

PRESS RELEASE



ROTARY AND ANU BRING THE UNITED NATIONS TO CANBERRA

The Rotary national Model United Nations Assembly (MUNA) was conducted in the historic House of Representatives Chamber of the Old Parliament House, home to the Museum of Australian Democracy from 16-18 August. This was the 23rd consecutive MUNA event that the Rotary Club of Canberra Sunrise has run on behalf of Rotary District 9710, with the aim of increasing international understanding and goodwill. Club President, Lain Dare hailed the event a great success, noting the high quality of debate throughout, great enthusiasm from the participants and involvement of a number of embassies and high commissions in supporting the students.

Seventy Year 10 to 12 students from schools in Queensland, NSW, ACT, Victoria and Tasmania participated in the event. Teams of two or three students made up 26 teams, each representing a country to debate six real-world United Nations resolutions over the weekend. The topics, all of which were well researched by students and debated with passion were:

- Measures to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the Korean peninsula.
- Regulating International Migration
- International Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
- Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind
- The Situation of Human Rights in Venezuela
- The protection of journalistic freedoms

We truly believe that all participants in MUNA are winners, coming away with a greater awareness of world issues and the way that the UN operates to bring about change and also making some lasting friendships. Testimonies from some of those that have attended past events show that MUNA can be a life changing experience and one that has shaped their careers going forward.

Our adjudicators had a difficult task identifying winning teams for the debate because the standard was high across the board. The results this year were:

	Country	Rotary Sponsor	School
1st	United Kingdom	D9685	Penrith High School
2nd	Japan	Rotary Clubs of Berrima District	Southern Highlands Christian School
3rd	New Zealand	Rotary Club of Moruya	Carroll College
Highly Commended	Colombia	D9675	SCEGGS Darlinghurst
Highly Commended	Afghanistan	Rotary Club of Epping	Epping Boys HS
Totenhofer Peace Prize	Egypt	9810	Box Hill High School

The MUNA dinner was also a highlight with guest speaker, 'Fred' Smith, a long-term Australian diplomat and talented songwriter and musician. Fred spoke about his life and career, including some notable work in both PNG and Afghanistan.

Another highlight of MUNA was the involvement and support from a number of Embassies and High Commissions for the event. Several teams were hosted by their supporting Embassy for a visit and provided information on the country's position in relation to the debate topics. Diplomatic representatives from the Embassies of Mexico, Afghanistan and Russia joined the participants at the MUNA dinner and gave the students a great insight into diplomatic life and their cultures. This opportunity to meet diplomats and to understand some of the factors influencing a country's position on world issues was grasped by many participants.

Once again, the Australian National University provided significant sponsorship for the event. The Museum of Australian Democracy also provided great support for the event, and this year showcased their new 'One Small Step' tour, celebrating aspects of the moon landing 50 years ago for the students.

MUNA 2019 was a fantastic event and showcased Rotary, contributing clubs, districts, schools and, of course, the participants themselves in a most positive light.

Much of the debate was captured on video and in photos that are available on the MUNA Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/D9710NationalMuna/>.

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