SHANTI NIKETAN PUBLIC SCHOOL, BHADRA

in association with FairGaze Skills Pvt. Ltd.

SNPS FAIRGAZE MUN 1.0

BACKGROUND GUIDE

United Nations

Human Rights Council

UNHRC

AGENDA

Promotion and protection of the rights of the child in the digital environment, with special emphasis on online exploitation, data privacy and emerging technologies

21–22 November 2026

Shanti Niketan Public School, Bhadra, District Hanumangarh, Rajasthan

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BEFORE YOU BEGIN

How to Use This Guide

This guide has been written for delegates who may be attending a Model United Nations (MUN) conference for the very first time. You do not need any previous MUN experience to read it, understand it and perform well in committee. Read it in the order given: Part I explains what an MUN is and how the Human Rights Council works, Part II teaches the rules you will use in committee, Part III explains the agenda in depth, and Part IV shows you how to research and prepare.

- **Blue boxes** explain an idea in simple words.
- **Gold boxes** are practical tips for delegates.
- **Green boxes** contain key facts and figures you can quote in committee.
- **Red boxes** warn you about common mistakes.

Facts in this guide were checked against United Nations documents and other reliable sources as of October 2026. Laws and technologies in this area change quickly, so always confirm the latest developments yourself before the conference.

COMMITTEE AT A GLANCE

Item	Details
Committee	United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC)
Agenda	Promotion and protection of the rights of the child in the digital environment, with special emphasis on online exploitation, data privacy and emerging technologies
Members	UN Member States allotted at the conference; each delegation has one vote
Outcome	A resolution adopted by a simple majority of members present and voting
Dates	21–22 November 2026, four committee sessions
Venue	Shanti Niketan Public School, Bhadra, District Hanumangarh, Rajasthan

A NOTE ON SENSITIVE CONTENT

Part of this agenda deals with the sexual exploitation and abuse of children online. This guide discusses the subject in a factual, non-graphic way, as the United Nations does. If anything you read or research upsets you, speak to your Faculty Advisor or a trusted adult. In India, children in need of help can call the Childline number **1098**, and online crimes can be reported on the national cybercrime helpline **1930** or at cybercrime.gov.in.

Letter from the Executive Board

Dear Delegates,

It is our privilege to welcome you to the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) at **SNPS FairGaze MUN 1.0**. This is the first edition of a conference that brings the work of the United Nations to Bhadra, and you are among its very first delegates. Whether you have attended many conferences or this is your first, you are welcome here, and you will leave a more confident speaker and a sharper thinker.

Our agenda is about you and your generation: *Promotion and protection of the rights of the child in the digital environment, with special emphasis on online exploitation, data privacy and emerging technologies.* Children today learn, play, make friends and express themselves online. The same apps and devices that open the world to them can also expose them to abuse, collect their personal data without real consent, and shape what they see through algorithms and artificial intelligence. Governments, technology companies, parents and children themselves are all searching for the right balance between protecting children and respecting their freedom.

Few agendas are as close to the lives of delegates as this one. Use that to your advantage: you understand the digital world from the inside. But remember that in committee you represent your allotted country, not your personal opinion. A country with strict online controls and a country that strongly protects free expression will see this agenda very differently, and you must argue your country's view convincingly.

This guide is your starting point, not your finishing line. It explains the rules of procedure, the rights involved, the main risks, the laws that already exist and the positions of different countries. The best delegates are not those who speak the loudest, but those who listen carefully, negotiate in good faith and write solutions that others are willing to sign.

Free pre-conference training will be held in the first week of November 2026. Come with questions. We look forward to an informed, respectful and lively debate.

With warm regards,

The Executive Board
United Nations Human Rights Council
SNPS FairGaze MUN 1.0

PART I

Understanding Model United Nations

What an MUN is, and how the Human Rights Council works

1. What is a Model United Nations?

A Model United Nations is an educational simulation of the United Nations. Each student becomes a **delegate** who represents a country (called a **portfolio**) in a UN body. Delegates research their country's views, give speeches, debate, form alliances, negotiate and finally write and vote on a **resolution**, which is the formal document in which the committee records what it has agreed, exactly as real diplomats do in New York and Geneva.

MUN conferences began in universities in the mid-twentieth century and are now held in schools across the world. In India they have become one of the most respected co-curricular activities, because they build skills that classrooms alone rarely develop: public speaking, research, negotiation, teamwork and clear formal writing.

Who is who in committee

Role	What they do
Delegate	Represents a country. Speaks, negotiates, drafts documents and votes according to that country's policy.
Executive Board (EB)	Chairs the committee: the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Rapporteur. They keep order, apply the rules, recognise speakers and evaluate delegates.
Secretariat	The organisers of the whole conference, led by the Secretary-General. They manage logistics, schedules and the overall conduct of the conference.
Pages / Volunteers	Carry chits (written notes) between delegates and help the committee run smoothly.

IN SIMPLE WORDS

Think of MUN as a mini United Nations in your school auditorium. You are not playing a character in a play; you are doing the real work of a diplomat: understanding a problem, speaking for your country and persuading others to agree on a solution.

2. The United Nations and Human Rights

The United Nations was founded on 24 October 1945, after the Second World War. Its Charter lists, among its purposes, "promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion" (Article 1(3)). In 1948 the General Assembly adopted the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, the first global statement of the rights that belong to every person. Since then, States have agreed many human rights treaties, including the **Convention on the Rights of the Child** (1989), the most widely ratified human rights treaty in history.

Within the UN, human rights work is carried out by three kinds of bodies: **political bodies** made up of States, such as the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council; **treaty bodies** made up of independent experts, such as the Committee on the Rights of the Child; and the **Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)**, which supports them all.

HOW THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL FITS INTO THE UNITED NATIONS

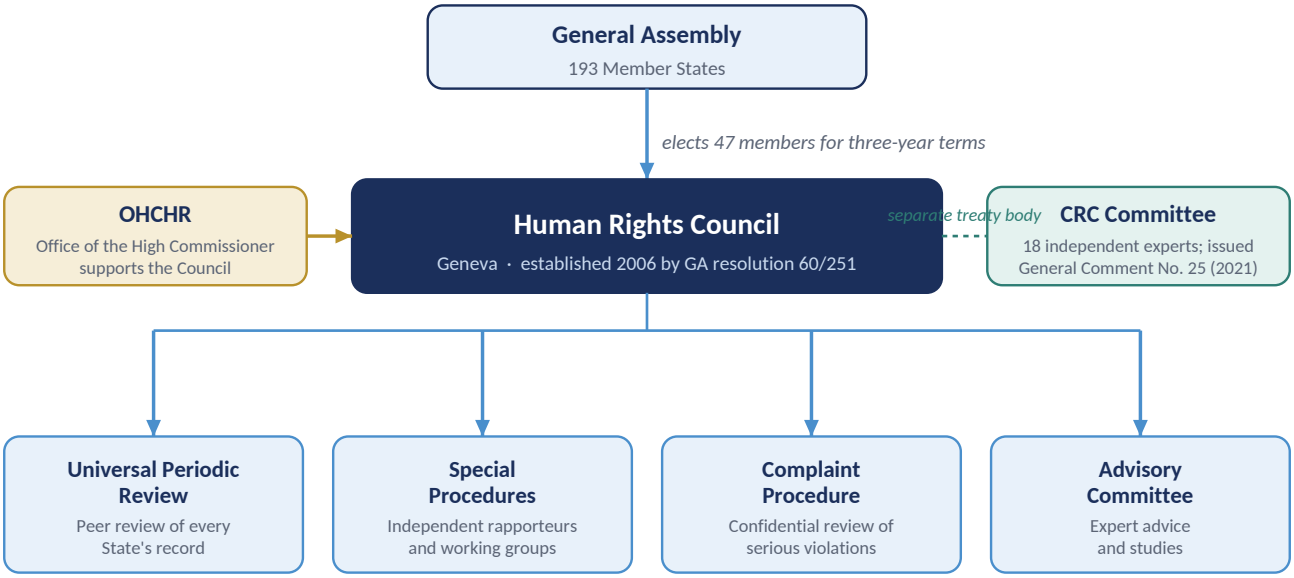


Figure 1. The Human Rights Council and the bodies around it.

3. The Human Rights Council

The **Human Rights Council** was created on 15 March 2006 by General Assembly resolution 60/251, replacing the Commission on Human Rights, which had worked since 1946. It is the main intergovernmental body of the UN responsible for "promoting universal respect for the protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all." It meets in Geneva in at least three regular sessions a year, and can hold special sessions to respond to urgent situations.

The Council has **47 members**, elected by the General Assembly by secret ballot for three-year terms. A State needs the votes of a majority of the Assembly's members to be elected, and cannot serve more than two consecutive terms. Seats are shared among the five regional groups of the UN:

THE 47 SEATS OF THE COUNCIL BY REGIONAL GROUP

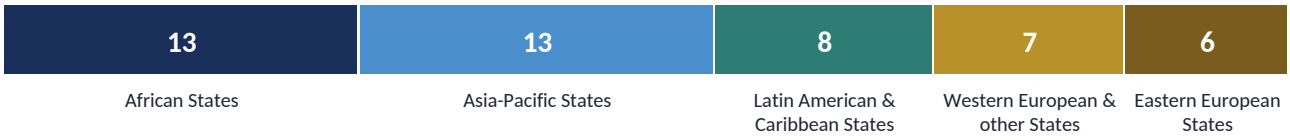


Figure 2. Distribution of the Council's 47 seats.

Every year, during its March session, the Council holds a full-day meeting on the rights of the child, and it regularly adopts resolutions on children's rights. In July 2025 it adopted, without a vote, a resolution presented by Saudi Arabia on protecting children in cyberspace, which called for international cooperation, sharing of good practices and capacity-building.

What the Council can do	What the Council cannot do
Discuss any human rights issue and adopt resolutions recommending action to all States	Make its resolutions legally binding on States
Appoint Special Rapporteurs and other independent experts to study a theme or a country	Impose sanctions or authorise the use of force (these belong to the Security Council)
Ask the High Commissioner (OHCHR) for reports and organise panels and expert meetings	Change the text of a treaty such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child

What the Council can do	What the Council cannot do
Review every State's record through the Universal Periodic Review	Act as a court or decide individual criminal cases
Recommend action to the General Assembly and encourage cooperation with companies and civil society	Directly regulate private companies such as social media platforms

DELEGATE TIP: STAY WITHIN THE MANDATE

A Council resolution that "bans an app worldwide" or "fines a company" is outside its powers. Use verbs that fit a human rights body: *calls upon States*, *urges*, *encourages business enterprises*, *requests the High Commissioner*, *decides to convene*, *invites*.

PART II

Rules of Procedure

How debate is run at SNPS FairGaze MUN 1.0

Every MUN committee follows a set of rules of procedure so that debate is fair and orderly. The rules below are those followed at SNPS FairGaze MUN 1.0. They are based on the procedure commonly used at school conferences in India. The Executive Board may interpret or adjust them where needed, and its decision is final.

4. The Flow of Committee

Most committee sessions follow the order shown below. Do not worry about memorising it now: the Executive Board will guide the committee through each stage.

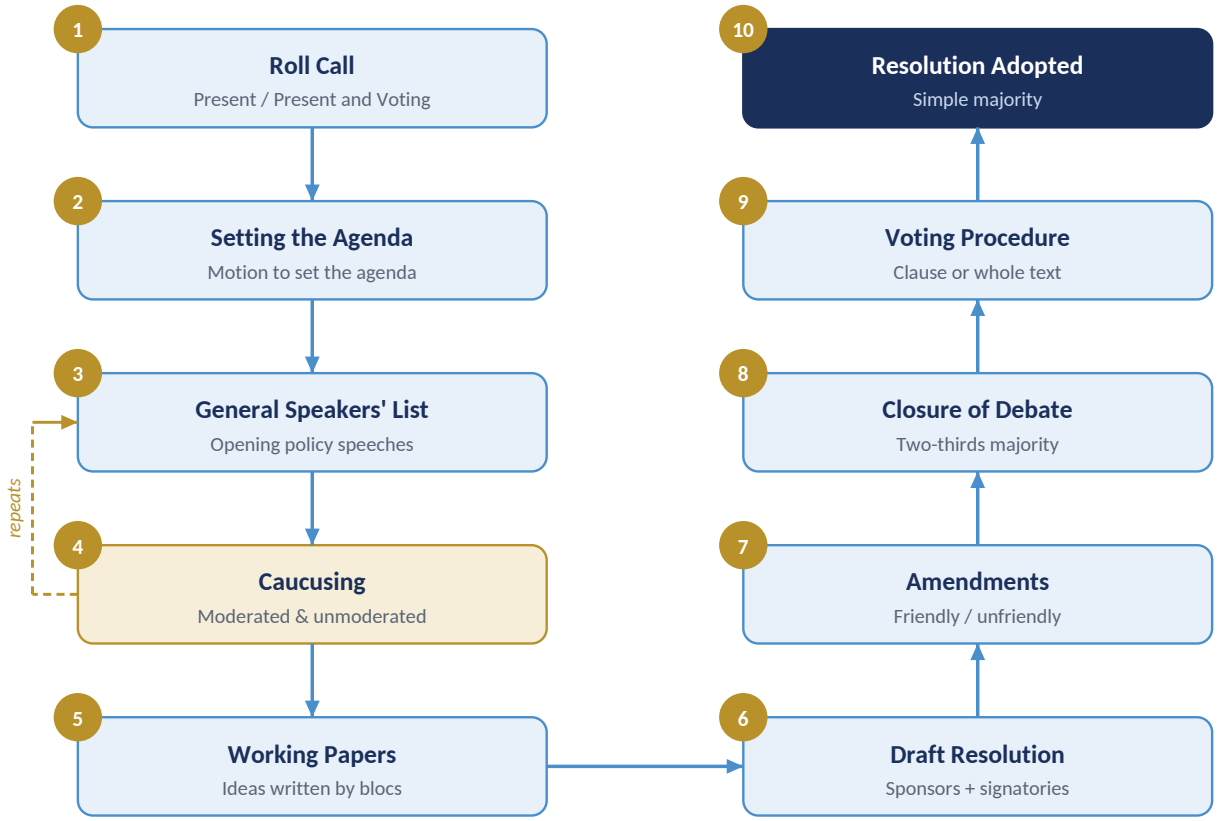


Figure 3. The usual flow of a UNHRC session, from roll call to the adopted resolution.

5. Stages of Debate

5.1 Roll call

At the start of each session the Chair reads out the names of all countries. Delegates raise their placards and reply **"Present"** or **"Present and Voting."** A delegate who says "Present and Voting" gives up the right to abstain on substantive votes and must vote either for or against. The roll call also establishes **quorum**, the minimum number of delegates needed for the committee to work, usually one-third of members to begin debate.

5.2 Setting the agenda

Since the Council has a single agenda at this conference, a delegate simply raises a *motion to set the agenda* to the topic in this guide. It passes by a simple majority.

5.3 General Speakers' List (GSL)

The GSL is the backbone of debate. Delegates who wish to speak are added to a list, and each speaks in turn for a set time, usually 60 to 90 seconds. The first GSL speech is your **opening speech**: it presents your country's position. The GSL stays open throughout committee; when no motion is on the floor, debate returns to it. If time remains at the end of a GSL speech, the speaker must **yield** it:

Yield	What happens
Yield to the Chair	The remaining time is given back to the Executive Board. This is the most common yield.
Yield to another delegate	Another delegate uses the remaining time. They cannot yield it again.
Yield to Points of Information	Other delegates may ask the speaker questions about the speech, as many as the time allows.

5.4 Moderated caucus

A moderated caucus is a focused debate on one sub-topic, for example *"Age verification and children's privacy."* A delegate proposes it with a total time, a time per speaker and a topic. If the motion passes, the Chair calls on speakers one by one. Moderated caucuses keep debate specific and fast-moving.

5.5 Unmoderated caucus

During an unmoderated caucus, formal debate is suspended. Delegates leave their seats, talk freely, form blocs and write working papers. This is where most negotiation happens. Use it well: find allies, share ideas and draft clauses together.

> **EXAMPLE MOTIONS, EXACTLY AS YOU WOULD SAY THEM**
>
> **Moderated caucus:** "The delegate of Brazil would like to raise a motion for a moderated caucus of 10 minutes, with 1 minute per speaker, on the topic 'Safety by design on social media platforms.'"
>
> **Unmoderated caucus:** "The delegate of Japan would like to raise a motion for an unmoderated caucus of 15 minutes to begin drafting working papers."

6. Points and Motions

Points are requests a delegate makes to the Chair. **Motions** are proposals that the committee does something, and most are put to a vote. Delegates raise their placard and wait to be recognised.

Point	When to use it	Can it interrupt a speaker?
Point of Personal Privilege	You cannot hear the speaker, the room is too cold, or you are personally uncomfortable.	Yes, only if it concerns audibility

Point	When to use it	Can it interrupt a speaker?
Point of Order	You believe the rules of procedure have been applied incorrectly.	No
Point of Parliamentary Inquiry	You have a question about the rules or what is happening in committee.	No
Point of Information	You wish to ask another delegate a question about their speech.	No; only when the speaker yields to points

Motion	What it does	Vote needed
Set the agenda	Begins debate on the agenda topic	Simple majority
Moderated caucus	Focused debate on a sub-topic with set speaking time	Simple majority
Unmoderated caucus	Informal negotiation and drafting time	Simple majority
Extend the caucus	Adds time to the current caucus (usually not more than half the original time)	Simple majority
Introduce a working paper or draft resolution	Presents a document formally to the committee	Simple majority, at the Chair's discretion
Divide the question	Votes on operative clauses separately	Simple majority
Close debate	Ends debate and moves the committee into voting	Two-thirds majority
Suspend the meeting	Pauses committee for a break or lunch	Simple majority
Adjourn the meeting	Ends the session for the day or the conference	Simple majority

6.1 Right of Reply

If a delegate's speech insults the national integrity of your country, you may send a written request for a **Right of Reply** to the Chair. If the Chair grants it, you may respond briefly. A Right of Reply to a Right of Reply is not allowed.

6.2 Chits

Chits are short written notes passed through the pages. Use them to contact allies, invite delegates to join a bloc or ask the Executive Board a question. All chits must be in English, relevant to committee and diplomatic in tone.

COMMON FIRST-TIMER MISTAKES

- Speaking in the first person ("I think"). Always use the third person: *"The delegate of Kenya believes..."*
- Speaking for yourself instead of your country. Your personal opinion does not matter in committee; your country's policy does.
- Interrupting a speaker. Only a Point of Personal Privilege about audibility may interrupt.
- Using laptops or phones without the Executive Board's permission.

7. Documents of Committee



Figure 4. The life of a resolution in committee.

7.1 Working papers

A working paper is an informal document that sets out a bloc's ideas. It has no fixed format and can include bullet points, tables or proposed clauses. Working papers help the committee see which ideas have support. They are introduced to the committee with the Chair's approval.

7.2 Draft resolutions

A draft resolution is a formal document written in the format of a real UN resolution. It needs **sponsors** (the main authors, usually two to five countries, who must support the document) and **signatories** (countries that wish to see it debated but need not agree with all of it). The Executive Board sets the minimum number of signatories. Once approved by the Chair, it is introduced, read out and debated.

7.3 Amendments

An amendment adds, removes or changes an **operative** clause. A **friendly amendment** is accepted by all sponsors and is added without a vote. An **unfriendly amendment** is not supported by all sponsors and must be voted on by the committee. Preambulatory clauses cannot be amended.

7.4 Voting

Once debate is closed, the doors are sealed and no one may enter or leave. Each draft resolution is voted on in the order it was introduced. Delegates vote **Yes**, **No** or **Abstain** (unless they declared “Present and Voting”). A draft resolution passes with a **simple majority** of members present and voting, which follows the practice of the real Human Rights Council, where many resolutions are also adopted without a vote when no member objects. Abstentions do not count as votes cast.

8. How to Write a Resolution

A resolution is one long sentence. It begins with the name of the committee, continues with **preambulatory clauses** that explain the background and reasons, and ends with **operative clauses** that say what the committee will actually do.

Part	Rules	Example
Heading	Committee, agenda, sponsors and signatories	*Committee: Human Rights Council; Sponsors: …; Signatories: …*
Preambulatory clauses	Begin with an *italicised* phrase; end with a comma; are not numbered; cannot be amended	*Recalling* the Convention on the Rights of the Child,
Operative clauses	Begin with an underlined verb; are numbered; end with a semicolon; the last ends with a full stop	1. Calls upon all States to adopt child data protection laws;

Preambulatory phrases
Acknowledging, Affirming, Alarmed by, Aware of, Bearing in mind, Concerned by, Convinced, Deeply concerned, Determined, Emphasizing, Expressing concern, Fully aware, Guided by, Having considered, Mindful of, Noting with concern, Observing, Reaffirming, Recalling, Recognizing, Seeking, Stressing, Taking into account, Underlining, Welcoming

Operative phrases
Affirms, Calls upon, Condemns (Security Council language; use carefully), Decides, Declares accordingly, Encourages, Endorses, Invites, Notes, Proposes, Recommends, Reminds, Requests, Requests the Secretary-General to, Stresses, Supports, Takes note of, Transmits, Trusts, Urges, Welcomes

Sample clauses on our agenda

The clauses below show the style. They are examples only and do not represent any country's position.

Recalling the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography,

Guided by General Comment No. 25 (2021) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on children's rights in relation to the digital environment,

Deeply concerned by the rapid rise in online sexual exploitation and abuse of children, including financial sextortion and sexual images generated by artificial intelligence,

1. Calls upon all States to ensure that the best interests of the child are a primary consideration in all laws, policies and regulations concerning the digital environment;

2. Encourages business enterprises, including technology companies, to conduct child rights impact assessments and to apply safety, privacy and security by design and by default;

3. Requests the Office of the High Commissioner to prepare a report, in consultation with children, on good practices in protecting children's rights online, and to present it to the Council at a future session;

9. The Position Paper

A position paper is a one-page summary of your country's views on the agenda, usually submitted before the conference. It shows the Executive Board that you have researched well. The Organising Committee will share the format and deadline with registered delegates. A strong position paper usually has four short sections:

1. **Background:** the problem in two or three sentences, in your own words.
2. **International action:** what the UN and other forums have done, with document numbers.
3. **Your country's policy:** how your country has voted and what it has said, with evidence.
4. **Proposed solutions:** two to four concrete ideas your country would support in a resolution.

DELEGATE TIP
Write your position paper first. It will become the basis of your opening speech, your arguments in caucuses and the clauses you contribute to a draft resolution.

Your opening speech

A 90-second opening speech

Hook 0–15 s	Position 15–30 s	Evidence 30–60 s	Solutions 60–80 s	Call to action last 10 s
A striking fact or question	Your country's stance in one line	Votes, data, documents	What you propose	Invite allies

Figure 5. A simple structure for a strong first speech on the General Speakers' List.

10. Committee Etiquette and Diplomatic Language

Diplomacy depends on respect. The Executive Board evaluates not only what you say but how you say it. Follow these simple rules of decorum throughout the conference:

- Address the Chair as *"Honourable Chair"* or *"Madam/Mister Chair"* and other delegates as *"the delegate of [country]"*.
- Speak only when recognised by the Chair, and stand when you speak unless asked otherwise.
- Never criticise another delegate personally. Disagree with a policy, not a person.
- Use formal English. Avoid slang, jokes about other countries and offensive language.
- Follow the dress code shared by the Organising Committee and keep your placard and badge with you at all times.

Instead of saying...	Say...
"I think China is wrong."	"The delegate of India respectfully disagrees with the delegate of China on this point."
"That makes no sense."	"Could the delegate clarify how this proposal would work in practice?"
"We want an age limit."	"The Commonwealth of Australia calls on all States to set a minimum age for social media accounts."
"Join our group."	"The delegation of Kenya invites all like-minded delegations to work together on a joint working paper."

Your two days in committee

SNPS FairGaze MUN 1.0 has four committee sessions. The Executive Board decides the pace, but committees usually move through these stages:

Session	Time	What usually happens	Your goal
Session 1	Day 1, 11:30 AM–2:00 PM	Roll call, setting the agenda, opening speeches on the GSL, first moderated caucuses	Deliver a clear opening speech and note who agrees with you
Session 2	Day 1, 2:30–4:00 PM	Moderated and unmoderated caucuses on sub-topics; blocs begin to form	Join or lead a bloc and start a working paper
Session 3	Day 2, 9:45 AM–12:30 PM	Working papers merge into draft resolutions; drafts are introduced and debated	Contribute clauses and gather signatories
Session 4	Day 2, 1:00–3:00 PM	Amendments, closure of debate and voting	Defend your clauses and vote according to your country's policy

Timings follow the tentative conference itinerary and may change.

HOW DELEGATES ARE USUALLY EVALUATED

- **Research and knowledge:** accurate facts, correct use of documents and a clear understanding of the agenda.
- **Speeches and points:** clarity, structure, confidence and relevance on the GSL and in caucuses.
- **Diplomacy:** staying in your country's policy, building alliances and negotiating respectfully.
- **Documentation:** meaningful contributions to working papers, draft resolutions and amendments.
- **Participation and conduct:** regular involvement throughout all four sessions and respect for the rules.

PART III

Understanding the Agenda

Children's rights in a connected world

11. Introduction to the Agenda

Around the world, **one in three internet users is a child** (UNICEF, 2017). Children go online at younger and younger ages, and for many of them there is no longer a clear line between their "online" and "offline" lives. The digital environment helps children learn, find information, express themselves, play, make friends, take part in public life and reach health and support services. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it became the only classroom for hundreds of millions of students.

The same environment brings serious risks. Adults who wish to abuse children can contact them easily and anonymously. Apps and websites collect enormous amounts of data about children, often to target them with advertising. Algorithms decide what children see, sometimes pushing harmful content. New technologies such as generative artificial intelligence (AI) can create realistic fake sexual images of real children in seconds.

At the same time, many children are left out entirely. UNICEF and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) estimated in 2020 that two-thirds of the world's school-age children, about **1.3 billion children aged 3 to 17, had no internet connection at home**.

The central question before the Council is: **how can States, companies and societies protect children from harm in the digital environment, while respecting their rights to privacy, information, expression and participation?**

KEY FACTS

- In 2024 the US National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) received **20.5 million** reports of suspected child sexual exploitation online through its CyberTipline, from around the world.
- NCMEC recorded a **1,325% increase** in reports involving generative AI in 2024, and nearly **100 reports of financial sextortion every day**.
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child has **196 States parties**. Every UN Member State except the United States has ratified it.

12. Key Terms Explained

Term	Meaning in simple words
Child	Every human being below the age of 18 years, unless adulthood is reached earlier under national law (CRC, Article 1).
Digital environment	As defined in General Comment No. 25: digital networks, content, services and applications, connected devices, virtual and augmented reality, artificial intelligence, robotics, automated systems, algorithms, data analytics and biometrics.
Online child sexual exploitation and abuse	Any sexual abuse or exploitation of a child that is carried out or made easier by digital technology, including grooming, live-streamed abuse and sextortion.
Child sexual abuse material (CSAM)	Images or videos showing the sexual abuse of children. Experts prefer this term to "child pornography" because it makes clear that every such image records a crime.
Grooming	When an adult builds trust with a child, often online, in order to sexually abuse or exploit them.
Sextortion	Threatening to share a child's intimate images unless they send more images, money or other favours. *Financial sextortion* demands money.
Cyberbullying	Bullying through digital devices: harassment, threats, humiliation or exclusion online.
Personal data and profiling	Any information about an identifiable person. Profiling uses that data to predict or influence behaviour, for example to show targeted advertisements.
Age assurance	Methods used to estimate or verify a user's age, from simply asking a date of birth to checking identity documents or using facial age estimation.
Safety by design	Building products so that safety and privacy for children are part of the design from the start, not added later.
Deepfake	A realistic image, video or voice recording created or altered by AI to show something that never happened.
Digital divide	The gap between those who have affordable, meaningful access to the internet and digital skills and those who do not.

13. The Rights at Stake

The **Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)** was adopted by the General Assembly on 20 November 1989, before the internet became part of daily life. In 2021 the Committee on the Rights of the Child adopted **General Comment No. 25**, which explains how every right in the Convention applies online. It was prepared after consulting more than 700 children in 28 countries. It rests on the Convention's four general principles:

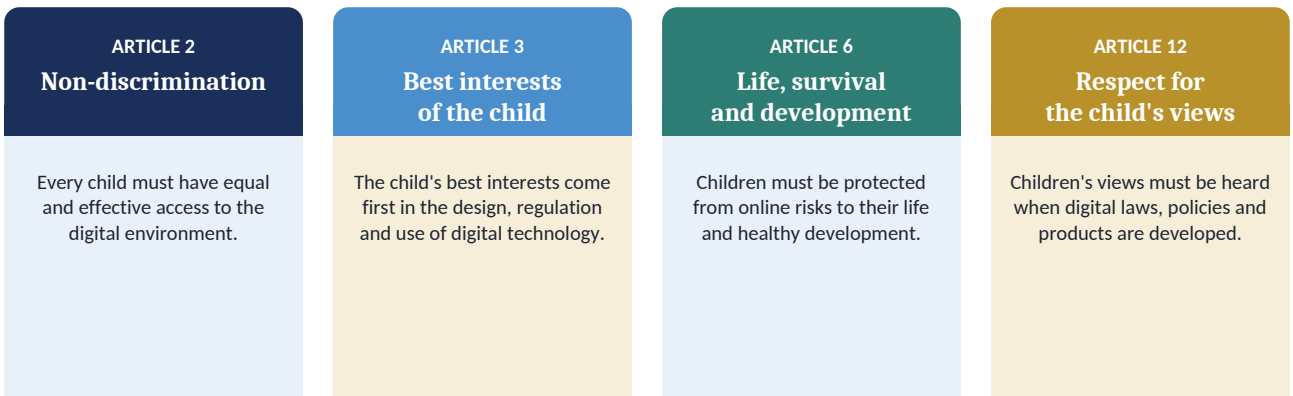


Figure 6. The four general principles of the CRC, applied to the digital environment.

CRC article	Right	What it means online
Article 5	Evolving capacities	Protection and freedom should match a child's age and maturity; a 7-year-old and a 16-year-old need different rules.
Article 13	Freedom of expression	Children may seek, receive and share information and ideas, including by creating content.
Article 16	Privacy	Children's data, communications and identity must be protected from arbitrary interference.
Article 17	Access to information	Children should have access to diverse, good-quality information, and be protected from material harmful to their well-being.
Article 19	Protection from violence	States must protect children from all forms of violence, including online abuse and cyberbullying.
Articles 28–29	Education	Digital technology should widen access to education, and education should include digital literacy.
Article 31	Play and leisure	Online games and play are part of childhood and should be safe and inclusive.
Article 32	Economic exploitation	Children's data and attention must not be exploited for profit in ways that harm them.
Article 34	Sexual exploitation	States must protect children from all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse, online and offline.

14. Understanding the Risks

Researchers often sort online risks to children into four groups, known as the **4 Cs**. This simple model, used by UNICEF and many governments, helps delegates see that "online safety" covers very different problems that need different solutions.

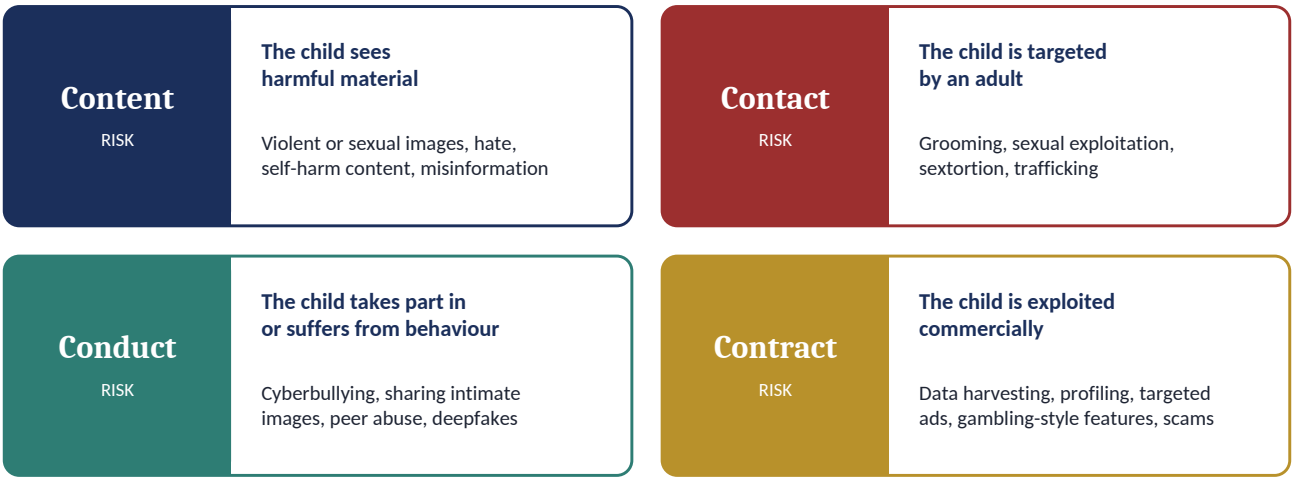


Figure 7. The 4 Cs of online risk to children.

14.1 Online exploitation

Online child sexual exploitation and abuse is growing in scale and changing in form. Offenders use social media, gaming platforms and messaging apps to find and groom children, sometimes across borders. Live-streamed abuse can be ordered and paid for from anywhere in the world. Financial sextortion, in which criminal networks trick teenagers into sending intimate images and then demand money, has risen sharply since 2022 and has been linked to suicides of young victims. UNICEF's *Disrupting Harm* research found that, in some of the countries studied, up to one in five internet-using children had experienced online sexual exploitation or abuse in a single year, and that most did not tell anyone.

14.2 Data privacy

Children's lives are now recorded in data from before birth: in parents' social media posts, school apps, smart toys, games and health trackers. This data can be used to profile children, target them with advertising and shape their choices. Children rarely understand privacy policies, and parents often cannot either. Strong data protection laws, limits on profiling and targeted advertising, and privacy by default are central to General Comment No. 25. Age assurance raises a difficult question of its own: verifying a child's age may itself require collecting more personal data.

14.3 Emerging technologies

Generative AI can be a powerful learning tool, but it is also being used to create sexual deepfakes of real children and to produce child sexual abuse material at scale. AI chatbots and "companions" can form emotional relationships with lonely children without the safeguards a human adult would provide. Recommender algorithms can trap children in loops of harmful content. Virtual reality, connected toys and biometric systems such as facial recognition create new risks to safety and privacy. UNESCO's 2023 guidance on generative AI in education suggested a minimum age of 13 for the use of AI tools in the classroom.

15. Historical Timeline

The timeline below shows key milestones in protecting children's rights in the digital environment. Gold markers show turning points.

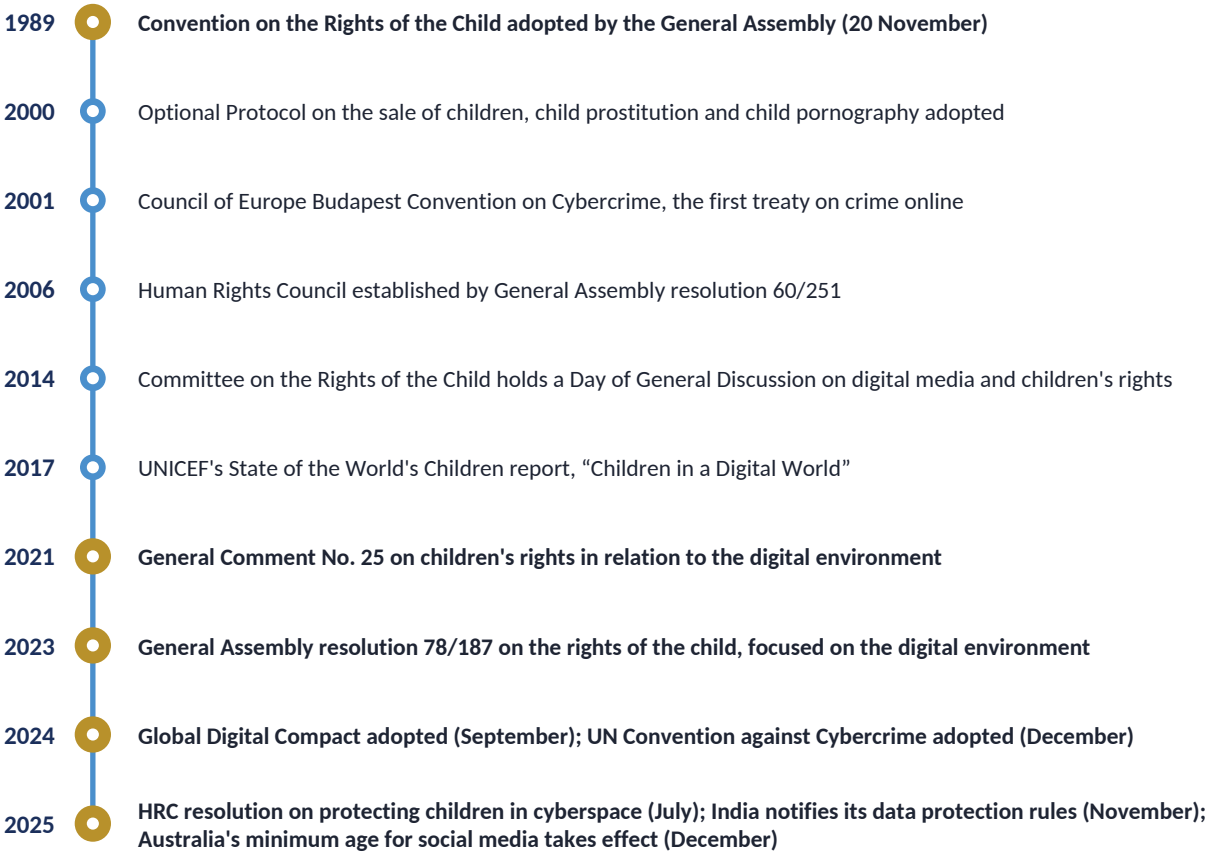


Figure 8. Key milestones for children's rights in the digital environment.

16. The International Legal Framework

16.1 The Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Protocols

The CRC is legally binding on its 196 States parties. Its **Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography** (adopted 2000, in force 2002) requires States to make the production, distribution and possession of child sexual abuse material a crime. A third Optional Protocol (2011) allows children to bring complaints to the Committee on the Rights of the Child when their rights have been violated and national remedies have failed.

16.2 General Comment No. 25 (2021)

General Comments are not treaties, but they are the authoritative interpretation of the Convention by its expert committee. General Comment No. 25 asks States to:

- review and update national laws so that they protect children's rights in the digital environment;
- require businesses to carry out child rights due diligence and impact assessments, and to apply high standards of privacy and safety by design;
- prohibit profiling and targeted advertising based on children's data where it harms their interests;
- make digital literacy part of education, and close the digital divide;
- ensure that children have effective and child-friendly remedies when their rights are violated online; and
- consult children and take their views seriously when making digital policy.

16.3 Other international instruments

Instrument	Relevance to the agenda
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)	Article 17 protects privacy; Article 19 protects freedom of expression. Both apply to children.
UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (2011)	Endorsed by the Council in resolution 17/4. States must protect, companies must respect human rights, and victims must have access to remedy.
Children's Rights and Business Principles (2012)	Developed by UNICEF, the UN Global Compact and Save the Children to guide companies on children's rights.
Council of Europe Lanzarote Convention (2007)	A regional treaty against sexual exploitation and abuse of children, including grooming online.
UN Convention against Cybercrime (2024)	Adopted by the General Assembly on 24 December 2024 and opened for signature in Hanoi in October 2025. It requires States to criminalise online child sexual abuse material and the solicitation or grooming of children.
African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990)	The regional children's rights treaty of the African Union.

17. The United Nations and Multilateral Response

- **Human Rights Council:** holds an annual full-day meeting on the rights of the child and adopts resolutions on children's rights, including the July 2025 resolution on protecting children in cyberspace. It also has mandates such as the **Special Rapporteur on the sale, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children** and the **Special Rapporteur on the right to privacy**.
- **General Assembly:** in December 2023 it adopted by consensus resolution 78/187 on the rights of the child, which focused on the digital environment and endorsed the approach of General Comment No. 25.
- **Committee on the Rights of the Child:** reviews each State party's reports and issues "concluding observations" that often include recommendations on children online.

- **UNICEF:** leads research such as *Disrupting Harm* and supports governments in building child protection systems.
- **ITU:** publishes the *Guidelines on Child Online Protection* (2020) for children, parents, educators, industry and policymakers.
- **UNESCO:** works on digital literacy and published guidance on generative AI in education and research (2023).
- **Global Digital Compact (2024):** UN Member States committed to strengthen measures to protect children online and to promote safe, inclusive digital spaces.
- **Other partners:** the WeProtect Global Alliance, INTERPOL's International Child Sexual Exploitation database and the INHOPE network of reporting hotlines connect governments, police and companies.

18. National Approaches

Countries have chosen very different ways to protect children online. These examples show the range of approaches delegates will meet in committee:

Country or region	Main law or measure	Key features
European Union	General Data Protection Regulation (2018); Digital Services Act (2022)	Parental consent for children's data below an age set between 13 and 16; platforms must protect minors and may not show them ads based on profiling
United Kingdom	Online Safety Act 2023	Duties of care on platforms; child safety duties and strong age checks in force since July 2025
Australia	Social media minimum age law (2024)	Since 10 December 2025, certain platforms must take reasonable steps to stop under-16s having accounts, with fines of up to A$49.5 million
United States	Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (1998)	Parental consent to collect data from children under 13; strong protection of free speech limits content regulation
China	Regulations on the Protection of Minors Online (2024)	State-led controls, including time limits and “minor modes” on devices and apps
India	Digital Personal Data Protection Act 2023 and Rules 2025; POCSO Act 2012; IT Act 2000	Verifiable parental consent to process data of anyone under 18; ban on tracking, behavioural monitoring and targeted advertising directed at children; criminal law against online sexual abuse
Brazil	Digital Statute of Children and Adolescents (2025)	Duties on digital services to protect children by design, including age verification and parental supervision tools

Laws change often. Check the current status of these and your own country's laws before the conference.

19. Case Studies

Case study 1: Financial sextortion of teenagers

Since 2022, police and child protection agencies in many countries have reported a sharp rise in financial sextortion. Criminals, often part of organised networks in another country, pose as young people on social media, persuade teenagers, mostly boys, to share intimate images and then demand money. Victims feel trapped and ashamed, and some have taken their own lives. *Question for delegates:* how can States cooperate across borders, and what should platforms do to detect this behaviour early?

Case study 2: AI-generated images in a Spanish town

In September 2023, in Almendralejo, Spain, more than twenty girls aged between 11 and 17 discovered that boys had used an AI app to create fake nude images of them from photos on their social media accounts. A juvenile court later convicted several minors. The case showed how easily AI tools can be misused, and that children can be both victims and perpetrators. *Question for delegates:* who should be responsible: the app developer, the platform that spread the images, or the users?

Case study 3: Education technology during the pandemic

In 2022 Human Rights Watch examined 164 education apps and websites that 49 governments had recommended for online learning during COVID-19. It reported that 89 per cent of them appeared to monitor children or had the capacity to do so, often sharing data with advertising technology companies, without children's or parents' knowledge. *Question for delegates:* what standards should governments require before recommending digital tools to schools?

Case study 4: Australia's minimum age for social media

Australia became the first country to require certain social media platforms to stop children under 16 from holding accounts, from 10 December 2025. Supporters say it protects children's mental health and safety. Critics, including some child rights groups, argue that it limits children's rights to information and participation, may push them to less safe spaces, and requires age checks that affect everyone's privacy. Several other countries are considering similar laws. *Question for delegates:* is a minimum age the best way to protect children, or should platforms be made safe for them instead?

20. Key Issues for Debate

Issue	Why it matters
Protection and participation	How can children be protected without taking away their rights to information, expression, play and participation? Which rules fit which ages?
Age assurance	Should platforms be required to verify age? How can this be done without collecting excessive personal data or excluding children without documents?
Encryption and detection	End-to-end encryption protects everyone's privacy, including children's, but makes it harder to detect abuse material. Should companies be required to scan private messages?
Platform responsibility	Should companies have a legal duty of care and be required to design their services safely? Who enforces this across borders?
Commercial use of data	Should profiling, targeted advertising and persuasive design features aimed at children be banned or restricted?
Artificial intelligence	How should AI-generated abuse material, nudify apps and AI companions be regulated? Should AI companies carry out child rights impact assessments?
Digital divide and literacy	How can States give every child meaningful, affordable access and the skills to stay safe, especially in rural areas and developing countries?
Remedies and support	How can child victims report harm easily and receive justice and support? How should children who harm other children be treated?
Children's voices	How can children be meaningfully consulted when laws and products that affect them are designed?

21. Positions of Countries and Blocs

Country positions are complex and often combine several approaches. The descriptions below are broad starting points only. Every delegate must research their own country's laws, statements and record.

THE SPECTRUM OF APPROACHES TO CHILDREN ONLINE

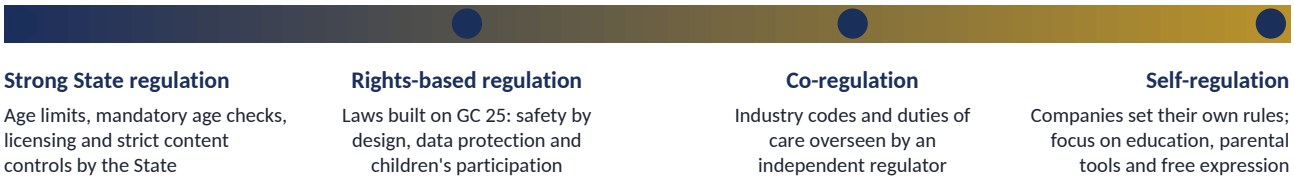


Figure 9. A simplified spectrum. Most States sit somewhere between these points.

Group	Examples	General view
European Union and like-minded States	EU members, the United Kingdom, Norway, Switzerland	Rights-based regulation built on data protection and platform duties. Strong supporters of General Comment No. 25. Internal debate over whether to require scanning of private messages for abuse material.
Strong regulation and age limits	Australia, the United Kingdom, and others considering minimum ages	Favour duties of care, independent regulators and minimum ages for social media, with tough penalties for platforms.
Free expression and industry-led approaches	United States	Strong protection of free speech; prefers targeted laws, industry action, parental tools and education over broad content regulation. Not a party to the CRC.
State-led control and cyber sovereignty	China, the Russian Federation and others	Stress each State's right to govern its own internet, with strong State controls on content and online behaviour of minors.
Child protection and family values	Saudi Arabia, Gulf and many OIC States	Emphasise protecting children from harmful and immoral content and the role of the family; Saudi Arabia led the 2025 Council resolution on children in cyberspace.
Digital inclusion and development	India, the African Group, many Asian and Latin American States	Combine protection with the need to connect children, build capacity and close the digital divide. India has one of the world's largest young online populations and new data protection rules for children.

22. Questions a Resolution Must Answer

A strong resolution does not need to solve everything, but it should give clear answers to the most important questions:

1. How can States make sure the best interests of the child guide all digital laws and policies?
2. What duties should technology companies have to make their services safe by design for children?
3. Should there be minimum ages for social media and other services? How should age be checked while protecting privacy?
4. How should children's personal data be protected, and should profiling and targeted advertising of children be restricted?
5. How can States cooperate across borders to stop online sexual exploitation, sextortion and AI-generated abuse material?
6. How should the risks of generative AI, AI companions and other emerging technologies be addressed?
7. How can every child gain meaningful access to the internet and the digital skills to use it safely?
8. How can child victims report abuse and get support and justice, in a child-friendly way?

9. How can children's own voices be included in decisions that affect them online?
10. What should the Council request from the High Commissioner, Special Rapporteurs and States at its next sessions?

Policy options at a glance

Option	What it means	Strengths and weaknesses
Safety and privacy by design	Legal duties on companies to build child-safe services and high privacy settings by default	Prevents harm at the source, but needs strong regulators
Minimum age rules	Ban accounts below a set age for some services	Simple and popular, but hard to enforce and may limit rights
Data protection for children	Parental consent, limits on profiling and targeted ads	Protects privacy, but consent systems can be weak
International cooperation	Shared hotlines, police cooperation, joining the Cybercrime Convention	Tackles cross-border crime, but raises concerns about surveillance
Digital literacy and inclusion	Teaching children, parents and teachers; expanding access	Empowers children, but takes time and money
Child-friendly remedies	Easy reporting tools, helplines, take-down of images, victim support	Helps victims directly, but depends on resources
A new UN mechanism or report	Ask OHCHR for a report or create a dedicated mandate on children online	Keeps the issue on the agenda, but adds cost

PART IV

Research and Preparation

How to research your country and the agenda

23. How to Research the Agenda

Good research is the single most important thing that separates strong delegates from the rest. Follow these seven steps:

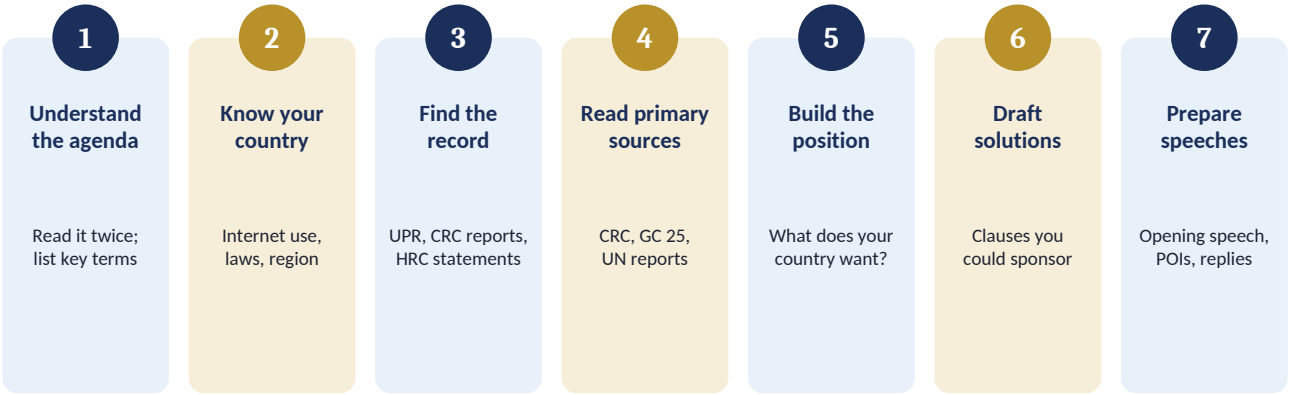


Figure 10. Seven steps from a blank page to a confident first speech.

Step-by-step guidance

1. **Start with this guide.** Read it once quickly and once slowly. Write down every term you do not understand and look it up.

2. **Profile your country.** How many of its children use the internet? Is it a home of major technology companies? Which groups does it belong to, such as the EU, the African Union, ASEAN or the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation?
3. **Find your country's laws.** Does it have a data protection law, a law against online child sexual abuse, an online safety regulator or a minimum age for social media?
4. **Read the Committee on the Rights of the Child's concluding observations** on your country. Search the UN Treaty Body Database for your country and "CRC." They show what experts think your country should improve.
5. **Read your country's Universal Periodic Review documents** on the OHCHR website, and its statements at the Council's annual day on the rights of the child.
6. **Write down your country's red lines.** What will it never accept? What does it want most? Where could it compromise?
7. **Prepare your material.** Write your position paper, a 90-second opening speech, two or three moderated caucus topics and some draft clauses.

> **WHERE TO FIND YOUR COUNTRY'S VIEW QUICKLY**
> The **concluding observations** of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on your country, and your country's own **State party report** to that Committee, both available in the UN Treaty Body Database, are among the clearest official sources. Your government's statements in UN Web TV recordings of Council sessions are also very useful.

24. Official Sources and Reference Pointers

Use official and reliable sources first. Search engines and AI chatbots are useful for getting started, but always check the facts against an original document before you quote them in committee.

Source	What you will find	Web address
OHCHR	The Human Rights Council, the Universal Periodic Review, Special Rapporteurs and the text of the CRC	ohchr.org
UN Treaty Body Database	Reports and concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child for every country	tbinternet.ohchr.org
UN Digital Library	All UN resolutions and reports; search by symbol, for example A/RES/78/187	digitallibrary.un.org
UN Web TV	Video of Human Rights Council sessions and the annual day on the rights of the child	webtv.un.org
UNICEF and UNICEF Innocenti	Research on children online, including *Disrupting Harm* and the State of the World's Children reports	unicef.org
ITU Child Online Protection	International guidelines for parents, educators, industry and policymakers	itu.int
UNESCO	Digital literacy and guidance on AI in education	unesco.org
WeProtect Global Alliance	Global Threat Assessment reports on online child sexual exploitation	weprotect.org
NCMEC	Annual CyberTipline data on reports of online child sexual exploitation	missingkids.org
5Rights Foundation	Research and policy on children's rights by design (an advocacy group)	5rightsfoundation.com

Source	What you will find	Web address
Government of India	MeitY (IT and data protection rules) and NCPCR (child rights commission), a model for finding any country's official sources	meity.gov.in ncpcr.gov.in

HOW TO JUDGE A SOURCE

- **Official UN and government documents** are the most reliable evidence of a country's position. Quote them by their document symbol.
- **UN agencies and research institutes** such as UNICEF, ITU and UNESCO are reliable for facts and analysis.
- **Advocacy groups and companies** provide useful information but may argue for a particular outcome. Use them, but say who they are.
- **News reports** are useful for recent events. Prefer well-known outlets and check whether facts are confirmed.
- **Wikipedia, blogs, social media posts and AI chatbots** are starting points only. They are not acceptable as evidence in committee.

Acceptable evidence in committee

The Executive Board will accept as evidence documents from the United Nations and its bodies, official government sources and reputable international news agencies. When you make a claim in committee, be ready to say where it comes from, for example: *"As paragraph 70 of General Comment No. 25 states..."*

25. Glossary

Abstain: To choose neither yes nor no in a vote.

Bloc: A group of countries with similar positions that work together.

Caucus: A period of focused (moderated) or informal (unmoderated) debate.

Concluding observations: Recommendations of a treaty body to a State after reviewing its report.

CRC: Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989); also its expert Committee.

CSAM: Child sexual abuse material.

Delegate: A student representing a country in committee.

Draft resolution: A formal document in UN format put to the committee for a vote.

EB: Executive Board: the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Rapporteur.

General Comment: An expert committee's authoritative interpretation of a treaty.

GSL: General Speakers' List.

OHCHR: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Operative clause: A numbered clause stating what the committee decides or recommends.

Optional Protocol: An additional treaty that adds to an existing convention.

Portfolio: The country a delegate represents.

Preambulatory clause: A clause giving the background and reasons for a resolution.

Ratify: To formally agree to be legally bound by a treaty.

Special Rapporteur: An independent expert appointed by the Council to report on a theme or country.

Sponsor: A main author of a draft resolution.

Signatory: A country that wants a draft resolution debated, without necessarily supporting it.

UPR: Universal Periodic Review, the Council's review of every State's human rights record.

Yield: Giving away the remaining time of a speech.

26. Delegate Research Worksheet

Fill in this page as you research your allotted country. Bring it with you to the training session and to committee.

My country (portfolio)

Region and groups

Year it ratified the CRC

Children online: key data

Child data protection law

Law on online child abuse

Regulator or minimum age?

Key CRC recommendation

Its position in one sentence

Likely allies

Likely opponents

Red lines

Two solutions it would support

Caucus topics to propose

27. References and Further Reading

United Nations documents

Charter of the United Nations, 26 June 1945, Article 1(3).

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, General Assembly resolution 217 A (III), 10 December 1948.

Convention on the Rights of the Child, General Assembly resolution 44/25, 20 November 1989.

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General Assembly resolution 60/251, *Human Rights Council*, 15 March 2006.

Committee on the Rights of the Child, *General Comment No. 25 (2021) on children's rights in relation to the digital environment*, CRC/C/GC/25.

General Assembly resolution 78/187, *Rights of the child*, A/RES/78/187, December 2023.

General Assembly resolution 79/243, *United Nations Convention against Cybercrime*, 24 December 2024.

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Human Rights Council resolution 17/4, *Human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises*, 2011 (endorsing the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights).

Human Rights Council, resolution on protecting children in cyberspace, 59th session, July 2025.

Other sources

UNICEF, *The State of the World's Children 2017: Children in a Digital World*, 2017.

UNICEF and ITU, *How Many Children and Young People Have Internet Access at Home?*, 2020.

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Human Rights Watch, *"How Dare They Peep into My Private Life?" Children's Rights Violations by Governments that Endorsed Online Learning During the COVID-19 Pandemic*, 2022.

Interagency Working Group, *Terminology Guidelines for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse* (Luxembourg Guidelines), 2016.

Government of India, Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023, and Digital Personal Data Protection Rules, 2025.

A FINAL WORD

Research deeply, speak clearly, listen generously and negotiate in good faith. The world is still learning how to keep children safe online without taking away their freedom. At SNPS FairGaze MUN 1.0, you have the chance to show how it might be done. We look forward to meeting you in committee.

The Executive Board, United Nations Human Rights Council