

Welcome everyone, to the 5th MUN at Rysensteen: RYSMUN 2016

First of all a very special thank you must go to the former Danish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Martin Lidegaard, and to the Ambassador of Turkey, Mr. Mehmet Dönmez. - We are honored that you are with us today.

I would also like to thank the planning committee of students from Rysensteen. Without your effort, this event would not have been possible at all. So a special thanks to all of you!

And then a very warm welcome to all the students from our visiting partner schools. Some of you have participated several times in RysMUN before. For others, this is your very first experience with the Model United Nations.

We welcome all of you - old and new friends alike - to the RysMUN and to Rysensteen's global family:

So please give a hand to the participants from:

- Dr. Nermien Ismail's language schools from Cairo, Egypt
- Colegio Estudio from Madrid, Spain
- Fergusson College from Pune, India
- Heinrich Heine Gymnasium from Dortmund, Germany
- The Linden School from Toronto, Canada.
- Ohep Koleji from Alanya, Turkey
- Fenerbache School from Istanbul, Turkey

We are proud that so many of our global partners have decided to participate in RysMUN. Some of you travelling more than 20 hours to be with us to make this a truly global event.

And last but not least a very, very warm welcome to all of our 2nd year students.

At the moment, we are faced with global challenges on an unprecedented scale. Every day our newspapers tell stories of poverty, destructive wars, terrorism, global warming and social inequality. These challenges pose important practical questions to all of us: what concrete solutions can make out and what solutions can we agree upon? But the challenges also pose a fundamental ethical question: Are we responsible only to ourselves and our own people, or are we, ultimately, responsible to all citizens of the world? The UN, of course, gave it's answer to this question more than 70 years ago. And so the UN-charter reads:

WE THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS ARE DETERMINED

- to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours...

At Rysensteen we believe wholeheartedly in the idea and the ideals of the UN. But we also know that the UN will never be stronger or more capable than the member states' allow it to be. If the states are not able to set their own narrow interests aside in order to create a more fair and secure world, the UN will never be able to live up to **the true meaning of its creed.**

The international educational programme of Rysensteen High School - called the Global Citizenship Programme - is in many ways a modest contribution to fulfilling the ideals of the UN. We believe, that bringing you - the politicians, civil servants and business people of tomorrow - together for cultural meetings and political discussions can help create an understanding of the basic humanity that binds us all together. And hopefully that will translate into your ability to think and act not only in your own interests but also in the interest of a more fair and secure world.

RysMUN, which is part of the Global Citizenship Programme, involves a special feature that makes it an excellent platform for creating an understanding for others that can make you look beyond your own narrow interests : During the next two days you will represent a country that is not your own, and – very likely – also political opinions that you do not agree with. To gain the most from this experience I urge you to really reflect on the opinions that you are representing: why does your country strive for these goals? What is the rationale behind striving for these goals? And so on.

This reflection, I believe, will take you from a superficial understanding of RysMUN as a game to be won, to a deeper understanding of the positions of others and of the underlying global challenges of today. And remember, the UN and democracy, as such, is about listening and striking compromises. If we do not accept this, the UN will never be as capable of solving our common problems, as I am sure we would all like it to be.

I look forward to following your work during the next couple of days, and I hope that you will all have a fantastic experience, that will strengthen your political understanding and your abilities for intercultural communication.

I wish you all a very enjoyable and interesting RysMUN!