

HARITHKRAM MODEL UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT ASSEMBLY

SEPTEMBER 20-21, 2019

SUMMARY REPORT OF THE TWO-DAY CONFERENCE HELD AT SHAHEED BHAGAT SINGH COLLEGE, NEW DELHI

Harithkram successfully completed the first day of the two-day MUNEA 2019 on September 20, 2019.

The chief guest for the **opening session and inauguration** of the fourth edition of Harithkram Model United Nations Environment Assembly, **Justice Swatanter Kumar, former Chairperson, National Green Tribunal** gave an electrifying address. He began by suggesting that just like Shaheed Bhagat Singh gave up his life for the country, the students of the College named after him should also be sincere fighters for the environment of this country as well as the world at large. He also mentioned the Ten Commandments that the Former President of India, Late Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam once administered to a bunch of law students, and suggested that even if a student succeeded in following any two of them, then she/he will be serving the country at some point. In his speech, he gave alarming facts and figures, which left the audience astounded, but also offered relief and hope through simple and practical solutions. He suggested that one should improve one's conduct, one's way of life, one's general habits and lifestyle, and spread the same message far and wide. He also made a poignant suggestion: knowledge and conscientiousness about the environment have nothing to do with science, as the environment is something we live in and breathe in. Hence, everyone must be aware about the same, and everyone must contribute towards the betterment of the same.

The Keynote Speaker in the opening session and inauguration, **Dr. Indrani Chandrasekharan, former Advisor, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change** addressed the assembly on “**Global Health Diplomacy and Related Sustainable Development Goals.**” She gave a succinct presentation on Sustainable Development Goals and their relationship to global health and diplomacy. Her paper was indeed an eye-opener. She shared a wealth of information with the assembly, together with the relevant data and statistics, and urged each one present to live sustainable lives.

The Introductory Session of HMUNEA had a brief, but an incisive address by **Ms. Taru Mehta** from the **Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)**. Ms. Mehta, an educationist for a large share of her career, suggested how the youth need to be alert to and take constructive steps towards the environment. She also emphasized why such simulation exercises were significant for students: not only did they improve their skills of public speaking and negotiations, but because the students today will be part of decision-making committees and bodies in a decade's time, a first-hand experience of such assemblies will come handy. She also hoped that by the end of the two-day session, the delegates will be able to arrive at concrete resolutions, suggestions and action plans.

The **First Session** of Harithkram Model United Nation Environmental Assembly started off as a promising event. The overwhelming majority of participating member states indicated their commitment to the environment and to environmental diplomacy on global health. The Committee started with the General Assembly Speakers' List in which each delegate was given 90 seconds to talk about the stand of their respective countries on the topic "Environmental Diplomacy on Global Health," after which the quorum moved to an Unmoderated Caucus to discuss the agenda to be raised in the Moderated Caucus. The Committee then moved into the first moderated caucus on the topic "Climate Change with Special Emphasis on Global Health."

With a majority of delegates seconding the motion, the floor was open to deliberation. Most of the delegates actively took part in the discussions.

Before the session closed, the Assembly, including the volunteers and faculty of Harithkram as well as the delegates of HMUNEA took an oath **in support of the Global Climate Strike, the biggest global movement calling for a Climate Emergency, in solidarity with the Swedish environmentalist Greta Thunberg**. Harithkram joined the people of over 150 countries who are supporting young climate strikers demanding an end to the age of fossil fuels by taking an oath and organizing a signature campaign in the College to support Thunberg's call for a Climate Strike.

On day two, i.e. September 21, 2019, the Environment Assembly convened **three sessions**. The sessions were conducted on women's health and sanitation, preventing non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and finally, public health institutions. **The committee also passed a resolution where the full house voted in favour of the resolution.** The secretariat is delighted to announce that the Assembly successfully attained its objectives by covering all the six agendas that were listed by the assembly. The brainstorming sessions did not only bring out the negotiation skills of the delegates but also affirmed their commitment to the cause of the environment.

The closing session and valedictory had a full house that was addressed by two eminent speakers as guest of honours, **Ms. Gayatri Raghwa, Environment and Education Consultant for UN in India (UNEP)** and **Ms. Radhika Suri, Director, Environment Education from WWF-India.**

The assembly that saw participation of delegates from different Universities and various colleges of the University of Delhi, after a brief feedback session, was declared closed by Dr. Komal Agarwal, the Executive Director of the Harithkram Model United Nations Environment Assembly 2019.

The student conveners of this assembly, Ms. Rhythm Patel and Mr. Arghadeep Das presented the Vote of Thanks and thanked the Patron and Principal Dr. Anil Sardana, Convener Ms. Mita Hussain, Staff Advisor Dr. V.A.V. Raman and other faculty members, the knowledge partners, the supporters, the organising team and the support staff for their contribution to the success of this youth conference.