

# UConn Travel United Nations

## Practice Conference Procedure

### Flow of Debate

#### General

1. Motion to open debate.
2. Motion to open the speakers list.
3. Accept motions to change the speaking time. Recommended time: 45 seconds - 2 minutes.
4. Vote on speaking time motions. If no motions are put forth, use a default time of 1 minute.
5. Begin calling speakers to the floor.
6. Speakers may yield their time to the chair or to questions.
  - a. Deduct from the remaining speaking time during time spent by the speaker answering questions. Do not deduct time while questions are being asked.
7. Close the Speakers List, and accept motions for moderated and unmoderated caucuses before speakers run out.
8. If the speakers list is exhausted, then the committee automatically enters Voting Procedure. Otherwise, committee may Motion to Close Debate with a  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote.
9. At the end of Voting Procedure, close debate with a Motion to Adjourn.

#### Mid-Committee

- Moderated Caucuses
  - Requires an overall duration, a speaking time, and a topic of discussion.
  - Delegates may yield remaining time to each other.
- Unmoderated Caucuses
  - Requires an overall duration.
- Speakers List
  - Delegates may still ask to be added to the Speakers List by sending a note to the chair.
  - The committee will return to the Speakers List if no motions are passed.
- Motion to Close Debate
  - Requires a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority.
  - Used to enter voting procedure and move towards closing committee.

#### Taking a Break

- If time for a committee session has expired, but the overall committee is not yet complete (i.e. it is not the final session), the Chair should look favorably upon a "Motion to Suspend Debate" -  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority.

## Resolutions

- Resolutions may be referred to as “working papers” until they have achieved the format below.
  - Working papers can be used as an opportunity to outline and present general ideas before committing to writing a draft resolution.
- A draft resolution is simply a resolution that has not yet been passed by committee.
- Resolution Format:
  - Title
  - Committee name
  - Sponsors list
    - Delegates who helped draft the resolution.
    - If three primary sponsors are not marked to speak on behalf of the resolution, take the first three.
  - Signatories list
    - Delegates who would like to hear the resolution debated.
  - Committee Topic
  - Preamble
    - First phrase in the present participle - verb ending in “ing” (“Recognizing,” “Considering,” “Supporting,” etc).
    - End each clause in commas.
  - Operative Clauses
    - Numbered clauses.
    - First phrase in present simple tense - verb ending in “s” (“Suggests,” “Promotes,” “Condemns,” etc).
    - May not include specific monetary values.
    - Cannot forcefully compel a nation to take an action (exception: Security Council).
    - End in semicolons.
      - If a clause has subclauses, it may end in a colon.
      - Last operative clause ends in period.
- See sample resolution on next page.
- Voting Procedure:
  - Voting procedure is initiated when a motion to pass specific or all draft resolutions is passed. If one of the debate methods described in step two below is not specified, take another motion to determine the method of debate.
  - 1. Have the primary sponsors come to the front of the room and read or summarize their resolution.
    - a. The full text must be displayed, handed out to, or read to the committee at some point.
  - 2. Allow debate through any of the following:
    - a. Presentation period for sponsors to describe the resolution followed by question period (minute amounts).
    - b. A certain number of speakers for and against the resolution for a set speaking time.
    - c. None. Read the resolution and immediately vote.

3. Vote on the resolution.
  - a. Abstentions are in order.
  - b. Simple majority to pass.
- Written resolutions should be submitted to the chair during unmoderated caucuses or discreetly during other periods.
- Pre-written resolutions are not in order. Resolutions may be outlined ahead of time.

#### Closing Committee

- Look favorably upon a Motion to Adjourn -  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority.

#### Sample Resolution

#### **A Resolution to End Post-War Border Skirmishes**

Disarmament and International Security Committee

Sponsors: South Korea, United States, Israel

Signatories: Guatemala, Japan, Ukraine, Hungary, Czech Republic, Turkmenistan, Germany, South Africa

Topic: "Lingering conflict in past war zones"

*Acknowledging* Article 3 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights stating all have a "right to life, liberty and security of person,"

*Observing* the violence frequently occurring on the borders of nations previously at war, such was the Korean Demilitarization Zone,

*Noting* UN peacekeeping issues have been successful on the during the Israeli-Palestinian Crisis (1948), Indian-Pakistani border (1951), and Israeli-Egyptian border (1956),

*Stressing* the need for peace in these regions as a step towards reconciliation for the nations involved,

1. Recommends to the Security Council peacekeeping observation missions be commenced in regions where border skirmishes have continuously occurred:
  - a. Areas where skirmishes have continued for more than five years are of special interest;
  - b. Areas where armistice or peace has recently been declared are of special interest;
2. Suggests the establishment of a UN Office of Border Peace (UOBP) as a subsidiary body of the Security Council to monitor borders with a potential for skirmishes and suggest peacekeeping missions to the Security Council accordingly;
3. Calls for the evacuation of civilians from these violent regions and neighboring nations to accept them as refugees:
  - a. Peacekeepers should facilitate this evacuation whenever possible;
4. Reminds nations to confront each other through peaceful bodies such as the UN before turning to violent conflict.

## Specific Guides

#### Points

- Point of Personal Privilege
  - A delegate seeks resolution to a personal matter, such as having to use the restroom, having an air conditioner pointed in their face, etc.
- Point of Order
  - A delegate would like to correct a piece of parliamentary procedure incorrectly performed by the Chair.
- Point of Parliamentary Inquiry
  - A delegate has a question about Parliamentary Procedure.
- Point of Clarification/Information
  - A delegate has a non-political, factual question, such as “What is the rate of ice caps melting?” “How many endangered polar bears remain?” etc.
  - If the Chair believes another delegate can best answer this point, they may forward the question to said delegate.
- Points posed by delegates during inappropriate times, such as during a speech, should not be entertained.

#### Right of Reply

- If a delegate’s personal character or nation has been grossly attacked, they may request a Right of Reply.
- A Right of Reply should be presented in the form of a short note written to the Chair. If the Chair deems the Right of Reply legitimate, they will read it to committee.

#### Yields

- Limited to the Speakers List and Voting Procedure (during sponsor speeches).
  - Exception: May yield to another delegate during moderated caucuses.
- Yield to Chair
  - Absorb the rest of the time, and move on.
- Yield to Another Delegate
  - Another delegate receives the remaining speaking time.
  - A “yield chain,” in which a delegate yields to another delegate, and the second delegate yields to a third, is disallowed.
- Yield to Questions
  - See “Questions” below.

#### Questions

- Members of committee may raise their placards with questions for the Speaker. The Chair calls upon delegates and only elapses time while the speaker is answering.
- If a delegate has a follow-up question, they may “Motion for a Follow-Up.” The Chair should prevent any back-and-forth dialogue.
- Inappropriate or overly aggressive questions should be ruled dilatory, and the Speaker is not required to answer.

#### Voting

- Votes are primarily a simple majority.
  - Tie votes fail.
  - Exceptions may be marked  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority for important procedural matters, such as adjourning.
- All procedural votes are mandatory. Delegates must vote if an issue affects the progression of committee.
  - The only non-mandatory votes in which abstentions are in order are votes on the passage of a resolution.

### Motion Voting Order

- Vote on motions in most disruptive to least disruptive order.
  - Unmods come before mods.
    - Exception: Motions to Extend the Current Moderated Caucus come first
  - Mods with smaller speaking times come before mods of the same duration with longer speaking time.
  - Motions to extend a current moderate caucus special privileges.
    - i.e. A ten minute unmod takes precedence over a motion to extend a current moderated caucus by five minutes.
  - Motions to close or suspend debate are highest priority.
  - Motions to change the speaking time and other small matters are lowest priority.

### Vocabulary

- Decorum: Order in the house - [Speaker is being interrupted by another delegate].
- Dias: The area the Chair where is sitting. Refers to the Chair and their assistant directors. - "Please pass your notes to the dias."
- Dilatory: Irrelevant - "The delegate's motion for a 5 minute moderated caucus with a 5 minute speaking time is dilatory."

### Inappropriate Behavior

- If members of a committee are behaving in an inappropriate or disruptive manner, the Chair should call for decorum. If the issue persists, the Chair may individually reprimand the conduct of a delegate or call for the delegate to be removed from committee.

## Crisis Procedure

### Directives

- Directives take the place of resolutions. Unlike resolutions, countries or characters that submit a directive actually follow through with the proposed actions in the document.
- The format of a directive varies with conference, but TMUN Practice Conferences will accept a bullet pointed list of actions to be taken - "Send food aid to the Balkans," "Move 300 troops to the Spartan border," etc.
- Titles are optional - "Aid for Africa," "A Declaration of War on England," etc.

- Directives should have a sponsors list.
- If a directive is signed by multiple members of committee, it becomes a joint-directive and gains more weight (i.e. the actions are more likely to be successful).

### Crisis Notes

- Crisis notes are passed to the Dais by delegates and detail what actions they would privately like to take - “Hire bodyguards,” “Move from Beijing to Shanghai,” “Break alliance with France, and seize Paris,” etc.

### Press Releases

- The Dais will periodically prepare press releases to update committee on how its actions are affecting the world. This may take the form of a news article, video, speech, etc.

### Other Differences

- “Backroom” refers to the group of staff members working to process all directives and crisis notes. The Backroom also typically prepares press releases.
- “Round Robins” are a popular form of moderated caucus in crisis. A “one minute speaking time Round Robin on the topic of [topic]” involves every member of committee speaking for one minute on the issue.
- Crisis committees are tend to be less than twenty people and faster pace.

## Statement on Additional Elements of Procedure

This guide purposely avoids more obscure elements of procedure for three reasons:

1. They confuse delegates and hamper the flow of debate.
2. Their implementation is highly variable depending on the hosting conference.
3. They tend not to accomplish anything that cannot be done with normal procedure.

Ignored items include but are not limited to:

- Setting the Agenda (we only have one topic per committee)
- Motion to Table the Topic (we only have one topic)
- Resolution Amendments
- Dividing the Question
- Reorder Resolutions
- Roll Call Votes
- Straw Votes
- Suspension of the Rules
- Quorum

If a chair encounters an unknown element of procedure posed by a delegate, they may rule it dilatory.

The goal of TMUN Practice Conference Procedure is to provide a simple and universal subset of Model United Nations procedure with which delegates can easily train and take the core elements to any conference. Minutiae of procedure may be studied from conference-specific documentation.

Sources:

<http://www.harvardmun.org/assets/pdfs/HMUN-2016-Guide-to-Delegate-Preparation.pdf>

<https://www.ilmunc.com/assets/pdf/Guide%20to%20Model%20UN%20Procedures.pdf>

McMUN 2018 Guide

Note: Pieces of procedure may be altered and amalgamated from these sources.