

I am privileged to have participated in the International Negotiation Competition for Law Student 2013. One of my professors, who joined this competition as a coach before, told me it would be a once in a lifetime opportunity that I could never get otherwise, and now I'm pretty sure he was right. I learned how difficult it was to reach an agreement with opponent parties who we do not share mother tongue, customs, and way of thinking with. We needed to much more constantly make sure what the other party say, what they mean, what we've agreed so far, and what we need to agree in the remaining time than when we would negotiate against Japanese opponent parties. But at the same time, I learned how interesting and exciting it is to negotiate beyond these differences. We prepared more and tried to strategize better than usual for a better negotiation, or more practically, in order to make up for the language disadvantage against English native speakers. When these preparations and strategies led to a successful negotiation, it felt exciting and even uplifting.

In addition, meeting representatives from 21 other countries itself was as good a learning experience as the negotiations. We got to know some of the top law students in each participating country, who I believe will be our potential business or transaction partners in the future, and discussed many kinds of topics not limited to law. I am sure the exposure I got through this competition will help me a lot build a good and cooperative relationships when I actually start practice.

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