

POSITION PAPER GUIDE

LISBOMUN 2019



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Augusto Gonçalves de Jesus | Carolina Grande | Ulrica Londes Marques

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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. THE POSITION PAPER: AN OVERVIEW

1. WHAT IS A POSITION PAPER

The Position Paper is a brief and concise description of a State's position, as well as priorities, for a given committee. It's nothing more complicated than the statement of the position of a country on the topic discussed in your Committee.

2. RULES REGARDING THE POSITION PAPER

In LisboMUN, all participants will have to submit their Position Paper for the topic(s) to be debated, one position paper for each topic. This Position Paper is due on the 15th of March 2019. If delegates fail to do so, they'll be made ineligible to win the awards.

The Position Paper:

- Must be no more than 500 words long;
- Must be written in English;
- Should be written in Calibri 11 or Times New Roman 12;
- Should be sent as a PDF file.

The Position Paper should have the three following headers:

Committee:

Country:

Delegate:

[followed by the actual text of the Position Paper]

You can find an example of a Position Paper for guidance in the Annex.

III. TIPS ON HOW TO DO THE POSITION PAPER

Generally, a Position Paper is important because it provides a basis for future Working Papers and Draft Resolutions. It also doubles as a good introductory speech at the beginning of the debate. It'll help you organise your ideas on paper and stay focused on your country's stance throughout the proceedings. The best Position Papers are backed by facts and figures, but do note that they are not simply a statistical summary; the most important thing to keep in mind is that it should describe the country's position on the topic.

TIP: Ask yourself: does your Position Paper allow the reader to understand your country's stance on the topic?

A well written Position Paper should:

- i) Include an introduction to the country in the context of the topic and committee, incorporating historical references (please keep this as short as possible);
- ii) Show how and why the country is affected by the issue;
- iii) Include the country's position and policies, and their justifications;
- iv) Discuss any measures taken by the country, and reasons for these;
- v) Mention previous international participation by the country, citing previous resolutions, treaties and UN action on the issue;
- vi) Include your country's proposals on the issue and solution(s) to the problem.

To begin your research and have in-depth knowledge on your country and its stance, you may want to look at the follow considerations:

1. The country's profile and physical geography – consider who its neighbours are and in what region of the world it finds itself. Recommended website: the CIA World Factbook.

2. The country's politics and government – consider what its government type is, when the country was founded, how big is its military and who its allies and enemies are.

3. The country's culture – consider what the country's population is and its ethnic make-up, as well as what are the major religions practiced in your country.

4. The country's economy – look into its GDP, major exports and imports, trading partners and its natural resources. Recommended website: World Bank Data.

All of this will help you get a clear idea of the country you will be representing before starting your research on the specific topic debated in committee.

Also, don't forget:

- MUN are formal events, requiring formal speech;
- Use simple, direct, language for a more effective communication;
- Have a structured, well-argued and concise text (with an introduction, main body and conclusion);
- Suggest solutions (the best position papers are the ones that provide a basis for Working Papers and Draft Resolutions);
- Use statistics to back up your country's stance (you can also use, for example, quotes from the UN Charter; agreements/resolutions your Member State has ratified; quotes from statements made by your Head of State, Head of Government, ministers, delegates to the UN, and any other relevant international documents);
- Do NOT use the first person in a Position Paper. DO use the country's name, delegation's name, or, alternatively, expressions such as "our government", "our country" and "our nation".

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IV. HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR POSITION PAPER

The Position Papers must be sent until the 15th of March 2019 through e-mail at international@lisbomun.pt. The subject of the email should be the following: Position Paper [Committee Abbreviation] [Allocated Country] Attached, there should be the Position Paper, in accordance with the rules, in PDF format, preferably with the following name:

[Abbreviation Committee]_[Country]_[Surname]_[First Name].pdf

After sending the Position Paper, you will receive a confirmation e-mail shortly. Should that not be the case, please send us an email at international@lisbomun.pt.

ANNEX – EXAMPLE OF A POSITION PAPER

Committee: Legal (General Assembly's Sixth Committee)

Country: Republic of Turkey

Delegate: XX YY, [University]

Topic: The Settlement of International Disputes to which International Organisations are Party

In the era of globalization, no problem is solely a domestic one, for it affects a diversity of entities, and creates a shift in dynamics. Therefore, both the increase in violence of the last few years, and the overwhelming need to invest in durable peace are constantly a priority for Turkey. With over 3 million refugees currently in our State (making us the host of the largest refugee population in the world), we understand the necessity of somehow being able to hold accountable the numerous international organizations that intervene at our side and within our borders, whether with humanitarian or military purposes, so as to make sure human rights are respected and remain the priority. When it comes to international disputes, we believe mediation has proved to be by far the most cost-effective and adequate means of dispute settlement, to which we add the benefit of its peaceful nature. Finding a

balance between confidentiality and transparency, and or peace and justice, is fundamental. Turkey and Greece have achieved a very positive level in their relations (contrary to the state of affairs a decade ago) and are a tangible example of how mediation is the means of dispute settlement of a peaceful future. In today's world, we have a larger than ever diversity of actors. Mediation is not a one-size-fits-all mechanism, but rather an ensemble of guiding common principles, which we adapt to the complex issues at hand. It is fundamental that we acknowledge this diversity of actors involved, as was mentioned by the Secretary-General in his United Nations Guidance for Effective Mediation, requested by the historical GA Resolution 65/283, the first one about this peaceful dispute settlement mechanism. We believe this to be the most adequate way to deal with conflicts to which international organizations are party, due to its flexibility and ability to address the needs of a multiplicity of actors. Resolution 65/283 paved the way, consolidating the normative basis and reinforcing encouragement, but a lot remains to be done.

The UN has invaluable experience in peaceful agreements, mere involvement brings credibility and legitimacy to the process, making it an ideal promoter. However, its good office services come from voluntary contributions, which is why the promotion of mediation as a way to solve conflicts to which international organizations are party must be a joint, global effort. Turkey has been doing its part; we co-created the Group of Friends of Mediation with Finland in 2010, which has reached 46 associates (38 countries and 8 major regional and international organizations including the UN), proving the viability of submitting international organizations to this form of dispute solving. Following its success in the UN, this group was mirrored in the OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) in 2014, once again showing its solidity and the open reception amongst States and Organizations. We firmly believe this is the most viable path follow regarding this issue. It is time for individual member-States and non-governmental entities to play their fundamental part via Positive reinforcement.