



Middle East Partnership Initiative MEPI Alumni Network in Jordan

Building Skills through Diplomacy: An Introduction to the Model United Nations

Through activities like the Model United Nations, the MEPI Alumni Chapter in Jordan provides training to young Jordanians to build their skills in conflict resolution and team-work.



Students from the Jordanian city of Ma'an prepare to participate in the Model United Nations Conference.

This project is funded through the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, Office of the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI). MEPI is a unique program designed to engage directly with and invest in the peoples of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). MEPI works to create vibrant partnerships with citizens to foster the development of pluralistic, participatory, and prosperous societies throughout the MENA region. MEPI partners with local, regional and international non-governmental organizations, the private sector, academic institutions, and governments. More information about MEPI can be found at: www.mepi.state.gov.

The Model United Nations activity provides a forum for young Jordanians to address global concerns in a "real world" context. The activity aims to educate participants about civics, current events, effective communication, globalization and multilateral diplomacy.

In preparation for the Model United Nations Conference in Jordan, MEPI Alumni trained students to prepare for their roles as diplomats and to participate in a simulated session of the security council. Each student is expected to research a country, identify international issues, debate, deliberate, consult with their peers and then develop solutions to world problems.

The ultimate aim of the activity is to educate participants about civics, current events, team-work, and multilateral diplomacy as they prepare for and then participate in a Model United Nations (MUN) Conference with students from across Jordan. Students will choose the topic of the conferences from a number of critical issues including regional conflicts, peacekeeping, human rights, women and children, economic and social development, and the environment.

In the first preparatory training leading to the national conference, fifteen youth/university students from the South participated in an academic simulation of the United Nations (UN). Lina Arafat, the MEPI Alumni Network coordinator, explained to the students the history and mandate of the UN. Faris Muhaisen, former participant of several MUNs, explained the process of the MUN, delegates division, resolution process, UN forums, UN terminologies, general rules, allies and opponents, how to follow policies of the represented country, clothing, language, code of conduct, parliamentary procedures, and how 'live the character' when engaging in the MUN. Both Lina and Faris explained skills of debating, language used, words to emphasis, strategies, resolutions, lobbying and resolution preparations, and decision making.

At the end of the session, students were assigned to represent a country currently sitting on the Security Council and a case study to practice what they have learned during the day. They were given sometime to research their assigned country and prepare their speeches, position statements, and resolutions. The students were evaluated in terms of performance, phrases used to support their position, as well as body language.

The first MUN conference was held in September 2010.