

Delegate Preparation Handbook

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Research Tips

Research and preparation are two of the most important parts of MUN. You can hardly argue your country's position if you don't know what it is, or what the facts, history, and politics surrounding the topics are. The first thing to do is to keep an eye out for your country in the news. This can give you an idea of the policy and, more importantly, the philosophy of your country. Most of your arguments will not be based primarily on facts and figures, but on your country's beliefs and politics. Once you know those, you can take a credible position on almost any topic or sub-topic imaginable. That said, facts and figures are still very important, because without them, you're only blowing so much hot air. Here is a list of places to start getting info (it will expand as you get more in depth):

- Start with the **background guides**. They will often mention organizations and individuals involved in the topic area.
- **The library**. (If you're feeling adventurous or nostalgic) You can look your country up in encyclopedias, atlases, history texts, etc.
- **The UN website** is a decent starting point at. It can link you to various specialized organizations, etc.
- **UN resolutions** can generally be found on any search engine (search for "resolution ####")
- **The CIA world factbook** does a decent summary of most countries' histories and political stances. Remember that this is strictly the American viewpoint and interpret it accordingly, but if you want to know how many miles of airstrip and how many troops you have, this is the place for it.
- At least one of your **teachers** (especially in the social studies department) probably knows a fair amount about the topics. It never hurts to ask.
- **Government websites**. Those of your country and the countries directly involved with the issue you are discussing. These will often have the official government positions of the country you represent.

Position Paper Writing

One of the goals and challenges of the Model UN experience is for delegates to adopt the position of their assigned country and advocate it throughout the course of the simulation. This is a fundamental aspect of the international flavour of the conference as it forces delegates to examine the perspectives, problems, and policies of a foreign country on a very basic level. It is a difficult task, because the delegate must confront their own personal biases and further points of view to which they may not particularly subscribe. It may be difficult to find a published account of your nation's specific stance on your committee topics, but by gaining an understanding of your country's political system, and cultural and religious beliefs, you will be able to construct a plausible position for your country on each of the topic areas. The position paper is a focal point of delegate preparation to this end before the conference. It should outline your country's stance on the topics at issue on your committee.

Suggested length: $\frac{1}{2}$ page for country info, $\frac{3}{4}$ page for each topic, Times New Roman 12, single-spaced.

It should contain the following elements:

1. Headings

- a. Your Committee Name:
- b. The country you're representing:
- c. Your Name:
- d. Your School:

2. Preamble

A short general statement where you introduce your country, provide any relevant background information, and speak briefly about the goals and pursuits of your country in light of your committee's objectives.

3. Position on Committee Topics

This is the substantive portion of your position paper where you discuss your country's policy on your committee topics. You should feel free to elaborate on the particular problems your country is facing as well as any initiatives your country has pursued or advocated to deal with the issues or further related objectives domestically or internationally. You should make a firm statement of how you feel the international community should approach the problems facing your committee, using your country or other nations whose views you share, as benchmarks for action plans.

NOTE ON CITATION: Position papers should include proper citations using the style of the delegates choosing (MLA, Chicago, APA, etc.). This means that each time the paper makes a substantive claim of fact (ex: Canada has a population of 83 million, Desalination is bad for the environment, etc.), the end of the sentence should indicate where that information came from.

One method of indicating where information came from is called parenthetical citation. This means that there is a set of brackets/parentheses at the end of the sentence which includes a reference to a bibliographical entry that comes at the end of the paper.

Example: Desalination is bad for the environment (Doyle).

Works Cited

Doyle, Alister. "Too much salt: water desalination plants harm environment: U.N." *Reuters*, January 14, 2019.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-environment-brine-idUSKCN1P81PX>.

The other method is to use superscripts and footnotes.¹ See the bottom of this page for where that footnote leads. To add a footnote on PC, use the shortcut Ctrl+Alt+F. On Mac, use Command+Option+F.

The essential information for each citation is **Author's name**, **Title of article/page**, **Date of publication**, and a **link**. If one of these is not available on the page, include whatever is available.

Please note that failure to include any sort of citation will be considered **plagiarism** and will make the delegate **ineligible for an award**.

Feel free to email us (jcymun@jcymun.org) if you have any questions about citation or the rest of the position paper writing process. I also recommend speaking to your teachers about citation because they will likely be able to help you with whatever you need.

¹ Doyle, Alister. "Too much salt: water desalination plants harm environment: U.N." *Reuters*, January 14, 2019. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-environment-brine-idUSKCN1P81PX>.

Sample Position Paper

Committee: United Nations Human Rights Council

Country: Republic of Iraq

Name: John Smith

School: My High School

Preamble

Iraq is a democratic republic that holds human rights in high regard. During Saddam Hussein's rule from 1979-2003, part of his brutal regime involved using his unlimited power to capture and torture prisoners.² After the overthrow of the Ba'ath government in 2003, the United States and its allies established the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA).³ The CPA appointed the Iraqi Governing Council which consisted of 25 Iraqi members. They then approved an interim constitution in March 2004 and a permanent one in October 2005.⁴ This document listed the new rights and freedoms of Iraqi citizens. For example, Article 14 of Chapter 2 states that "Iraqis are equal before the law without discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, origin, color, religion, sect, belief or opinion, or economic or social status."⁵ Iraq also formally guaranteed human rights to women,⁶ the rights of freedom of speech and press, and the right of freedom of assembly in accordance with the law.⁷ Although Islam is the official religion of Iraq, the state has laws permitting freedom of religion.⁸ These examples show that even if human rights were not a priority in our country's past, the current government has made them one now.

Topic 1: Treatment of Political Prisoners

Iraq does not believe that it is justified for a nation to imprison people based on their political beliefs. We understand that in the past, our police force and judiciary systems have used political beliefs to justify the use of violence against our citizens.⁹ Hussein's government felt that violence must be met with a strong hand or it would continue. This, however, is no longer our way. Our current government believes that along with it being unjust, taking political prisoners is an ineffective and short term solution to our problems. To counteract our past legislation concerning political dissidents, Iraq has allocated many resources to the retrieval of lost persons and to the release of political prisoners. For example, we have created the Political Prisoners Foundation whose only purpose is to deal with the issue of political prisoners and support them financially

² "Iraq: State of the Evidence." *Human Rights Watch*, Human Rights Watch, Nov. 2004, www.hrw.org/reports/iraq1104.pdf.

³ "Coalition Provisional Authority." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., www.britannica.com/topic/Coalition-Provisional-Authority.

⁴ "Coalition Provisional Authority." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., www.britannica.com/topic/Coalition-Provisional-Authority.

⁵ "Iraq's Constitution of 2005." *Constituteproject*, Constituteproject, 19 Feb. 2021, www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Iraq_2005.pdf?lang=en.

⁶ Ditmars, Hadani, et al. "Constitutional and Legal Rights of Iraqi Women." *Middle East Institute*, MEI@75, 26 Feb. 2021, mei.edu/publications/constitutional-and-legal-rights-iraqi-women.

⁷ "Iraq's Constitution of 2005." *Constituteproject*, Constituteproject, 19 Feb. 2021, www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Iraq_2005.pdf?lang=en.

⁸ "Iraq - United States Department of State." *U.S. Department of State*, U.S. Department of State, 1 Dec. 2020, www.state.gov/reports/2019-report-on-international-religious-freedom/iraq/.

⁹ "Iraqi Parliament's Committee for Martyrs and Political Prisoners Meets with ICMP." *International Commission of Missing Persons*, 2022, <https://www.icmp.int/press-releases/iraqi-parliament-committee-meets-with-icmp/>.

and morally.¹⁰ The Prime Minister of Iraq, Mustafa Al Kadhimi, has reached out to the families of political dissidents to assure them that their voices are being heard.¹¹ He promised that an investigation into the killing and abduction of protesters would be conducted.¹² We understand that other countries have similar positions to ours when it comes to political dissidents. Iraq would stand with these countries and others if they agree on a resolution to put an end to political prisoners. This resolution should include measures to prevent maltreatment of current prisoners and look to free them in the future. Iraq also encourages its fellow nations to shine a light on the issue of political prisoners being detained in horrible conditions.¹³ Iraq suffers from a lack of facilities which leads to overpopulated prisons.¹⁴ We are aware that many other countries face this problem and we believe it can be solved if we all imprison less people. No country should be exempt from the rules put in place to protect its citizens. Although not all countries share our views, we are optimistic that we can all agree to help people to get fair treatment no matter their political beliefs.

Topic 2: Philippine Drug War

Iraq does not agree with the Philippines's method of using violence to lower the distribution and consumption of drugs. The violence and terror caused by the government's war on drugs has been horrendous. Despite the fear that citizens face, drug usage and distribution is still rampant within the country and in the region. Iraq believes that this committee should work to allocate resources to learn more about the situation. This will not only help the citizens of the Philippines, but also people from other countries facing similar struggles with drug usage. Iraq, for example, also has many instances of drug usage.¹⁵ Even though the problem is not as severe, trends show that usage of drugs such as crystal meth, hashish, opium, benzhexol, heroin, benzodiazepines, methamphetamine and many others are on the rise.¹⁶ Iraqi health officials have discovered that the increase in drug usage can be linked to post-traumatic stress caused by the regime of Saddam Hussein, decades of war, and a poor economy.¹⁷ This, we believe, could also be the case for the citizens of the Philippines. In other words, exposing people to violence may only increase their desire for drug use. Many people believe that the only reason that drug usage in Iraq has not

¹⁰ "من نحن | مؤسسة السجناء السياسيين", www.ppf.gov.iq/%d9%85%d9%86-%d9%86%d8%ad%d9%86/.

¹¹ Aldroubi, Mina. "Iraqi Protesters 'Did Not Die in Vain', Prime Minister Mustafa Al Kadhimi Says." *The National*, The National, 5 June 2020, www.thenationalnews.com/world/mena/iraqi-protesters-did-not-die-in-vain-prime-minister-mustafa-al-kadhimi-says-1.1029399.

¹² Aldroubi, Mina. "Iraqi Protesters 'Did Not Die in Vain', Prime Minister Mustafa Al Kadhimi Says." *The National*, The National, 5 June 2020, www.thenationalnews.com/world/mena/iraqi-protesters-did-not-die-in-vain-prime-minister-mustafa-al-kadhimi-says-1.1029399.

¹³ "Iraq: Hundreds Detained in Degrading Conditions." *Human Rights Watch*, Human Rights Watch, 28 Oct. 2020, www.hrw.org/news/2017/03/14/iraq-hundreds-detained-degrading-conditions.

¹⁴ "Iraq: New Government, New Legislative Agenda." *Human Rights Watch*, Human Rights Watch, 28 Oct. 2020, www.hrw.org/news/2020/05/14/iraq-new-government-new-legislative-agenda.

¹⁵ Al-Hemiary, Nesif J, et al. "Drug and Alcohol Use in Iraq: Findings of the Inaugural Iraqi Community Epidemiological Workgroup." *Substance Use & Misuse*, U.S. National Library of Medicine, 14 May 2014, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4431571/.

¹⁶ "UCLA Integrated Substance Abuse Programs (ISAP)." *Iraq - ISAP International Projects and Scholars*, www.uclaisap.org/internationalprojects/html/iraq.html.

¹⁷ Aqrabi, Rawnak, and Keith Humphreys. "Responding to Rising Substance Misuse in Iraq."

Www.biblioteca.cij.gob.mx/, Informa Healthcare, 2009, www.biblioteca.cij.gob.mx/Archivos/Materiales_de_consulta/Drogas_de_Abuso/Articulos/55614848.pdf.

gotten out of hand is because Iraqi social norms look down upon drug use.¹⁸ This belief is supported by Islamic religious teachings which are practiced by a large majority of the population and by the harsh legal punishment for drug trafficking and drug abuse that was in place for many years under the Hussein government.¹⁹ Studies from Ibn-Rushd Teaching Mental Hospital showed that the drug phenomenon has grown significantly in many parts of Iraq.²⁰ One problem is the amount of unregulated pharmaceuticals and fraudulent medicines that are smuggled into the country.²¹ Despite a number of criminal networks being shut down, the lack of border security and access to medicine gives them an environment to thrive. Another main issue that the government is facing is the lack of treatment facilities with the medical expertise to deal with the issue.²² This is because of the fragility of the economy in Iraq. Iraq's economy has especially suffered during the global pandemic. This is due to the plummeting oil prices worldwide, since oil revenue makes up over 84% of the Iraqi government's yearly budget.²³ The Human Rights Council must protect Filipino citizens from the terror they are facing by putting pressure on the government and voicing their disapproval of the violence taking place within their country. We believe that the United Nations should intervene to find a peaceful alternative to the current violent solution being implemented.

¹⁸ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Unodc.org*, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 25 Aug. 2003, www.unodc.org/pdf/report_iraq_2003-09-01.pdf.

¹⁹ Aqrawi, Rawnak, and Keith Humphreys. "Responding to Rising Substance Misuse in Iraq."

Www.biblioteca.cij.gob.mx, Informa Healthcare, 2009,

www.biblioteca.cij.gob.mx/Archivos/Materiales_de_consulta/Drogas_de_Abuso/Articulos/55614848.pdf.

²⁰ Aqraw, Rawnak. "A Study of Addicted Inpatients at Ibn-Rushd Psychiatric Teaching Hospital in Baghdad Category." *National Institute on Drug Abuse*, 9 Sept. 2013,

www.drugabuse.gov/international/abstracts/study-addicted-inpatients-ibn-rushd-psychiatric-teaching-hospital-in-baghdad-category.

²¹ United Nations office on drugs and crime. "Regional Program for Arab States 2016-2021."

<https://www.unodc.org/>, UNODC,

www.unodc.org/documents/middleeastandnorthafrica/Regional-Programme-doc/Regional_Programme_for_the_Arab_States_2016-2021.pdf.

²² United Nations office on drugs and crime. *Unodc.org*, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 25 Aug. 2003, www.unodc.org/pdf/report_iraq_2003-09-01.pdf.

²³ Aresti, María Lasa. "Oil and Gas Revenue Sharing in Iraq." *Resourcegovernance.org*, National Research Governance Institute, July 2016, resourcegovernance.org/sites/default/files/documents/oil-gas-revenue-sharing-iraq.pdf.

Resolution Writing

A resolution is a declaration of opinion from a committee, and, eventually, from the UN as a whole (if adopted by the General Assembly). They are not binding on anyone, unless they come from the Security Council, but carry a great deal of moral force.

Resolution Format

Resolution format is very specific. It is essentially a list of statements, called clauses, and is divided into 2 parts: the preamble and the operative section. In both, the first word of each clause must be underlined. The first word of each must be a verb of a definite type (see the suggestions below, but do not feel bound by them). The committee Chair is the final arbiter of resolution format.

Preamble

The preamble section is where a resolution lists its justifications. It uses passive verbs like ‘guided by’, ‘alarmed by’, ‘realising’, ‘recalling’, ‘noting’, etc. The preamble does not actually do anything, but it is necessary, because it provides a context for the operative section to draw from. This is also the place to reference (‘recalling’) treaties and resolutions on the subject. In this section, each clause ends with a comma. Preamble clauses are not numbered.

Operative

This is the meat of the resolution, where its recommendations are spelled out. The idea is not to be overly specific, but specific enough to get the job done. This sounds tricky, but is easier than it seems. The trick is to not get carried away, and to err on the side of specificity. All clauses in this section are numbered, and all end with semicolons, except for the last, which ends in a period. Always remember, resolutions passed by committees other than the Security Council have no actual binding power, so should not use words like ‘demands’ and ‘requires’. This is only a recommendation, however. Use the language you deem necessary. More common clause beginners would be ‘urges’, ‘asks’, ‘expresses concern’, ‘notes’, ‘recommends’, ‘declares’, etc.

List of suggested words:

Preamble

Affirming, Alarmed by, Approving, Aware of, Believing, Bearing in mind, Confident, Contemplating, Convinced, Declaring, Deeply concerned, Deeply conscious, Deeply convinced, Deeply regretting, Desiring, Emphasizing, Expecting, Expressing its appreciation, Expressing its satisfaction, Fulfilling, Fully aware, Fully alarmed, Fully believing, Further deploring, Further recalling, Having adopted, Having considered, Having considered further, Having devoted attention, Having examined, Having studied, Having heard, Having received, Keeping in mind, Noting with regret, Noting with satisfaction, Noting with deep concern, Noting with approval, Observing, Realising, Reaffirming, Recalling, Recognising, Referring, Seeking, Taking into account, Taking into consideration, Taking note, Viewing with appreciation, Welcoming.

Operative

Accepts, Affirms, Approves, Authorises, Calls, Calls upon, Condemns, Congratulates, Confirms, Considers, Declares accordingly, Demands, Deplores, Draws the attention, Designates, Emphasizes, Encourages, Endorses, Expresses its appreciation, Expresses its hope, Further invites, Further proclaims, Further reminds, Further recommends, Further resolves, Further requests, Have resolved, Notes, Proclaims, Reaffirms, Recommends, Reminds, Regrets, Requests, Requires, Solemnly affirms, Strongly condemns, Supports, Trusts, Takes note of, Transmits, Urges.

General Tips

1. Avoid using actual dollar figures unless you really do have access to the kind of information which that requires.
2. Respect the scope of the committee (the WHO should not be talking about antiterrorism strategies, for example).
3. Remember that the Security Council must approve any actions taken.
4. Be wary of national sovereignty issues. The UN has fairly strict limitations when it comes to what countries may consider their internal matters or legitimate foreign policy interests.
5. Make sure it's in proper resolution format before taking it to the chair (it will save headaches all around).
6. Be reasonable when choosing the language used (ex. SOCHUM is not in a position to 'require' anything).

Sample Resolution

Resolution 1.4 (topic 1, resolution #4)

Sponsors*: Germany, Thailand, Uruguay, China

Signatories**: Sweden, Argentina, Australia, Morocco, United States

The Commission for the Advancement of Science and Technology***

Realizing that the majority of the world's energy is produced by environmentally-hostile fossil fuels,

Aware of the relatively low expense of obtaining energy from nuclear sources,

Noting with deep concern that nuclear power plants and information about nuclear power can lead to the production of nuclear weapons,

1. Proclaims the necessity of using clean energy sources such as solar, or even nuclear, to replace fossil fuels;
2. Recommends the creation of a UN sponsored commission to deal specifically with the distribution of information related to nuclear power to those countries which request it;
3. Further Recommends that this committee not distribute information to countries with militaristic or unstable governments;
4. Designates the above commission as having responsibility to monitor the use of any distributed information;
5. Urges nations with nuclear capability to cooperate with the above commission.

*Usually the authors, at least 2 needed, but it is best to keep the number small. These members must actually support it.

**Believe that it is important enough to discuss. Not necessarily in favour.

***or "The General Assembly", "The Security Council", committee name (no abbreviations)

Helpful Videos

If there is a contradiction between any information in these videos and our Rules of Procedure document, follow our Rules of Procedure.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WCCjaVjnArl>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BYYwBLJ9g5E>