idea and actors	11
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Simon Walters (Secretariat)

Editor in Chief of SNN

Born in London but Scottish at heart, Simon has just finished his final year of a history degree at the University of Edinburgh.

He became involved in the MUN programme whilst studying on an Erasmus Exchange Year at the University of Salamanca in Spain. He participated in the first edition of MUNUSAL before being invited back the following year to Chair the Security Council. Most recently Simon was the Secretary General in the first ever edition of MOSTIMUN, held in the city of Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina. He will also be involved in LEBIMUN, taking place straight after this year's SOFIMUN. Simon is now very excited about this new challenge, ready to run the first version of Sofia News Network – SNN.

Outside of the world of MUNs, Simon has worked as an English teacher, which included spending a year teaching in a Vietnamese high school, and was also the presenter of a request show for a Hospital Radio station. In 2008, Simon coached the Mexican team for the World Schools' Debating Competition. Simon has also been involved in both acting and directing a number of amateur theatre productions, and secretly dreams of becoming professional, but as he said, this is a secret!

Directing SNN, Simon brought the SOFIMUN delegates a news service which reported on all aspects of the conference. From the committee sessions themselves, sensational speeches made by delegates and groundbreaking resolutions formed or rejected, SNN was also there at the parties and social events, and no doubt brought a selection of photos and thus provided SOFIMUN delegates with great memories of their best (and perhaps worst) moments.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has" (Margaret Mead)



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Petya Genova (Ex-com)

Member of Ex-com

Petya Genova was born in 1985 in Varna, the sea capital of Bulgaria. During her studies in a foreign languages High school she felt that even living in such a beautiful city, it was however too small for her.

Petya has Bachelor degree in Political Sciences in French and Public Administration from the New Bulgarian University in Sofia. She is currently finishing her Masters degree in European Interdisciplinary Studies, with a major in Governance in the EU at the College of Europe, Warsaw campus.

Her first UN model meeting was in 2007. During the same year she contributed to the organization of several of simulations in Sofia. Last year Petya was more than pleased to have the chance to be invited in the SOFIMUN 2008 as a member of the Secretariat! Taking into consideration that experience and her current living with people from all around Europe, Petya believes that the UN Models offer a great opportunity for young people to become more open-minded.

"The realization of the Second edition of SOFIMUN not only proves but also confirms that if young people are determined and persistent, they could easily gain their goals"

"Nothing happens unless first we dream", Carl Sandburg



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SOFIMUN News Network

at

Sofia International Model United Nations 2009

Official Report

By Simon Walters, Editor-in-chief 2009

www.snn.sofimun.org

SOFIMUN News Network (SNN) was established as an interactive online news service to report SOFIMUN 2009. The initial aims of the media were to provide a service regularly updating delegates, secretariat and organizers of SOFIMUN 2009, as well as outside observers, with the latest news of the debate and discussion, held within the different committee rooms, during the conference.

SNN itself was the brain-child of President of the SOFIMUN foundation, Miss. Paola Ivanova and Executive-Director, Mr. Dimiter Mandradjiev. It was then managed and worked on before and during by the conference, by: Editor-in-Chief, Mr. Simon Walters; Vice-Editor-in-Chief, Miss. Petya Genova; and IT manager, Mr. Petko Podayski.

SNN is a collection of various different medias, from Europe and the rest of the world. Major media's represented in the SNN body were the BBC, Associated Press, Al Arabia, Agence France and Euro News. The 11 journalists who became part of the SNN team had the option of selecting the media they wished to represent. Their principle responsibilities, once the conference had started, was to report the work of the different committees, from the perspective of the media they were representing. The principle responsibilities of Petya and I were to edit all articles, ensuring that content was appropriate and acceptable to the aims of SNN. Petko Podayski was on-hand to assist and provide guidance relating to the overall technical management of the website.



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Before the conference, the journalists were all asked to prepare an introductory piece of work, based on one of the topics for each committee. These articles were edited by Petya and I prior to the conference and uploaded to mark the official launch of SNN. The advantage of doing this was that Petya and I were able to see the work of the journalists before the start of SOFIMUN. It also meant that we were able to officially launch the media to the delegates, and as such they were able to become engaged in SNN before the conference had even started.

When SOFIMUN 2009 officially opened, journalists were fully briefed in order to ensure they were completely prepared for the experience of working for an online media. Much of these briefings were based on feedback from the articles they had already submitted. As committee sessions began, a minimum of two journalists were placed in each room. This allowed for communication and interaction between the journalists in order to evaluate the work of the committee. Daily briefings also took place on each morning of the conference. This allowed for interaction between all members of the team and included: an update of the latest news; a review of the previous day; a discussion of the plans for the upcoming day.

The journalists were split into two groups, Group A and B. Group A were given a deadline of 14:45 to submit their articles. Once submitted, they were then asked to work on some form of feature, at their discretion. This ranged from interviews to photography or assisting in the editing of the website. Group B were asked to submit their article 30 minutes before the closure of debate each day. Although it was not always possible to stick to deadlines, the two-group system allowed for a range of different articles.

Group A's articles tended to be more specific to a certain issue discussed in the committee, whereas Group B's work tended to give a much more general view of the overall daily work of the committee. It also gave journalists more opportunity to assist each other. Once Group A had submitted their articles, many often chose to assist their colleagues in Group B with their work.



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On day 4 of SOFIMUN, a "crisis" situation arose in the Sea of Japan, which required the urgent action of the Security Council. This fictitious crisis was a surprise to delegates but also to the journalists. The online media body of SNN proved to be an excellent means for developing and enhancing this crisis situation. 3 journalists were deployed to the Security Council to report, photograph and video-tape the various developments in the council. SNN was also able to bring a semi-regular "Breaking News" update from the council. The ability to make regular updates and changes, something not possible in a normal paper media, was most certainly a major advantage for SNN.

The impact of SNN as a media group seems indisputable. Delegates and Chairpersons were very keen to contribute to the workings of the media. Many delegates requested to issue Press Statements to SNN to further express their positions. Others contributed, either in the form of Press Statements, or by using the Comments facility to agree, criticise or continue the debate within the media. It would be impossible to state that everybody agreed with the articles and the conclusions made by SNN, but it is clear that the influence of an online media group, reporting a Model United Nations conference was felt by everybody participating in the event.

The key focus for SNN, as far as I am concerned, was to provide a media which would be an extra wing of debate. In this sense I am convinced SNN was a great success.

SNN had some other key goals. Most of these were achieved. Some, however, did not meet our requirements. Most certainly SNN provided a forum for debate and discussion. It also gave regular updates of what was happening in the different committees. This meant that delegates did not have to wait for a single publication of a daily paper newspaper, but instead could make regular checks of the latest news via their laptops. We had wanted to also make regular updates to the SNN website with information about the history and culture of Bulgaria as well as some other features. Due to time constraints and our own inexperience working with the software, this did not prove as possible as we had hoped. Hopefully, as SNN continues to progress, this section can be added to and developed.



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As far as I am concerned, SNN has proved to be a wonderful success. It was engaging and thought provoking. For delegates and Chairpersons it gave the extra window of discussion. For journalists is provided a challenging but highly rewarding experience of working in the fast-pace world of online media. Whilst we were unable to meet all of our objectives, we did meet our key goals and focuses for the media. Many of the journalists working for the SNN team have now spoken of how they are now considering a career in the media as a future possibility.

Running an online media group is a challenging and very difficult job, but I am truly delighted by the end result and I am very proud and honoured by the outstanding work done by all of the SNN team. I would very much hope that SNN continues as a media body, as it shown just how important a strong and active media group is for a MUN conference. I would very much encourage other initiatives to take on board the ideas and principles behind SNN.

Simon Walters
SOFIMUN News Network, Editor-in-Chief 2009
www.snn.sofimun.org



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Team of SOFIMUN News Network



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Medias simulated in SOFIMUN News Network 2009

The idea of having a simulation also of world media companies came from the necessity to ensure that we have all possible angles of view and opinion through the articles for the conference's plenary sessions and work. This also was a start of the work on an idea to embody in a democratic way the world media companies in the UN structure through a simulation and centralized information body. Initially we had opened applications for the following media: EURONEWS, EUOBSERVER, AGENCIA EFE, AL ARABIYA, ASSOCIATED PRESS, AGENCE FRANCE – PRESSE, BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION, DEUTCHE WELLE, RIA NOVOSTI, XINHUA. After the closure of the application procedure we had participants in the following media:

