

## From the Desk of the Hon'ble President of the United States of America

Members of the National Security Council

I welcome you to the simulation of the White House Situation Room (WHSR/SITROOM) at the DPS Noida Model United Nations 2014. I am sure all of you have been preparing well and wondering as to why there was no word from the Executive Board until now. On the outset, I want to let you know that this will be unlike any of the MUN committees you have taken part in, even a Security Council. I'll go over those differences briefly.

Firstly, you are not delegates here. Each of you has a specific portfolio and a person you are role-playing. This automatically brings forth two aspects that would be different.

- Instead of country research as done by a delegate, you would be researching upon your portfolios, your duties and responsibilities and every issue that falls within your jurisdiction. That jurisdiction (mandate of the post) itself needs to be understood through research. Alongside this, you should understand the current political, economic, and geopolitical status of United States of America in the world and its actions in the Middle East.
- Since you're role-playing an actual person, you should also research on him or her. What is their background and history? What kinds of work have they done in the past as part of the United States Machinery? A comprehensive understanding of their background and current leanings or opinions on certain issues as highlighted later in the Brief will stand you in good stead in the SITROOM. I cannot stress more on the importance of including multimedia in your research for the same. Watching videos about or of the person themselves; their interviews or public appearances to give speeches on matters under their jurisdiction, etc. will give you a better idea of who you are role-playing and how does that person think.

Secondly, since this is not a UN Council, we would not be following the Charter of the United Nations, but we are bound by the Constitution of the United States of America<sup>1</sup>. However, you will greatly benefit if you have knowledge of the international commitments of the USA (in the form of ratified treaties and conventions, as well as bilateral or multilateral agreements) as well as National Protocol regarding security situations, emergencies, legal commitments, etc.

### Proof/Evidence in Council

We will be accepting United States Government reports as credible proof. Intelligence reports from allied/NATO nations can also be looked at as holding enough credibility to be considered seriously by the SITROOM. As you will realize, the significance of reports as

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www.usconstitution.net/const.pdf> | Constitution of the United States of America

proof reduces greatly from general UN committees because statements from you will be considered fact (if it is regarding an issue that you have jurisdiction over as per your portfolio) and you will be required to present proof only if asked or if you wish to. That said, the Executive Board will appreciate creativity at every stage of the discussion, but not faffing about your department's capabilities.

**Usage of Phones or Tablets** WILL **NOT** BE PERMITTED IN COUNCIL, EVEN IF IT IS FOR REFERRING TO SAVED PAGES. When the NSC members enter the SITROOM, all personal communication devices will be handed in and will be kept in a box. Keeping with the security protocols of the SITROOM, you will be allowed to take your phones when the session ends for a break. If you are planning on keeping your research in your phones, please get printouts or bring it on your laptop. This rule is non-debatable.

### **Role of the Executive Board**

The Executive Board will be substantively involved with the debate as per the protocol of the SITROOM. However, we'll be doing so by asking questions to the NSC members and taking decisions that would chart out the direction that debate will head in. We will not introduce our own solutions to the situation or help you with documentation. Here, you are the functioning arm of the United States possessing all the decision making capabilities – Military, Intelligence, Legal, Financial, Diplomatic and Political.

### **What is expected of the National Security Council?**

It is imperative to understand that the White House Situation Room is a very apolitical committee in its internal functioning. Every member of the National Security Council present there has TOP SECRET security clearance as a minimum threshold. Instead of political leanings, decision making capacity after logical analysis will be appreciated in all its members. Your goal is not to put each other's opinion down or just criticize them, it is mainly as troubleshooters who will work

For a more detailed understanding of the WHSR, I suggest you read this account.

<https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/97unclass/whithous.html>

PDF Version -

<https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/kent-csi/vol40no5/pdf/v40i5a02p.pdf>

out a quick and most efficient way to deal with the situation and making sure the United States is not compromising on its integrity or its policy. Indecision is not an option here because you are faced with a situation which is instrumental to protecting the national security and the interests and reputation of the United States of America.

## Flow of Debate and Rules of Procedure

Usually in MUNs, the flow of debate is categorized into Formal (GSL) and Informal (Caucuses). **In the SITROOM, the atmosphere is more charged and tense, because the NSC has been called during the time of an emergency to respond quickly, efficiently and definitively to the situation. Time is of the essence.** Every member should realize that and should not unnecessarily take up time of the NSC. Short, precise statements or questions will be preferred over long-drawn speeches, effectively making discussions sharp, and to the point.

The debate will begin with the situation being given to you. Instead of questioning us on the facts of the matter, questions to what our objectives are and what the limitations would be are welcome. After these questions have provided the NSC with an idea of what is our aim, debate will ensue in a round robin format, where the President will ask each member of the NSC for their recommendations. There is no specific time limit for this, but members should understand the importance of time and not make elaborate speeches. Either make short recommendations or take a longer amount of time if you're presenting a detailed plan of action. There are no formal yields after the speech but every statement can be questioned by other members or the President. We suggest that you take detailed notes so as to stay abreast of the debate which will be fast and at times, explosive. Normal privileges that are extended to you such as asking a delegate to repeat their statements or permission to rephrase yourself (by taking some more time) can and in most cases will be overruled by the President. You are an expert, a chief public official; you will be treated as such. Cross-questioning will be permitted at the discretion of the Executive Board but try to not interrupt the speaker when they're speaking.

**Table: WHAT POINTS MEAN IN THE SITROOM**

Point	In the WHSR
<b>Personal Privilege</b>	Besides walking out of the room, you do not need to take permission for anything else. If you feel like standing up and walking around the room, you can do so. As long as it does not annoy the President.
<b>Order</b>	For Procedural Errors – this form doesn't exist in the WHSR. For Factual Errors – Point it out when you're questioning a statement rather than raising it separately. Suggest alternatives while pointing out errors.
<b>Enquiry</b>	They would become questions regarding the functioning of different departments of the United States Government or its military and would be posed to the member of the NSC with the appropriate portfolio, not to the POTUS.
<b>Information</b>	Since there are no yields, Points of Information simply become questions that can be asked to any member of the NSC at any point of time during debate. There is no allocated time for this. As and when



you have a question, feel free to put it to the concerned person. Cross-questioning and following up on questions asked by others is permitted.

There are no formal motions or formal voting. If you want to discuss a certain matter, all you need to do is you are not going against a decision by the President. For example, if the President has called for a discussion on the legal implication of the proposed action for 15 minutes, do not raise another topic at that time, but when the President tells the NSC that the discussion is over, feel free to speak up that you want discussion on another matter. The time for discussion will be decided by the President and there'll be an informal vote in the form of a show of placards for consensus. The final decision rests with the President. Do not feel that your vote doesn't count; we will still be judging your voting based on your portfolios and expertise.

No formal motions or voting. A show of placards for Consensus; final decision rests with POTUS.

Members of the NSC can feel free to call for discussion in an informal manner not moderated by the President. This will not be treated as a break however. Members can work on options in groups to discuss and prepare different parts of the action. This will be like the Unmoderated caucus. One difference would be that documentation would be expected after every such informal discussion. Even if the only thing discussed were questions to the presented options, a list of those questions and possible solutions would suffice. What would be preferable is that the documentation happens on a laptop so that those Plans can be edited immediately following your discussions and no extra time is taken to type it out at the end.

Informal Discussions are like Unmoderated Caucuses. Documentation is expected at the end of every informal discussion.

By the end of the first session for lunch, the NSC should have come up with a range of options/plans of action (POAs) that have been debated on. By the end of this session, the President will expect separate documents clearly outlining the options and another document with each one, listing the members of the NSC in agreement with the plan. Once the requisite documentation is provided, the President would inform the NSC that they can leave for Lunch.

By lunch, separate documents outlining different Plans of Action (POAs) will be submitted to the POTUS.

Once the NSC returns from lunch, the President will conduct informal discussions with each group about their POAs or ask the Vice President to do so. The NSC will be expected to start

thinking of a timeline for each POA alongside these informal discussions, so that the same is ready by the time every group is done discussing their POA with the top brass. The President will then take a decision as to which Plan of Action we would be following and lay down the Rules of the Operation that the NSC will not violate while carrying out their orders. As soon as the decision is taken, discussions on finer points of implementation are supposed to begin; this can be done as moderated by the POTUS, or in groups, or a combination of the two. Please understand that by this time, we would not be looking at any other Plan of Action except the one the POTUS has decreed. The NSC members are expected to plan out proper operational details based on their portfolios and coordinate resources to efficiently carry out the POA. Another task would be to think of contingencies for each part of the POA and plan ahead for possible snags or hiccups. By the end of the first day, the POTUS would expect one detailed document, clearly stating the Plan of Action in each of its stages, what exactly is going to be done including who will be providing the resources or which department would be handling that action? This document would also contain the contingencies for each phase and the division of responsibilities for every member of the NSC with their own timeline as per which they are supposed to act.

Informal Discussion will happen between each group and the POTUS or the VP; finalization of timelines of the different POAs.

POTUS will take a decision on what is going to be done and which POA would be followed.

Plan out each stage of the POA, think of contingencies, clearly mark out each NSC member's role in the POA. Prepare one final document with all the details by the end of the first day.

We will end the first day with a discussion on what is to be declassified to the General Public, other Heads of State or Organizations (NATO, UN, OAS, OPEC, etc.), members of the US Government within US territory and those on foreign soil. Every member of the NSC will be then required to record an official statement in a video for release to the Press, and submit the transcript of the same.

THE FLOW OF DEBATE FOR THE SECOND DAY OF THE SITROOM WILL BE INFORMED TO THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WHEN THE POTUS RECEIVES THE FINAL PLAN OF ACTION.



President of the United States of America

## SUGGESTED RESEARCH LINKS

Key U.S. Government Reports (by Region)-

<http://fpc.state.gov/c28061.htm>

Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, U.S. Department of State

<http://www.state.gov/p/nea/index.htm>

Press Briefings on the Middle East and North Africa

<http://fpc.state.gov/c18054.htm>

Briefings-

Defense and National Security

<http://fpc.state.gov/c18045.htm>

Terrorism and Counter Terrorism

<http://fpc.state.gov/c18057.htm>

Foreign Policy

<http://fpc.state.gov/c18052.htm>

Congressional Research Service | *The "Islamic State" Crisis and the U.S. Policy*

<http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/231789.pdf>





The 5 Part Series *Inside the White House Situation Room* (during the planning of the Operation to terminate or capture Osama Bin Laden, *Codename Geronimo*) - notice particularly the discretion maintained by the NSC and atmosphere of the room that we are trying to recreate, how people are sitting, hierarchy being chucked in time of crisis with terms of behaviour protocols - angers can flare, questions can be asked, people can be rude, but ultimate authority rests with the POTUS.

Part 1 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MeAtsz6AurA>

Part 2 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jXW1-v3kYsA>

Part 3 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EnwZTDB2Myc>

Part 4 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nu1pKmr8ekU>

Part 5 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h91-hzJmPdY>

White House official video for the space known as the Situation Room -

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2009/12/18/inside-situation-room>

Movies -

Thirteen Days (SITROOM during the Cuban Missile Crisis)

[http://isohunt.to/torrent\\_details/1706919/Thirteen-Days-2000-DvDrip-Eng-Maxxon](http://isohunt.to/torrent_details/1706919/Thirteen-Days-2000-DvDrip-Eng-Maxxon)

Photographs -

<http://www.whitehousemuseum.org/west-wing/situation-room.htm>

<http://content.time.com/time/photogallery/0,29307,2069435,00.html>

Understanding of terminologies in legal documents – what different terms signify

<http://energy.gov/ia/international-commitments-primer>

CIA WORLD FACTBOOK – USA

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/us.html>

Military Law and Legal Links

<http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/awc-law.htm#ucmj>

Uniform Code of Military Justice – Bedrock of US Military Law

<http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/ucmj.htm>