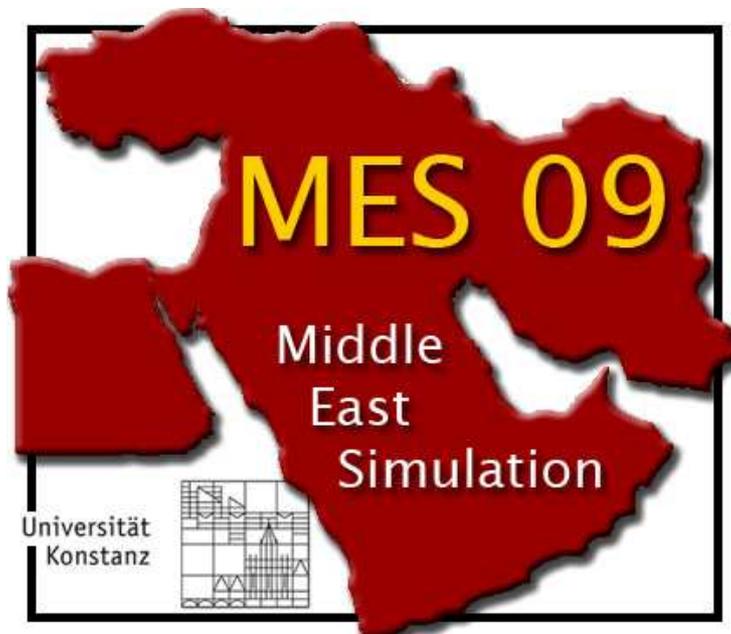


How to 'Make a MES'

–

A Guide to Organizing a Middle East Simulation



International Conference
Middle East Simulation

June 11-14 2009

University of Konstanz

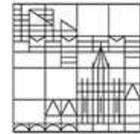
Robert Bosch **Stiftung**



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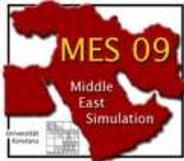
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Content

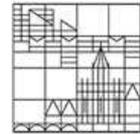
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The structure and concept of this section are partially based on the *Guideline to Organising a Model European Union - Preversion*, © AEGEE Konstanz e.V.



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I Introduction

Dear organizers(s),

When you are reading this you are probably at the starting point of an ambitious project. We, the authors, were at a similar point in November 2008 when we began to organize the Middle East Simulation 2009.

MES 2009 took place from 11th till 14th of June 2009 at the University of Konstanz (Germany) and was the first Middle East Simulation organized in Konstanz.

It was a conference simulation aimed at modeling the intricate reality of the Middle East Conflict. 45 students from more than twelve countries, including Israelis and Palestinians, simulated the roles of the regional and global actors involved. They met for four days of intensive negotiations and social-political events. The goal was to foster a deeper understanding of the conflict in the Middle East.

Starting off with little experience in managing a project of this scope, it took us some time to properly get started. In retrospective, we would have very much appreciated a sort of guide that would have enabled us to focus our energy less on the organizational matters and more on the content. This is why we decided to at least try and make things easier for anybody attempting such a task in later years.

With this guide, we hope to provide our experiences and lessons learned to those who would like to get some initial help and orientation regarding the organization of a conference for international students in general and the organization of a Middle East Simulation in particular.

Needless to say, we are no experts. We developed this guide after the conference took place according to our own experiences, recommending what we thought worked out really well and sometimes suggesting how things could be done better than in our case. We are sure that you will have other good ideas yourself and the way we organized our conference is not the only possibility to guarantee a successful event. There are many factors that may vary when comparing your project to ours, but we hope that this guide can serve as a starting point from which you can get useful hints to develop your own student conference.

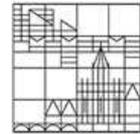
Our event was a great success and in the end we were rewarded for all the work. We wish you good luck with your project and a lot of fun while working on it together!

The organizers of MES 2009



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II Getting started

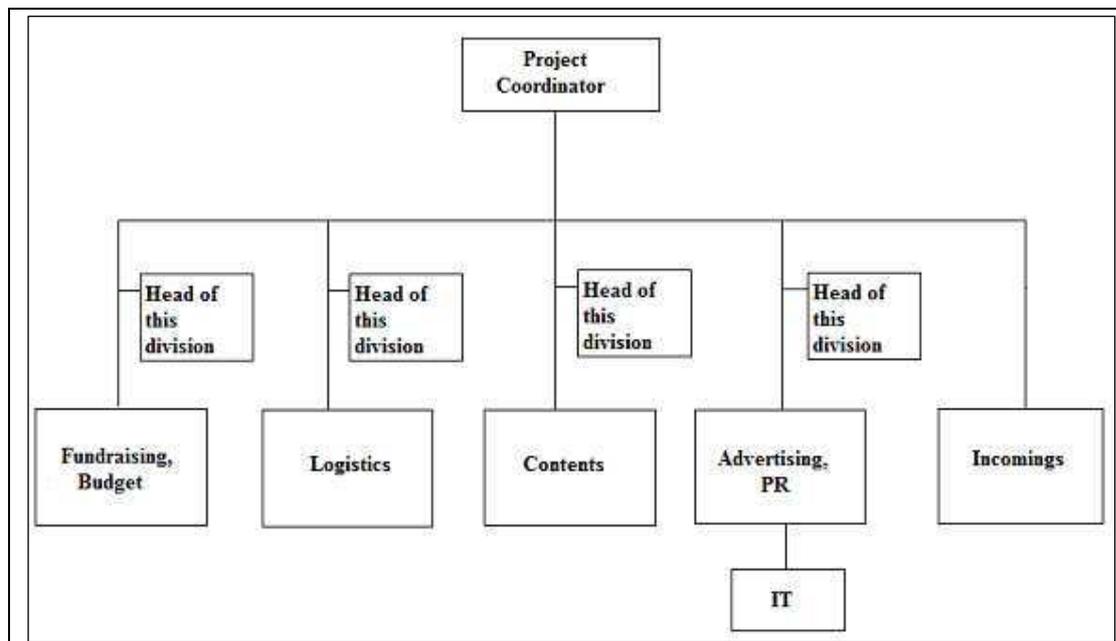
A Finding a Team

In the beginning there is the initiative around which a team should be gathered. If you are a single person with an idea but no team yet, here is some advice on how and where to look for team members:

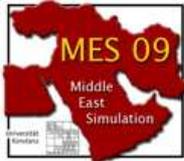
- Ask your friends, friends of your friends and fellow students if they would be interested in working on your project
- Contact student associations at your university and ask if you may present your idea at one of their meetings. You can win people who want to join you there and you could even get a formal platform through the association from which you can organize your idea. This formal setting might help with sponsoring later
- Find mailing lists reaching as many students of your university as possible to promote your idea and express that you are looking for a team
- Organize a location (a room at your university), invite interested people via mailing lists and present your idea there

B Structuring the Team

An organizing team should have a reasonable structure in order to distribute work among the team – everyone should have their specified responsibility. We suggest the following structure, which can be expanded through any additional division you need:

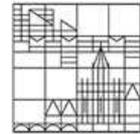


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We highly recommend to have one project coordinator and at least two team members in each division of the team. One of the members in each division can serve as a Head of Division. However, in our case, this was not necessary as we were a relatively small team. Also during our project the teams developed momentums of their own so that towards the end everyone worked on certain tasks from various fields. We still would advise you to try to establish a formal structure and then dynamically adjust it to the reality of planning such a big project.

The Project Coordinator

In a way, the project coordinator is the generalist of the team, who is more or less part of every division, granting the overview and coherence, while the division members are the experts in their divisions. The coordinator can either be the initiator of the whole project or can be voted by the whole team.

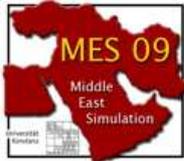
Here are some tasks of the project coordinator we regard as essential:

- Keeping an overview of the project in general and specifically all project divisions
- Helping out in every division if needed
- Making sure that communication between the divisions works well
- Allocating tasks, setting deadlines and reminding the members of their tasks
- Keeping in mind the large to-do list of the project
- Organizing the team meetings (i.e. to set an agenda)
- Promoting efficiency at meeting (e.g. to stop discussions when nothing new comes up)
- Motivating the team and praising good work
- Listening to the team member's concerns
- Being aware of all developments to prevent possible problems
- Solving problems between team members
- Correcting important documents
- Externally representing the event

The Heads of Division

If you decide on having a head in every division she or he is a “small project coordinator” regarding her or his division. The tasks of each head are:

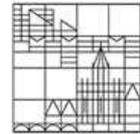
- Keeping an overview of the division
- Being aware of what has been done and what the next steps in the division should be
- Ensuring that the main project coordinator is kept up-to-date
- Organizing division meetings
- Allocating tasks and setting deadlines within the division
- Communicating developments to the project coordinator and other teams



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Meetings

We recommend holding weekly meetings in the entire team. Find a regular date at which all of you are available. Probably your university can offer you a free room at this time. Contact the facility management for this purpose. It may be difficult to find a time for a meeting. Finding a date becomes easier through the following online polling website, where the project coordinator can set up a survey: <http://www.doodle.com>

If there are long holidays within the period of organization, do not give up your meetings. Doing so may lead to the team not knowing what the other divisions are doing and, in the worst case, to put an end to the whole project. We recommend all team members to get a Skype account and to organize online telephone conferences within the different divisions.

In order for a meeting to be efficient we recommend that the project coordinator should prepare an agenda in advance, for example:

1. General announcements by the Project Coordinator
2. Every division gives a short report about its recent progress
3. After each report the next tasks are summarized so that in the following meeting the results can be discussed
4. Remaining issues and closing remarks by the Project Coordinator

A team member should make sure to protocol the main things said and send it to the whole team afterwards. Through that everyone can look up their tasks and members that missed a meeting are still kept up-to-date. It also helps to document the progress made by the team.

Also mention scheduled appointments or finalized agreements (e.g. with a catering service, hotel etc.) in your minutes. In this way everyone can look them up.

Last but not least, discussions sometimes need to be closed as not everything can be discussed by everyone in the team. Often it is more efficient to work on tasks within the divisions.

C Setting the Frame

The first big task of the organizing team is to set the frame of the project. The following questions should be answered:

When will your event take place?

Setting the date for your MES is not a trivial task. Should it take place during the week or on a weekend, in summer or in winter, during the semester or during holidays? Every option has its pros and cons that you need to consider thoroughly before setting the exact date. Especially the availability of accommodation in times of high tourist activity in your region, for example, might limit your options further.

How long should your event be?

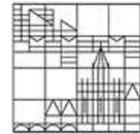
Of course, the duration depends very much on your funding situation – you might have to make compromises regarding the length of your conference in order to maintain a high-quality experience for everyone involved. In the case of MES 2009, this financial restriction made it necessary to cut down our originally planned duration to two days simulation and two half days of surrounding events. However, we recommend that a MES should have at least



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three days of actual simulation. Including an opening event and a closing ceremony, this adds up to four or five days for a complete Middle East Simulation conference.

How many participants do you want to have at your event?

To answer this question, ask yourself what the minimum of roles you need is. Remember that the number of participants will influence how close to reality your simulation will be, but also bear in mind that the higher the number of participants, the higher your costs and logistic efforts will become. Ask yourself how much you can and are willing to do.

From where will you recruit your participants?

Your university, your city, your country, your continent, the world? Remember that again, the more ambitious you set your scope here, the more work is involved. At the same time an international atmosphere always enriches such an event. Obviously, participants from the actual conflicted region will be the most sought after group of participants. However, because of visa requirements etc. they might also be the ones that require the most logistic efforts (naturally, this depends on where exactly your MES takes place).

What extra events do you plan?

You need to decide to what extent you want to extend your event through extra events. Do you want a welcome party? An opening/closing ceremony? A goodbye party? A theme party? A gala night? A panel discussion? Do you want to invite guest speakers? Do you want to open one of the events to the public? Of course, every extra event means extra costs and extra work, but certainly will add to the success of your simulation. It is very important to think about how much time and effort you are willing to invest. This may seem strange in the beginning since of course you are very motivated, but do remember that you also need time to study and keep up your personal social life. Therefore set yourself a realistic frame and workload. Be perfectionist and motivated, but do not overwork yourself.

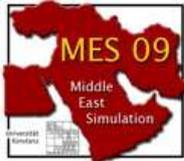
Who do you want as a patron for your MES?

Having a famous, influential and/or well-to-do patron can make a huge difference in regards to finding funds, guest-speakers and participants. In our case, we were honoured to having Mr. Tony Blair as a political as well as the Robert-Bosch-Foundation as our financial and ideal patron.

D Becoming a Team

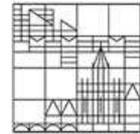
We recommend having a so-called kick-off meeting, at which you decide on the general questions outlined above. At this meeting we furthermore advise you to come up with a rough plan of your project's phases. Think of milestones and set yourself your first deadlines. In the following chapters of this guideline you will find an overview of basic tasks and proposed deadlines.

Last but not least, you will be working together for quite a while. We therefore recommend you to get to know each other beyond the joint work. Make sure to take the time for social meetings at which you do not talk about your project. Such social meetings will surely contribute to a good working climate and also allow you to simply have fun together, which is indeed important for your team's dynamic.



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III MES Contents

A Choose a topic for your Simulation

The conflict in the Middle East is multifaceted, and one of the first things you should decide when it comes to the contents of your simulation is if you want to focus on specific aspects of it and, if so, on which. If you decide to focus on certain topics, bear in mind that all of them are interrelated in some way. You should therefore give some substantive thought as to which aspects should be addressed first.

For the MES 2009, we decided to use the Arab Peace Initiative of 2007 as the infrastructure for the negotiations. These negotiations began already via email exchange within and between different delegations about one month prior to the actual meeting. We found this to be a highly valuable part of the simulation, as people already learned to work together, were 'forced' to learn a lot before the actual conference, and we as organizers could monitor the participants' level of activity and when necessary also could take the liberty to address some non-cooperative participants during that month. By doing so, we made sure that only well-prepared and highly motivated teams arrived in Konstanz.

During the conference itself, we had three negotiation blocks, which followed the order of issues raised in the Arab Peace Initiative itself. Two blocks were on the first day and one on the second day of negotiations:

- Negotiating the issue of Israel's borders
- Negotiating the issue of Palestinian refugees and the issue of Jerusalem and the Holy Places
- Negotiating the issue of regional security relations and the issue of regional diplomatic, economic and developmental relations

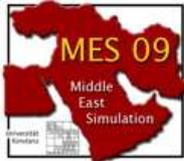
As there is an actual debate among the sides to the conflict whether everything has to be negotiated at once or rather issues should be dealt with gradually and separately, we allowed the negotiators an additional four hours to come up with a 'package deal' (which ties up one core issue with another) or to finalize agreements on specific issues. In practice, the participants did both and we ended up with many agreements, some reflecting a wholesome multi-lateral approach while others more technically and professionally addressing specific issues such as municipal rule in Jerusalem.

We decided to cover most aspects of the conflict. When we discussed the topics in our group, we were sceptical about including topics where we thought no agreement would be reached. We expected that especially for the issue of Palestinian refugees. However, it turned out that the participants reached a substantive agreement on this very topic.

We decided to stick to reality and allow participants the option of coming to a dead end, and leave without an agreement (but with a learning experience nevertheless). As mentioned above, the option of reaching no agreement was quickly turned down by our ambitious participants.

We also gave the participants rather broad topics in order to provide room to decide on which aspects they wanted to focus.

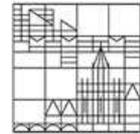
The choice of topics should be one of your first steps in organizing a Middle East Simulation. This allows you to advertise the conference and choose guest speakers accordingly. It gives you also enough time to do some research yourself and put together the preparatory guides



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for participants. If you are not sure about the design of your conference, consult with professors from your university or Middle East experts.

B Find a basis for discussion

A lot of ink was spilled over the Middle East conflict and possible solutions to it, and there are lots of agreements you could base your simulation on. It is therefore advisable to give your participants some common denominator through a substantive policy document they can build on. We identified two such documents, the *Arab Peace Initiative* and the *Draft Permanent Status Agreement*, better known as *Geneva Initiative* or *Geneva Accord*. Both are recent initiatives (2002 and re-endorsed in 2007, and 2003, respectively) and therefore take into account recent developments. We chose the *Arab Peace Initiative*.

The advantages of the *Arab Peace Initiative* were the international support it was receiving prior to and during MES 2009, and our personal belief that it represents an important historical turn which Israel regrettably ignored so far.

The advantages of the *Geneva Accord* were possible funding from the movement that promotes this agreement, but its disadvantage of being politically less significant convinced us to neglect it.

The more prominent the initiative, the easier it will be for your Contents Team and for the participants to research the countries' positions regarding the initiative as a whole and certain aspects of it.

Once you have agreed on such a policy document, initiative or agreement, you may also look for sponsors that are related to or endorse it. You may also try to find guest speakers who had been involved in the initiative or are currently working on it.

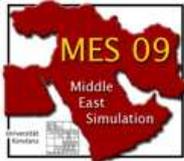
C Identify roles

Once you have concretised the topic and settled the basic frame for your conference, you can decide which actors you want to have represented in the simulation. This decision depends also on the number of participants you want to accept at your event. Therefore, this step has to be discussed with the whole team, and above all with the Fundraising and Incoming Division as well as with the main coordinator of your project.

At MES 2009 we decided to include Egypt, the European Union, Iran, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey and the United States of America as the main actors involved in the negotiations or conflict in the Middle East. We also decided to have the Arab, Israeli and 'Western' press involved. The journalists though decided during the conference that as a sign for peace they would compile all their articles into one journal.

D 'Design' the course of the simulation

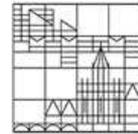
The negotiation process of a Middle East conflict simulation is not directly comparable to that of a Model United Nations or Model European Union conference, for instance. Each actor has got a different voice and you cannot just decide by a qualified or simple majority vote what the borders between Israel and the Palestinian territories will look like, if the Israeli and Palestinian delegation or one of them does not agree. Likewise both delegations may agree about something that does not find a majority among the other delegations. Depending on the weight of the supporters, the agreement might still be feasible. It is therefore very important to think of the following points:



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A scenario for the negotiations

The scenario could be a conference called for by the Secretary-General of the United Nations (as in the case of our simulation), or by a major actor or group of actors involved in the negotiations.

How the actors ought to interact

You already identified a basis for discussion. But you have to thoroughly think about the process of negotiation. You should try to make the process as realistic as possible, and to give all participants the chance to actively intervene in the process.

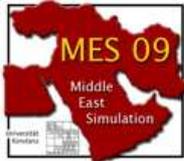
At the Middle East Simulation 2009, we decided to have a plenary session where all actors would have to be present. As each delegation was composed of at least two delegates, there was enough room for informal discussions outside the plenary. In the plenary, formal statements were made and there was a Chair who made sure that all delegates respect some basic rules of procedure, such as the speaking time. Outside the plenary, secret and open agreements would be negotiated in the style the delegates preferred. This design assured that delegates would always have a place to announce new agreements and that all delegations could be updated about any other news at the same moment. At the same time, it gave delegations enough flexibility to meet whoever they wanted and decide themselves how long they would like to negotiate with another party and if they wanted to make their agreements public or not. But this design also challenges delegations: It happened that an agreement that was negotiated outside the plenary was not approved by the head of delegation that was at that time sitting in the plenary; the agreement was therefore nullified even after it had been signed.

You should emphasize the difficulties to coordinate the negotiations well before the conference. We recommend that delegates try to find an effective way to manage their delegation before the simulation and readjust it whenever necessary. They could, for example, agree on a range of acceptable results on every topic before the conference. They could also establish the rule that every delegate has to sign any agreement. Recommend that they take advantage of breaks not only to continue informal negotiations but to update the other members of their delegations of the course of the negotiation.

When designing MES 2009, we also discussed a concept of alternating plenary discussions, informal discussions and meetings among delegations. We dismissed that idea because of two reasons: A perceived lack of flexibility and the fact that we had only two full days of negotiations. We felt that the participants would have too little time to engage in real negotiations and that not all of them would have the same chance to participate, since the plenary only gives a few delegates the possibility to make a statement.

What kind of results you would like to achieve

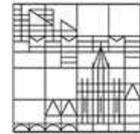
In Model United Nations Conferences you normally try to reach an agreement on a resolution. In a Middle East Simulation you also wish for some written results participants can carry home and you can present to the press and your sponsors. At MES 2009, any result was acceptable, as long as it was endorsed by at least two parties. The participants therefore came up with a considerable number of bilateral and multilateral agreements. If your simulation lasts several days, you can even try to put all agreements into one peace treaty and have it signed by at least the main actors. The Chairs can encourage delegates to compile such a document or can themselves elaborate a proposal for a comprehensive peace agreement. In that case make sure that you can improvise a little signing ceremony.



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We believe it is more realistic to allow also a "no-agreement-result". While we are happy that the conference produced great agreements, we repeatedly emphasized the point that reaching agreements is not a must. The conference could thus, at least theoretically, result in twelve unilateral statements. Although this might have been a disappointing result for some of us and the participants, we believe that organizers should not push for agreements at any cost and be faithful to reality.

How the simulated media can be involved

Make sure you give journalists enough time to interact with the delegates *and* to edit their newspaper editions. At MES 2009 we offered a workshop for journalists at the beginning of the conference. This helped them to further prepare for their role and gave the Chairs time to reiterate the Rules of Procedure to the participants and the participants to warm up.

E Set up the time schedule

Once you know how to design the simulation, you can set up the time schedule for the whole event. While doing this, make sure that you leave enough time for the participants to get from one place to another (e.g. the hotel to the conference venue) and enough free time, especially in the evening. Bear in mind that breaks during the day are necessary but that delegates will mostly not relax since they may continue with their informal negotiations or get together with their fellow delegates.

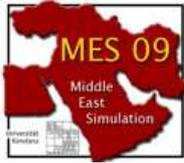
Try to have a draft programme ready as soon as possible to make the work for your Logistics Division easier. Revise it from time to time in the meeting with the whole team. You will become aware of inconsistencies and minimize communication problems and stress from the very beginning. Finalize your programme at the latest about two weeks before the conference. Mark it always as a 'tentative schedule' or 'subject to alterations'. Small changes in the schedule even during the simulation are usually not avoidable and should not cause any serious problems let alone panic among the organizers. Even bigger changes, for example the introduction of a larger break, or instead of an additional block of negotiations, if necessary, can enrich the event. If you introduce such a change, make sure your participants are comfortable with it.

For your convenience, we have attached the programme schedule for MES 2009. It may help you to develop the course of your own simulation.

F Find Chairs for Your Simulation and Establish Rules of Procedure

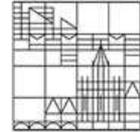
You can start to look for suitable Chairs as soon as you have decided the dates, scenario and basic course of the simulation. The scenario also defines the role of the Chair. For MES 2009 we decided that the United Nations Secretary General would call for a meeting of the most important actors involved in the negotiations around the Middle East conflict. The Chair therefore represented the United Nations. This scenario makes it possible for the Chair to intervene in the negotiations. He or she can, for example, propose a more comprehensive agreement or mediate between the parties. We therefore decided to have three Chairs in order to give them the opportunity to leave the plenary session to interact with participants outside the formal rules. You should make sure that you have two Chairs present in the plenary at all times so that one can take care of the speakers list and stop the time while the other directs the negotiations.

Finding suitable Chairs may take time. It is advisable that the Contents Division consults with them during the development of the Rules of Procedure. Chairs should be experienced and



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have attended other conferences of that kind. Having Chaired a conference is an advantage. Chairs should have very good language skills and a natural authority certainly helps. Chairs should also be enthusiastic about the conference and disposed to do substantial research on the topic and roles represented. In order to find good Chairs, you can rely on personal contacts and MUN or MEU networks or debating societies.

The Chairs are also those responsible to assert the Rules of Procedure, especially during the plenary sessions. Again, it has proven very helpful to be able to rely on the future Chairs' input when composing these rules prior to the simulation.

An advantage of a Middle East Simulation is that you do not have to stick to the same rules of procedure as in a Model United Nations Conference. The disadvantage is that you have to develop them yourself. In the attached *Preparatory Guide* you will find our version, available for your usage too.

G Position Papers

We recommend that every delegation hands in a position paper about two weeks prior to the conference. This assures that all delegations have prepared themselves. You should publish all position papers on your websites or via similar means, so that other delegations can get familiar with the different positions and adjust their strategy accordingly.

The above mentioned *Preparatory Guide* of MES 2009 includes a section regarding research, that was composed to make the writing of a position paper easier¹. We recommend that you emphasize that all members of the delegation must contribute to the position paper. It is advisable that the position paper is written by the delegation as a whole to minimize problems with different views of the own position at a later stage.

Journalists should write an overview and analysis of the Middle East conflict in general and the document chosen by the organizers in particular. They should do so from the viewpoint of the press they are representing (you can find examples of position papers in the *MES 2009 Executive Summary*).

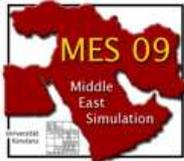
The preparatory phase of MES was a great opportunity to raise its professional level. Participants who did not contact their delegations were monitored by us through reports of their respective Heads of Delegation, and those who did not make an effort to improve were liable to have their participation cancelled.

H Acquire Guest Speakers for Your Conference

Guest speakers enrich the conference and make it more appealing so you will attract many applicants, especially if these guest speakers have been involved in real negotiations. The number of guest speakers once again depends on the duration of your conference and on your budget. Try to find guest speakers who do not demand payment, but be aware that you will have to cover and normally also arrange their travelling and accommodation. If you manage to engage high level politicians, you may ask them to stay for more than one day. This is more pleasant for them if they come from far away and you can arrange for special events, for example a workshop for the delegates. Keep your schedule flexible to be able to insert such an event.

Make sure that your guest speakers have a pleasant stay. They are devoting their time to your project, so treat them accordingly. Make sure that during the conference you have

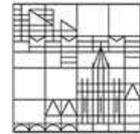
¹ For more details, see *Incomings* and Appendix.



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enough personnel resources to be able to pick them up at the airport or train station and guide them from their hotel to the conference venues (and back). It might also be necessary to suggest and plan a few activities outside the conference for those speakers that prefer to stay more than just one evening; for example, you may arrange a city tour for them. On these occasions, it is a nice gesture if you have somebody from the team to accompany them.

But how do you attract interesting guest speakers for your event?

Identify Guest Speakers

Have a brainstorming meeting with the whole team and write down all the names or institutions that come to your mind. Explore personal contacts. Talk to the patron or sponsor of your project and ask for advice. The guest speakers should at least be used to speak in front of an international audience and have experience they are willing to share with the participants. If you chose a policy document or agreement as the basis for your simulation, you may try to find a guest speaker who has been involved in writing it or who is involved in the negotiations regarding this document².

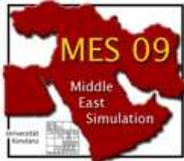
In order to also send a message regarding gender equality, the team of MES 2009, tried to find at least one female speaker. However, due to the minority status of women in this field and time constraints of those few available, the MES conference offered three male guest speakers. Nevertheless, we recommend to at least keep the aspect of gendered representation in mind at all times (e.g. when choosing the participants).

Contact Guest Speakers

Develop a cover letter and an overview over your project and program before you contact the guest speakers. A rough time schedule should already be included. We made the experience that contacting possible guest speakers through a formal letter (possibly attached to an e-mail) and following up on this with a phone call works best. But be prepared that many will not be able or willing to come to your conference. Acquiring guest speakers can take a lot of time, so make sure you start as early as possible, but at least three to four months before the event. You should only contact alternative speakers when you have received concrete cancellations. You may however ask a professor from your university to help out in case one of your guest speakers cancels right before the event.

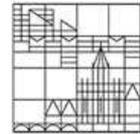
For MES2009, we managed to get three guest speakers: a member of the Green Party in Germany and head of the Heinrich Boell Foundation in Ramallah and two high ranking politicians – one from Israel and one from the Palestinian Territories. The two politicians stayed for more than one day and assembled with the Israeli and Palestinian delegation to share their first-hand experience from the negotiations. They also gave speeches during our Gala night and entered into debate with the participants. Additionally, the mayor of the town welcomed all participants to the location and the conference.

² For a list of possible guest speakers, see also the lists provided in *Fundraising*



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IV Fundraising and Logistics

A First Step: Gaining an Overview

At the beginning, logistics and fundraising should work closely together. In order to be able to draft a feasible budget, you will need to know the rents for the seminar rooms, transportation, accommodation, food etc. It is not necessary to know every little detail at the very beginning, but it is helpful to start a list with all the activities (times and locations) which you update on a regular basis (each week or even every other week). Once you have an overview of the amount of money you need to make things happen, you should immediately start to think about how to finance the simulation. You basically have three options (that can be combined): finance the simulation through a participation fee, through sponsors and/or raise money by selling waffles, cookies or something else (this can not at all finance the whole project, but might give you some flexible money on the side).

Concerning the first option: you don't want to charge the participants too high, if you want to have young people or students who usually don't have a reliable source of income. You also don't want to discriminate by income, but give everybody a chance to take part in the simulation. In the case of MES 2009, we supported those participants with lower than average income with partial stipends.

Concerning the second option: Make a list with possible sponsors. It is helpful if you give the list of sponsors a structure: e.g. differentiate between public and private sponsors. Public sponsors could be foundations, institutions (European Union, Ministry of Education...), private sponsors are usually companies, who can be considered at a local, regional, national or even international level. Some of the possible sponsors may have early deadlines, which is important to know in the beginning and having that information, you should create a time line/ to-do lists with time specifications.

B Second Step: Describing the Project and Formulating the Cover Letter

In order to promote your conference, you should be able to tell people about it specifically. It is necessary to agree within the organizing team what the project should look like. You will also get in touch with your (possible) sponsors by mail, so you need the outline not only in your heart and mind, but have something in a written form.

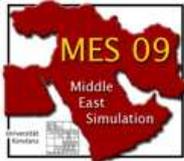
Concretising the Project

Before you can start contacting sponsors, important facts about the project have to be defined. What are the objectives of the project? Which size shall the project have? How many participants will take part? How long will its duration be? At which location(s) will the conference be held? What evening events are planned? Will there be an event open to the public?

It is self-evident that in the first project phase, a close collaboration with the other divisions of the team has to take place.

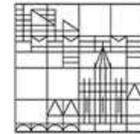
Description and Cover Letter

As soon as those basic facts about the project are defined, they should be summarized in a project outline, which will be send to possible sponsors later. This description should be formulated in short interesting paragraphs, that you might also want to upload on a website.



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The same should be considered in the cover letter, which must naturally be adjusted and personalized for each possible sponsor.

C Third Step: Finding an Umbrella Group and/or a Patron for the Conference

If you organize such a simulation or conference for the first time, sponsors first of all don't know who you are and they might have difficulties to trust you, because you might not have a lot of experience or can refer to other similar projects. So it is very helpful to find an existing student group that shares similar interests and could "lend" their name to your conference. These students might be even helpful with contacts or experience in the management of similar projects (in our case, we got support from the Model United Nation Society from our university).

You might think of a patron for the conference. In this case, you need to first decide what relation the patron should have to the organizing team. To stress the relation to your university, the rector or chancellor could be a possible patron. A person that is well known for his or her engagement in the conflict could also be a possible patron and help build trustworthiness for sponsors. You should note that a patron can support you in different ways - not only as representative of the conference but also, for example, with contacts. It might be helpful to be able to communicate with your patron at any time and to get in touch with him or her personally.

Once you found your patron it is recommended to kindly ask them for a short letter in which they expresses their support for your conference. Follow common practice and offer to formulate the letter yourself. You can later on add this letter to your applications for funding in order to make a point regarding your trustworthiness. In the case of MES 2009, we acquired the patronage of Tony Blair and he provided us with a letter that was attached to every request for sponsorship.

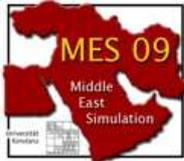
D Fourth Step: Setting up the Budget

First Estimations

To set up a first draft of the budget for possible sponsors' demands, each division of the team should think about the different cost factors. The Fundraising Division can then summarize those factors and thus acquire a total amount of the budget. This step is decisive as it allocates amounts of money to each part of the event. How much money should be spent as maximum for e.g. the evening events like a gala night or a party? How much will be spent for the place where the conference takes place? Are university buildings available or is money for conference rooms needed? The more concrete those figures are, the easier it is to find enough sponsors to finance your conference.

Concretizing the Budget

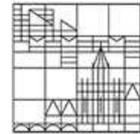
After a first draft of the budget is set up, it needs to be concretized over time. The closer the date of the event approaches, the more "real" the figures have to be that can be included in the budget. Some flexibility is necessary, as some costs can only be fixed during the days of the event. The final budget can only be established in the aftermath of the event. Sponsors usually finance specific parts of the budget. It is therefore advisable to allocate a specific part of the budget to each sponsor. It is important to guarantee that you strictly follow the conditions your sponsor set up regarding their support (e.g. one foundation may only finance accommodation, another only catering costs etc.). If you do not follow these conditions, you may eventually not receive the money or even have to reimburse some of it. Expenditures



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have to be well documented. Every single receipt must be kept. If you want to get the costs for e.g. your mobile phone back, make sure to have bills with detailed insight into your calls. Many sponsors will only transfer the money in the aftermath of the event, even though you actually need the money before and during the event. Therefore it is essential to find an option where you are able to overdraw the account – if possible without costs.

In our case, this was an account at our university. This had the advantage of short ways but there were also some restrictions, for example, on how much we could spend on a hotel room. Especially this last limitation and similar conditions have to be communicated to the logistics team well in advance.

E Fifth Step: Conducting a “Market Analysis”

Study the “market” and look for sponsors that have a student target group, are associated with or active in the field of the subject of the event or have special sponsoring programs. It might then be helpful to gather information on the internet about those possible sponsors and to create a database with this information.

Main Sponsor

Having a main sponsor supporting your project makes many things easier: a large part of the budget is covered, possibly reassured by an official contract, and other sponsors may follow more easily if they notice that a main financial supporter is already on board.

The most promising sponsor (and in the end main financial patron) for MES 2009 was the Robert Bosch Foundation. Here, you will apply for being taken into consideration as a project for funding. After we passed the first round, we established personal contact and an interview with a representative of our team was conducted. The person in charge of our project then proposed our project to the board, who then agreed to make a sponsoring contract with us.

Other Sponsors

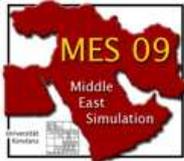
Other sponsors you might contact can be summarized in six different groups:

1. University: At your home university, there might be different possibilities to raise money: an international office, the vice chancellor, alumni organisations, etc.
2. Banks: Local banks often support activities in the region; however, it is also worth it to contact national banks.
3. Public sponsors: You might also think about contacting national and local authorities.

Depending on the extent of your project, your city might support you as it is more directly linked to the project through the location. This is PR for the city that might grant you their support.

4. Local Businesses: Local businesses are often generous concerning contributions in kind, e.g. drinks, food, pens etc. In our case, however, the financial and economical crisis has prevented many local businesses from even considering our conference for sponsorship.
5. Supra-regional businesses: Before contacting them, think about the motivation of interest (increase of sales, image and prestige, recruitment) those supra-regional businesses might have in sponsoring your conference. These businesses could, for example, have considerable interests in the region of the Middle East.

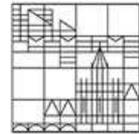
6. Foundations: You should definitely give the different (political and economical) foundations in your home country and at international level a phone call and explain your project to them.



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Unfortunately some of them only act operatively, financing exclusively their own projects and not external projects.

For your convenience, we compiled a list of possible sponsors of a Middle East simulation; as this was what the team of MES 2009 worked with, the list focuses on German and international sponsors:

Foundations:

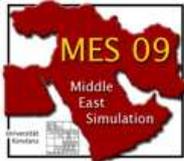
Konrad Adenauer Foundation
Aspen Institute Berlin
Bertelsmann Foundation
Heinrich Boell Foundation
Robert Bosch Foundation
Rachel Corrie Foundation
Deutsche Initiative für den Nahen Osten (DINO)
Deutsch-Israelische Gesellschaft Bodensee
Die Gesellschafter
FAZIT Foundation
Friedrich Ebert Foundation
Ford Foundation
Hanns Seidel Foundation
Herbert Quandt Foundation
Hertie Foundation
Krupp Foundation
Lion Foundation
OneVoiceUK and International
Arthur B. Schultz Foundation
Tempus (European Commission)
Tony Blair Foundations
Thyssen Foundation
Volkswagen Foundation
Youth in Action

Institutions and Embassies:

German Ministry of Education and Research
Saudi Arabian Embassy
Jordan Embassy
Qatar Embassy
Egyptian Embassy
Foreign Ministry of Germany

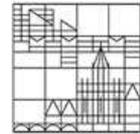
Private Companies:

Bahn AG
BB Bank
Daimler AG
Deutsche Post AG
EnBW AG
Hochland Kaffee
Lufthansa
MLP AG
nycomed (pharmaceutical company in Konstanz)



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Porsche AG
Regin Brot (organic bakery in Konstanz)
Sparkasse Konstanz / Bodensee
TuiFly
Volksbank Konstanz

F Sixth Step: Finding Sponsors

Choose an order in which you want to contact the possible sponsors. This is often regulated by sponsors who exclude each other or due to interdependencies you do not want to give up. We recommend to give possible sponsors a phone call first to find out who to address your request to. Then send them an information package with a short cover letter, a project outline, your patron's supportive letter and the budget, where they can choose one or more of the cost factors for sponsoring. Be aware of the fact that you should offer the sponsors something as reward for their investment. There is a set of possibilities that might be attractive for sponsors:

- printing their logo on posters, flyers and the final report;
- referring to them in newspaper articles;
- distribution of their promotional material during the event;
- publishing their sponsoring activities in relation to a public event which is involved in your conference;
- distributing a contribution receipt for tax relief

G Seventh Step: Aftermath

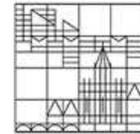
One fact regarding the financial side that we underestimated was the aftermath. Having only one person who is responsible for all expenditures during the conference makes this person responsible for A LOT of money. So we decided to have several persons with fewer amounts of money, to split responsibility. However, this made the bookkeeping and the final financial reports more labour-intensive. After the conference, you have to collect all the receipts and split the costs up by sector / sponsor. This can be more time-consuming than you expect, especially if you had several people spending money. In the end, it proved both a blessing and a curse that our account was a part of the university's financial structure – a blessing because an employee of the financial department could advise us with the procedures; a curse because this placed many more restrictions on the spending itself and made it more difficult to keep an overview of everything.

Finally, make sure to keep your individual sponsors' deadlines. Some might want to be informed of how their money was spent right after the conference, some might give you a few months time.



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V Public Relations

Without any sort of advertisement, a Middle East Simulation can neither be successfully be organized nor would it have the desired effects. Therefore, a certain number of people from your organizing team must be responsible for public relations. Their tasks include the following:

- Publish notices of the upcoming event on appropriate message boards as soon as a date has been set
- Compose cover letters for possible sponsors and guest speakers, but also to invite media representatives
- Set up and update a website with all available information and watch the e-mail account
- Contact media representatives
- Design posters, flyers etc

A Message Boards

A first step in letting the world know about your upcoming conference is to post a short notice on appropriate message boards or similar forums. As MES 2009 was firstly interested in younger people as participants, we advertised our event at facebook.com as well as a German speaking students forum called studivz.net.

Convenient are also all kinds of calendar of events, e.g. from your university/institution, but also from other clubs, foundations etc. that share your interest (namely promoting peace in the Middle East).

B Cover Letters and a Logo

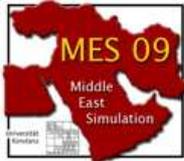
As soon as the Contents Division has come up with a rough outline of the simulation, your teams should compose the cover letters for possible sponsors, patrons, guest speakers etc. The Public Relations Division's responsibility will especially be letter headings, layout, formal wording etc. This ensures a recognizable layout and design as well as makes life much easier for every team member.

We, the MES 2009 team, also decided very early to design our own logo on order to further increase our recognisability. A few alternative suggestions were created and discussed in our weekly meetings before we settled on the one you can also see in this document's header. Apart from giving our correspondence a more professional look, it was also great fun to come up with the various logo ideas and helped a lot with the 'Becoming a team' part of the organization.

Furthermore, it was very useful to set up an online storage facility, where standard documents could be stored and accessed by all members of the organizing team. The e-mail account for external communication can be included in this system, thus providing a basis for all public relations.

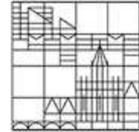
C Website and E-Mail

In this day and age, most people look for information online. It is therefore essential, that you can offer a website with information on your conference as soon as possible. Again, a sort of



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unified design comes in very hand here. Make sure that whatever information you put on this website is updated regularly.

When recruiting the members of your various organizational divisions, try to find at least one or two with experiences in web design. Of course, your institution's IT department might be able to assist you with that but it is always much more convenient if you can do the majority of updates yourself.

If you establish a special e-mail account for this conference – which is in our opinion always better than using random private addresses – , make very sure that one person is responsible to check that account on a daily basis.

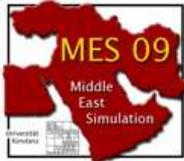
D Interest the Media

This proved to be the most difficult part for the MES 2009 team: Our approach was to research possible interested parties (local, regional and national newspapers, as well as tv stations) on the internet and then send our information package via e-mail or mail. However, this resulted in very view responses. Only when we started contacting people via phone and thus established personal contacts, for example with those reporters responsible for politics in the Middle East, increasing interest in our conference was shown. Unfortunately, by that time, too many weeks had been wasted on waiting for responses and being busy with other organizational things so that most media representatives didn't have any appointments free in their busy schedules. Therefore we recommend to establish this essential personal contact with media representatives as early as possible.

Furthermore, it could proof very useful to ask your institution's press department for support in this regard. For example, they probably have already well established links with local newspapers or even tv station.

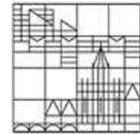
E Flyers, Posters etc

Finally, you might want to attract an audience to one or more of your conference events. For example, MES 2009 was ended with a public presentation of results and a discussion. This turned out to be very interesting and entertaining for all involved, not least because the audience was very mixed. To advertise for tor this event, we produced a small contingent of flyers and posters that we distributed in our university as well as local shops and businesses.



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IV Incomings

A The Application Process

The call for applications for participation in your conference needs to be distributed as widely as possible. The message boards mentioned above are of course only one means of first contact with possible participants. We also send emails to friends and acquaintances and were able to make use of our university's international contact lists. Thus we managed to have more than twice as many applicants as there were places.

In our case, the deadline for the application had to be at least three months in advance because our participants were supposed to do some work prior to the actual simulation in June. If you decide against that kind of participation, your application deadline can be a bit closer to the conference but don't underestimate the resulting consequences if you leave it too late (e.g. cancellation fees for accommodation, replacing participants on short notice etc.).

In order to apply, people had to send a short CV and answer an essay question as well as state their motivation to participate in MES 2009. They also had to give a few preferences for a role in the simulation. This actually proved to be the part that most applicants had difficulties with, as they might not even have heard of the concept of a simulation in this context before. And even though we provided all the necessary information on available roles on the website under a different link, some applicants seemed to have problems with this question. Therefore we recommend a very detailed application form in this regard.

The whole application process was organized via our website/our e-mail account which prevented us from having to deal with lots of paper work or applications getting lost in international postal service.

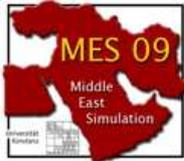
B Choosing and Allocating Participants

After an appropriate amount of applications had arrived, the Incomings Division set to work on choosing the best possible participants. We aimed to have a good mixture of experienced as well as inexperienced people in order to not having to fear the failure of the simulation due to participant's difficulties with the concepts of the simulation. Also, we tried to stick to a proportional representation of Israeli and Palestinian participants.

In MES 2009, we decided to have twelve delegations plus three groups of media representatives. As each delegation (or group) was composed of at least two delegates and was supposed to be mixed in regards to ethnicity/nationality, there were certain things to consider while choosing the participants.

Especially when you invite participants from the countries involved in the Middle East conflict, and above all from Israel and the Palestinian Territories, make sure that the participants have enough time to get to know and to talk to each other. These encounters may be their most precious memories after the conference. Still true to the time of MES 2009, Israelis and Palestinians cannot meet in Israel or in the Palestinian Authority due to security restrictions. Any opportunity for them to meet and talk is therefore bound to be of social and political significance.

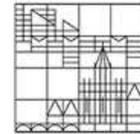
Indeed, it is also emotional dynamite: moderate as they may appear to be during formal negotiations, participants coming from a conflict zone such as the Middle East are carrying a lot of frustration and fear with them.



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Our tactics of tackling this sensitivity and to get these participants to effectively interact were:

- Do not let anyone represent his/her own nationality. The only exceptions we allowed were for the simulated press and the EU delegation, in which we included also participants from EU countries.
- Engage Israelis and Palestinians in all delegations. Having worked together along with a German participant in the Egyptian delegation, for example, certainly made informal interaction outside the plenary discussion much easier.
- Remain rather conservative about sleeping arrangements. We did not want to structure the event in a way that during sleeping hours the fiercest debates would arise. Therefore we did not dictate international room-arrangements in the hotel.
- Be sensitive and alert in times when you decide to let the simulated roles be ignored. We encouraged participants to talk regardless of their roles in the simulation during the Gala dinner (see the conference's schedule following), and experienced a wave of emotional outbursts. It wasn't easy to handle and contain, and thus we recommend that you consider it seriously before you set the genie out of its bottle.

C Preparatory Guides

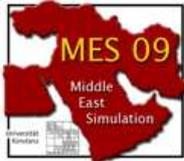
The *Preparatory Guide* helps the participants to get ready for the simulation. It should include a detailed description of their roles and give them some guidance for the research on the topic in general and their role in particular. You may attach some documents or web links that are either relevant for a general understanding of the topics or for the delegation in particular. We recommend that you prepare different *Guides* for each delegation. They should be sent at least one month before the event to the participants so that they can prepare themselves, start contacting each other and write their position paper. You should consider sending web links or documents about the topics with the acceptance email so that participants can start to research the topic even before they know their role and their fellow delegates.

For your convenience, we attached an exemplary *Preparatory Guide* from MES 2009 to this document.

D VISA Requirements and Stipends

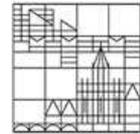
As some of your participants may be from countries whose citizens require visas to cross your country's borders, be ready to assist them in their goal to acquire these visas. This assistance usually involves the drafting of an invitation letter to the foreign embassy or a similar document.

In MES 2009, we also decided to enable students with very small incomes to participate in our conference through (partial) stipends. Especially the travel costs from the Middle East to Germany and back would have been a big obstacle for many promising applicants had we not offered support in this regard. However, if you decide to do this as well, make very sure that you don't promise your participants too much in advance if you are not absolutely sure that you can keep your promises through guaranteed sponsoring or similar means.



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IV Execution

A Find Additional 'Staff' for Your Conference

When you enter your final planning phase, you might notice that you could use a few additional pairs of hands for the days of the actual conference, e.g. for catering or decorating the venues. You can find additional help in the same way you formed the core organizing team: ask around in your faculty, friends, student initiatives in the university, etc.

It is good to have one photographer during the whole conference. Participants will appreciate good photos, and also guest speakers may ask you for them. There should also be a computer available to save the photos once the memory card is full. At least two copies of the photos should be made once the conference is over and given to different persons, in case one gets lost.

You should also have one person that is responsible for the simulating journalists and deals with the layout of the newspapers published during the simulation. The journalists will only hand in the articles after the negotiations are over. Normally, you will have only a short break before dinner and the evening program. If journalists want to participate in it, you will have to help them with the editing or take care of it entirely.

This person could also be responsible for the upcoming printing jobs. A printer should be set up / be available not too far from the plenary room, as delegates might want to work on paper copies of agreements shortly after the agreement has been made.

B Gifts and Certificates

When you invite guest speakers to your conference, don't forget to have small gifts ready as a thank you for their participation; this holds especially if they offered to give their time for free. A book of the region or some delicacies (chocolate, wine etc.) were our gifts of choice.

For our best delegates awards, which were awarded during the final public event, we decided to gift the successful participants with books on international diplomacy.

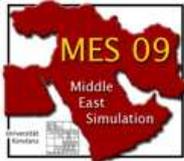
Lastly, all participants were naturally given certificates stating their role in the simulation. These certificates, as well as the award certificates, should be ready at the last day of the conference so you won't have to send it to every single participant via postal service.

C Have a Very Detailed Schedule for the Conference

During those long awaited days of the conference, everyone of your organizing team needs to know exactly *what* is going on *where* and *when* and *who* is responsible for what. Therefore we prepared a very detailed schedule (for organizers' use only) including exactly these facts. This way, everyone also knows whom to call in case of questions.

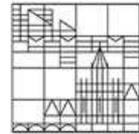
D Expect the Unexpected

No matter how much effort you put into the planning of your conference, something unexpected will always happen. During MES 2009, for example, we had to cope with water damage in one of the guest speaker's accommodation resulting in our having to find



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alternative accommodation at a moment's notice. Also, one of our participants fell ill and had to be escorted to a medical facility.

As little as you can actually prepare for these kind of incidents, make sure you have all kinds of telephone numbers, from taxi services to emergency medical services or alternative hotels. There is no such thing as being prepared too much.

E Dissemination

Despite the fact that you are just starting your conference when you read this, it is important to get an overview of all working phases: The planning, the execution and the dissemination. Therefore we want to include some short remarks about the dissemination of your project at this point already.

We experienced that it is very important to be aware of the fact that the project is NOT over after the execution of your event. You will at least still be dealing with finalizing your budget. You might also have planned something such as an evaluation or a publication in written form. It must be clear to you as a team that despite the immense workload that you probably dealt with before and during your event, that work has not yet come to an end after your event. It is crucial for the project coordinator to make this point clear.

It is rather likely that the team will not be as motivated after the execution of your project. After all, you have now reached your goal and still the work continues. It is therefore crucial to motivate one another. Especially the project coordinator should take care of this, but it is just as important for the rest of the team to stay committed.

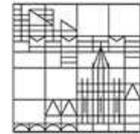
We hope, that the in this guide accumulated 'words of wisdom' will make it as problem-free as possible for you to organize your own Middle East Simulation.

We believe in what this kind of event can effectuate – a significant more of experiences, understanding and tolerance – and therefore wish for many happy returns.



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IIIV Appendix

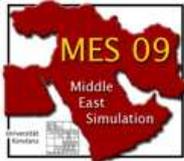
Schedule MES 2009

Thursday, June 11th

15.00-17.30	Arrival, check-in & registration	Apartment Hotel
17.30-18.00	Coffee & Snacks	Town Hall Atrium
18.00-20.00	Opening Ceremony with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the Mayor of Konstanz, Horst Frank ▪ Christian Sterzing, former MP and head of Böll-Foundation Office in Ramallah, and ▪ the MES 2009 Coordinator Tal Harris 	Town Hall
20.00-20.30	Champagne reception	Town Hall
20.30-22.00	Dinner	Restaurant "Münsterhof"

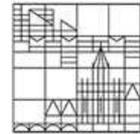
Friday, June 12th

7.45-8.45	Breakfast	Apartment Hotel
9.00-10.00	Delegations: Rules and Procedures and Opening Statements Media: Journalistic Workshop	University E404 University D351
10.00-13.00	Delegation: Negotiating the issue of Israel's Borders Media: Journalistic Workshop (until 11.00)	University E404 University D351
approx. 11.00	Coffee Break	University E404
13.00-14.00	Lunch	University Mensa
14.00-19.00	Delegations: Negotiating the issue of Palestinian refugees and the issue of Jerusalem and the Holy Places Media: Preparation of first news paper edition	University E404 University D406/ D432/ D436
approx. 16.30	Coffee Break	University E404
18.30	Media: Press Conference	University E405
20.00-21.30	Dinner	Restaurant "Pastante"
21.30-23.00	Social Event	Various locations in Konstanz



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Saturday, June 13th

7.45-8.45	Breakfast & Distribution of news papers	Apartment Hotel
9.00-13.00	Delegations: Negotiating the issue of regional security relations and the issue of regional diplomatic, economic and developmental relations Media: Preparation 2nd news paper edition	University E404 University D432/ D433/ D435
approx. 11.00	Coffee Break	University E404
13.00-14.00	Lunch	University Restaurant "Arche"
14.00-19.00	Delegations: Formulating Agreements and other Resolutions Media: Finalization 2nd news paper edition	University E404 University D432/ D433/ D435
approx. 16.30	Coffee break	University E404
18.30	Media: Press Conference	University E405
20.00-23.00	Gala Dinner Dinner with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ephraim Sneh (former Deputy Defense Minister in Israel) and ▪ Ilan Halevi (Representative of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation) 	Restaurant "Seerhein"

Sunday, June 14th

7.45-8.45	Breakfast, distribution of news papers & check-out	Apartment Hotel
9.00-11.00	Delegations: Formal finalization of agreements and preparation of statements Media: Preparation of final newspaper edition and press conference	Kulturzentrum am Münster (Library)
11.00-13.00	Public Event: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ (Simulated) Press conference with presentation and signing of agreements ▪ Distribution of certificates and Best Delegate Awards ▪ Discussion with Public/Press 	Kulturzentrum am Münster (Wolkensteinsaal)
13.00-14.00	Lunch	Kulturzentrum am Münster (Wolkensteinsaal)
14.00-17.00	Guided City Tour and Departure	Konstanz Centre