The Geneva School of Diplomacy, under the supervision of Ambassador Dr. Sameh Abould Enein, conducted a simulation for a UN special session on the Middle East peace process. The simulation involved graduate students from the International Relations MA Program. The participating students represented countries and organizations that are most concerned with the topic including the US, Russia, China, France, the UK, Egypt, Iran, Israel, the EU, and representatives from the United Nations, such as UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East, that are usually present around the negotiations table whenever resolving the conflict in the Middle East is on the agenda.
During the simulation, the students had the opportunity to represent the foreign policy stance of their respective states and to engage with their counterparts in formulating a draft resolution that is aimed towards solving the issue at hand. Students were able to experience what it's like to be part of an international conference, and to become familiar with the working atmosphere and procedures in UN sessions.

Simulation Exercise Preparation

• Participants will be assigned roles for the session, and should read into their roles and be prepared to speak on their country’s/organization’s position.
• It is important that strict adherence is kept to time available.
• Take into consideration the UN Dress-Code: Formal suit/dress

Simulation Setting
• This will be in the form of a conference called by the UN Secretary General.
• The aim is to prepare the ground for the formal talks planned on resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The decision to hold this meeting has been prompted by the report of the Middle East Quartet over current unrest in the region. The Israeli/Palestine question seems no nearer to a two-state solution despite intense efforts at mediation by all involved.

Conference

Stage 1:
• In this formal session, each delegate representing a country is to be prepared to present his/her country’s position on the Simulation topic.
• Each student will have 10 minutes for the opening statement.
• Countries with interest on the topic may wish to intervene in the discussions and students representing them should be prepared to do so.

Stage 2:
• Interactive session during which Country/Organization representatives engage in cross exchanges on the topic in an informal session.
• Each student will have 2 interventions in this stage to respond to other delegations, and each intervention should not exceed 5 minutes.

Stage 3:
The Conference President and the UN Secretary General’s representative are to prepare two or three paragraphs on a resolution arising from the discussion. An attempt to achieve consensus through a drafting process will be exercised. Otherwise, there will be a call for a vote.
LEARNING OUTCOMES OF THE SIMULATION

- Practice in speaking in public
- Practice in the use of diplomatic language and the required protocol
- Importance of careful preparation before speaking and the accuracy of facts
- Need to keep diplomacy active, with no “closed doors”
- Realization of the dangers of becoming locked into positions and of stating preconditions before the commencement of negotiation
- The use of “ice-breakers” and “shared experiences” when appropriate to build trust