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I. INTRODUCTION

So, you are doing a Model United Nations (MUN) for the first time? Do not worry! In this document, you will find all the information you need to understand what is a Draft Resolution and a Working Paper, what are their purpose and how to write them, so you can start preparing for your first MUN conference.

MUN is a simulation of the United Nations (UN) that is done at a high school and university level. MUN aims to educate participants about civics, effective communication, globalization and multilateral diplomacy. In MUN, students participate as “delegates” from the UN Member States and simulate UN committees. From this experience, not only do they become involved and debate today’s pressing current issues, but also broaden their world view and their knowledge of international relations and the UN, allowing delegates to develop their critical thinking and soft skills. It is an international global phenomenon, being a wide-spread extra-curricular activity with a solid tradition and community in many countries.

Although MUN can be an interesting, challenging and exciting experience for those participating, delegates should also understand that it also demands prior research and knowledge not only of the topic being discussed, but also of the workings of MUN itself. The debate is a formal event, with specific rules, which delegates should know and need to act in accordance with, in order to effectively represent their allocated country in the best way possible.

This document is meant to help the delegates, since we are aware the vast majority are beginners. Nonetheless, this document should be viewed as a starting point, and all the delegations need to do their own research regarding the topic and the position of their country.

We hope this information is helpful and that, most importantly, you have fun!
II. DRAFT RESOLUTIONS

A resolution is a document that seeks to solve the problems that a committee addresses. Technically, a resolution is called a Draft Resolution until the latter is successfully passed during voting procedure. Draft Resolutions are more formal documents that have to be written in the correct UN resolution format.

In the early days of the UN all draft resolutions were put to a vote, now every draft resolution is discussed beforehand in informal consultations where some of the language is sacrificed in a spirit of compromise.

The key to successful drafting of both oral proposals and/or Draft Resolutions is to consult widely so as to know the concerns of others before you put pen to paper, and then to factor these into your draft so as to recruit sponsors and disarm opponents. When your Draft Resolution is written, you should again consult widely and be ready to modify it in response to the concerns of other delegations. This process will often ensure the draft’s acceptance when it is put to the committee for decision. At the very least, any points of serious disagreement will have been identified and isolated.

When drafting a resolution, a delegate can take 1 of 2 approaches:

- negotiations before tabling – the sponsors consult with Member States and hold informal negotiations on the draft before tabling the “best version possible”, which would only then be introduced formally.

- negotiations after tabling – the sponsor(s) draft a resolution without prior negotiations, introducing the document and only after will informal negotiations take place. Either consensus is reached, or if it is not, then i) the sponsor withdrawals the original document and a new one is introduced or ii) amendments are submitted.

TIP

To approve a resolution, albeit being the purpose of the debate, can be extremely difficult. The Draft Resolution takes a lot of time to write, and is the result of intense negotiation, compromise and lobbying. You need States to sign the document, and still, it can fail if there is not a majority of States in favour of the resolution. Negotiation and building support is key.

Therefore, if you want to pass a resolution, it is advisable to think of a strategy prior to the debate, research your country and the other countries, and perhaps even come to the debate with a proposal for a Draft Resolution.
1. **Format of the Draft Resolution**

The resolution begins with the name of the organ that is adopting the resolution (in this case, “The General Assembly”). This is followed with several preambular paragraphs (or perambulatory clauses). These are not really paragraphs, but clauses in the sentence. Each one starts with a verb in the present participle (e.g., Recalling, Considering, Noting), which is capitalized, and ends with a comma. Sometimes the clause begins with more than one keyword, such as, Noting with satisfaction, Noting with regret, etc. These words are always italicized.

After the preambular paragraphs come the operative paragraphs (or operative clauses), each of which begins with a verb in the present tense, also capitalized, and finishes with a semi-colon, except for the last, which has a period at the end of it.

A Draft Resolution must include:

- the committee’s name (e.g. United Nations Security Council);
- the names of the sponsors;
- the name of the signatories;
- the topic;
- preambulatory clauses;
- operative clauses.

2. **Wording of the Resolution**

Each resolution consists of one long single sentence. After the committee’s name, the name of the sponsors and signatories, and the topic, come the preambulatory clauses, followed by the operative clauses. Informally, the preambular paragraphs are referred to as PP1, PP2 etc. and the operative paragraphs as OP1, OP2 etc.

The wording of the resolution is key.

A. **Preambulatory Clauses**

Preambular paragraphs serve to explain the basis for the action called for in the operative paragraphs. They can be used to build an argument. They can also be used to build support. Sometimes they express general principles and the tone can be elevated. Some lack of precision in the wording of preambular paragraphs is tolerable.

These clauses are not numbered, end with a comma and start with words such as:
Acknowledging  Having adopted
Affirming   Having considered
Appreciating  Having noted
Approving   Having reviewed
Aware     Mindful
Bearing in mind   Noting
Believing   Noting with approval
Commending    Noting with concern
Concerned   Noting with satisfaction
Conscious    Observing
Considering    Realising
Convinced   Recalling
Desiring   Recognising
Emphasizing    Seeking
Expecting   Taking into consideration
Expressing    Underlining
Fully aware   Welcoming
Guided by   Whereas

If the preamble is going to refer to UN Charter, it should be put first. If the resolution starts with a general reference to the “purposes and principles in the Charter of the United Nations” there should be another clause in the preamble that refers more specifically to a Chapter or Article within the UN Charter that elaborates what principles are relevant to the issue that is the subject of the resolution. The first time it is mentioned in the preambular or operative section it should be referred to as the “Charter of the United Nations”. After that, it can be referred to simply as the “Charter”.

References to past resolutions or decisions usually come second (e.g., “Recalling its resolution 65/309 of 19 July 2011”). If the resolution was adopted in the Security Council, the correct wording would be “Recalling Security Council resolution 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973”. It is not considered good form to write, “Recalling resolution 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973 of the Security Council ...”. The first time a resolution of the Security Council is mentioned the date is included. After that only the resolution number and year needs to be mentioned, for example, resolution 338 (1973).

Next, it is proper to include general observations about the content or purpose of the resolution which serves as basis for the rest of the text. This helps set the stage for the call to action in the operative section of the resolution.

Finally, if it is considered desirable to include a reference to a report on this item, this would go last (e.g., “Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General...”). If this is done, it is not considered proper to include the symbol of document in the text. This would go in a footnote.
B. OPERATIVE CLAUSES

Operative paragraphs express what the committee has decided to do. They form the policy that the sponsors of the resolution believe would help resolve the issues regarding the topic being discussed. Precise clear language enhances political impact and facilitates implementation. Likewise brevity is preferable, as it is politically much more powerful.

Each clause should address one aspect of the issue only.

Clauses should be numbered (1, 2, 3) and can include subclauses (1a, 2a, 3a). Clauses should support one another and continue to build your solution. Your clauses should be detailed in order to have a complete solution. Operative clauses should end with a semicolon, with the exception of the last operative clause, which should end with a period. They should start with words such as:

- Accepts
- Adopts
- Agrees
- Appeals
- Approves
- Authorizes
- Calls upon
- Commends
- Considers
- Decides
- Declares
- Determines
- Directs
- Emphasizes
- Encourages
- Endorses
- Expresses appreciation
- Expresses hope
- Invites
- Notes
- Notes with approval
- Notes with concern
- Notes with satisfaction
- Proclaims
- Reaffirms
- Recommends
- Reminds
- Repeals
- Requests
- Resolves
- Suggests
- Supports
- Takes note
- Urges

For an example of a Resolution, see UN Doc A/RES/67/234.
III. AMENDMENTS

Draft Resolutions are modified through written amendments, which change the operative clauses.

There are 2 types of amendments:
- friendly amendments – changes to the draft resolution supported by the sponsors (they are passed automatically after the approval of the Chair)
- unfriendly amendments – changes not supported by the sponsors and must be voted on by the committee).

The distinction is important because only the unfriendly amendments need to be voted on; if it is a friendly amendment, i.e., if it is accepted by all the sponsors of the resolution, it does not need to be voted on.

If there are no proposals for amendment, that passage is considered to have been provisionally agreed. The Chairman will then invite the committee to consider the next passage. If amendments are proposed, these will be discussed and, if there is agreement, the modified wording will be incorporated into the text. This new text will then form part of the provisionally agreed draft.

If, on the other hand, the committee is unable to reach agreement on the proposed amendment within a reasonable time, the disputed words will be enclosed in square brackets and the committee will proceed to the next passage.

Example of an Amendment

“Deletes sub-clause 1.b. Adds an operative clause that reads “9. Urges member states to...”. Amends operative clause 6 to read “6. Calls upon developed countries to reduce their emissions by 5%...”’”
IV. Working Papers

Working Papers are documents that are differ from Draft Resolutions or Amendments, but are closely linked to them.

Working papers are informal unofficial documents containing a framework for the resolution. They can be created individually. They do not have to be formatted to the Draft Resolution format, although that is encouraged to do so regardless.

They are also not necessary to create a Draft Resolution. Why are Working Papers documents of interest? They could be the basis of Draft Resolutions, and also they can be the object of a moderated caucus. So, for example, if it is in work country’s interest to understand the position of the other countries, or to propose and discuss solutions regarding a particular issue within the topic (in order to later make a Draft Resolution), then perhaps one way of obtaining such information is by writing a Working Paper, submitting it and propose a moderated caucus discussing this document.