



**Statement from Concerned Members of the Malaysian MUN Congress
3rd of October 2021**

**Addressing concerns of the Indo-Pacific Youth
Model United Nations Conference
and the practices of the Malaysian Institute for
Debate and Public Speaking**

The Malaysian Model United Nations (MUN) Congress expresses its concerns about the Indo-Pacific Youth Model United Nations (IPYMUN) Conference and its organiser, Malaysian Institute for Debate and Public Speaking (MIDP), for practices that would make Model United Nations in Malaysia unaffordable and establishing multiple negative precedents that would have long-lasting impacts on the MUN scene.

The conference, which consists of three online parts, namely a MUN workshop, a THIMUN council followed by a HMUN council, at the pricing of RM 42.40 for the workshop, RM 53 for THIMUN or HMUN councils and RM 84.80 for both councils, is unaffordable for many Malaysians to attend¹. While the MUN Congress understands the right for MUN conferences to charge a suitable entry price, we do not condone the practice of exorbitantly charging the entry fee for the conference, as not only it would make the economically immobile unable to attend this conference, but it would establish a precedent that online MUN conferences can be charged at an unaffordable price level and the creation of the artificial perception that MUN is a co-curricular activity which can be attended only by those who are economically advantaged. MIDP should be mindful that this would give way for future online MUN conferences to exploit this newly-established price ceiling and increase the unaffordability of MUN conferences as a whole, which potentially extends to physical conferences in the future, even in spite of the COVID-19 pandemic which has exposed deep socioeconomic inequalities within our society.

The MUN Congress does not oppose the means of remuneration of dais members or outstanding delegates in a MUN conference, but it expresses regret on its execution. In the case of chairs and rapporteurs, we find it disingenuous that it is advertised upfront, with more emphasis on the remuneration rather than merit or talent at the pursuit for chairs and rapporteurs in the conference. This would also set another negative precedent where chairs would be expected to be paid by conferences, rather than being motivated by the passion of

¹ Prices include 6% SST by organiser



education to future participants in MUN conferences to be a chair. Simultaneously, we are concerned that the practice of awarding cash prizes to awardees may open opportunities for the conference to be exposed to pressure, bribery, exploitation, or other undue influence which may compromise the integrity of the conference and to an extent, the co-curricular activity of MUN. This may also set a negative precedent where delegates are motivated to join a conference if there are cash awards, thus putting smaller and less-established conferences at a disadvantage. Without stringent terms and conditions to ensure the quality of work done to remuneration, and mechanisms to ensure that the process of awarding awards are fair and free from undue influence, this would foster an unhealthy cycle on the perception of MUN where the motivation of chairing is geared towards monetary incentives while delegates could potentially collude to unfairly gain awards they do not deserve.

While we understand that anyone is free to start their own MUN conference, the practice of making a MUN conference unaffordable for multiple stratas of society and the establishment of the negative precedent of advertising dais positions to entice potential applicants with remuneration and awarding cash prizes to awardees is indeed regrettable. We request that MIDP alter the existing practices of the conference in line with IPYMUN's own objective to "provide (a) platform for MUN that is accessible to all" and instil principles and ethics in chairing to set an example for other conferences to follow. We also urge the sponsors and collaborators of this conference to also pressure MIDP or pull out from the collaboration with MIDP in IPYMUN in gesture of support against such practices for reasons ascribed above.

*Undersigned,
Concerned Members of the Malaysian MUN Congress*