



Celtic International School

Model of the United Nations

CISMUN 2026

Delegate's Handbook

INTRODUCTION

The Celtic International School provides our students with a transformative learning experience that provides the content and tools to safely face the challenges and opportunities that contemporary society poses. The United Nations is an international organization whose main purposes are to maintain international peace and security, develop friendly relations among nations, achieve international cooperation in solving international problems, and be a center for harmonizing the actions of nations. This organization was founded in 1945 and it is currently made up of 193 Member States.

Model United Nations, also known as Model UN or MUN, is an activity in which students role-play delegates to the United Nations and simulate UN committees. The Model United Nations (MUN) is a space for students to have an approach to multiple events (past, present, and future) that have an impact on relationships and the structure of the global context in which we are living. Through the representation of the different Councils and Committees present in the United Nations, students are provided with the conditions to develop and enhance their research and communication skills, both in Spanish and in foreign languages, as well as to generate high-value interpersonal relationships. MUN is the perfect opportunity for students to put into practice a series of knowledge and skills developed through the continuum in their academic formation taking the attributes of the IB profile as its axis.

Throughout their work in the MUN subject, students will have to learn, analyze, interact, communicate, and reflect both in the classroom, as well as in other schools and institutions and of course in our own Model United Nations (CISMUN) where additionally, they must plan, manage and control its operation, generating a sense of belonging and responsibility that we are sure they will carry with them not only in their next stages of academic and professional formation but also in other aspects of their lives.

This document has been designed as a first approach for the Celtic International School students who want to succeed as delegates in MUN events. The information presented here is expected to provide technical and practical background, a framework about how a MUN is structured and conducted, and the role and behavior that is expected of a delegate.



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CISMUN Delegate's Handbook has the basis for a better understanding of the knowledge that will be acquired and the skills that will be developed in the 3 years of the MUN program at High School as part of their own transformative educational experience to create self-confidence and care members of the community at any scale.

We will not be able to do anything if we require a warrantee in advance of the success of our decisions and actions. Be a risk-taker delegate, don't hesitate, and get your voice to. Knowledge gives power but sharing it gives greatness.

CORE

As mentioned in the introduction the objective of a MUN is to provide the students with the environment to develop research and communication skills through role-playing. A MUN simulates the debates that take place in the United Nations but with several rules designed to promote specific conditions that lead to academic and personal development.

In this handbook, you will find not only rules but also examples and tips for the improvement of your performance as a delegate in these role-plays. Not all the MUNs have the same rules, because one of the greatness of this is that has some flexibility, which means that is widely different from other subjects where the processes are unique. There is a standard framework, but the details are defined by the organizers of each MUN, and the delegates must be enough prepared to adapt to any other model structure.



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RULES OF PROCEDURE

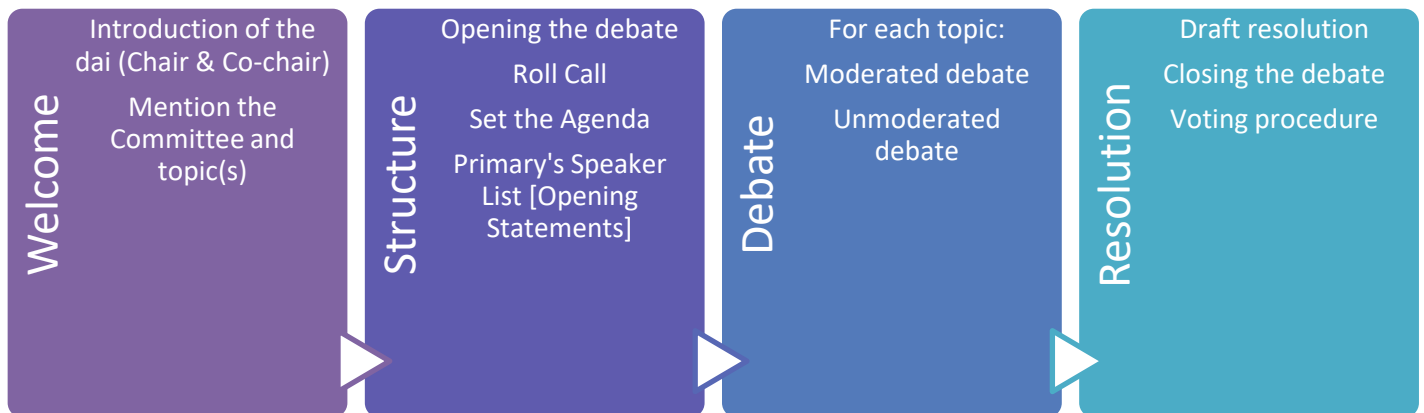
Structure of the Committee

The Chair is the acknowledged leader and representative of the whole Committee, which consists of the:

- a) **President:** The President in each commission oversees the opening and adjourning of every session. He has the power to take and announce the decisions he considers appropriate. Additionally, he should look after the academic quality of the debate, as well as guide the Delegates during the debate.
- b) **Moderator:** A member of the dais who moderates debate, keeps time, rules on points and motions, and enforces the rules of procedure. Also known as a Moderator.
- c) **Conference Officer:** The Conference Officer oversees administering the Speakers List, the time allotted for each Delegate, and every other function whose ultimate objective is to add to the flow of the debate.
- d) **Ushers:** The Usher, whose responsibility is to facilitate the communication between delegates in all the sessions, plays an essential role during a Model United Nations conference. His/Her job is to run all the errands during the session and take care of documents meant for distribution. Since delegates are not allowed to communicate directly with each other during the session, all communications are channeled through the Usher and the usher may at his/her discretion read the content of these messages. If it violates any of the rules, he/she may decide to notify the chairperson or politely call the sender to order.

Structure of the Sessions:

The Parliamentary Procedure establishes a framework that must be followed to guide the discussion of a topic, MUN this set of rules are applied, but as mentioned before is a framework, which means that has some sort of flexibility and the organizers can make some changes in the structure. In the case of the Model of the United Nations for the Celtic International School, the following structure is defined:



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Welcome

The chair asks for an order and then presents himself and the co-chair (if applicable), the Committee, and the topic(s) that will be discussed.

Example:

Chair: Attention delegates, please take your seats; my name is [name of the Chair] and I will guide with the support of [name of the Co-Chair] as Co-Chair this session of [name of the Committee], in which we will be discussing [List the topic or topics]. Before we can officially begin, I call this session to order.

Opening the session

This is the first official interaction between the chairs and the delegates, no other process can take place if the session is not officially open.

The Chair announces that specific actions or requests (motions and points) can be expressed by the delegates, and it is expected that a delegate raises his/her placard asking for the corresponding authorization to talk.

Example:

Chair: Delegates, the floor is now open, are there any points or motions on the floor?

A delegate raises his/her placard.

Chair: Yes, delegate.

Delegate: The delegation of [Delegation's name] makes a motion to open the session.

Chair: That is in order. Who seconds the motion?

At least one delegate (different from the one that made the motion) raises his/her placard.

Chair: Thank you delegate from [Delegation's name]. Let's proceed to vote.

In favor? (Co-chair counts how many delegates are in favor).

Against? (Co-chair counts how many delegates are in favor)

It is expected that this process will get the necessary votes in favor.

Chair: The motion passes (if the number of votes in favor is significantly higher than the votes against can be said as "The motion passes"). The session is now officially open.

Roll call





This phase must take place every time a MUN session begins, is how the co-chair takes note of which delegations are present and which ones aren't and identifies the posture of the delegations according to their interest in the topic(s) that will be discussed.

Delegates must answer "Present" or "Present and voting". For procedural voting processes, delegates just can vote "In favor" or "Against", for substantial voting processes (related to the topic(s) that will be discussed), delegates that answered in this phase of the session "Present" are not only able to vote "In favor" or "Against", also they can abstain from voting.

This phase can be established by a delegate through a motion, in which the CISMUN protocol is directly introduced by the chair. Delegations are called in alphabetical order, and each one has two consecutive opportunities to answer that call, if a delegation is not present or doesn't answer when is called, will receive a warning. Is recommended that the Chair call the delegations and the Co-Chair fill in the list of attendants.

Some chairs decide to give an extra call at the end to all the delegations that were registered as "Not present", for the CISMUN every chair has the authority to do or not do this extra call as they consider, the delegations that arrive after the calls ended or doesn't arrive will get a warning.

Example

Chair: Now we will proceed to the Roll Call. Is the decision of the Chair if they will mention rules or explanations before beginning the Roll Call, for example, the conditions related to answering "Present and voting" instead of "Present". The Roll Calls will be in alphabetical order.

Chair: Delegation of [First in the list alphabetically ordered].

A delegate called: Present / Present and voting

As a delegate, you are allowed to extend your ideas for a more accurate understanding or to demonstrate communication and self-confidence skills.

Chair: Delegation of [Second in the list alphabetically ordered].

A delegate called: The delegation of [Second in the list alphabetically ordered] is Present / Present and voting.

Chair: Delegation of [Third in the list alphabetically ordered].

A delegate called: No answer

Chair: Delegation of [Third in the list alphabetically ordered].

A delegate called: No answer

Chair: The delegation of [Third in the list alphabetically ordered] is not present.



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This will continue until either the assistance or absence of each delegate is confirmed. All the delegations of the list must be called two consecutive times and a third call can be made after finishing the standard process. The chair and Co-Chair must be aware of the answer of each delegation in this phase of the session to make sure the delegates follow their position in voting processes that are related to the topic discussed.

Chair: Thank you, delegates. Delegates the floor is now open are there any points or motions on the floor?

In this case, the first thing that should happen before any other motion is presented has to be opening the session. Delegates will raise their placards and the Chair will allow a delegate to make their motion.

Chair: delegation of [name of the delegation] please establish

Delegate: the delegation of [name of the delegation] makes a motion to open the session.

Chair: yes, delegate that would be in order. Who seconds the motion?

A delegation should raise their placard and second their motion.

Chair: the delegation of [name of the delegation] seconds the motion.

The chair will then proceed to a voting process.

Chair: votes in favor. Delegates who are in favor raise their placards. Votes against. Delegates who are against raising their placards. Abstentions. Delegates who abstain raise their placards.

The chair should count the votes and make sure the motion proceeds or is rejected.

Chair: The motion passes.

The chair now will open the floor once again. What would be in order would be to open the speaker list. The protocol can vary, but this is the most recurrent way to proceed.

Chair: delegates the floor is now open, are there any points or motions on the floor?

Delegate: the delegation of [name of the delegation] makes a motion to open the speaker list.

Chair: for how long?

Delegate: For as long as the chair recommends.

The chair should suggest a limit of time according to the session time. It usually goes from 1-2 minutes maximum.

Chair: the chair recommends 1 minute and 30 seconds. Please re-establish.



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Delegates: the delegation of [name of the delegation] makes a motion to open the speakers' list for 1 minute and 30 seconds.

The chair should ask for someone to second the motion. Then the chair should ask delegates to raise their placards to be added to the speakers' list. Only delegates who would like to be added will raise their placards. The co-chair will write down the name of the delegate who made the motion, then the delegate who seconded the motion, and then, the delegates who raised their placards will be written down in alphabetical order.

Chair: yes, delegate that would be in order. Who seconds the motion?

A delegate raises their placard.

Chair: the delegation of [name of the delegation] seconds the motion. Delegates, if you want to be added to the speakers' list please raise your placards.

When given the instruction the delegations should pass to the front and give either their opening speech or their positional paper, according to the delegate's preference.

Chair: Delegation of [name of the delegation] you may take the floor and establish.

The delegation should establish. If by the time they finish giving their statements, the time is not done. Delegates should yield their time. The delegates have the option to either yield their time to the Chair, to another delegate, or use it for questions.

The chair now will open the floor once again, for delegates to make points or open extraordinary sessions of a certain number of questions with/ without a certain number of follow-ups.

Chair: the floor is now open are there any points or motions on the floor?

A delegate could raise their placards.

Chair: delegation of [name of the delegation] please establish.

The delegate who took the floor: the delegation of [name of the delegation] would like to make an extraordinary session of 1 question with 2 follow-ups.

Chair: yes, delegate that would be in order. Please establish.

The delegate should ask their questions. Then the chair will ask the delegate who took the floor if it accepts this question. If the delegate rejects the question, there is no further thing to do. If the delegate rejects questions two times, they will be notified about a future warning if they reject a question again. If the delegate rejects questions three times, they will be given a warning.

Chair: delegation of [name of the delegation] do you accept this question?





Delegate: The delegation of [name of the delegation] would like to answer this question in a moderated debate.

Then the delegation who seconds the motion should take the floor.

Chair: delegation of [name of the delegation] please take the floor and establish.

The process is then repeated. The chair will open the floor again and delegations can make new questions.

Delegate: point of information.

Chair: yes, delegate established.

The delegate will make a question that the delegate who took the floor will not be asked to accept and should answer.

The delegate who took the floor: (answers the question).

Chair: delegation of [name of the delegation] has your question been answered?

Delegate: no, my question has not been answered.

For topic's discussion:

Secondary Speaker's List
Moderated debate
Unmoderated debate
Submission of Draft Resolution
Amendment of Draft Resolution
Resolution approval

Setting the agenda
Primary Speaker's list
Topic A discussion
Topic B discussion
Submission of Draft Resolution
Amendment of Draft Resolution
Resolution approval
Session closure



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MOTIONS

A motion is an action that can be made by any delegate to guide the debate in a certain direction:

Motions of Procedure are used by most Model UN conferences to maintain order and decorum by deciding who speaks, on what, and when. This is essential as delegates put forth their points of view and interact with other States on lengthy agendas.

There are different motions of the procedure:

1. **Motion to open the speaker's list:** The Chairperson will ask all of those delegates who would like to make a speech and to be on the speaker's list to raise their placards. The Chairperson will then choose delegates to be placed on the speaker's list.
2. **Motion to set the time in the speaker's list:** Speaking time is set through a motion from a delegate. If no motions are made, the default time is 90 seconds.
3. **Motion to open a formal consultation (moderated caucus):** When a motion for formal consultation is passed, the Chair calls upon delegates to raise their placards to address the committee for a specific amount of time. The time proposed for the formal consultation should not exceed 20 minutes.
4. **Motion to open an informal consultation (simple/unmoderated caucus):** An informal consultation is a temporary recess. Rules of procedure are suspended during caucusing. During this time delegates can meet informally with each other and the committee staff to discuss draft resolutions and other issues.
5. **Motion to open an extraordinary session of ____ questions.** After a delegate in the speaker's list has finished talking, this motion is proposed to question important aspects of the speech. A minimum of 2 questions and a maximum of 5 can be asked. The delegate who makes the motion is the first to ask.
6. **Motion to adjourn the meeting:** This motion ends the committee's sessions for the day/model.
7. **Motion to close the session:** This motion is used to end a session for a lunch break. (Delegates may propose a motion to suspend the meeting if they want a regular recess, unrelated to the debate).
8. **Motion to present the Working paper:** Working papers are just a list of ideas formed by the blocs. They may or may not be written in resolution format. The working paper needs to be approved by the chairs.
9. **Motion to present a draft resolution:** it is in order after it is approved by the chairs and introduced to the committee but not yet voted upon is called a draft resolution. Delegates will be spending most of their time writing and amending the draft resolutions.

POINTS

A point is an action that can be made by any delegate to ask for something specific related to some technical or personal request.

For a delegate to make a point, he or she must be recognized by the chair. After being recognized, the delegate can rise and state his/her point. Do not forget to raise your placard and say the name of the point you want to make.



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- a) **Point of Inquiry**: used when a delegate has a question about something that is not clearly understood in committee. Use this to ask a question if you don't understand a term or get what's going on in committee!
- b) **Point of Personal Privilege**: used when a delegate experiences personal discomfort that hinders their ability to participate in a committee, to open a brief preamble, etc.
- c) **Point of Order** (also called **Point of Parliamentary Procedure**): used when a delegate believes that there was a mistake made regarding the rules of procedure, can't hear another delegate, etc.

Yield: A decision that a speaker makes to give up the remaining time in his or her speech. Typically, the three types of yields are:

- 1) **Yield to the Chair** meaning you give up the rest of your time.

Delegate: I yield my time to the chair

- 2) **Yield to another delegate** meaning you give up the rest of your time to another delegate.

Delegate: I yield my time to the delegate from _____

- 3) **Yield to questions** from other delegates or **Yield to comments** on your speech by other delegates. Questions are also sometimes called Points of Information.

Delegate: I yield my time for questions

Amendments: A change made to an **operative clause** of a draft resolution. Amendments can add, delete, or change an operative clause in a draft resolution. There are two different types of amendments:

- a. A **Friendly Amendment** is an amendment written and approved by all the sponsors to a draft resolution and is automatically included in the text.
- b. An **Unfriendly Amendment** is an amendment not approved by all the sponsors to their draft resolution and must be voted upon before it can be included in the text.

VOTING PROCEDURES

On Resolutions, Clauses, and Amendments, only Member States can vote. This means that Observer Status delegates (organizations and unrecognized countries) cannot vote (this doesn't apply to the Advisory Panel).

However, on procedural matters, all delegates have the right to vote. For example, if a motion to adjourn debate is called, the chair will ask delegates to vote on it. Here, all delegates have the right to vote as it is a procedural matter.





POSITION PAPER

Your proposal must explain what you are planning, how you plan to do it when you plan to do it, how much it is going to cost, and what the benefit will be. (450-600 words)

Introduction: In it, you should identify the aim of the project. State the problem to be addressed and why it is important.

The main body: you should now explain how you intend to get the job done, how long it will take, and how much it will cost.

- Objectives: indicate the expected outcomes of the project, preferably in measurable terms.
- Methods: describe your plan of action for how the objectives will be achieved and which stages you will use to make the plan succeed.

Timetable: Describe how long (days, months) specific tasks or components of the project will take.

Budget: Present the overall cost of the project. A detailed budget should be divided into categories.

Conclusion: This proposal is different from other forms of writing and requires no formal conclusion. However, you could emphasize any benefits of your proposal for the sponsor.

Tips:

- Avoid verbs such as might, could, may, should, and hope appears.
- Positive tone
- Support your argument with evidence
- Use formal language and be very polite.
- Avoid exaggerated or emotional expressions.
- Use a heading to help the reader understand the proposal.



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BASICS OF RESOLUTION

- **Who:** Who writes a resolution? Any delegate in the committee can write a resolution (although in rare instances an observer state is not allowed to directly write a resolution). The author of a resolution is called a **sponsor**. Most resolutions have multiple sponsors because it takes a group of countries to share good ideas and come to a consensus. Some conferences allow delegates to sponsor multiple resolutions for each topic while others only allow delegates to sponsor one per topic.
- **What:** What is a resolution? A resolution is a document that contains all the issues that the committee wants to solve and the proposed solutions to those issues. It's called a resolution because that's what the United Nations calls the documents they produce (here are some real [2018 Security Council resolutions](#)). Technically, the resolution should be called a draft resolution before it is voted upon and then called a resolution after it is successfully passed during the voting bloc.
- **When/Where:** When and where are resolutions written? Most conferences require students to write resolutions during the conference. Specifically, resolutions are usually written during informal consultations where delegates are free to roam around the committee to collaborate on ideas with each other, and sometimes students work outside in hallways or computer labs as well. Resolution writing becomes more focused during the latter sessions of the committee when different country policies are clear and different ideas have been mentioned already. These conferences will not allow any pre-written resolutions. A few conferences have a “**docket-style**” debate. This is when students are required to submit resolutions to the conference in advance and the chairs pick the best ones and put them into a docket. The delegates focus only on the resolutions in the docket when they get to the conference and work on amending them.
- **Why:** The ultimate purpose of a committee session is to pass a resolution. All the speeches, debates, negotiations, and teamwork are supposed to lead up to a resolution that contains all the proposed solutions to the issue. The resolution(s) that the majority of the committee agrees upon will be passed during the voting bloc and the sponsors will be informally commended for building consensus on good ideas. Most conferences allow multiple resolutions to pass as long as they do not contradict each other, but a few conferences allow only one resolution to pass.

A resolution is really simple to write. It has three main parts: the **heading**, the **pre-ambulatory clauses**, and the **operative clauses**. We'll break down the example above into these three parts below.

1. Heading

The heading contains four pieces of information: the committee's name, the sponsors, the signatories, and the topic (not necessarily in that order depending on each conference's rules).





Resolution GA/3/1.1

General Assembly Third Committee

Sponsors: United States, Austria and Italy

Signatories: Greece, Tajikistan, Japan, Canada, Mali, the Netherlands and Gabon

Topic: "Strengthening UN coordination of humanitarian assistance in complex emergencies"

The committee's name and topic should be self-explanatory. The sponsors are the authors of the resolution. The signatories are other delegates in the committee who do not necessarily agree with the resolution but would like to see it debated. Most conferences require a minimum number or percentage of sponsors and signatories (or a combination of both) before a resolution can be presented, this encourages consensus-building. You will also notice some numbering (on the top right corner in the example). This is usually provided by the committee chair and is just a way to number the different resolutions — usually by the order they are received or approved — so that delegates can easily differentiate or reference them.

2. Preamble

Contains

The pre-ambulatory clauses state all the issues that the committee wants to resolve on this issue. It may state reasons why the committee is working on this issue and highlight previous international actions on the issue. Each clause begins with a present participle (called a preambulatory phrase) and ends with a comma. Preambulatory clauses can include:

- Past UN resolutions, treaties, or conventions related to the topic.
- Past regional, non-governmental, or national efforts in resolving this topic.
- References to the UN Charter or other international frameworks and laws
- Statements made by the Secretary-General or a relevant UN body or agency.
- General background information or facts about the topic, its significance, and its impact.

It's very simple to write pre-ambulatory clauses. First, take a statement that you want to write about (perhaps an issue you want to solve or a specific fact from one of the five bullet points above). You then take that statement, combine it with an underlined pre-ambulatory phrase, and end it with a





comma.

The General Assembly,

Reminding all nations of the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, which recognizes the inherent dignity, equality and inalienable rights of all global citizens, **[use commas to separate preambulatory clauses]**

Reaffirming its Resolution 33/1996 of 25 July 1996, which encourages Governments to work with UN bodies aimed at improving the coordination and effectiveness of humanitarian assistance,

Noting with satisfaction the past efforts of various relevant UN bodies and nongovernmental organizations,

Stressing the fact that the United Nations faces significant financial obstacles and is in need of reform, particularly in the humanitarian realm,

Sample Preambulatory Phrases

Affirming	Expecting	Having examined
Alarmed by	Emphasizing	Having received
Approving	Expecting	Keeping in mind
Bearing in mind	Expressing its appreciation	Noting with deep concern
Believing	Fulfilling	Nothing with satisfaction
Confident	Fully aware	Noting further
Contemplating	Emphasizing	Observing
Convinced	Expecting	Reaffirming
Declaring	Expressing its appreciation	Realizing
Deeply concerned	Fulfilling	Recalling
Deeply conscious	Fully aware	Recognizing
Deeply convinced	Further deploring	Referring
Deeply disturbed	Further recalling	Seeking
Deeply regretting	Guided by	Taking into consideration
Desiring	Having adopted	Taking note
Emphasizing	Having considered	Viewing with appreciation
		Welcoming



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Useful Phrases to be used when working on the resolution part of a debate

- **When recognizing someone to speak**

The Chair recognizes the delegate of Russia. To what point do you rise?

Please raise and state your point (of information/order).

- **When the question is not clearly stated**

Please state your point in the form of a question.

The speaker appears not to have heard/ understood your question. Will you please repeat/rephrase your question?

- **When asking for further points**

Are there any further points on the floor? Are there any further points of information to this speaker?

- **When dealing with a point of order**

There's an order point on the floor. Please rise and state your point.

Your point is (not) well taken.

- **When asking a speaker to conclude his speech**

Will the speaker please make his concluding remarks?

- **When concluding debate time**

Debate time for/against the motion/the amendment has been exhausted/has expired.

Debate time has expired. Will the speaker please yield the floor?

- **When extending debate time**

The Chair proposes an extension of debate time by 5 minutes for and 5 minutes against the motion.

- **When concluding the debate and moving to the vote**

The debate is now closed. We will move into voting procedures. All points are out of order.

- **If there is a point of order during voting**

Does your point of order pertain to the conduct of the voting?

- **When conducting the vote**

The motion will now be put to the vote.

Operative phrases

Operative clauses offer solutions (actions and recommendations) to issues addressed earlier in a resolution through the perambulatory section. These clauses are action-oriented and should include an underlined verb at the beginning of your sentence followed by the proposed solution. Each clause should follow the following principles:

- Clause should be numbered.
- Each clause should support one another and continue to build your solution.
- Add details to your clauses to have a complete solution.



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- Operative clauses are punctuated by a semicolon, except for your last operative clause which should end with a period.

Will all those in favor of the motion/the amendment/the resolution please raise their placard

Will all those opposed to/against the resolution please raise their placard.

Are there any abstentions? / Will all those abstaining please raise their placard.

- When announcing the result**

The motion /amendment has been carried/passed by X votes to Y with Z abstentions.

The motion/ amendment has failed/been defeated by Y votes to X with Z abstentions.

Operative phrases examples

Accepts	Congratulates	Expresses the appreciation	Has resolved	Solemnly affirms
Affirms	Considers	Expresses its hopes	Notes	Strongly condemns
Approves	Declares accordingly	Further invites	Proclaims	Supports
Authorizes	Deplores	Further proclaims	Reaffirms	Takes notes of
Calls	Draws the attention	Further reminds	Recommends	Transmits

DRESS CODE

Delegates are expected to wear professional attire at all conference sessions. As tastes may vary, the following guidelines have been provided to alleviate confusion regarding the expectation of professional dress.

Acceptable:

- Casual business attire, such as slacks and a blouse or a button-down shirt.
- More formal attire, such as suits and ties, is encouraged.
- Skirts and dresses (knee-length, three fingers above the knee).
- Use dark-straight colors.
- Formal shoes to match your outfit. Make sure to use socks that match your outfit.





Unacceptable:

- Clothing is more casual than the aforementioned standard, such as blue jeans, shorts, and T-shirts.
- Revealing outfits are inappropriate for diplomatic work, such as low-cut blouses, halters, and extremely short skirts.
- Baggy pants or other articles of clothing that reveal undergarments.
- Outfits intended to distract or disrupt the work of committee sessions.
- Athletic wear, such as warm-up suits and sweatpants.
- Hats and caps are not permissible in committee sessions.
- Outerwear should not be worn in committee sessions.
- Sneakers, sandals, white socks, and open shoes where toes can be seen are not acceptable.

Committee Staff may ask delegates to return to the committee with the appropriate dress if these guidelines are not met. **The Secretary-General or her/his representative will have the final authority on matters of dress.**

GLOSSARY

Model UN can be confusing to a beginner, not only because of the complexity of the issues and the pace of debate but because of the strangeness of the language. Note that several of the terms below, including Secretariat and Secretary-General, have different meanings in Model UN than they do in the real UN; you should familiarize yourself with both meanings.

NOTE: Rules of the procedure vary greatly from Model UN conference to Model UN conference. Though these are the most common definitions of the terms below, do not be surprised if you see them used in a slightly different manner at some of the conferences.

Abstain: During a vote on a substantive matter, delegates may abstain rather than vote yes or no. This generally signals that a country does not support the resolution being voted on, but does not oppose it enough to vote no.

Adjourn: All UN or Model UN sessions end with a vote to adjourn. This means that the debate is suspended until the next meeting. This can be a short time (e.g., overnight) or a long time (until next year's conference).





Agenda: The order in which the issues before a committee will be discussed. The first duty of a committee following the roll call is usually to set the agenda.

Amendment: A change to a draft resolution on the floor. Can be two types: a “friendly amendment” is supported by the original draft resolution’s sponsors, and is passed automatically, while an “unfriendly amendment” is not supported by the original sponsors and must be voted on by the committee.

Background Paper: A guide to a topic being discussed in a Model UN committee is usually written by conference organizers and distributed to delegates before the conference. The starting point for any research before a Model UN conference.

Binding: Having legal force in UN member states. Security Council resolutions are binding, as are decisions of the International Court of Justice; resolutions of the General Assembly and Economic and Social Council are not.

Bloc: A group of countries in a similar geographical region or with a similar opinion on a particular topic. Blocs typically vote together.

Caucus: A break in formal debate in which countries can more easily and informally discuss a topic. There are two types: moderate caucus and unmoderated caucus.

Chair: A member of the dais that moderates debate, keeps time, rules on points and motions, and enforces the rules of procedure. Also known as a Moderator.

Dais: The group of people, usually high school or college students, in charge of a Model UN committee. It generally consists of a Chair, a director, and a Rapporteur. The dais is also the raised platform on which the chair traditionally sits.

Decorum: The order and respect for others that all delegates at a Model UN conference must exhibit. The Chair will call for decorum when he or she feels that the committee is not being respectful of a speaker, of the dais, or their roles as ambassadors.

Delegate: A student acting as a representative of a member state or observer in a Model UN committee.

Delegation: The entire group of people representing a member state or observer in all committees at a particular Model UN conference. They are usually all from the same school.

Director: A member of the dais that oversees the creation of working papers and draft resolutions, acts as an expert on the topic, makes sure delegates accurately reflect the policy of their countries, and ensures that decorum is maintained during caucuses.

Division of the Question: During the voting bloc, delegates may motion to vote on certain clauses of a resolution separately, so that only the clauses that are passed become part of the final resolution. This is known as the division of the question.

Draft resolution: A document that seeks to fix the problems addressed by a Model UN committee. If passed by the committee, the draft resolution will become a resolution.





Faculty Advisor: The faculty member in charge of a Model UN team, class, or club.

The flow of debate: The order in which events proceed during a Model UN conference. This usually indicates the movement between formal and informal debate and the process of drafting, debating, and voting on resolutions.

Formal Consultation:

Formal debate: The “standard” type of debate at a Model UN conference, in which delegates speak for a certain time in an order based on a speaker’s list.

Gavel: The tool, shaped like a small wooden hammer, which the Chair uses to keep order within a Model UN committee. Many conferences give the gavel used in a committee to the delegate recognized by the dais as the best in that committee; therefore, the term is frequently used to refer to the award given to the best delegate, even in cases where no actual gavel is given.

Head Delegate: The student leader of a Model UN club or team.

Informal Consultation: MUN simulations refer to informal consultations as moderated and unmoderated caucuses. Although these types of meetings do occur at the UN this terminology is not used. Delegates at the UN engage in informal consultations. The different types of informal consultations are summarized in the article The Process of Informals in the Fifth Committee which was published in the UN Chronicle. A moderated caucus at the UN would correspond to an informal consultation where the Chair remains to preside over the meeting but the rules of procedure are suspended. This type of meeting would be referred to at the UN as a formal informal. The Chair, however, is not always present at a formal-informal meeting. It can also be led by a facilitator appointed by the Bureau. At other times, delegates may meet in the corner of a conference room or in another location to discuss a draft resolution. This type of meeting is called an informal and is most similar to what is called an unmoderated caucus in MUN simulations.

Member State: A country that has ratified the Charter of the United Nations and whose application to join has been accepted by the General Assembly and Security Council. Currently, there are 193 member states.

Moderated Caucus: A type of caucus in which delegates remain seated and the Chair calls on them one at a time to speak for a short period, enabling a freer exchange of opinions than would be possible in a formal debate.

Moderator: see Chair.

Motion: A request made by a delegate that the committee as a whole do something. Some motions might be to go into a caucus, to adjourn, to introduce a draft resolution, or to move into voting procedure.

Observer: A state, national organization, regional organization, or non-governmental organization that is not a member of the UN but participates in its debates. Observers can vote on procedural matters but not substantive matters. An example is the Holy See.





On the floor: At a Model UN conference, when a working paper or draft resolution is first written, it may not be discussed in the debate. After it is approved by the Director and introduced by the committee, it is put “on the floor” and may be discussed.

Opening Speech:

Operative clause: The part of a resolution that describes how the UN will address a problem. It begins with an action verb (decides, establishes, recommends, etc.).

Page: A delegate in a Model UN committee that has volunteered to pass notes from one delegate to another, or from a delegate to the dais, for a short period.

Placard: A piece of cardstock with a country’s name on it that a delegate raises in the air to signal to the Chair that he or she wishes to speak.

Point: A request raised by a delegate for information or for an action relating to that delegate. Examples include a point of order, a point of inquiry, and a point of personal privilege.

Position paper: A summary of a country’s position on a topic, written by a delegate before a Model UN conference.

Preambulatory Clause: The part of a resolution that describes previous actions taken on the topic and reasons why the resolution is necessary. It begins with a participle or adjective (noting, concerned, regretting, aware of, recalling, etc.).

Procedural: This has to do with the way a committee runs, as opposed to the topic being discussed. All delegates present must vote on procedural matters and may not abstain.

Proposal: Any working paper, draft resolution, an amendment thereto, or a portion of a draft resolution divided out by motion.

Quorum: The minimum number of delegates needed to be present for a committee to meet. In the General Assembly, a quorum consists of one-third of the members beginning debate, and a majority of members pass a resolution. In the Security Council, no quorum exists for the body to debate, but nine members must be present to pass a resolution.

Rapporteur: A member of the dais whose duties include keeping the speakers’ list and taking the roll call, as well as assisting in and keeping track of administrative duties in the committee room.

Resolution: A document that has been passed by an organ of the UN that aims to address a particular problem or issue.

Right of Reply: A right to speak in reply to a previous speaker’s comment, invoked when a delegate feels personally insulted by another’s speech. Generally, requires a written note to the Chair to be invoked.

Roll Call: The first order of business in a Model UN committee, during which the Rapporteur reads aloud the names of each member state in the committee. When a delegate’s country’s name is called, he or she





may respond “present” or “present and voting.” A delegate responding “present and voting” may not abstain from a substantive vote.

Rules of Procedure: The rules by which a Model UN committee is run.

Second: To agree with a motion being proposed. Many motions must be seconded before they can be brought to a vote.

Secretariat: The staff of a Model UN conference.

Secretary-General: The leader of a Model UN conference.

Signatory: A country that wishes for a draft resolution to be put on the floor and signs the draft resolution to accomplish this. A signatory need not support a resolution; it only wants it to be discussed. Usually, Model UN conferences require a minimum number of sponsors and signatories for a draft resolution to be approved.

Simple majority: 50% plus one vote of the number of delegates in a committee. The amount needed to pass most votes.

Speakers’ List: A list that determines the order in which delegates will speak. Whenever a new topic is opened for discussion, the Chair will create a speakers’ list by asking all delegates wishing to speak to raise their placards and calling on them one at a time. During the debate, a delegate may indicate that he or she wishes to be added to the speakers’ list by sending a note to the dais.

Sponsor: One of the writers of a draft resolution. A friendly amendment can only be created if all sponsors agree.

Substantive: Having to do with the topic being discussed. A substantive vote is a vote on a draft resolution or amendment already on the floor during the voting bloc. Only member states (not observer states or non-governmental organizations) may vote on substantive issues.

Unmoderated Caucus: A type of caucus in which delegates leave their seats to mingle and speak freely. Enables the free sharing of ideas to an extent not possible in formal debate or even a moderated caucus. Frequently used to sort countries into blocks and to write working papers and draft resolutions.

Warning: sanctions imposed by the Staff to call attention to behaviors that are inappropriate for the rules of procedure. Violating courtesy rules, interrupting the debate unnecessarily, not having a respectful attitude, and arriving late to a session are examples of behaviors that will generate a warning. The participation of a Delegate in CISMUN shall be canceled if he/she accumulates three warnings.

Working Paper: A document in which the ideas of some delegates on how to resolve an issue are proposed. Frequently the precursor to a draft resolution.

Vet: The ability, held by China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States to prevent any draft resolution in the Security Council from passing by voting no.





Vote: A time at which delegates indicate whether they do or do not support a proposed action for the committee. There are two types: procedural and substantive.

Voting procedure: The period at the end of a committee session during which delegates vote on proposed amendments and draft resolutions. Nobody is allowed to enter the room during this procedure.

Important Abbreviations:

AIIB – Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank

AL – Arab League

AU – African Union

ADB – Asian Development Bank

ASEAN – Association of Southeastern Asian Nations

BRICS – Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa

CERN – European Organization for Nuclear Research

CIS – Commonwealth of Independent States

CTBTO – Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization

DSG – Deputy Secretary General

DICEC – Disarmament and International Security Committee (UNGA First Committee)

ECOFIN – Economic and Financial Committee (UNGA Second Committee)

ECOSOC – UN Economic and Social Council

EU – European Union

FAO – UN Food and Agriculture Organization

FIFA – Fédération Internationale de Football Association

G7 – Group of Seven (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, United Kingdom, and the United States)

G8 – Group of Eight (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, United Kingdom, and the United States)

G20 – Group of Twenty (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, European Union,

France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, United Kingdom, and the United States)

GA – General Assembly (**UNGA**)

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

HRC – Human Rights Council

IADB – Inter-American Development Bank (**IDB**)

IAEA – International Atomic Energy Agency

ICC – International Criminal Court

ICJ – International Court of Justice

IGO – Inter-Governmental Organization

IMF – International Monetary Fund

Interpol – International Criminal Police Organization

JCC – Joint Crisis Committee

MICJ – Model International Court of Justice

MUN – Model United Nations

NAFTA – North Atlantic Free Trade Agency

NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization

OPEC – Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries

OSCE – Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

P5 – The permanent five members of the UNSC (China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States)

PGA – President of the General Assembly

PHRC – President of the Human Rights Council





PICJ – President of the International Court of Justice

PSC – President of the Security Council

SC – UN Security Council (**UNSC**)

SG – Secretary General

SOCHUM – Social, Cultural, and Humanitarian Committee (UNGA Third Committee)

SPECPOL – Special Political and Decolonization (UNGA Fourth Committee)

UN – The United Nations

UNESCO – UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

UNFCCC – UN Framework on Climate Change

UNIDO – UN Industrial Development Organization

WBG – World Bank Group (**WB**)

WTO – World Trade Organization

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