

The Basics

WHAT IS MODEL UNITED NATIONS?

In MUN, students act as though they are a country's delegates or representatives to the United Nations. Prior to the conference, each student is assigned a country and a committee. Each committee meets separately and debates several topics of a general subject matter. Each delegate tries to advance the objectives of his or her country in dealing with each topic. The entire committee works together to develop a resolution or multiple resolutions that aim to resolve the issues at hand.

HOW DID MUN BEGIN?

Simulating international organizations began even before the birth of the United Nations, when students held a series of Model League of Nations in the 1920s. MUN is a successor to a student directed simulation of what preceded the U.N. itself, but it is not documented exactly how Model U.N. began.

WHAT IS A MODEL UNITED NATIONS DELEGATE?

A MUN delegate is a student who assumes the role of an ambassador to the United Nations. He or she does not have to have experience in international relations. Anyone can participate in Model U.N., so long as they have the ambition to learn something new, and to work with people to try and make a difference in the world. Model U.N. students tend to go on to become great leaders in politics, law, business, education and even medicine.

WHY SHOULD I PARTICIPATE IN MODEL UNITED NATIONS?

Model United Nations promotes student and teacher interest in international relations and related subjects, increases the capacity for students to engage in problem solving, teaches aspects of conflict resolution, research skills, and oral communication skills, and creates the opportunity to meet new people and make new friends.

WHAT ARE SOME EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS OF MODEL U.N?

For almost 60 years, teachers and students have benefited from and enjoyed this interactive learning experience. It not only involves young people in the study and discussion of global issues, but also encourages the development of skills useful throughout their lives, such as research, writing, public speaking, problem solving, consensus building, conflict resolution and compromise and cooperation.

WHAT TYPES OF TOPICS ARE DISCUSSED AT MODEL U.N CONFERENCES?

The agenda items discussed in committee vary at each conference. Most conferences tend to focus on current affairs issues that are being discussed in the United Nations. These issues can highlight political, financial and/or social concerns. However, the task of some committees might be to address hypothetical concerns or issues from the past or future. For example, many conferences have "crisis" committees, in which delegates must react to a hypothetical or actual crisis situation. Other conferences host historical or future Security Council simulations.

Committee Structure

The general structure of committee staff ultimately depends on the specific rules of procedure for the conference or the size of the committee. In all committees however, delegates behave as real United Nations representatives do in committee sessions. They will use parliamentary procedure and written resolutions to solve real-life problems related to committees' pre-assigned topics. A typical session might begin with formal debate, in which countries speak to the entire committee according to an order assigned by the staff based on countries' input, and then move to caucusing, which allows countries to write and informally discuss resolutions. After several rounds of formal debate, caucusing, and resolution writing, countries will vote on resolutions.

THE ROLE OF A DELEGATE

Delegates, playing the role of international diplomats and politicians, solve real-life problems in simulations of UN and other committees. Delegates use formal rules and procedures to discuss real-life problems and current events. Prior to the start of a conference, each committee's staff members determine the topic that delegates will discuss and write a background guide that describes the topic and gives questions that delegates should use as a guide for research. Just as the real United Nations and other committees record their work and most often take action by issuing written instructions or recommendations, MUN committees frequently write resolutions or other documents that require or request action from other countries, organizations, and groups. Drafting and editing some form of written document takes the most time in a typical committee.

Delegates should work with other delegates representing governments with similar positions or interests. At times, delegates should cooperate because they support the same working paper or draft resolution despite other disagreements. At other times, delegates should work together because of traditional alliances or friendly relations. Working constructively means writing resolutions together, combining similar resolutions, and reaching a consensus without digressing from a country's real-life foreign policy. If delegates cannot agree, then they should find other working partners and propose alternatives before working against a working paper or draft resolution. Delegates should be wary of changing their position on a topic to the point of compromising their country's national security.

THE ROLE OF THE DAIS

The dais (**day-us**) is the head table of a committee. Staff members of the conferences we attend run a committee. Staff members are typically college students who participate in their colleges' MUN program. Depending on the size of the committee, anywhere from three or five students can be a part of the dais. Usually, the **director** writes the background guide, guides debate and resolution writing, and chairs debate. Other members of the dais include the **chair**, who typically shares responsibility for leading the committee through debate. A **rappporteur/page** is there to assist the director and chair in receiving notes from the delegates and maintaining the speakers list. For some conferences, there will be a **home government representative**, an individual who can help delegates research or reference issues in committee session.

While members of the dais are responsible for monitoring the flow of debate during committee sessions, their ultimate goal is to make committee sessions as informative and fun

as possible. Well prepared dais members who are very familiar with the intricacies of parliamentary procedure and the topics on the floor will help delegates get the most out of their MUN experience. Dais members link the delegates to the Secretariat, a small group of individuals ultimately responsible for planning the conference. After working for so long and hard, the conference staff members will be delighted to answer any questions you might have. If you are attending multiple conferences a year, it can be difficult to remember the individual rules of procedure unique to each. Conference handbooks are typically a good place to check for a complete outline of the rules of procedure for the conference.

COMMITTEE SESSIONS

The largest committees simulate the United Nations General Assembly plenary body, its six committees, and the deliberative bodies of other international organizations. Smaller committees include simulations of the United Nations Security Council, cabinets of current or historical governments, regional organizations, and even international courts. The small, specialized committees spend most of their time reacting to a simulation of an international crisis, not writing formal resolutions. Every conference decides what kind of simulations to offer delegates. Committees can be as small as ten to fifteen delegates in Specialized Agencies or as large as hundreds of delegates in General Assembly committees at the high school or collegiate level.

Most committee sessions will follow the general outline below. Please note however, smaller committees, or simulations of bodies that would not use these formal procedures, use a more informal style similar to a business meeting. Crisis committees typically vote to go into informal session, which usually means that staff calls on individual delegates to speak and expect other delegates to be attentive to debate but do not necessarily follow a speakers' list or vote on all matters.

- **Setting the agenda** – The committee must decide in what order it will address its topics. Delegates will speak on which topic to address first in the order of the speakers' list for setting the topic, which is the list of what delegations will speak in what order. The speakers' list, set by the dais based on delegates' who raise their placards and signify their desire to speak, normally determines speaking order during formal session. Delegates motion to open the speakers' list.
- **Caucusing** – Delegates can motion for a caucus, which means that the committee will vote to move from formal session into one of two styles of informal session.
 - **Moderated caucus** – There is no speakers' list but there is still only one delegation recognized to speak by the chair at any given time. Speaking time is typically thirty to forty-five seconds, and delegates should concisely either introduce specific ideas for resolutions or discuss resolutions currently being written or revised.
 - **Unmoderated caucus** – Delegates can move about the room to write or revise resolutions. Caucus sessions typically last five to fifteen minutes and should only be used for the committee's business. If delegates wish to continue to work together after the caucus has ended, they should leave the room so not to disturb other delegates.

- **Writing working papers** –The first steps in writing a working paper are listening to speeches in formal session and working cooperatively during caucusing time. Working papers are like rough drafts of resolutions – they have the same format as resolutions but need editing. They are called working papers because the dais has not approved them as formal committee documents.
- **Writing draft resolution** – For a working paper to become a draft resolution a certain number of countries (the exact number will be given before the committee begins its first formal session) to sign the working paper as signatories or sponsors (sponsors usually have put more effort into writing the resolution and support it more strongly than signatories do) and the dais must approve the working paper as a draft resolution.
- **Voting on draft resolutions** – Once all draft resolutions have been submitted and the proper motion is made (motions are more fully explained in the full list of parliamentary procedures), the committee will go into voting procedures and vote on the draft resolutions that the dais has accepted. Voting procedures means that delegates do not speak or otherwise communicate with each other, sponsors and any others who are not conference staff members or delegates are asked to leave the room, and no one enters or exits the room until voting concludes.

Standing General Assembly U.N Committees:

- GA 1st: Disarmament & International Security
- GA 2nd: Economic and Financial
- GA 3rd: Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural
- GA 4th: Special Political and Decolonization
- GA 5th: Administrative and Budgetary
- GA 6th: Legal

Other regular U.N deliberative bodies that may appear at conferences:

- Security Council
- IAEA: International Atomic Energy Agency
- High Commission for Refugees
- Commission on Human Rights
- Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice
- Commission on Status of Women
- African Union
- OIS: Organization of Islamic States
- UNEP: United Nations Environmental Programme

Crisis Situations

Crisis situations are a special feature of certain MUN conferences. Crises are usually thrown into the middle of a conference during regular debate. In crises, staff members simulate a hypothetical crisis based on real world political situations. Delegates are then expected to react as their country would and, as a committee, respond appropriately. There can be historical, modern, or futuristic crisis scenarios.

- In a **historical crisis**, delegates simulate international events of years past.
- The **modern crisis** consists of integrated crisis scenarios combining many potentially disastrous elements of the current international system. Delegates must quickly respond to situations in a way which will impact all other factors in the crisis, just as policymakers must do in the real world. Along the way numerous other situations, domestic and international, military and political, may arise that will compel the delegates' attention. All committees must work together to ensure the safety of the world and be prepared for anything along the way.
- In **futuristic crisis** scenarios, the dais will thoroughly prepare a background guide for the delegates with detailed information regarding the international, national, economic, social, or cultural characteristics of the world. This could include new nations, major wars, treaties, or a variety of other changes to the current global setting. Delegates will use this information and their creativity to solve new problems.

PREPARING FOR A CRISIS

Delegates are not alerted to the crisis which has been carefully planned by the conference staff until they arrive in committee, and even then, it may take a few hours before something happens. Part of the challenge of crises scenarios – and the fun – therefore lies in their unpredictability. The staff has the flexibility to change the crisis trajectory at any moment, creating new challenges or problems for the delegates to address. To prepare for a crisis, delegates should research real-life international crises. These may be “hot-spots” that frequently have crisis-type situations or regions that are prominent in current events. While researching, delegates should concentrate on “big picture” aspects of a country’s foreign policy, such as major policies, the countries allies, or specific areas of tension around the world.

RESPONDING TO THE CRISIS

In a crisis, time is of the utmost essence. Committees must pass resolutions or issue communiqués, documents which ask questions or convey information to the media, another country, another committee, or an individual, to stay up-to-date with the crisis. The speed with which the committee responds depends upon practical diplomatic solutions and discussions. Information will come from the crisis staff in many forms, including phone calls, newspaper articles, press releases, faxes, emails, satellites, etc. Delegates must be flexible and ready to react to different kinds of information and prioritize their reactions to each different element of the crisis. It is also important for delegates to attempt to know or predict the reactions of their fellow committee members based on their respective national policies or previous decisions in similar situations. In committee session, delegates should remember their allies but also consider unorthodox and creative solutions to the problems.

Parliamentary Procedures

Most committees will rely on some form of parliamentary procedure to organize the flow of debate. These rules can be difficult to memorize for novice delegates; with so many precise ways to articulate a delegate's position, remembering which motion to make can be confusing. The simplest way to improve a delegate's command of parliamentary procedure is through practice. The more it is used, the more comfortable a delegate will feel making motions before the body of the committee.

The order of debate is set by the dais establishing a **speakers list**. This is an order of countries who wish to speak on the topic at hand. Each speaker is allotted a certain amount of time to speak at the podium; that time limit is established by the committee at the beginning of the session. Between each speaker, the dais asks the committee if there are any **points of order** to consider. This is a chance for delegates to call for a caucus, vote, or any other matters they wish to address that is not part adding to the debate itself. Some matters require delegates to argue in favor for and against for a motion. This is referred to as 'speakers for and speakers against'. The dais will ask for volunteers and then any delegate may participate.

Voting is done by raising your countries' placard. Raise it high over your head silently. Do not wave it or move it around; this tends to annoy the dais who is trying to count them.

If you wish to speak, raise your placard and wait to be acknowledged by the dais. This is especially important during point of order options, getting on to a speakers list, and getting called up for a moderated cause. Very rarely may a delegate interrupt a speaker; check the chart on the next page for appropriate situations.

Conference handbooks typically include an overview of the form of parliamentary procedure used by the host school. Delegates should familiarize themselves with these various differences in order to maximize their performance in committee, as the dais members will immediately recognize those who are not following the rules. Most daises are more than willing to help guide delegates through debate and will prompt those less experienced to motion.

On the next page you will find a quick guide to parliamentary procedure designed for a typical conference.

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To do this:	You say this:	May you interrupt a speaker?	Must you be seconded?	Speakers for/Speakers against	What vote is needed?
Adopt the Agenda	"I move that we adopt _____ as the first item on the agenda"	No	Yes	2/2	Majority
Open a speakers list	"I move that we open the speakers list"	No	Yes	0/0	No Vote
Set the speakers time	"I move that we set the speaker's time at _____"	No	Yes	0/0	Majority
Set time limit or question limit for points of information	"I move that we set the time limit/question limit at _____"	No	Yes	2/2	Majority
Ask a question of the speaker	"Point of Information"	No	No	0/0	No Vote
Object to a procedural error	"Point of order"	Depends	No	0/0	No Vote
Ask a question on the committee's proceedings	"Point of parliamentary inquiry"	No	No	0/0	No Vote
Complain about noise, room temperature, etc.	"Point of personal privilege"	Depends	No	0/0	No Vote
Un/Moderated Caucus	"I move for a _____ minute un/moderated caucus to _____"	No	Yes	0/0	Majority
Close the speakers list	"I move that we close the speakers list"	No	Yes	2/2	Majority
Reopen the speakers list	"I move that we reopen the speakers list"	No	Yes	2/2	Majority
Table a topic to return to later	"I move that we close the speakers list"	No	Yes	2/2	Majority
Reopen a tabled topic	"I move that we reopen the tabled topic of _____"	No	Yes	2/2	Majority
Close debate	"I move that we close debate"	No	Yes	0/2	2/3
Vote on parts of a resolution separately	"I move that we divide the question"	No	Yes	2/2	Majority

Model U.N General Procedures

Introduction

- Chair will give an introduction
 - Tells about themselves, introduces assistant chair and other committee staff members
- Attendance
 - Chair will call each country by name
 - Respond with: “Present” or “Present and Voting”
 - Present-You may decide at the end of the conference whether or not you want to vote or abstain.
 - Present and voting- YOU MUST VOTE!
 - Chair asks, “Are there any points or motions on the floor at this time?”

Procedural Motions

- Adoption of the Agenda (order of topics to be discussed)
 - Someone makes a motion: “Motion to set the agenda at 2,1,3”
 - 2 speak for (includes the country who motioned)
 - 2 speak against
 - Requires a simple majority to pass
 - Passes: Move on to speakers time
 - Fails: Someone must motion for another agenda
- Setting the Speakers Time (length each delegate will have to speak during non-caucus debate)
 - Someone makes a motion: “Motion to set the speakers time at 45 Seconds”
 - Requires a simple majority to pass
 - Passes: Moves on to opening the Speakers List
 - Fails: Motion to set the speakers time at a different time
- Opening of the Speakers List
 - Someone makes a motion: “Motion to open the speakers list”
 - Sometimes 2 speakers for, 2 against
 - Requires a simple majority to pass
 - Usually it will pass
- Establishes the Speakers List
 - Chair: “All those wishing to be added to the speakers list please raise your placard.”
 - The Chair will then make a list on the overhead or on a board
 - It will remain open throughout the conference until someone motions to close the Speakers List
 - If you want to be added to the Speakers List after the initial opening, send a note up to the chair through a committee staffer, or a page

Speeches

- If no more motions remain, the chair will “recognize” the first country/delegate on the speakers list
- The country’s delegate then goes up and speaks

- If time remains after the delegates speech, the delegate can:
 - Yield remaining time to the Chair
 - Yield to points of information
 - Yield their remaining time to another delegation.
- In between each speech, the Chair will ask, “Are there any points or motions on the floor?”

Points or Motions (Made between speeches)

- Point of Order
 - Challenging the Chair
 - Be careful with these – You don’t want to insult the chair!
 - Point of Personal Privilege
 - Used to address issues with the settings
 - Point of Parliamentary Inquiry
 - Feel free to ask anything relevant- If you don’t understand something, ask
 - Right of Reply
 - If you feel you’ve been insulted, then you have a right to respond or “clear your name”
 - NOTE: Do not raise placard to motion for this! Send a note to the Chair requesting it, and they will deem it, if it is necessitated
 - Motion to Close/Reopen the Speakers List
 - Closing – Closing the speakers list will limit any more countries to be added to the list. It is done to bring the debate to a stop. It will require 2 speakers for, and 2 speakers against
 - Reopening – Done after the list has been closed, allowing more countries to be added. Will require 2 speakers for, and 2 speakers against
 - Both require a simple majority to pass
 - Motion to Table a Topic
 - Puts the topic aside until “later”
 - Requires 2 speakers for, and 2 speakers against
 - Requires 2/3 vote to pass
 - Motion for a ____ minute Un-Moderated Caucus
 - One of the most common motions
 - Requires a simple majority to begin.
 - Motion for a ____ minute Moderated Caucus
 - Requires a simple majority to begin.
 - Appeal of the Chair
 - Not a common motion to be made
 - Motion to Close the Debate
 - Used to end debate and move onto voting procedures
 - Requires 2 speakers for, and 2 speakers against
 - Requires 2/3 vote to pass
 - Motion to Suspend the Meeting
 - Used to break for lunch/dinner or for the day

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- Requires a simple majority to pass
- Motion to Adjourn the Meeting
 - Used to end the committee session
 - Requires a simple majority to pass

Voting Procedure

Voting procedure is taken VERY seriously. It is entered into after the speakers list has expire or a Motion to Close the Debate has been made.

- During voting, no one may leave or enter the room
 - If you are you of the room when voting procedure is started, you will be LOCKED out and not allowed to vote. This is not a good thing for your conference success.
- Each resolution will be voted for in turn
- You may motion for a roll call vote where each country is called in alphabetical order
- Each delegate must respond with one of five options
 - Yes
 - Yes with rights
 - No
 - No with rights
 - Abstain (not an option if you checked in with “present and voting” at the beginning of the committee session)
 - Voting with rights gives you a change to explain your choice.

Delegate Training

Like other sports or hobbies, developing the skills that will make you a successful delegate requires diligent practice and effective training. Delegates must rely on more than their knowledge of policy or international affairs – thorough research alone does not guarantee a productive delegate. The most industrious delegates in committee are the students who support their intelligence with practical speaking and listening habits. Some students will develop these skills more quickly than others, however, if you consider these four simple ideas before and during committee sessions, it will surely help you become an integral part of the committee and make your MUN experience more enjoyable.

BE COURTEOUS

Above all, every MUN delegate should be respectful, polite and exhibit pleasant behavior toward the dais and other delegations. Depending on the size of the committee, whether it's a large 200 member General Assembly committee or a smaller cabinet with 10 other delegates, students should always be mindful of the way they chose to present themselves to the rest of the group. Delegates should always give the speaker their undivided attention. Conversations should be taken outside committee so as not to distract others trying to listen. A delegate is more effective if he or she decide to make constructive comments in a few speeches rather than aggressively reprimanding the rest of the committee if he or she disagrees with the general consensus of the debate. It is the quality, not the quantity of speeches that is important. Delegates It is the quality of speeches that is important, not the quantity. Delegates should also remember it is never appropriate to openly criticize another delegate for his or her mistakes or incorrect policy, research, or information. The United Nations gathers people of all different backgrounds and interest together in an attempt to bridge differences and find solutions to global problems. If an MUN delegate ceases to be diplomatic and courteous to his or her fellow students, this negative behavior negates any point in simulating the actions of the United Nations.

BE A LEADER

There are generally two kinds of leaders in committee sessions. Some delegates are more comfortable speaking to the entire body, constantly addressing the other delegates from the front of the committee and easily moving among different circles during unmoderated caucuses. They are content to be the spokesperson for various working paper groups or for groups that share common ideologies. They can come from powerful countries such as the United Kingdom or smaller delegations such as Kazakhstan. These students frequently raise their placards to participate in debate and engage in parliamentary procedure. In the first few committee sessions, these delegates will be eager to move the committee forward by selecting a topic and then proposing specific actions to take towards working for the solution. In the later committee sessions, these delegates will relay the progression of their potential solutions to the rest of the committee and seek ways to combine similar ideas. The other leader is a quieter, behind-the-scenes collaborator. While equally well versed in their country's policy, they more comfortable working in small groups combining the ideas of others. They pay close attention to flow of debate in the committee

session and are always aware of what names are on the speaker's list, which delegates have practical ideas or which delegates are off policy and wasting time. In the first few committee sessions, these delegates will use unmoderated caucuses to gather others together to suggest ideas or solutions, eager to get right down to business. In later committee sessions, these delegates have integral parts in the resolution writing process and are especially good at refining and editing resolutions. The most effective delegates are those who can combine these two sets of characteristics. When a student is able to develop solid ideas in caucus sessions or private discussions in addition to convincingly advocate these perspectives before the committee, he or she will easily become respected leader among the rest of the delegates. Keep in mind however; this balance does not have to be equal. And as always, the more a delegate practices these skills, the more comfortable they will be in various committee sessions. Any form of expression, either one-on-one with another delegate or to the entire committee, of well-researched and practical ideas can elevate the level of debate.

BE A LISTENER

If half of a delegates' time in committee is spent talking to other delegations to build consensus and practice diplomacy, the other half, and arguably the most important half, is time spent listening. Honing active listening skills is an essential part of becoming a successful delegate. It is only by listening to the comments of the other committee members that you will follow the flow of debate and be able to contribute new solutions or ideas. Often times, students get so worried about delivering their speeches that they forget to consider what other speakers before them have conveyed. Prewritten speeches, while they can reassure a delegate, look forced and out of place because they usually do not tie in to the ideas or comments of previous speakers. If a delegate is recognized to address the committee and has been listening to the general flow of debate, their speech will easily elide with the suggestions or comments of other speaker and maintain the flow of debate rather than repeating ideas that have already been presented to the body.

BE SUCCINCT

Most of a delegate's chances to address the rest of the committee will come in short, thirty second comments and replies during moderated caucuses or from their place on the speakers list. While this may seem like an incredibly short time to convey a delegation's ideas, one or two succinct points chosen to deliver to the rest of the body is the most efficient way to move debate forward. Long winded speeches that cram a lot of facts together will not capture the attention of the rest of the body. During these speeches, delegates are more likely to lose interest before the speaker gets to his or her main ideas, if there is even time to do so before the clock runs out. When delivering a speech to the rest of the committee, a delegate should control the audiences' attention with direct eye contact, a calm tone of voice, a voice loud enough to be heard, a voice slow enough to be understood, and controlled body movement. If a delegate stumbles, he or she should pick up right where the speech left off and continue without getting embarrassed or flustered.

BE A PARTICIPANT

The main goal for attending a Model U.N conference is to participate in the committee sessions. The way that a delegate "wins" anything is by showing the dais and the judges that they know the material about the issues at hand and are good all around delegates.

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This cannot be done if you are a wallflower. Do not be afraid to speak! Get on the speakers list as soon as possible. During un-moderated caucuses, talk to other delegates about your ideas. Sponsor working papers and resolutions and get others to join your efforts. Be willing to step out of your comfort zone and be a part of the discussion; you will have much more fun if you do. The whole point of the Parkview High School Model U.N program is for you to have fun at conferences we attend. Have fun!

Researching

After a school receives their assigned country or countries and committee topics from the host school, each delegate should begin to research. Students may prefer to work individually or alone. Sometimes, MUN is offered as an elective course with time in class devoted to researching. However, typically in secondary and collegiate schools in the United States, MUN is usually a club sponsored by a teacher from the social studies, history, or government department. Regardless of the organization or size of the team, adequately researching for the conference is a crucial step to getting the most out of a MUN conference.

Researching for a conference can seem like a daunting task, especially for new delegates. With so many sources available on the internet, it is difficult to know which ones are reliable. Even respected sites such as the CIA World Factbook or the UN can be difficult to navigate. Most of the tips below cite internet websites; however, the most recent *World Almanac and Book of Facts* or a reputable print encyclopedia can also provide delegates with accurate information. Below are outlined five steps to successful and productive research.

This guide to research is meant to supplement the information found on the Worksheets for Delegates. Additionally, the Bibliography contains an extensive list of electronic and print resources.

STEP ONE: THE COUNTRY

Before even considering their assigned topic, delegates should familiarize themselves with basic facts about their country. While knowing the population, climate or natural resources of a country may seem irrelevant to certain topics, a general understanding of these facts will help delegates place their country in a great global context. Some good starting points for this research include the CIA World Factbook, the British Broadcasting Corporation News website, and the UN's links to government websites. Delegates should be careful not to spend too much time with this part of the research process since the majority of their time and efforts should concentrate on committee topics.

- **CIA World Factbook:** This site includes an introduction, geography, people, government, economy, transportation, communication, military and transnational issues relevant to the country. Printer friendly versions are available.
WEBSITE: <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/>
- **BBC Country Profiles:** After typing the name of the country in the search box (located in the top right corner) and selecting the link to the country profile, a brief overview and quick facts about the country are followed by detailed information regarding current leaders and current media coverage. Printer friendly versions are available.
WEBSITE: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/>
- **Permanent Missions to the United Nations:** From the Permanent Missions pull-down menu, select a country to connect to the official website of the permanent representative to the United Nations. Websites not in English will usually have a link to translate the text.
WEBSITE: <http://www.un.int/index-en/webs.html>

STEP TWO: INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Delegates should then attempt to understand how their country and government perceive the rest of the world. Even if this research does not seem relevant to committee topics, it helps delegates understand how to approach those topics and gives students valuable social studies knowledge and skills. When researching a country's international perspective or foreign policy, delegates should start with these questions:

- ❑ What is occurring in nearby countries or regions that could affect that country?
- ❑ What cultural, religious, and ethnic groups live in the country?
- ❑ How wealthy is the country and how is that wealth distributed among the population?
- ❑ What kind of natural resources, industries, or services does the country have and how do these affect domestic or foreign policy?
- ❑ Who are the country's allies/enemies and what are their common interests/disagreements?
- ❑ What historical events have affected the country's foreign policy and how have those events affected the current political environment?
- ❑ What international topics are most important to the country and its government?
- ❑ What current events are most important to the country and its government and how would the country analyze the cause and effect of those events?

To answer these questions, delegates can check the website of a government's mission to the UN. Secondary sources and a variety of local news sources accessible through searches on *Google* or *Yahoo!* will also provide delegates with access to myriad of several formal documents, press releases, national newspapers or magazines, etc.

STEP THREE: COMMITTEE TOPICS

After a delegate is comfortable with the above information, he or she should direct their attention to research on their committee's topics. Hosting schools constantly seek to plan topics which expose delegates to some of the most important international or historic problems that affect the global community. Each delegate will receive a background guide from the dais which can act as a good starting point for further research. Typical background guides include a bibliography that can point delegate to other useful cites. However, delegates should not rely solely on the information presented in the background guide. Good research includes an explanation of the problem or concern and its international significance supplemented by relevant facts, statistics, previous UN resolutions, treaties, and attempted solutions to problems related to the committee's topics. When researching for a topic, delegates can ask questions such as:

- ❑ What current events are related to the topics?
- ❑ What real-life problems are related to the topics?
- ❑ What solutions have been proposed or attempted for the problems?
- ❑ Are there any solutions or approaches to the problems that are especially trendy or popular among world leaders and other important figures?
- ❑ What have the United Nations and other international agencies already done about these problems and the topic?
- ❑ What has the country already done about the topic or related problems, if the topic or problems is directly related to a country?

- ❑ What prior solutions have been tried in the past and what problems have they encountered?
- ❑ What new solutions would work best to solve the problem?

To answer these and similar questions, delegates can use UN websites to find press releases, reports, resolutions, and other official documents with facts and countries' positions, *A Global Agenda*, *A Delegate's Guide to Preparation*, websites on specific topics, and news websites. The most useful resource for MUN is the *Global Agenda*, a book published by the United Nations Association of the United States of America. This book would be challenging for younger delegates but for more experienced MUN veterans, the detailed accounts would prepare delegates far beyond most material researched.

STEP FOUR: FOREIGN POLICY RELATING TO TOPICS

Once a delegate understands the history or development of the topic, he or she must know what their governments' policies regarding these issues. This step in researching is designed to help delegates understand their country's position relating to the topic. Delegates should also begin to envision ways their country can help solve the problem by working with other member states. This is frequently the most difficult part of MUN research, but creative thinking, and suggestions from sponsors and conference staff members can help lead delegates in the right direction. Delegates can ask these and similar questions:

- ❑ What current events in the country relate to this topic?
- ❑ Are there related topics on which a country takes a strong stance?
- ❑ Does the topic relate to any problem that a country is experiencing and what is that country already doing about the problem?
- ❑ What have local news sources reported about this topic or related problems?
- ❑ How is that different from what has been reported about this topic or related problems in other news sources?
- ❑ Has a country's representative at the United Nations already spoken about the topic? If so, what did the representative say?
- ❑ Have other leaders from a country spoken about the topic? If so, what did the leaders say?
- ❑ Has a country sponsored or supported any UN resolutions related to the topic?
- ❑ Do other countries take positions that the country would support or oppose? What are those positions and why does the country maintain these positions?

To answer such questions, delegates can consult the websites of foreign ministries, embassies, or other official websites, or UN press releases.

STEP FIVE: CURRENT EVENTS

One sign of a thoroughly prepared delegate is that he or she is familiar with important international events and can relate them to his or her government and committee topic. Reading or hearing about current events also builds historical, geographical, political, economic, and even cultural knowledge.

When students participate in MUN conferences, they are exposed to a new level of responsibility, the responsibility of an informed global citizen who understands how local decisions or events can have impacts that stretch across the globe. Even when not preparing for a MUN conference, students should be encouraged to read newspapers such as the *New*

York Times or the *Washington Post* or news magazines such as the *Economist*, watch the local evening news, or listen to National Public Radio to help inform them of current events. Delegates can think about the following questions when researching current events:

- ❑ What events are mentioned most frequently?
- ❑ Who are some of the most important people in the news, and why are they important?
- ❑ What countries or regions are mentioned most frequently, and what is important about those places or regions?
- ❑ What are the historical facts about the events, people, and places mentioned frequently?
- ❑ What themes or main ideas are mentioned most frequently?
- ❑ How would current events affect a country's view of the world and committee topics?
- ❑ How would a country analyze the cause and effects of current events?
- ❑ How are current events related to committee topics and discussions in committee?
- ❑ How would the answers to these questions change if local, rather than international or Western news sources are used, and vice versa?

EXAMPLE:

For example, if your topic is infectious diseases, you would want to start by identifying the most common infectious diseases, which sectors of the population are most vulnerable to getting them and why, what causes them, what role environmental conditions play in the spread of these diseases, etc. Look at how your country is affected by these diseases. What has been done in the past, both within your country and by the international community about these diseases? How have these responses worked and what can be done in the future?

In addition, you would want to become familiar with the availability of medical treatment, such as vaccine programs as well as other approaches to the problem, such as education programs that aim to inform the public of what they can do to prevent the spread of infectious diseases. Check out news sites to see if anything has been happening recently regarding these diseases.

TIPS:

- Run general web searches using the mail keywords related to your topic and the name of your country.
- Look for books and web sites that give a general overview of the topic as well as information on more specific aspects of your topic.
- Carefully select your internet sources. Keep in mind that in general, web sites are not always reliable sources of information.
- When searching libraries or the internet for information you might want to look for several keywords that are related to your topic. Sometimes, different spellings or alternative wordings may lead you to additional sources of information.
- One of the most valuable resources at your fingertips is the CTRL-F function!! Use this to scan really long documents for key words and then highlight them once they are printed.

Position Papers

A position paper is brief statement of a country's position on a committee's topics written and submitted to the committee dais, often before the conference begins. A position paper should indicate both the way a country views the committee's topics and what solutions the country will suggest in committee. Delegates might consider an introduction that expresses their governments' more general goals for the committee in relation to countries' international concerns. Like resolutions, however, the format and requirements for position papers are defined by individual conferences. Position papers should be concise (no longer than a page, double spaced) and focus specifically on what should be done to solve the problem. Delegates should contact their dais or other conference staff prior to the conference if they have any questions.

OUTLINE FOR A POSITION PAPER

I. Introduction

II. Topic I

- a. Statement of problem, its consequences, and any relevant previous actions taken by the committee and/or member state
- b. Suggested solutions to problem

III. Topic II

- c. Statement of problem, its consequences, and any relevant previous actions taken by the committee and/or member state
- d. Suggested solutions to problem

IV. Topic III

- e. Statement of problem, its consequences, and any relevant previous actions taken by the committee and/or member state
- f. Suggested solutions to problem

OTHER SUGGESTED SOURCES FOR POSITION PAPER WRITING

- *A Guide to Delegate Preparation* (see "Bibliography")
- http://65.109.42.74/mun0002/Crisis01/how_to_write_a_position_paper.htm
- <http://unausa.org/> (select "Education" – "Model U.N." – "Preparation" – "Position Papers")

SAMPLE POSITION PAPER

Sample portion of a position paper written by Russian Federation's delegate in the Security Council, regarding the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict:

Carter Hudgins, Russian Federation
UN Security Council, WMHSMUN XVIII
November 12, 2004

Position Paper

Israeli-Palestinian relations, being of great concern to this body and to the region's people, should be based on respect for previous UN Resolutions, especially Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. Resolution 242 of November 22, 1967, required several helpful actions that have yet to occur: an Israeli withdrawal from the "territories occupied in the recent conflict," a return of forces to the borders prior to the 1967 Six-Day War, and a guarantee of "the territorial inviolability and political independence of every State in the area." Resolution 338 of October 22, 1973, reaffirmed Resolution 242 and rightfully called for the cessation of "all military activity" related to the 1973 October War.

The present climate is destructive partially because of Israel's policy towards Palestinian extremists. While the Russian Federation deeply regrets the Palestinian people's suffering, the Security Council already affirmed states' right to defend their peoples in Resolutions 1269 (1999), 1368 (2001), and 1373 (2001). If Israeli actions threaten international peace and security without necessarily increasing Israeli security, however, the Security Council should request Israel to cease such provocations. The razing of Palestinian homes in Gaza during January of 2002 might be such a case.

Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat's difficulties in controlling the Palestinian population also prevent a peace agreement. Since Arafat can only contribute to the peace process if he can lead his people, Israel should end his confinement in Ramallah and avoid increasing the already excessive influence of groups such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad. The Russian Federation is deeply disturbed by two comments made during January, 2002, that further obstruct the Middle East peace process: Arafat's own self-spoken interest in being a "martyr" for Jerusalem, and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's publicly expressed regret for not killing Mr. Arafat in 1982. The Security Council should request Israel and Palestine to avoid such inflammatory language.

Resolution Writing

Typically the last committee session will be spent in voting session, when the committee will vote to approve submitted draft resolutions as formal documents. Therefore, during most of the conference, delegations will be working together to combine their ideas during moderated and unmoderated caucuses to address the topics of their individual committees. Working papers articulate these ideas. They are usually written in resolution form, but delegates should remember that a working paper does not become a draft resolution until it has a certain number of signatories and sponsors, specified by the conference rules of procedure, and has been named as a draft resolution by the dais. Remember that the goal of writing any draft resolution is to gather the consensus and support of delegates on ideas or problems that may or may not be important to their domestic agenda. You will need to use your diplomatic skills and teamwork to be successful. During voting session, the committee will decide which draft resolutions will pass and be approved as formal documents. A resolution itself has three main parts: the **heading**, the **preambulatory clauses**, and the **operative clauses**.

HEADINGS give basic information including the name of the committee that wrote the resolution, the resolution number, sponsors, and signatories.

PREAMBULATORY CLAUSES, or “preambs,” introduce a resolution, state its purpose, and put it into the context of prior UN actions. Commas separate preambulatory clauses, and the first phrase is underlined or italicized. Remember, friendly or unfriendly amendments cannot change preambulatory clauses once a resolution has been submitted. Therefore, it is important to choose your words wisely. Common phrases that begin with preambles include, but are not limited to:

Affirming	Expecting	Keeping in mind
Alarmed by	Expressing its appreciation	Noting with regret
Approving	Expressing its satisfaction	Noting with satisfaction
Aware of	Fulfilling	Noting with deep concern
Believing	Fully alarmed	Nothing further
Bearing in mind	Fully aware	Noting with approval
Appreciation	Fully believing	Observing
Cognizant	Further deploring	Realizing
Confident	Further recalling	Reaffirming
Contemplating	Guided by	Recalling
Convinced	Having adopted	Recognizing
Declaring	Having considered	Referring
Deeply concerned	Having devoted attention	Seeking
Deeply conscious	Having examined	Taking into account
Deeply convinced	Having studied	Taking into consideration
Deeply disturbed	Having heard	Taking note
Deeply regretting	Having received	Viewing with appreciation

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Desiring
Emphasizing

In support of
In view of

Welcoming

OPERATIVE CLAUSES are the action portion of a resolution. Depending on the nature and scope of the committee, operative clauses can request countries or international organizations to take action, request fact-finding missions, form new committees, define or clarify terms, suggest guidelines for economic, environmental, health or social issues, set international environmental, economic, health, or other standards (not applicable to all committees), clarify or discuss international law (not applicable to all committees), or propose or suggest changes to the organization of the UN or other organizations (not applicable to all committees). The United Nations Security Council is the only committee that has the power to require that countries take action or condemn a country. Each clause starts with a verb and addresses only one complete idea. Clauses are numbered and separated with semicolons. The last operative clause concludes with a period at the end of the resolution. Common words to start operative clauses include, but are not limited to:

Accepts	Encourages	Reaffirms
Affirms	Endorses	Recommends
Approves	Expresses its appreciation	Reminds
Authorizes	Expresses its hope	Regrets
Calls	Further invites	Requests
Calls upon	Further proclaims	Solemnly affirms
Condemns	Further reminds	Solemnly resolves
Congratulates	Further recommends	Strongly condemns
Confirms	Further requests	Supports
Considers	Further resolves	Takes note of
Declares Accordingly	Has resolved	Trusts
Deplores	Identifies	Transmits
Draws the attention	Notes	Urges
Designated	Notes with regret	Warns
Emphasizes	Proclaims	

*For more words and phrases visit <http://www.paxmun.org/calmun/resolutions.html>.

RULES AND VOCABULARY

- **Sponsors:** Sponsors are co-authors of the working paper and resolution who have significantly contributed ideas to the body of the resolution. At least two delegations must sponsor a working paper. A delegate's country name rather than personal name is recorded as the sponsor of a resolution (this goes for signatories as well).
- **Signatories:** Signatories are delegations who may or may not have contributed to the working paper; signatories do not even have to agree its contents. Signing the document simply means a delegation would like to discuss the ideas raised in the paper.
- **Friendly Amendments:** A friendly amendment is a change in a formally-introduced resolution (signed and approved by the dais) that is agreeable to all

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sponsors and presented to the dais only after all sponsors agree to it. Once approved by the dais they automatically become part of the resolution.

- **Unfriendly (Hostile) Amendments:** Unfriendly amendments propose a change that is not agreeable to all the sponsors of a resolution. Unfriendly amendments must have the signature of a set number (usually one fifth) of those delegations present and be approved by the dais before it can be formally introduced and voted upon.

RESOLUTION PROCEDURES

In order for a working paper to be introduced for consideration as a draft resolution, it must:

- Have 10% of member-states as sponsors (the total number will be given at the conferences)
- Be written in the standard U.N resolution format
- Have 15% of member-states as signatories (the total number will be given at the conference)
- Be submitted to and approved by the chair.
 - ✓ Once the resolution has been given approval by the chair, copies will be made and distributed to the floor. At that point, the chair will temporarily suspend the speakers' list so that the resolution may be read aloud into the record (usually by a sponsor). After reading the text, the chair will resume the speakers' list.

Friendly Amendments will be considered part of the resolution without a vote. Again, the chair will stop the debate to read the amendment into the record.

Unfriendly (Hostile) Amendments require 5% of the committee members as sponsors and an additional 5% as signatories and no approval of the chair. The amendments will be voted on during voting procedure.

TABLING A SUBSTANTIVE MOTION:

A member-state may move to table a draft resolution or hostile amendment at any time after its introduction to the floor.

- Once tabled, the resolution or amendment can no longer be discussed in formal debate and will not be considered during voting procedure.
- A motion to table requires a second, one speaker for and one against, and a majority vote to pass.
- A motion to remove a draft resolution or amendment from the table (reinstate it to be considered again_ has the same requirements as a motion to table

WITHDRAWAL OF A RESOLUTION:

- A resolution may be withdrawn if all the sponsors and the chair approves.
- A resolution may be reintroduced to the floor. However, it must once again collect the required number of sponsors and signatories.

Sample Working Paper

The following pages include some examples of working papers and draft resolutions submitted by former delegates. Remember that each conference will specify the preferred format for these documents, yet no matter what conference you attend, each will have the three parts explained above.

The dais will assign the number according to the topic and the order in which they are received

Does NOT need to be listed alphabetically

WORKING PAPER 1.1

Sponsors: United Kingdom, Poland, United States of America,
Signatories: Columbia, Canada, Argentina, Germany

The Economic and Social Council,

Horrified by the destruction caused by the HIV/AIDS virus, especially its disparate impact on women and children,

Commas separate preambulatory clauses.

Believing that current HIV/AIDS health programs do not sufficiently address the special needs of women and children,

Semicolons separate operative clauses.

1. Encourages all U.N member states to increase their funding for international efforts to fight HIV/AIDS;
2. Request that the U.N and the World Health Organization collaborate to design innovative new programs to better address the special status of women and children.

Operative clauses are numbered

Please list alphabetically

Sample Draft Resolution

2.6 indicates that this is the second topic of the committee and the sixth draft resolution submitted to the dais.

DRAFT RESOLUTION 2.6

Sponsors: Republic of Argentina, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka
Signatories: Bhutan, Canada, Kingdom of Jordan, Philippines,

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling the creation of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries program in September of 1996 by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank,

Believing that this program, which was amended in July 1999 to provide additional support to less developed nations, has not significantly reduced external debt burden,

Saddened by the fact that developing nations now spend thirteen dollars on debt repayment for every one dollar they receive in grants, resulting in situations such as Nigeria’s, whose President has observed that by 1985 his nation had borrowed approximately five billion dollars and currently owes twenty-eight billion dollars to creditors despite the country’s already completed payment of more than sixteen billion dollars,

Recalling the statement of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan on July 28, 2000, when he said, “I urge the donor countries and the international financial institutions to cancel the official debts of poor countries,” as well as UN General Assembly Resolution 55/216, which encouraged innovative means of debt relief, and other UN documents concerning debt relief,

1. *Calls for* an immediate halt to international debt payments until an international settlement panel consisting of less developed nations and a representative of the Secretary-General of the UN, with representatives of international financial institutions and creditors observing, has determined a more proper structure for the international debt of less developed nations;
2. *Strongly urges* that this panel consider ways to reform the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries relief effort, especially by allow lesser developed member states’ governments greater freedom in budgeting for poverty reduction and social spending;
3. *Further calls for* debt relief programs to involve less developed nations currently ignored by debt relief programs, for less developed nations to have a greater voice in the process of debt relief and access to lowered interest rates, and for international financial organizations and developed member states to strongly consider an immediate forgiveness of debts of lesser developed member states;
4. *Recommends* that in instances in which member states face significant developmental challenges such as infectious diseases, natural disasters, or violent conflicts, the international debts of those nations be forgiven by all creditors, including member states and international financial institutions.

Preambulatory clauses are indented and italicized or underlined.

I. Heading

II. Preambulatory Clauses

III. Operative Clauses

Use a period to end a resolution.

Operative clauses numbered and the first word is italicized or underlined.

Sample Draft Resolution

DRAFT RESOLUTION

Sponsors: Indian Union, People’s Republic of China, Russian Federation,
Signatories: Canada, Honduras, Republic of Argentina, Turkmenistan

The Security Council

Saddened by the fact that Angola has been disturbed by a civil war since its independence in 1975, at which point the Marxist-Leninist Popular Movement of Angola and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) clashed over control of the country,

Recalling the 1994 Lusaka Protocol, by which the government of Angola and UNITA, which since 1975 had lost much ground in the civil war, agreed to a ceasefire and demilitarization of the country that was never implemented,

Determined to end Angola’s civil war, which has resulted in the displacement of more than four million people and the present plight of more than one million, eight hundred thousand people who require humanitarian aid for survival,

Hoping to assist the former combatants of the conflict that are depending on the international community for food and other supplies to return to civilian life, as well as to respect the request of the government of Angola that the peace process to remain within the control of Angola,

1. *Praises* the government of Angola and UNITA for adhering to the terms of the April 4, 2002 ceasefire and previous agreements, including the 1994 Lusaka Agreement, especially those agreements’ calls for the demobilization and integration of UNITA forces into government forces and civil society;

2. *Encourages* the UN Security Council to continue to allow members of UNITA free travel throughout the country based upon UNITA’s continued support for the April 4, 2002 ceasefire and past peace agreements, as well as UNITA’s continued cooperation with the UN Security Council appointed sanctions monitoring panel;

3. *Implores* all member states to contribute additional personnel and materials to the UN Mission in Angola (UNMA), and to provide additional humanitarian aid to former combatants, the government of Angola, and others in need;

4. *Notes* the UN’s commitment to the sovereignty of Angola and importance of the rebuilding of the country remaining in the control of Angola, especially the need to limit the role of this body and other outside forces in the joint commission overseeing the restructuring of the Angolan government;

5. *Asks* that on January 10, 2003, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General serving as the head of the UNMA inform this body of Angola’s status and additional humanitarian aid and international support needed

Please list
alphabetically

II. Preambulatory Clauses

III. Operative Clauses

Only the UN Security Council
has the power to demand
countries to action or
condemn actions.

The U.N System

Navigating the complex web of UN and other websites is an important research skill. Outlined below are some of the most important UN agencies and committees and information about them including their websites.

UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- **Purpose:** Consider all matters of international importance not addressed by the Security Council and make recommendations to member states and UN agencies.
- **Membership:** All member states.
- **Website:** <http://www.un.org/ga/59/>

Committees

- **First Committee, Disarmament and International Security**

<http://www.un.org/ga/59/first/index.html>

- **Third Committee, Social, Cultural, and Humanitarian**

<http://www.un.org/ga/59/third/index.html>

- **Fourth Committee, Special, Political and Decolonization**

<http://www.un.org/ga/59/first/index.html>

- **Sixth Committee, Legal**

<http://www.un.org/law/cod/sixth/59/sixth59.htm>

UN SECURITY COUNCIL

- **Purpose:** Provide for the maintenance of international peace and security, using force if necessary, in the name of the UN.
- **Membership:** 5 permanent members (US, UK, France, Russia, China) and 10 non-permanent members chosen by the UN General Assembly on a two-year basis. Currently, the non-permanent members are Argentina, Benin, Brazil, Denmark, Greece, Japan, Philippines, Romania, United Republic of Tanzania, and Algeria.
- **Website:** <http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/>

THE UN AND MUN: SOME DIFFERENCES

While every delegate strives to capture the spirit of the UN as he or she participates in MUN, students and sponsor should realize that some differences will always exist between the typical practices of the UN and the established rules of procedure for MUN. These differences arise due to the shorter time frame of most MUN conferences (typically one to four days). At other times, conference hosts may only have access to the public portions of UN operations, using their best judgment to interpret other scenarios. The educational needs of students should always be the highest priority for host schools to ensure that delegates get the most out of their MUN experience.

The Glossary

Abstain - During a vote on a substantive matter, delegates may abstain rather than vote yes or no. This generally signals that a state 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 of 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 as a whole.

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

Bloc - A group of countries in a similar geographical region or with a similar opinion on a particular topic.

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

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 of their roles as ambassadors.

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

Delegation - The entire group of people representing a member state or observer in all committees at a particular Model UN conference.

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 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 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 into a resolution.

Gavel - The tool, shaped like a small wooden hammer, that 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.

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 speakers' list.

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 191 member states. The only internationally recognized state that is not a member state is the Holy See.

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 of time, enabling a freer exchange of opinions than would be possible in 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 bloc. See our Charts of Rules and Motions.

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 debate. After it is approved by the Director and introduced by the committee, it is put "on the floor" and may be discussed.

Operative clause - The part of a resolution which 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 of time.

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. See our Charts of Rules and Motions.

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 - Having to do with the way a committee is run, as opposed to the topic being discussed. All delegates present must vote on procedural matters and may not abstain.

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 to begin debate, and a majority of members to 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.

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

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 on a substantive vote.

Rules of Procedure - The rules by which a Model UN committee is run. See our Charts of Rules and Motions.

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

Secretariat - The most senior staff of a Model UN conference.

Secretary General - The leader of a Model UN conference.

Signatory - A country that wishes 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 some minimum number of sponsors and signatories for a draft resolution to be approved.

Simple majority - 50% plus one of the numbers 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 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.

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 blocs and to write working papers and draft resolutions.

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.

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 bloc - The period at the end of a committee session during which delegates vote on proposed amendments and draft resolutions. Nobody may enter or leave the room during voting bloc.