North American MUN
Parliamentary Procedure Guide

As Used In:

Massachusetts Institute of Technology Model United Nations Conference

Model United Nations Of Seoul

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Introduction

North American Model United Nations Parliamentary Procedure has many different small facets for delegates to explore. This guide will try to cover all possible situations at a Model United Nations conference for delegates new to the North American style of debate. However, the best way to learn parliamentary procedure is to try it in a committee session. We have also found that [watching a session](#) can facilitate learning by example.

Throughout this guide, please keep in mind that the reasoning behind the rules of parliamentary procedure is to help facilitate civil debate between delegates. Thus, parliamentary procedure should be used to encourage free and rapid debate in committee. Chairs are also not allowed to make motions or points or force any procedural items on their committees. Thus, it is the delegates' job to make motions and points for the committee.

It is advised that Chairs take the role of a guiding presence for the delegates, to help them to gain the most of their Model United Nations experience. The Chairs should enforce the Procedures and Rules without being overbearing or excessively strict, with the purpose in mind to ensure a smooth flow of debate and a healthy environment for discussion and resolution-writing. The presence of the Chairs is essential for providing a safe and fair environment for the delegates to be able to speak their mind, rather than to maintain a discipline in the committee that scares delegates from sharing ideas.

Pre-conference Preparation

Before a conference, delegates are expected to prepare for the conference by reading the background guides for the topics of their

respective committees and by reading this guide to prepare for the rules of procedure for North American-style committees. Delegates are also expected to research their respective committees to get a sense of their place and purpose within the larger United Nations structure. By researching the committee itself, delegates will be familiar with what types of provisions can and cannot be established in resolutions.

Position Papers

Most conferences require each delegate to write a position paper on the topics selected for debate. Position papers are short explanations of the stances held by the delegates' countries in regards to the committee topics. A good position paper should include the recent history of actions, current status, and preferred actions by a country for each of the committee's topics. Typically, there is a short introduction to the delegate's country's political and socioeconomic status at the beginning of the position paper and each topic is discussed separately. Each conference will have it's own requirements for position papers but position papers usually range from one to four pages total.

Position papers are useful for delegates in that it allows delegates to focus their research. Instead of delegates collecting a large amount of unordered notes, position papers help to condense information needed for a conference onto a few sheets of paper. This can then be referred to or handed out at the conference. Some conferences also give awards for the best written position papers and most conferences have position papers as a requirement for other awards. Position papers are useful for chairs in that it allows chairs to narrow down the list of the best delegates before the conference, and creates a committee where most delegates can be depended on to be familiar with the topics selected.

Dress Code

Typical dress code for Model UN conferences is western business attire. Thus, conference attire is usually business formal or business casual. Some conferences will also encourage wearing outfits typical of a delegate's country (e.g. a hijab for female delegates representing a Muslim country) though it is never required.

Male

_. Business Suit _. Jacket and dress pants, slacks or khakis _. Dress shirt, sweater and/or vest _. Dress shoes and loafers
Female
_. Business suit _. Dress _. Dress slacks with blouse _. Business skirt with blouse or sweater _. Dress shoes

Unacceptable attire: T-shirts, jeans, tank tops, tennis shoes, shorts, and other casual attire.

Committee Flow

Beginning of the Conference

At the beginning of the first session of a conference, each member of the dias typically introduces themselves to the committee. If position papers haven't been collected yet, this is usually the time they are collected. Chairs may also give a presentation about parliamentary procedure or about the topics selected for discussion. If the chair wishes to run the committee differently from official parliamentary procedure, the chair should also state so at the beginning of the first session.

Roll Call

Each committee session will start with a roll call by the chair. The roll call is used to determine which delegates are present for each committee session and therefore determine the number of delegates required for a passing motions, resolutions, and amendments. The roll call will be conducted by calling every country in the committee in alphabetical order. When called, the delegate should respond by raising their placards and stating either "present" or "present and voting" clearly. Delegates who arrive late should send a note to the chairs with their country name and whether they are "present and voting". Observers, such as NGOs or countries without a seat on the committee, may not call "present and

voting." The difference between "present and present" and "voting" is explained in the [Voting Procedures section](#).

Voting

There are two kinds of votes: substantive and procedural. Substantive votes are for whether a committee wishes to pass resolutions and amendments and are done in voting procedures. Most of a committee's voting is procedural - votes on motions concerning the parliamentary procedure of a committee. Almost all motions require the committee to vote on whether or not to accept them. These procedural votes require that every delegate, including observers, that is present in committee vote either yes or no; abstentions are not allowed. Depending on the number of delegates who vote yes and the proportion required to pass the vote, the committee will either pass or reject the motion.

Some motions require that delegates speak for or against the motion before voting. Volunteers who speak for or against the motion should give a good faith effort to promote their positions in the time allotted. The time allowed for speaking is at the chairs' discretion. If there are multiple speakers for and against the motion, then the chair should alternate the speakers' positions (e.g. For, Against, For, Against).

For information about substantive voting on resolutions and amendments, see the [Voting Procedures section](#).

Setting the Agenda

During the first committee session, the body must set the agenda to begin debate on one of the topics. At this time, a delegate should make a motion stating, "The country of [name] moves to place [topic A] first on the agenda, followed by [list of other topics] in that order." The motion to set the agenda requires two speakers for and two speakers against as well as a 50% majority vote to pass.

During the conference, a delegate may also motion to set the agenda after the conclusion of [Voting Procedures](#) or after a topic has been tabled.

Speakers' List

The speakers' list is the default status of each committee session after it is opened. The speakers' list is almost always used for general debate about a topic. Sometimes, a speakers' list may also be opened to discuss setting the agenda. After the committee starts a new topic, a

delegate must motion to open the speakers' list by stating "the country of [name] moves to open the speakers' list on the topic of [topic name] with a maximum speaking time of [length]." Discussion of subtopics should be done using a [Moderated Caucus](#) and not by creating a new speakers' list.

During the speakers' list, delegates also have the option to change the maximum length of each speech. The recommended maximum length of each speech is between 45 seconds and 2 minutes. Additionally, when the committee is on the speakers' list and the speakers' list is empty, the chair will ask for delegates to add themselves to the speakers' list. Any delegate may volunteer themselves to be added onto the speakers' list; however, a delegate may not volunteer another delegate nor may a delegate add him or herself to the list when he or she is already on it. When the chair is not actively soliciting delegates to be added to the speakers' list, a delegate who wishes to be on the speakers' list should send a note to the chair stating the delegate's country and the intent to be added to the speakers' list. Additionally, when a committee is on a speakers' list but the speakers' list is empty and no more delegates wish to speak, the committee automatically moves to [Voting Procedures](#) unless more delegates are added.

Delegates who are speaking on the speakers' list have the opportunity to yield their speeches when they are finished speaking. Before beginning his or her speech, yields should be announced to the chair. Technically, There are four kinds of yields: yield to the chair, yield to another delegate, yield to questions, and yield to comments.

- Yielding to the chair is to give extra time after the speech back to the chair, which essentially forfeits any extra time.
- Yielding to a delegate allows another delegate to make a speech after the current delegate has spoken. The second delegate must yield to the chair after his or her speech. The second delegate's speech must finish in the time remaining from the original first delegate.
- Yielding to questions gives the committee a chance to pose questions to the delegate and have the delegate answer. The chair will pick delegates who wish to ask questions. The time to ask a question does not count to the speaker's remaining time, but the answer does.
- Yielding to comments gives the committee a chance to make comments about the speech. The chair will pick delegates who wish to make comments. Any comments will count to the remaining amount of time for a speaker.

It is under the chair's discretion whether there is enough time for a yield to delegate, questions, or comments. If there is not enough time, or a

delegate does not state a preference, the remaining time is yielded to the chair. Yields cannot be done in [Moderated Caucus](#) or on [speeches for or against votes](#).

See [Speaking Tips](#).

Moderated Caucus

Delegates who wish for committee debate to move faster or to focus debate on a particular subtopic may move for a moderated or unmoderated caucus. A moderated caucus is like the speakers' list but without following a preset list of speakers and it does not allow yields. When a delegate motions for a moderated caucus, the delegate should state "the country of [country name] motions for a moderated caucus on the topic of [topic name] of total length [length], speaking time [length]." The recommended maximum speaking time is between 30 seconds to 1 minute. The recommended caucus duration is between 5 and 20 minutes. Once the moderated caucus elapses, the committee automatically moves back to speakers' list.

See [Speaking Tips](#).

Unmoderated Caucus

Unmoderated caucuses are also available to allow a delegate to call for informal meeting sessions. During unmoderated caucus, delegates are free to move about the room and converse freely. It should be used primarily to allow exchanging of ideas and resolution writing. It is also acceptable to use it as a break during sessions at the chairs' discretion. When motioning for an unmoderated caucus, delegates should state a reason for the caucus and the duration of the caucus. The recommended unmoderated caucus duration is between 5 and 15 minutes.

Speaking Tips

Keep in mind that the majority of speaking, be it from the speakers' list or in moderated or unmoderated caucuses, should be done with the goal of airing the body's opinions on the subject matter and then on working together to draft resolutions to address the topic. The best speeches are succinct, on topic, and presents the correct viewpoint of the delegate's country.

There are many resources on the [Internet](#) that help with public speaking.

Voting Procedures

Voting for resolutions is different from voting for motions. To begin the voting process, a delegate needs to motion for a Closure of Debate. The closure of debate requires two delegates to speak against closure and a 2/3 vote to close debate and begin voting procedures. Once voting procedures begin, there are only three possible motions: division of the question, order of voting, and roll call vote.

- Division of the question allows delegates to split up resolutions into smaller resolutions to be voted on separately. The smaller resolutions would all have the same original preambulatory clauses but would have different operative clauses. Note that the operative clauses themselves cannot be changed, only separated. This is useful if delegates like parts of a resolution but not other parts.
- Order of voting allows delegates to change the order that resolutions are voted in. Normally, resolutions are voted in the order that they are received. This is useful for committees that allow only one resolution to be passed.
- Roll call votes allow for a more exact tally of the number of Yes, No, and Abstain votes for resolutions and amendments. Delegates are called by their country's alphabetical order to vote Yes, Yes with Rights, No, No with Rights, Abstain, or Pass. If a delegate passes, the chair will call the delegate again at the end of the list where the delegate must say either Yes or No. With Rights means that a delegate wishes to explain his or her vote, in which case the delegate will receive time for a short speech after the entire committee votes. With Rights should only be used for a voting choice that is unexpected by the committee. Roll call votes can be motioned for before voting; if a normal voting is less than two thirds for or against by the committee, the committee must re-vote using a roll call vote.

Normal resolution voting is done like regular votes, with all delegates raising their placards for voting for, against, and abstain.   For a resolution to pass, the resolution must receive a Yes vote by a majority of members present. Delegates who called in "present and voting" may not abstain on the substantive votes. On the chairs' discretion, only one resolution may be passed per topic.

Unfriendly amendments are voted on in the order they were received immediately before the resolution in question (friendly amendments are already included in resolutions).

See Resolutions and Amendments.

Points

There are several points that delegates can make. All points can be made anytime when a delegate is not speaking. Points of personal privilege and right of reply can interrupt a speaker.

- Point of Parliamentary Inquiry - This is used when a delegate has a question about proper parliamentary procedure or the current procedural status of the committee.
    - What is a roll call vote?
    - What is the maximum speaking time for this caucus?
    - How much time is left in the caucus?
    - When will printed resolutions be distributed?
- Point of Order - This is used when a delegate believes the chair has made a mistake and not followed proper parliamentary procedure.
    - There should have been a vote for the motion
- Point of Information?Clarification - This is used for asking about information relating to the topic at hand (and not about parliamentary procedure)
    - What is the difference between antiviral and antibiotic medicine?
    - What powers does this committee have?
    - Should there be an apostrophe in "it's" when the resolution states "It's members..."?
- Point of Personal Privilege - This is used when there is a discomfort in the room that impairs the ability of a delegate to participate in debate.
    - I cannot hear the speaker
    - The room is too hot
    - Can this delegate please restate his point of information?
- Right of Reply - This is presented with a raising of the placard, used when a delegate has insulted another delegate, and the Chair should be aware of the situational context so as to grant this Right of Reply as soon as it is necessary.
    - Iran is a peaceful nation looking to acquire peaceful applications of nuclear energy

Resolutions And Amendments

Overview

UN committees formally express their decisions and rationales

through resolutions. Resolutions are written in committee to address the topics that your chairs have selected. The resolutions should be the end result of verbal debate in committee; thus, resolutions should be jointly written by delegates during committee with input from the rest of the committee. Note that resolutions that were written in full or in part from outside of the committee may not be submitted. Handwritten resolutions should be submitted to the dais, and the Chair will return the resolution to the committee once it has been typed and formatted. Alternatively, if a conference allows personal computers, it may be emailed to the chair.

Format

Each resolution must have a total number of sponsors and signatories of at least a fifth of the whole committee. Sponsors are delegates who actively participated in writing the content of the resolution. Signatories are delegates who support debating the resolution. This is not an endorsement by any means, as one could act a signatory for the purpose of debating against the resolution and exposing its perceived flaws. Please note that above the minimum requirements, having additional sponsors or signatories does not add any weight or special precedence to the resolution.

All resolutions follow a very similar format consisting of a header, preambulatory clauses, and operative clauses. The header consists of the committee name, list of sponsors, list of signatories, and topic name. The preambulatory clauses consist of the reasons why the committee is addressing the aforementioned topic and the background of the topic. The operative clauses consist of actions the committee recommends undertaken by countries, NGOs, the UN, and other international organizations.

The whole resolution should read like a sentence using commas and semicolons where applicable. Each preambulatory clause starts with a participle (preambulatory phrase e.g., "Affirming", "Keeping in mind") and ends in a comma. Each operative clause starts with an underlined present-tense verb (operative phrase e.g., "Calls upon", "Condemns") and ends with a semicolon. Unlike preambulatory clauses, the operative clauses are numbered and may be expanded into sub-headings in the format of an outline. There should be a period at the end of the last operative clause. A list of preambulatory and operative clauses is provided for your reference in Appendix B. Also, please see the sample resolution in Appendix A for an example of how a document should look like.

Introducing a Resolution

A resolution is introduced to the floor with a motion as follows: "The delegate from [country] moves to introduce Draft Resolution X.Y", where X is the topic number and Y is the number of resolutions already introduced plus one. By this pattern, the first resolution introduced on the first topic will be Resolution 1.1, and the third resolution introduced on the second topic will be Resolution 2.3. After the motion, the chair will allow for a short reading time with a length at the chairs' discretion. Depending on the conference, the chair may allow a speech and/or question-answer session by one or all of the sponsors to describe the resolution. Once introduced, a resolution may be debated in either moderated or unmoderated caucus, and will be either displayed via projector, distributed in paper form, or both. Until a resolution is passed, delegates must always refer to them as Draft Resolutions.

Amendments

A motion to amend a resolution may be made once the resolution has been introduced. However, amendments can only apply to operative clauses; preambulatory clauses may not be amended. An amendment may add to, delete from, or modify the existing resolution. Only a total of one-tenth sponsors and signatories are required for an unfriendly amendment. At the chairs' discretion, amendments that affect only spelling, grammar, typographical errors, or other editorial considerations may be automatically included into the resolution. An amendment is friendly if it is supported by every sponsor of the original resolution and is brought into effect immediately after being introduced. An amendment is unfriendly if it is not supported by every sponsor of the original resolution. Unfriendly amendments are applied to a resolution with a majority vote. See Voting Procedures.

Awards

Awards are given to the best delegates in committee; the number of which depends on the conference. Awards are decided upon by the chairs at the end of the conference. Participants will be judged during committee sessions on several factors:

- The number of, eloquence, and content of their speeches
- The number of, contribution to, writing style, and content of sponsored resolutions and amendments
- Mastery of parliamentary procedure and the topics of the

committee

- The style and content of position papers, if applicable

Appendix A: Security Council Response to September 11

Below is a famous real resolution passed by the UN Security Council in response to the September 11 attacks. Model UN resolutions should be formatted like this, though usually much longer.

Resolution 1368 (2001)

Adopted by the Security Council at its 4370th meeting, on 12 September 2001

The Security Council,

Reaffirming the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations,

Determined to combat by all means threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts,

Recognizing the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence in accordance with the Charter,

1. Unequivocally condemns in the strongest terms the horrifying terrorist attacks which took place on 11 September 2001 in New York, Washington, D.C. and Pennsylvania and regards such acts, like any act of international terrorism, as a threat to international peace and security;

2. Expresses its deepest sympathy and condolences to the victims and their families and to the people and Government of the United States of America;

3. Calls on all States to work together urgently to bring to justice the perpetrators, organizers and sponsors of these terrorist attacks and stresses that those responsible for aiding, supporting or harbouring the perpetrators, organizers and sponsors of these acts will be held accountable;

4. Calls also on the international community to redouble their efforts to prevent and suppress terrorist acts including by increased cooperation and full implementation of the relevant international anti-terrorist conventions and Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 1269 (1999) of 19 October 1999;

5. Expresses its readiness to take all necessary steps to respond to the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, and to combat all forms of terrorism, in accordance with its responsibilities under the Charter of the United Nations;

6. Decides to remain seized of the matter.

Appendix B: Preambulatory and Operative Phrases

From:

Sample Preambulatory Phrases

Affirming	Expecting	Having studied
Alarmed by	Expressing its appreciation	Keeping in mind
Approving	Expressing its satisfaction	Noting with regret
Aware of	Fulfilling	Noting with deep concern
Bearing in mind	Fully alarmed	Noting with satisfaction
Believing	Fully aware	Noting further
Confident	Fully believing	Noting with approval
Contemplating	Further deploring	Observing
Convinced	Further recalling	Reaffirming
Declaring	Guided by	Realizing
Deeply concerned	Having adopted	Recalling
Deeply conscious	Having considered	Recognizing
Deeply convinced	Having considered further	Referring
Deeply disturbed	Having devoted attention	Seeking
Deeply regretting	Having examined	Taking into account
Desiring	Having heard	Taking into consideration
Emphasizing	Having received	Taking note
		Viewing with appreciation
		Welcoming

Sample Operative Phrases

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

Appendix C: Points and Motions

Point/Motion	Vote	Speakers for/against	Comments
Point of Personal Privilege	None	None	In order at any time
Point of Order	None	None	
Point of Information/Clarification	None	None	
Point of Parliamentary Inquiry	None	None	
Right of Reply	None	None	Chairs' Discretion
Moderated Caucus	1/2	None	Requires topic, duration, and speaking time
Unmoderated Caucus	1/2	None	Requires topic and duration
Setting the Agenda	1/2	2/2	
Introduction of Resolution / Amendment	None	None	Made by sponsor
Tabling / Resumption of Debate	2/3	2/2	
Opening Debate / Speakers' List	None	None	Chairs' Discretion
Close Debate / Speakers' List	2/3	0/2	Moves directly to voting procedures
Order of Voting	1/2	2/2	
Division of the Question	1/2	2/2	
Roll Call Vote	1/2	None	Automatically passed if a vote was too close to call
Suspension of Rules	1/2	None	
Suspension of Meeting	1/2	None	
Adjournment of Meeting	1/2	None	Used only for the last meeting

Appendix D: Sample Position Paper

This is a sample position paper written by a delegate of Portugal for the UNSC committee for the topics of Cyberwarfare and Bioterrorism.

Committee: UNSC

Country: Portugal

School Name: ****

Delegate Name: ****

MITMUNC 2011 Position Paper

The people of Portugal would like to open by saying that our position on terrorism is absolutely clear cut and not negotiable. As we said to general assembly in December 2007, "Terrorism is criminal and unjustifiable in any circumstances." Here, we believe that most parties concur. In the past Portugal has not been majorly attacked biologically or through cyber warfare, yet there is significant precedent to believe such an attack could happen, and Portugal has been substantially worried in the past about the fact that echoes of such attacks, especially biological attacks, reverberate over large areas, not necessarily contained by the original target. In the past we have signed numerous drastic anti-nuclear proliferation resolutions, and anti-weaponization resolutions. We see cyber and biological threats as having the potential to be just as harmful and unpredictable as other weapons of mass destruction, and in some cases having more long term affects. We therefore assert that action just as drastic must be taken.

Cyber Warfare

Cyber warfare, Portugal believes, is the intentional destruction of a nation's electronic data or programs by any organization existing outside that nation, be it a small private group or a government, on a scale large enough to incite conventional violence. Due to the inherent destructive nature of cyber warfare in its ability to not only cause physical harm to people and resources but also to damage industry and permanently destroy essential information, we cannot condone this warfare on any account. At this point in human history, it is safe to say that a world wide web is very new and complicated thing. Emerging for public use really only in the mid 1990s, this is a gift and a weapon. We know not what the true dangers are of open cyber networks, and believe that to keep regulations loose would be a huge mistake. The Security Council was founded to keep nations secure, and to continue to leave doors open to hackers is simply not that secure way of the future. Today, the era of wiki leaks is upon us, and offers much insight into the potential threats of the nets. We have, of yet, remained fairly untouched by the rampant spreading of classified information, and yet we realized that in some cases the only thing between our confidential military documents is a few lines of code. We do not want the world to read these documents on account of embarrassing information, but rather on account of positions, plans, and data that could put thousands of lives are at risk. But how can we close a dangerous system? Portugal proposes that governments work not off the internet, but off an entirely separate network. This way, people not directly involved in government already will have no access to government computers. There must be the

passwords and defense mechanisms now in place as well, on top of these new networks. Not only does this make governments more secure from threats from their own people or from other NGOs, but also safe from other governments.

Bioterrorism

Portugal's stance on bioterrorism is similar to its stance on cyber warfare in that we believe that it is our duty, as a United Nations, to do everything in our power to prevent any form or stage of bioterrorism from taking place, as it is a topic with little studied consequences and essentially unknown yet widespread potential. The scariest piece of it is the development of new organisms never before tested by Mother Nature. We don't profess to be able to properly control all these organisms, many of which could be created by organizations with no valuable resources put into the research of containment, control, and prevention. If we don't know how to use most of these to begin with, than we can certainly not hope to be able to use them responsibly, at least for the time being. The nature of the problem is about spreading and chain reactions, and country boarders serve as no limit to that. Portugal believes that action on the part of the U.N. is essential, because if this problem is left to sovereign governments, and one decides against taking firm preventive action, disease and infection from an attack on or by that state could spread to every country on the continent, in the world even. The preventative actions that Portugal recommends include, but are not limited to, resolving to not produce or develop bioweapons of any kind in a given country by any person(s) for any purpose, developing instead modern technology that non-invasively tests for infections, and creating a program by which a someone accused of bioterrorism, found guilty by the victim state, may be punished under the harshest law of those countries that were directly involved or majorly impacted.