

Rules of Procedure – UNA-USA

Roll call

The committee's roll call is the first action that happens. The nations are mentioned in alphabetical order. Each nation's name will be spoken aloud by the chairperson (or chairs). Following the mention of their nation, the delegate should hold up their placard and respond with "present" or "present and voting" (in which case they must vote "yes" or "no" for each resolution). For roll call, being on time is crucial; failing to do so could result in you losing your ability to vote.

Setting the agenda

Each committee at the National MUN Conference will only discuss one subject. A "motion to open debate" will need to be made in this situation. The discussion may begin in full once the agenda has been established.

Debates

Formal

The formal debate revolves around a general speaker's list. The Chair will ask all delegates if they are interested in speaking, and if they are, the delegates should raise their placards. The Chair will choose delegates to be placed on the General Speaker's list. If none are willing to speak, the chair may appoint someone. The speaker's list is strictly followed. When the sessions begin, speeches focus on stating countries' positions and offering recommendations for action. After blocs have met (e.g., in an unmoderated caucus), speeches focus on describing bloc positions to the entire committee. Delegates also make statements describing their draft resolutions and try to gather support through formal speeches and statements supporting or disagreeing with specific draft resolutions, as well as presenting any amendments they have created. The general debate is considered the backbone of the MUN, i.e., the default type of debate. It is important that people sign up for the General Speaker's list because once the list is exhausted, it is considered that no one wants to discuss anymore, and the debate will automatically move into the voting procedure, which ends the debate (and the conference ends since there is no other topic). The Chair will call for motions before the general speaker's list is exhausted ("Are there any points or motions on the floor?")

G.S.L.

When the debate is on the General Speaker's List, there is a strict time limit to

adhere to. If you finish your speech before your time limit is up, you have the opportunity to yield the remainder of your time in three ways:

- Yield to another Delegate: you may give the remainder of your time to another delegate. This can be useful if you have an ally who is able to back you up, give supporting arguments or is able to strengthen your speech.
- Yield to questions: this will allow time for delegates from the committee to ask questions regarding your speech. This may work for or against you, so use this yield wisely.
- Yield to the chair: this serves no strategic purpose, you only forfeit the remainder of your time to the Chair.

Informal

You can have an informal debate by presenting a “motion for moderated caucus” or a “motion for unmoderated caucus.”. The informal debate involves discussion outside of the speaker’s list. The delegate proposing the motion must briefly explain its purpose and specify a time limit for the caucus, which must not exceed 30 or 20 minutes (for the moderated and unmoderated caucuses, respectively).

Moderated

In a moderated caucus, the chair is allowed to choose more freely who gets to speak, calling delegates one by one for short speeches so that each can address the committee. The length of the moderated caucus and the speaker’s time are determined by the delegate proposing the motion (max. 30 minutes). A moderated caucus has many purposes, but its main purpose is to allow delegates to discuss sub-topics under the main topic of the debate. Since the topic is generally very broad, it is up to the delegates to steer the discussion in the direction they want it to go and towards issues that are relevant to them. You can also use the moderated caucus to gather resolution ideas or discuss what took place in other parts of the debate.

Unmoderated

In unmoderated caucuses (also called lobbying sessions or “unmods”), the committee breaks for a temporary recess (max. 20 minutes) so that delegates may meet with each other and discuss ideas. This is a non-moderated debate, normally used to exchange ideas, draft working papers or resolutions, or gather support for a specific draft resolution. Delegates are allowed to move from their seats and talk to other delegates freely and in the groupings of their choice. This is the time when resolutions are drafted. These will only be in order after a certain time into the debate, as the chair will want to ensure that you have enough to discuss and do not use this as a break.

Closure of debate

Once the speaker's list is exhausted, the committee automatically moves to vote. Also, once a delegate feels that his or her country's position is clear to others or that there are enough draft resolutions on the floor, he or she may make a motion for the closure of the debate.

Voting Procedure

Once a motion to close the debate has been approved, the committee moves into The voting procedures change depending on the committee in question. A delegate can vote "yes," "no," or abstain from voting. Abstentions are noted but do not count towards the majority. Order of voting procedure:

- Draft Resolutions (they can be voted as a whole or clause by clause).
- Amendment store solutions (only the unfriendly amendments need to be voted on, the ones that are not supported by the sponsors – for more information, please see our Help Guide regarding Draft Resolutions and Working Papers);

Terminologies

QUORUM

The quorum is the number of Member States who need to be present for the Chair to open a meeting and for the GA to take decisions. The quorum for opening a GA meeting is one-third of the Member States. Of course, for this debate in particular, we will abstain from demanding such quorum to be considered, and follow through with the debate with the participating delegations. The quorum for the adoption of resolutions/decisions and elections is a simple majority of Member States.

WORKING PAPERS

Working papers are informal documents containing a framework for the resolution. They can be created individually. They do not have to be formatted to the UN rules. The working papers may be submitted to the Chair. If you want delegates to discuss specific point in it, you can move for a moderated caucus to discuss your working paper. If the motion passes, the chair will put it up on the screen, and it can be discussed (that way, you can get good feedback and learn who agrees with you or not)

Draft Resolutions

Draft resolutions are more formal documents that have to be written in the correct UN resolution format. These are the documents that will be voted upon and become resolutions after the voting procedures. In order to get a draft resolution discussed, you have to get a minimum number of supporters (a minimum of five Member States). They can be:

- Sponsors: people who wrote the resolution (max. 5 sponsors);
- Signatories – people who do not necessarily agree, but want to hear the resolution discussed. The Chair then has to agree that the resolution can be introduced. Once the draft resolution has been introduced, it may be discussed, and delegates may propose amendments (changes) to the draft. If you wish to make an amendment, you have to get a set number of supporters for the amendment, in order to send it to the Chair, who can approve it for discussion. Each amendment must be introduced, debated and voted upon separately to become a part of the draft resolution.

Motions

Some of the most important motions are the following:

- Motion to open debate; Motion to suspend the debate (for break/lunch/informal/off-record discussions); The Chair will rule this motion out of order if it is raised prematurely. Motion to adjourn the debate; Motion to set the agenda: “The country of [name] moves to place [topic A] first on the Agenda, followed by [topic B] and then [topic C].”
- Motion for moderated caucus; “The delegate of Ghana moves for a moderated caucus of 10 minutes, individual speaking time 30 seconds, to discuss [issue/working paper/draft resolution x].”
- Motion for unmoderated caucus; “The Russian Federation moves for an unmoderated caucus for 10 minutes for the purpose of [X].”
- Motion to close the debate/move to the voting procedure: “The delegate of the United States of America moves to close debate and over into voting procedure.”
- Motion to introduce working paper/draft resolution/amendment: “The delegate of Angola moves to introduce Draft Resolution 1.2 to the floor.”
- Right of Reply If a delegate feels that another delegate’s speech has offended his country, the delegate can ask chairs for a right of reply by sending a note. If the Chair recognizes it, both parties involved will be granted a chance to speak

Points

A point is something you raise when it concerns something you'd like to address yourself. Some of the most important points are the following:

- Point of order; When a delegate believes the chair has made an error in the running of the committee; violation of the rules of procedure by the Chair. The delegate should only specify the errors they believe were made in the formal committee procedure, and may not address the topic being discussed.
- Point of parliamentary procedure; To clarify the RoP, flow of debate, or if you are uncertain of what is going on etc.
- Point of clarification; A delegate wants to clarify a non-substantive point (meaning grammatical, spelling, word choice, awkward phrases) in a resolution or amendment.
- Point of information; A delegate has a substantive question for a speaker during formal debate. The speaker chooses whether or not to yield his or her time to points of information
- Point of personal privilege. When a delegate's ability to participate in committee is impaired, for example you cannot hear the other delegate speaking, or you cannot see the working paper that is displayed on the screen