

# CONFERENCE HANDBOOK

This handbook will cover the basic rules and regulations regarding the Model United Nations :

## **A Model United Nations (MUN) :**

A Model United Nations, or a MUN, is a mock conference held on the lines of the United Nations Organisation. It is a unique debate, made for people with extraordinary talent of oratory, negotiation, problem solving and of course, criticism. A MUN brings to you the chance you've been waiting for: to discuss issues, on which you could ramble on for hours, with people who are just like you- equally appalled at the happenings and equally eager to solve them.

Generally, a MUN continues for three days. During these three days, delegates, i.e. participating students, are given crises of international standards. They are expected to think deeply about the problems and, by using their negotiation and persuasion skills, come up with viable solutions to them. In this way, students debate on various issues during the three days, at the end of which, they form a Draft Resolution with all solutions which they have thought of. A committee succeeds when it passes its Draft Resolution.

We can tell you with a blindfold that no matter how well you research about a MUN, you never get the grip of it unless you ACTUALLY do it. So, if this is your first MUN, worry not. A couple of hours into committee, and you'll be enjoying the best moments of your life.

## **BEFORE THE COMMITTEE BEGINS**

**Position Papers :** Position papers refer to a written document regarding your country's stance on the topic prescribed for the committee. It gives the Chairperson an overall idea of what to expect from a delegate. A position paper generally includes the following :

- A brief introduction of your country
- A short paragraph over your country's stance on the topic.
- Some examples from your country's past regarding the topic, as well as what leaders of your country have to say.
- Proposed solutions to the problems regarding the topic, which would be beneficial to your country.

The position papers are, besides helping the Chairperson, also a start-up for your own speech. They help to prepare and organize what you would like to say in committee, and what stance you would like to maintain.

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A sample Position paper is given:

**Topic: Violence against Women**

**Country: The Kingdom of Denmark**

**Delegate: Spider-man**

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, “no one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.” Although this doctrine was adopted in 1948, the world has fallen quite short of this goal. Violence against women pervades all states and it is the duty of the international community to ensure that all persons are afforded equality and respect. Despite cooperative efforts at combating gross human rights abuses, such as the adoption of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, the United Nations has not been able to alleviate the injustice women worldwide experience daily.

The Kingdom of Denmark believes that in order to end violence against women, nations must look to empower women in all aspects of society. This includes promoting equal gender roles in government, civil society, education and business. However, Denmark also recognizes the need to combat human rights abuses against women as they occur, and no nation is immune to gender violence. In 2002, the Danish Government launched an extensive action plan to combat domestic violence against women. The plan includes measures to help treat abused women, identify and prosecute the perpetrators, and incorporate professional medical and psychological staff into the rehabilitation process. The action plan currently reaches out to both governmental and nongovernmental groups on the local level throughout the nation.

The Danish Centre for Human Rights in Copenhagen, Denmark’s foremost national human rights institution, also promotes and protects human rights. Based on the Centre’s research, Denmark’s parliament can promote human rights-based legislation and education/awareness programs throughout the nation. The Centre also addresses the UN Commission on Human Rights annually regarding human rights developments in Denmark and internationally. Denmark has no record of committing major human rights violations, most importantly any targeted at women. In its 2003 Annual Report, Amnesty International also found no human rights violations against Danish women.

Women are invaluable to Denmark’s society and have achieved significant economic and social gains in the 20th century. Currently, 75 percent of medical students in Denmark are women.

Denmark is confident that this Commission can bring about an end to violence against women without compromising the sovereignty of member states. Education remains perhaps the most useful tool in protecting victims of gender-based violence. Governments, UN agencies, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) can plan a coordinated campaign that educates national populations on the various ways women are violently targeted. Similarly, harmful traditions, such as honour killings and female genital

mutilation, must be stopped by reforming traditional views of women in society. Children of both sexes need to be taught at an early age to value the rights of women in order to prevent such violence in their generation. Another way to stop gender violence would be to reproach member states that consistently violate treaties such as the Convention on Political Rights of Women (1952), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979), and the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993). Although this Committee cannot impose sanctions, it can pass resolutions verbally condemning states that commit human rights violations. In order to prevent gender violence, nations must work together to build a culture of support, equality and community. As such, the Kingdom of Denmark looks forward to offering its support, in whatever form possible, to nations firmly committed to ending violence against women in all its forms.

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## **COMMITTEE PROCEDURE**

The general proceedings of a committee are as follows:

### **Roll Call :**

Delegates can respond in two ways :

1. Present, in which case you may or may not vote in formal vote, i.e., you may abstain from voting if you wish.
2. Present and voting, in which case you aren't allowed to abstain from voting.

### **Formal Debate :**

After a roll call, delegates motion to open debate, and set the agenda of debate. When this is done, the following take place.

### **General Speaker's List :**

It is a continuously open list of speakers who want to put forward their views and arguments on the topic being discussed. Other media of debate, if any, do not close the list but overlap it. During a GSL speech, you may yield your time in the following three ways :

1. To the Chair
2. To another delegate
3. To questions.

If a delegate does not yield his time to anyone, the Chair allows two comments on the delegate's speech.

You may include your name in the GSL if you wish to by passing a written note to the Chair. Please note that the GSL remains open throughout the committee proceedings, and is brought up again if there is no other medium of debate preceding it.

### **Special Speaker's List :**

It refers to a speaker's list which is started in committee to discuss emergency or specific aspects of the topic area. When a SSL is opened, the GSL is suspended for the time being.

### **Caucusing/ Informal Debating :**

#### **Moderated Caucus :**

It refers to the most common medium of debating in a MUN. Delegates may motion for a ModCauc along with specifying its time period and individual speaker time. Whether the motion is in order or not is for the Chair to decide. If the Chair feels that the motion is in order, he'll ask for an informal vote. If the motion passes, the Chair asks delegates wishing to speak to raise their placards, and recognizes some. The recognized delegates are given the chance to speak. Please note that the delegate raising the motion for the MC must be the first one to speak in that MC.

#### **Unmoderated Caucus :**

An Unmoderated caucus is a time when delegates go into an informal state of debate and negotiation, during which they can move about the committee, talk to other delegates, form working papers, resolutions, etc. A motion has to be raised and passed for a UMC to begin. It is usually of 15 -20 minutes. Unofficially speaking, an UMC is the best part of a MUN, where you ACTUALLY get to know you fellow delegates. You'll be surprised at the hidden realities which are revealed during an UMC, but well, you'll find out for yourself.

### **Points and Motions :**

#### **1. Point of Personal Privilege :**

This point can be raised if you feel any personal discomfort while in committee, and would like to leave committee for some time, or if you would like something to be repeated, etc. This point can interrupt a speaker.

#### **2. Point of Parliamentary Enquiry :**

It can be raised to clarify your doubts regarding any parliamentary procedure. This point may not interrupt a speaker.

#### **3. Point of Order :**

This point is raised to point out any factual inaccuracy by another delegate or the Chair, or if the norms of committee aren't being followed. This point can interrupt a speaker. There cannot be a Point of Order on a Point of Order.

#### **4. Right to Reply :**

A Delegate who feels that his/her country or person has been insulted by another Delegate may rise to a Right of Reply. A Right to reply, however, is not raised if someone disagrees with what another delegate said. The Chair recognizes a right to reply at his/ her discretion. There is no Right to Reply on a Right to Reply.

#### **Working Papers :**

Working papers are, as the name suggests, a sheet of paper on which viable solutions to the problems discussed are immediately written down, just after discussion. A working paper is generally made in an UMC. It hasn't got any particular format, and can be written in any style, even cartoons in extreme cases, but that's beside the point. In any case, a working paper provides delegates a way of keeping track of all problems discussed in committee, as well as their solutions, which can later be used in forming the Draft Resolution. A working paper is usually incorporated into a Draft Resolution.

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A sample working paper is given under :

#### **Working Paper "Rolling in the Deep"**

**Committee: The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development**

**Topic: Generalized System of Preferences**

**Author: Bolivia**

**Signatories: Peru, Ecuador**

Bolivia, Peru, and Ecuador believe that a GSP should be set up so that less developed countries (LDC's) receive preferential treatment from the developed countries (DC's). To that end we propose:

1. Each DC reduces their tariffs to the lowest level possible. Subcommittee created below will determine this level.
2. Bilateral trade agreements should be pursued for further reduction in tariffs.
3. Trade preferences should be granted in the following areas: agriculture, manufacturing, semi-manufacturing and raw materials.
4. Decisions on product coverage are made in consultation with the affected LDC. Annual re-evaluation of coverage shall take place with disputes going to the subcommittee created below.
5. A subcommittee of UNCTAD should be created with equal membership of developed and developing countries. The subcommittee would have the following powers:
  - A) Mediate disputes between preference givers and receivers.
  - B) Make recommendations, which all countries should follow.

C) Serve as a forum for airing grievances relating to the GSP. D) Report regularly to the Secretary General.

6. Membership should be as follows:

A) Five permanent nation's from the DC's.

B) Five permanent nations from the LDC's and LLDC's.

C) Ten members elected annually by UNCTAD.

7. Voting rights will have to be worked out, but the UN format for subcommittees seems best. Of course, we are amenable to change.

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### **Draft Resolution :**

A draft resolution is the final summation of all proposed solutions to the various problems discussed in committee. A draft resolution is called so because it hasn't been voted on yet.

A draft resolution has a particular format, and it is very important to stick to it. There are three main parts to a draft resolution: the heading, the preamble and the operative section. The heading shows the committee and topic along with the resolution number. It also lists the draft resolutions' sponsors and signatories. Each draft resolution is one long sentence with sections separated by commas and semicolons. The subject of the sentence is the body making the statement (e.g. the General Assembly, Economic and Social Council, or Security Council). The preamble and operative sections then describe the current situation and actions that the committee will take.

### **Preambulatory Clauses :**

The preamble of a draft resolution states the reasons for which the committee is discussing a particular topic and highlights past international action on the issue. Each clause begins with a present participle (called a preambulatory phrase) and ends with a comma. Some preambulatory phrases are as follows:

*Affirming*

*Alarmed by*

*Approving*

*Aware of*

*Bearing in mind*

*Believing*

*Confident*

*Contemplating*

*Convinced*

*Declaring*

*Deeply concerned*

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

## **Operative Clauses :**

Operative clauses identify the actions or recommendations made in a resolution. Each operative clause begins with a verb (called an operative phrase) and ends with a semicolon. Operative clauses should be organized in a logical order, each containing a single idea or proposal, and are always numbered. If a clause requires further explanation, bulleted lists set off by letters or roman numerals can also be used. After the last operative clause, the resolution ends in a period.

Some operative clauses are as follows :

*Accepts*

*Affirms*

*Approves*

*Authorizes*

*Calls*

*Calls upon*

*Condemns*

*Confirms*

*Congratulates*

*Considers*

*Declares accordingly*

*Deplores*

*Designates*

*Draws the attention*

*Emphasizes*

*Encourages*

*Endorses*

*Expresses its appreciation*

*Expresses its hope*

*Further invites*

*Further proclaims*

*Further reminds*

*Further recommends*

*Further resolves*

*Has resolved*

*Notes*

*Proclaims*

*Reaffirms*

*Recommends*



*Regrets*  
*Reminds*  
*Requests*  
*Solemnly affirms*  
*Strongly condemns*  
*Supports*  
*Takes note of*  
*Transmits*

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A sample draft resolution is as under :

**DRAFT RESOLUTION “ALPHA”**

**Committee: The HRC**

**Topic : The right to food**

**Authors : USA, UK**

**Signatories: India, Pakistan, Russia, France, Germany**

The Commission on Human Rights,

*Recalling* the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which provides that everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for her/his health and well-being, including food,

*Recalling* also the provisions of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in which the fundamental right of every person to be free from hunger is recognized,

*Recalling* further the Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition as well as the United Nations Millennium Declaration,

*Bearing in mind* the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the Plan of Action of the World Food Summit, held in Rome from 13 to 17 November 1996, and bearing in mind also the Declaration of the World Food Summit: five years later - International Alliance against Hunger, held in Rome from 10 to 13 June 2002,

*Welcoming* the concrete recommendations contained in the Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security adopted by the Council of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations,

*Reaffirming* that all human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent and interrelated,

*Recalling* all its previous resolutions in this regard, in particular resolution 2004/19 of 16 April 2004,

*Recognizing* that the problem of hunger and food insecurity has global dimensions and that they are likely to persist and even to increase dramatically in some regions unless urgent, determined and concerted action is taken, given the anticipated increase in the world's population and the strain on natural resources,

*Reaffirming* that a peaceful, stable and enabling political, social and economic environment, both at a national and an international level, is the essential foundation which will enable States to give adequate priority to food security and poverty eradication,

*Reiterating*, as did the Rome Declaration as well as the Declaration of the World Food Summit: five years later, that food should not be used as an instrument of political or economic pressure, and reaffirming in this regard the importance of international cooperation and solidarity, as well as the necessity of refraining from unilateral measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations which endanger food security,

*Convinced* that each State must adopt a strategy consistent with its resources and capacities to achieve its individual goals in implementing the recommendations contained in the Rome Declaration and Plan of Action of the World Summit and, at the same time, cooperate regionally and internationally in order to organize collective solutions to global issues of food security in a world of increasingly interlinked institutions, societies and economies, where coordinated efforts and shared responsibilities are essential,

*Stressing* the importance of reversing the continuing decline of official development assistance devoted to agriculture and rural development, both in real terms and as a share of total official development assistance,

*Expressing* its deep concern at the number and scale of natural disasters, diseases and agricultural pests and their increasing impact in recent years, which have resulted in a massive loss of life and livelihood and threatened agricultural production and food security, in particular in developing countries,

*Welcoming* the solidarity and humanity expressed by the international community towards the victims and the Governments of the States that suffered huge losses of life and socioeconomic and environmental damage as a result of the unprecedented tsunami disaster that struck the Indian Ocean and South-East Asian region on 26 December 2004,

1. *Reaffirms* that hunger constitutes an outrage and a violation of human dignity and, therefore, requires the adoption of urgent measures at the national, regional and international levels for its elimination;
2. *Also reaffirms* the right of everyone to have access to safe and nutritious food, consistent with the right to adequate food and the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger so as to be able fully to develop and maintain their physical and mental capacities;

3. *Considers* it intolerable that there are around 852 million undernourished people in the world, that every five seconds a child under the age of five dies, directly or indirectly, of hunger or hunger-related disease somewhere in the world and that one person loses his/her eyesight every four minutes as a result of a lack of vitamin A when, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the planet could produce enough food to provide 2,100 kilocalories per person per day to 12 billion people, twice the world's present population;
4. *Expresses* its concern that women are disproportionately affected by hunger, food insecurity and poverty, in part as a result of gender inequality, that in many countries girls are twice as likely as boys to die from malnutrition and preventable childhood diseases and that it is estimated that almost twice as many women as men suffer from malnutrition and, in that sense, encourages the Special Rapporteur to continue mainstreaming a gender perspective in the fulfillment of his mandate;
5. *Stresses* the need to make efforts to mobilize and optimize the allocation and utilization of technical and financial resources from all sources, including external debt relief for developing countries, to reinforce national actions to implement sustainable food security policies;
6. *Recognizes* that the promises made at the World Food Summit in 1996 to halve the number of undernourished persons are not being fulfilled and that, on the contrary, global hunger increased yet again this year, and invites once again all international financial and developmental institutions, as well as the relevant United Nations agencies and funds, to give priority and provide necessary funding to help realize the aim to halve by the year 2015 the proportion of people who suffer from hunger, as well as to realize the right to food;
7. *Encourages* all States to take steps with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the right to food, including steps to promote the conditions for everyone to be free from hunger and as soon as possible enjoy fully the right to food, as well as to elaborate and adopt national plans to combat hunger;
8. *Requests* all States and private actors, as well as international organizations within their respective mandates, to take fully into account the need to promote the effective realization of the right to food for all, including in the ongoing negotiations in different fields;
9. *Takes note of* the report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food (E/CN.4/2005/47 and Add.1 and 2) and also takes note of his valuable work in the promotion of the right to food in all parts of the world;
10. *Calls upon* all Governments to cooperate with and assist the Special Rapporteur in his task, to supply all necessary information requested by him and to give serious consideration to responding favorably to the Special Rapporteur's requests to visit their countries, so as to enable him to fulfill his mandate even more effectively;

11. *Requests* the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to provide all necessary human and financial resources for the effective fulfillment of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur;
  12. *Welcomes* the work already done by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in promoting the right to adequate food, in particular its general comment No. 12 (1999) on the right to adequate food (article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights), in which the Committee affirmed, inter alia, that the right to adequate food is indivisibly linked to the inherent dignity of the human person and is indispensable for the fulfillment of other human rights enshrined in the International Bill of Human Rights and is also inseparable from social justice, requiring the adoption of appropriate economic, environmental and social policies, at both the national and international levels, oriented to the eradication of poverty and the fulfillment of all human rights for all;
  13. *Recalls* general comment No. 15 (2002) on the right to water (articles 11 and 12 of the Covenant) adopted by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, in which the Committee notes, inter alia, the importance of ensuring sustainable water resources for human consumption and agriculture in the realization of the right to adequate food;
  14. *Welcomes* the meeting of world leaders for action against hunger and poverty, convened by the Presidents of Brazil, Chile and France and the Prime Minister of Spain, with the support of the Secretary-General, and the resulting New York Declaration on Action against Hunger and Poverty, which has been supported by more than one hundred countries to date, and recommends the continuation of efforts aimed at identifying additional sources of financing for the fight against hunger and poverty;
  15. *Also welcomes* the adoption by the Council of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations of the Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security, which marks an important step in the progress towards the promotion, protection and implementation of human rights for all;
  16. *Requests* the Special Rapporteur to submit an interim report to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session and to report to the Commission at its sixty-second session on the implementation of the present resolution;
  17. *Invites* Governments, relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, treaty bodies, civil society actors, including non-governmental organizations, as well as the private sector, to cooperate fully with the Special Rapporteur in the fulfillment of his mandate, inter alia through the submission of comments and suggestions on ways and means of realizing the right to food;
  18. *Decides* to continue its consideration of this matter at its sixty-second session, under the same agenda item.
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## **Amendments :**

Draft resolutions can be modified through amendments, which may add, remove, or change any clause of the resolution. Amendments work to increase consensus by allowing delegates to have their say and modify the resolution according to their will. Amendments can be:

1. Friendly It is a change to which all authors agree. It does not require a vote.
2. Unfriendly It must be voted on by the committee. Prior to voting on the draft resolution, the committee votes on all unfriendly amendments.

## **VOTING**

Voting can be done in two ways:

### **1. Open/ Informal Vote :**

In this case, delegates just raise their placards to show their support. It is mostly used for voting on motions or procedural issues, etc. If the number of delegates in favor is sufficient, the committee proceeds with the motion.

### **2. Roll Call/ Formal Vote :**

This refers to voting on substantial issues like draft resolutions. In this case, delegates can vote: Yes (or yes with rights), No (or no with rights), Pass or Abstain. (Rights are when you wish to justify your vote, that is, you want to tell the committee why you voted in favor or against).

There may be three rounds of vote, that is, the delegates will be given two more chances to consider their vote. After the third and the final round, the votes are tallied and the results are declared. A Draft Resolution needs 2/3rd majority to pass.