

Model United Nations Practical Guide

1. Structure of a MUN Committee

A MUN committee simulates the work of a real international body. Each participant represents a country or entity, referred to as a delegate.

Key Roles

- Chair: Presides over the committee, enforces rules, and manages debate.
- Delegates: Represent countries and participate in debate and voting.
- Secretariat: Oversees the conference as a whole.

2. Rules and types of Debate

Agenda Setting : At the beginning of the committee, delegates vote on the order in which topics will be discussed.

a) Open Debate

Open debate allows delegates to discuss the topic more freely.

[Moderated debate: Delegates speak one at a time, called on by the Chair, for a fixed speaking time debate (for or against the clause or resolution proposed).]

Open debate is mainly used for discussion, negotiation, and drafting.

b) Closed Debate

Closed debate is more structured and is usually used when the committee is ready to focus on draft resolutions and amendments.

During closed debate (for then against the clause or resolution proposed) : Debate time may be limited and the committee may move quickly toward voting procedures

3. Lobbying

What is Lobbying

Lobbying is the informal process where delegates negotiate, form alliances, and work together to write draft resolutions. It is a core part of MUN and usually takes place during unmoderated debate or during designated lobbying sessions (if allowed by the Chair). Drafting resolutions during lobbying : delegates collaborate to write draft resolutions, one or more delegates act as sponsors (main authors) or other delegates may become signatories to show support for discussion

How to Lobby Effectively

- Approach delegates with similar interests or policies
- Clearly explain your country's position and priorities
- Be open to compromise and negotiation
- Exchange ideas, clauses, and support for draft resolutions

Lobbying is essential for building consensus and ensuring that resolutions gain enough support to pass.

4. Points

Points are used to address procedural or personal matters. They may interrupt a speaker only when specified.

Point of Order

- Used to point out a procedural error
- May interrupt a speaker
- Cannot be used to challenge the Chair's discretion

Point of Personal Privilege

- Used when a delegate's comfort or ability to participate is affected (e.g. cannot hear the speaker)
- May interrupt a speaker if necessary

Point of Information

- Used to ask a question after a speech (called by the Chairs and only authorized if the delegates has opened themselves to point of informations)
- Cannot interrupt a speaker

Point of Parliamentary Inquiry

- Used to ask the Chair a question about rules or procedure
- Cannot interrupt a speaker

5. Motions

Motions are formal proposals to change the flow of debate.

Motion to Move into Voting Procedure

- Ends debate and moves directly to voting on resolutions or amendments
- Usually requires a supermajority

Motion to Divide the House

- Requests that abstentions not be allowed during voting
- Used either before voting procedures for clauses or resolutions start or after these voting procedures if there are too many abstentions
- Request must be seconded by other delegations

Motion to follow up

- Requests to continue the point of information
- Can only be used by the person who asked the point of information
- Allowed by chairs

Motion to extend the point of information

- Extends the point of information to more delegations
- Has to be seconded by other delegations

Motion to Suspend the Meeting : Used for breaks (lunch, coffee)

Motion to Adjourn the Meeting : Ends the committee session

6. Voting Procedures

- Simple majority (>50%)
- Two-thirds majority (important decisions)

Roll-call vote : Countries vote individually (Yes / No / Abstain / With Rights)

Voting for resolutions or clauses : Delegates may vote Yes, No or Abstain, unless the house is divided

Voting for amendments : Delegates may vote Yes or No

7. Resolutions and Amendments

Draft Resolutions

- Written proposals addressing the topic
- Require sponsors and signatories

Amendments

- **Friendly Amendments**: Automatically accepted with sponsor approval
- **Unfriendly Amendments**: Voted on by the committee

8. Procedural Advanced Elements

Yielding Time : A speaker may : Yield to another delegate ; Yield to questions ; Yield to the Chair

Right of Reply : Used when a delegate feels personally offended.

Working Papers vs Draft Resolutions :

- Working Paper: Informal draft
- Draft Resolution: Formal document submitted for debate

Order of Voting : Amendments are voted before final resolution.

9. Writing Resolutions

Structure

Preambulatory Clauses

- Background information
- Past actions
- Begin with participles (Recalling, Noting, etc.)

Operative Clauses

- Actions and solutions
- Numbered clauses
- Begin with verbs (Decides, Calls upon, etc.)

Example (Simplified)

Preambulatory clause:

Recalling previous UN resolutions,

Operative clause:

1. *Calls upon* Member States to cooperate;
2. *Encourages* funding for programs;

10. Key Questions for Resolutions

A good resolution must answer:

- What is the problem?
- Who is responsible?
- What actions will be taken?
- How will it be funded?
- How will it be enforced?

11. Speaking and Diplomatic Conduct

- Always address the Chair, not other delegates directly

- Refer to yourself as "the delegate of [Country]"
- Personal pronouns not allowed
- Avoid offensive or undiplomatic language
- Respect time limits

12. Academic Content (Theme: "New territories of conflict: what humanity and what humanism?")

A. Historical Background

The nature of conflict has evolved beyond traditional territorial wars. Since the late 20th century, new domains of confrontation have emerged:

- Cyber space: cyberattacks, digital espionage, disinformation
- Outer space: militarization of satellites and anti-satellite weapons
- Biotechnology: dual-use research and biosecurity risks
- Artificial intelligence: autonomous weapons systems

Key developments include:

- Cold War technological competition
- Expansion of the internet in the 1990s
- Increasing reliance on digital infrastructure
- Recent conflicts involving cyber warfare (e.g. attacks on critical infrastructure)

These shifts raise fundamental questions about what "humanity" and "humanism" mean in non-physical battlefields.

B. Current Situation

Today, conflicts increasingly occur in spaces where:

- Civilians are directly impacted (cyberattacks on hospitals, infrastructure)
- Responsibility is difficult to attribute
- Existing international law is insufficient or unclear

Major concerns:

- Lack of regulation of AI weapons
- Growing cyber insecurity
- Militarization of space
- Ethical limits of technological warfare

C. UN Actions

The United Nations has addressed these issues through:

- Discussions on lethal autonomous weapons systems (LAWS)

- Groups of Governmental Experts on cybersecurity
- Treaties such as the Outer Space Treaty (1967)

However, there is no comprehensive framework regulating all new domains of conflict.

D. Key Actors

- Major powers: United States, China, Russia
- Emerging technological states: India, Israel
- International organizations: United Nations, NATO
- Private sector: tech companies (AI, cybersecurity)

These actors shape both the development and regulation of new conflict zones.

E. Geopolitical Issues

- Competition for technological dominance
- Security vs freedom (surveillance, data control)
- Inequality between technologically advanced and developing countries
- Risk of escalation without clear rules

The central question remains: how can human dignity and ethical principles be preserved in increasingly dehumanized forms of conflict.

13. International Positions

Delegates must understand:

- Which countries support or oppose policies
- Major blocs (Western countries, Global South, major powers)
- Strategic interests (economic, military, political)

14. Dress Code

Delegates are expected to dress in **business attire**.

Acceptable Attire

- Suit, blazer, dress shirt
- Dress pants or skirt
- Formal dress shoes

Not Acceptable

- Jeans
- Sneakers
- Casual clothing

15. How to Prepare for MUN

- Research your country's policy and alliances
- Prepare opening speeches
- Understand committee rules
- Be ready to negotiate and compromise
- Write a resolution that has to be sent to the chairs

16. Key Tips for Success

- Be confident but respectful
- Use points and motions correctly
- Listen actively
- Collaborate effectively and be diplomatic
- Focus on solutions, not just speeches

17. A few YouTube videos to help understand what is a MUN conference

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WCCjaVjnArI>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gsqIA9Ha-ik>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5zoibkTpG6M>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BYYwBLJ9q5E>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XpAWnDd5JuA>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GDnRGuAVdE>