

DRAFT RESOLUTION GUIDE

LISBOMUN 2019



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Introduction

Is this your first time doing MUN? If so, you've come to the right place! In this guide, we'll be explaining the Rules of Procedure (RoP) prevailing during this conference, as well as what you'll need to start preparing for your first conference.

Now, MUN (Model United Nations) is a simulation of the United Nations that's done at secondary and university level. Briefly, it's done with the aim of teaching participants how to express themselves effectively in a public setting, giving them a better understanding of the world (from learning about the topic being debated, to grasping the underlying concepts of diplomacy and politics) and fostering an international mindset – in short, students will largely emerge with their critical thinking and general soft skills improved. During the proceedings, students take the role of delegates from the UN's member states and behave accordingly in simulated UN committees. MUN is popular around the world, now being a long-standing tradition in many places. Naturally, all this demands much from those involved, and expects a strong level of responsibility; delegates should arrive at the conference having studied their topics well, and with a full understanding of what MUN entails.

This document will help with that second part, detailing all the rules one must know. This may seem staggering, but, really, it does end up being rather enjoyable – there's work to be done, but also plenty of fun to be had!

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II. DRAFT RESOLUTIONS

When a UN committee meets to address a particular issue, its aim is to release a “plan of action” – a document called a “resolution” that details all the steps the UN wishes that were taken by each country regarding the issue that have been agreed upon by the various member states.

A resolution is called a Draft Resolution until it’s successfully passed during voting procedures. Draft Resolutions are more formal documents that are written in the correct UN resolution format. In the early days of the UN all draft resolutions were put to a vote, but now every draft resolution is discussed beforehand in more informal consultations to save time and sort out comprises. Writers of successful oral proposals and/or Draft Resolutions consult as many countries as possible, so others’ concerns are known before anything gets committed to paper. This is useful to gain sponsors and disarm opponents early on.

If a Draft Resolution is to be accepted by the Dais, and therefore be introduced to the debate, it must have a minimum of 5 State signatories and/or sponsors, of which at least 2 must be sponsors (of course, for the Draft Resolution to pass voting, you’ll need support from even more States). 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 forth to the committee. In any case, points of serious disagreement will have been dealt with already.

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 only then would be introduced formally.

- Negotiations after tabling – the sponsor(s) draft a resolution without prior negotiations, introducing the document and only after this do informal negotiations take place. If at this point

consensus isn't reached, then i) the sponsor replaces the original document with a new one, or ii) amendments are submitted.

TIP: While the approval of a resolution is the purpose of the debate, this could be very difficult.

The Draft Resolution takes much time to write, and is the result of intense negotiation, compromise and lobbying. You need States to sign the document, but it can still fail if there isn't a majority of States in favour of the resolution. Negotiation and building support is key. Therefore, if you want to pass a resolution, it's a good idea to come up with a strategy before the debate, research your country and the other countries, and, perhaps, 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 aren't really paragraphs, rather, the clauses altogether amount to a single sentence – so, each clause really is but a part of a sentence. Each starts with a verb in the present participle (e.g., Recalling, Considering, Noting), which is capitalized, and ends with a comma. Sometimes the perambulatory clauses begin 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 semicolon, except for the last, which has a period at the end of it. Often such keywords will be repeated; for example, if you end up wanting to use "recalling" a second time, you may want to say "further recalling" for the sake of variety.

A Draft Resolution must include:

- The committee's name (e.g. United Nations Security Council);
- The sponsors' names;
- The signatories' names;
- The topic;
- Preambulatory clauses;
- Operative clauses.

2. WORDING OF THE RESOLUTION

Each resolution consists of one long single sentence. After writing the committee's name, the name of the sponsors and signatories, and the topic, then comes 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, but that shouldn't be presented like that in the document itself. The wording of the resolution is key.

A. PREMBULATORY CLAUSES

Preambulary clauses explain the basis for the action called for in the operative clauses. 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 intolerable. These clauses are not numbered, end with a comma and start with words such as:

Acknowledging, Affirming, Appreciating, Approving, Aware, Bearing in mind, Believing, Commending, Concerned, Conscious, Considering, Convinced, Desiring, Emphasizing, Expecting, Expressing, Fully aware of, Guided by, Having adopted, Having considered, Having noted, Having reviewed, Mindful Noting, Noting with approval, Noting with concern, Noting with satisfaction, Observing, Realising, Recalling, Recognising, Seeking, Taking into consideration, Underlining, Welcoming, Whereas.

If a clause refers to the UN Charter, it should come 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 on what principles are relevant to the issue addressed by the resolution. The first time it’s 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’s not considered good way to write, “Recalling resolution 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973 of the Security Council ...”. Include the date of the first time you mention a given Security Council resolution, but, for subsequent references, just put the number and year. (e.g. resolution 338 (1973)).

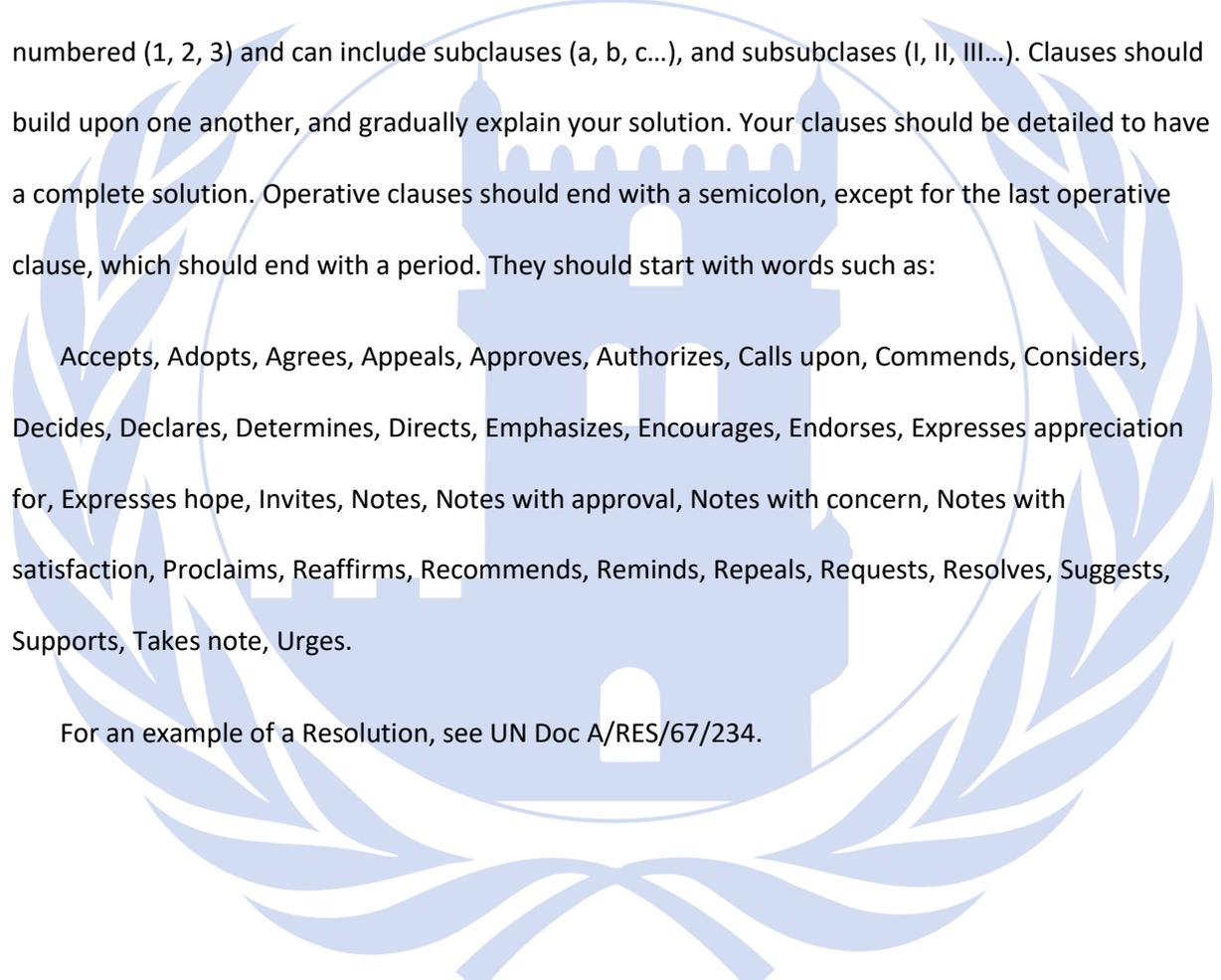
Next, it’s good to include general observations about the content or purpose of the resolution, which serves as basis for the rest of the text. This helps set the stage for the call to action in the operative section of the resolution. Finally, if you want to include a reference to a report on this issue, it would go last (e.g., “Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General...). If this is done, add the reference to the document in the 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 and clear language enhances political impact and facilitates implementation. Likewise, aim to be brief. Each clause should address one aspect of the issue only. Clauses should be numbered (1, 2, 3) and can include subclauses (a, b, c...), and subclassses (I, II, III...). Clauses should build upon one another, and gradually explain your solution. Your clauses should be detailed to have a complete solution. Operative clauses should end with a semicolon, except for 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 for, 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.



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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 all 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's a friendly amendment, i.e., if it's accepted by all the sponsors of the resolution, it doesn't need to be voted on. If there aren't any proposals for amendments, the resolution is considered to have been provisionally agreed. The Chairman will then invite the committee to consider the next topic. If amendments are proposed, these will be discussed and, if there's 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 amount of time, the disputed words will be enclosed in square brackets and the committee will proceed to the next passage.

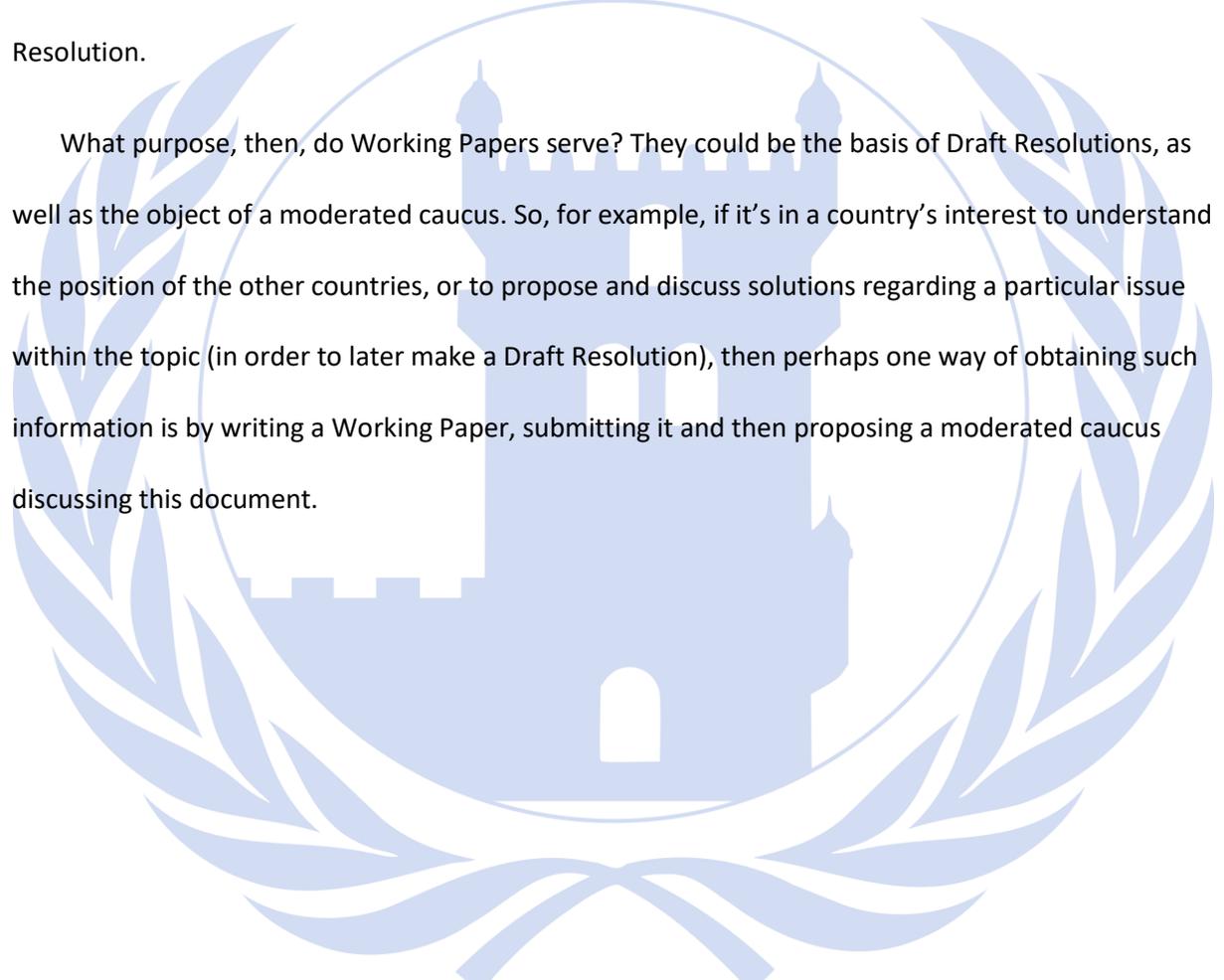
Example of an Amendment:

- 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, while distinct from Draft Resolutions or Amendments, are closely linked to them. Working papers are informal, unofficial documents that contain a framework for the resolution. They can be created individually. They don't have to be formatted to the Draft Resolution format, although such is encouraged. They also aren't necessary to create a Draft Resolution.

What purpose, then, do Working Papers serve? They could be the basis of Draft Resolutions, as well as the object of a moderated caucus. So, for example, if it's in a 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 then proposing a moderated caucus discussing this document.



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