



High School Youth simulate General Assembly to discuss the SDGs & Global Citizenship

Thursday, 19 September 2018: The United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) Windhoek in collaboration with MTN Namibia hosted a two-day simulation of the General Assembly for high school youth at the Safari Court Hotel from 19-20 September 2018. This was the 7th Model United Nations Namibia (MUNNAM) Conference to be held with participants stemming from the Khomas, Erongo, Otjikoto and Hardap region. A total of 15 high schools in Namibia were represented at the conference.

Speaking on behalf of the UN System Namibia, Dr. Charles Segoe-Moses, WHO Representative, said, "Today as you stand in the shoes of delegates that represent their respective countries, think not only of yourself but the millions of young people that depend on you to lead the youth agenda." He went on to say, "MUNNAM may just look like a role playing, but in reality, you are preparing yourself to be global citizens. Some of you may make these issues your life's work and maybe you will find yourselves as humanitarian workers someday or working for the envoy on youth. As you are preparing yourselves for the future today, your time to take action and drive for change is now."

Addressing the youth on behalf of the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, Ms. Joy Mbangi, Deputy Director for Management Planning and Appraisal said, "Model UN is an extraordinary platform for young people in Namibia and across the globe...Over the next two days, you will build bridges and come together as a fraternity of young people aligned to achieve the core principals of the United Nations. I urge you to make new friends and invest and empower one another." She called upon the youth delegates to, "emerge as global citizens, becoming well versed not only in local issues facing young people but also global challenges...you must understand the global call on young people to have a voice and use it to better our future."

Mr. Keith Handura, encouraged the youth delegates to "seize whatever opportunities come after this...the next two days are your opportunity to show what you can do." He encouraged innovative thinking during their deliberations and highlighted MTN Namibia's commitment to this educational platform since its inception in 2012.

Delegates were paired up to represent 30 United Nations Member States and deliberated on the topics:

1. Model United Nations (MUN) advocacy for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and global citizenship
2. Ensuring global water and sanitation availability and sustainability

The delegates successfully passed a resolution on each topic which was favourably voted upon and adopted by the assembly. At the end of day two, delegates were awarded with certificates for participation along with cash prizes sponsored by MTN Namibia.

The award for best school along with N\$3000 with the compliments of MTN was awarded to St. Paul's College in Windhoek. The General Assembly delegates voted for the Best Delegate, and the votes were unanimous for Salime Gossayn, who represented Sweden during the conference.

The other prizes as voted for by the judges included, Best Speaker, who received N\$1500 from MTN, which was awarded to a Grade 9 learner from Windhoek High School, Christiaan Prinsloo, who represented Yemen during the conference. The award for Best Delegation was awarded to the Delegation of the United Kingdom, represented by Selma Iyambo from Hochland High School and Ernst Calitz from Windhoek Gymnasium.

In addition, MTN awarded two innovation cash prizes to delegates who applied out of the box thinking or leveled up on traditional thinking and approaches. The awards went to Michael Petrus from Windhoek High School, representing the country of South Africa and Heinrich Nel from Etosha Secondary School representing France. Months of preparation and hard work resulted in a successful conference with most delegates participating for the first time. The teachers from the different schools were instrumental in the success of the conference and are one of the main agents working with UNIC Windhoek to sustain this educational programme.

Background:

The Model UN programme, an international programme, was launched by the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) in Namibia during 2012. High School youth have been actively engaged through the programme which has contributed to honing their leadership skills as well as research ability, writing, public speaking and problem-solving skills through hands-on experiences.

Model United Nations conferences are held worldwide and are an educational vehicle for the youth, committed in providing engaged learning opportunities and to have a proud tradition of debate, ideas and innovation.

While simulating the roles of international delegates, the students also gain leadership skills as well as research ability, writing, public speaking and problem-solving skills through hands-on experiences. This program is one of the most effective methods of promoting youth empowerment and leadership.