Country Research

Learning about a new country is one of the enjoyable parts of doing MUN. Country research can be done in two parts. The first part of your research should focus on general information about your assigned country. The second part of your country research should focus more on the connection between your country and the issue you are debating.

Thanks to Kristin Rowe, MS MUN Director at Taipei American School, for this great note taking guide.

Part I Country Research

Learn about the country/organization your delegation will represent.

Basic MAP:	***FLAG:***		
Country Overview – find info about:		**Answers (notes):**	**Sources (cut and paste URL):**
1. **GEOGRAPHY**: **Human** a. Population b. Languages c. Ethnic groups d. Religious groups e. Problems between religious/ethnic groups f. Health data · Birth rate · Infant mortality · Life expectancy · Population per doctor g. Education · Literacy rate · Expected years in school · GDP spent on education			

Part 2 Country-Issue Connection

Complete this from the perspective of your role in the debate- **the country delegate**. Note that what a government says and what the people in that country might be different. Record both as you work to determine how you will accurately portray this information.

Fill this in for EACH TOPIC your committee will discuss.

COMMITTEE NAME: (HR? Environment? CDIS?)	**Answers (notes):**	**Sources:** Sources should be from government websites (.gov) or NGOs (.org)
A. What is the **general focus** of your (M)UN **committee**?	**Definition of your committee's purpose and aims**:	

2. **GEOGRAPHY**: **Physical** Where is your country located and how does its geography affect its political relationships? a. Climate b. Topography c. Fresh water availability d. Ocean access e. Rivers f. Bordering countries g. Geo-political considerations h. Other physical advantages/disadvantages of topography		
3. **ECONOMICS**: What are the characteristics of your country's economy? a. What is your country's gross domestic product (GDP)? How does this compare to other countries in the world? b. Per capita income? c. Population below the poverty line? d. Diversity of the economy (e.g. Does your country rely on income from agriculture? Tourism? Technology? etc) e. Taxes & government spending: What is the tax rate and how does that compare to other countries? What percentage of government		

B. What is going on in your country as regards your committee's general focus? ● What is your country's general position? (e.g. What is the government's official position on human rights, the environment, disarmament etc?) ● According to a variety of sources, what is <u>actually happening</u> in your country? (This may be similar **or** different from what your government says is happening. ● Find statistics and examples.	**<u>General information about your country as regards the committee's purpose and aims</u>**:	
SPECIFIC ISSUE TO BE SOLVED:	**Answers (notes):**	**Sources:** **Sources should be from government**

spending goes to the military / education / social welfare programs?		
4. **ECONOMICS**: Human Development Index (health, education, and living standard info): http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/ a. Your country's data: http://hdr.undp.org/en/data/profiles/ b. How does this compare to other major countries?		
5. **NATURAL RESOURCES**: What are the country's natural resources? What resources are missing / do they rely on other countries for? **Natural Resources:** · Commodities produced · Mineral resources · Oil/Petroleum resources · Water · Land · Natural environment (e.g. forests) **Resources In Demand:**		
6. **POLITICS**: What sort of government does your country have? a. Formal name of country b. Name of political system (e.g. monarchy) c. Government positions (titles and names of people currently holding those positions)		

		websites (.gov) or NGOs (.org)
1. According to your country, what are the important aspects/fundamental problems/major causes of the issue to address?		
2. Quotes from your country's leaders about the general topic/specific issue		
3. How has your country been affected by the issue (recent history and current situation)? Find supporting statistics/details.		
4. What actions has your country taken on this issue? e.g. Has your country/organization contributed to any conventions/conferences on this issue? Passed any laws? Contributed to any international initiatives? (Were these successful, or unsuccessful?)		
5. Conventions, resolutions, documents		

· Head of state · Head of government · Cabinet · Legislative body · Internal administrative districts		
7. **POLITICS**: What types of ideologies (political, religious or other) influence your country's government? a. List names of other important organizations within the country (political, religious, etc) and names of current leaders. b. Corruption perceptions index (www.transparency.org)		
8. **POLITICS**: Which countries share a border with your country? **Relations with neighbors:**		
9. **POLITICS**: Which countries are considered allies / enemies / frenemies of your country? Why? **Allies:** **Enemies:** **Neutral:** **International Contributions:** **International Criticisms/ Problems**		

that your country has signed or ratified; UN actions that your country has supported OR opposed (Were these successful, or unsuccessful?)		
6. Positions of other countries that affect your country's position, e.g. neighbors, allies, trading partners, traditional enemies (+ main arguments for these positions)		
7. Solutions/actions your country would support (and why - arguments, evidence, statistics) ● List actions by neighboring countries, allies, trading partners, other UN member states and organizations that share your country's position. ● Make (new) suggestions of		

10. **POLITICS**: Organizations/Alliances/Memberships: a. Independent sovereignty since…? b. Does your country belong to any regional organizations such as the European Union (EU), the African Union (AU) or the Organization of American States (OAS)?When did your country become a member of the UN? c. Does your country belong to any <u>intergovernmental organizations</u> outside the UN system such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) or the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)? d. Any other alliances or major treaties?		
11. **POLITICS**: Summary of national interests / domestic issues which might influence your country's foreign policy		

your own that align with your country's experience and actions on this issue.		
8. Solutions/actions <u>your country</u> would **NOT** support (and why - arguments, evidence, statistics)		

12. **HISTORY**: What are some major events in your country's history? Why are they important? a. General b. Last 50 years c. Very recent		
13. **COOL STUFF**: a. Things your country has b. Things your country has done c. Things your country is proud of d. Famous people		