

# **Model United Nations Rules of Procedure**



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# Introduction

Whether this is your first MUN, or been doing MUN for years, this Rules of Procedure (RoP) guide will give you the information needed to understand the rules and flow of MUN.

## What is MUN?

Model United Nations (MUN) is an academic simulation that emulates the procedures of the United Nations (UN) to find solutions for real-world issues.

In MUN, students participate as “delegates” of UN Member States and simulate UN committees.

MUN aims to educate students about current events, international relations, diplomacy, and the United Nations agenda. Along with knowledge of the world we live in, participants will develop skills including public speaking, presentation, persuasion, situation analysis, research, and critical thinking.

The debate is a formal event, with specific rules, which delegates should know and follow, in order to effectively represent their assigned country in the best way possible.

The following MUN Rules of Procedure (RoP) is meant to help you, the delegate, get an idea of what to do at a MUN conference.

## Rules Of Procedure (RoP) - Explained

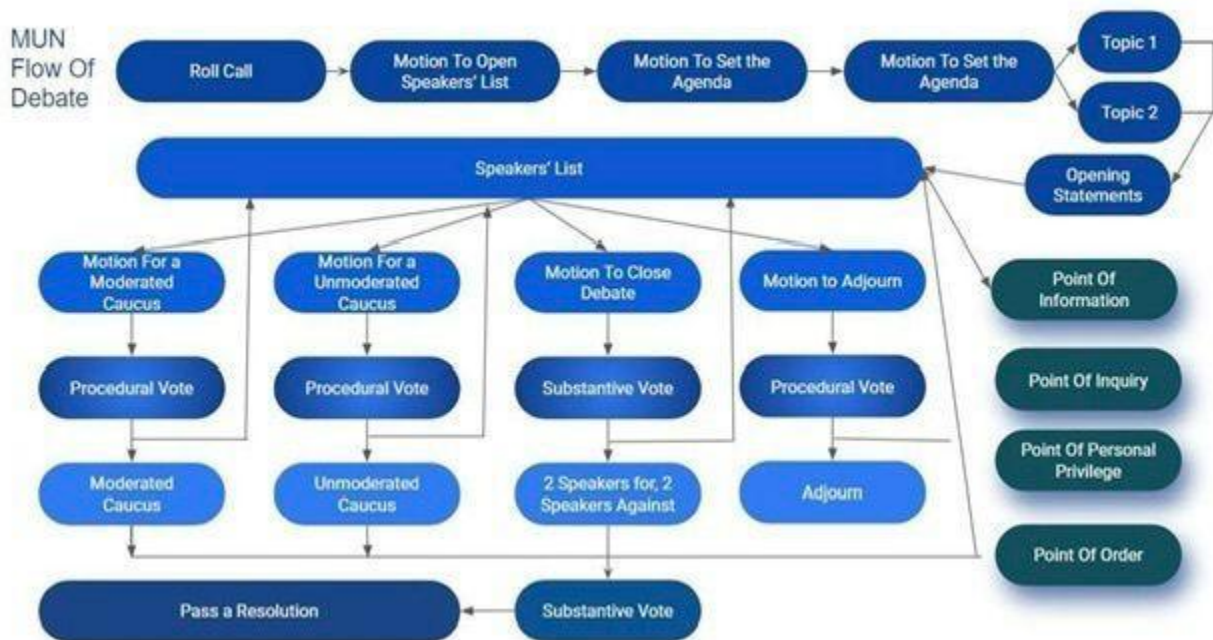
The MUN RoP is followed to maintain decorum and order during the course of a MUN conference. These rules and procedures are put in place to facilitate an effective and structured debate. It is very important for each and every delegate to understand the rules and procedures in order to make the most of their MUN conference experience.

Don't worry, if you find the rules and procedures seem a tad confusing. It's ok. Everything will become more clear as the committee session progresses. Practice makes perfect, and if you have any questions along the way, your chairs are always there to clarify the RoP.

## Flow Of Debate: An Overview

Each of the Rules of Procedure relates to a different part of the MUN committee session which will be explained in detail in the upcoming sections of this RoP.

We can see this in an overview of the sequence of events in the committee which is called the “Flow of Debate”.



**TIP** - When you want to ask the chair a question about the RoP during the conference, raise a “Point of parliamentary inquiry”.

## Important MUN Terms

**Delegate** - A participant who represented a country in a MUN committee

**Chair** - The facilitator of a MUN committee

**Motion** - To propose something. Most motions are specific to certain parts of the MUN committee session.

**Caucus** - A meeting of supporters.

**Clause** - A specific section within a working paper or draft resolution

**Working Paper** - A written collection of policies proposed by one or more delegates

**Draft Resolution** - A written collection of policy ideas, formatted according to UN specifications.

## MUN RoP

### Roll Call

Roll Call is when the Chair calls each country to determine if they are present in the room. This is done in alphabetical order. When you hear your country called, you should raise your placard and answer "Present" or "Present and voting".

- **"Present"** - You can abstain when voting on a draft resolution.
- **"Present and Voting"** You have to vote either "Yes" or "No" for every draft resolution that is voted on.

Roll Call is done at the start of every committee session to make sure there is a quorum. Quorum refers to how many Member States are needed for the Chair to open debate.  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the committee members are needed to open the committee, and a simple majority ( $\frac{1}{2} + 1$ ) is needed to pass a draft resolution.

**TIP** - *If you miss Roll Call, you can pass a note to the Chair when you arrive to let the chair know if your country is present or present and voting.*

### Setting the Agenda

Setting the agenda is done when there is more than one topic in the study guide. In such cases the committee would need to determine which topic would be discussed first.

If there is only one topic in the study guide, the agenda-setting phase is skipped and the committee will go directly into opening statements.

When there is more than one topic,  $\frac{2}{3}$  is needed to set the agenda. If  $\frac{2}{3}$  are not reached, the committee can open a General Speaker's list for the delegates to explain why one topic is preferable. After this, another vote should be taken. If  $\frac{2}{3}$  is still not reached, the chair can

return to the speaker's list and allow for moderated and unmoderated caucuses, until such time as the 2/3 majority is reached.

After the Agenda has been set, a "Motion to open debate" should be offered and the debate will officially start.

## Debate

### Opening Statements

Opening statements are the first speeches on a new topic. Each delegate will introduce their position on the topic and, ideally, outline their policy proposals. Delegates must give an opening statement. The opening statements are made in alphabetical order (the speaking order can change at the chair's discretion). Once each country has given their opening statement the General Speaker's list is opened.

### Formal Debate – General Speaker's List

The formal debate of a MUN simulation is centered around the General Speakers List (GSL).

#### How does the General Speaker's list work?

1. Chair will ask if any delegates are interested in being added to the GSL.
2. Delegates show their interest by raising their placards.
3. Chair will recognize delegates by calling their country name, after which the delegate is placed on the GSL.
4. If no delegates raise their placards to get on the list, the Chair may choose delegates to be added to the GSL.

The order of delegates on the speaker's list is not open to modification.

**TIP** - *Get on the GSL as early as possible, even if you aren't sure what to say. There will likely be other speakers before you, and you will have additional time to prepare before it is your turn to speak.*

Speeches during the course of the GSL you be about whatever anything in relation to the topic. For example, at the beginning of the simulation, delegates often elaborate on the ideas presented in their opening speech, as well as addressing what other delegates said in their speeches. Later on in the simulation, after the writing of draft resolutions has started, speeches describe the bloc positions and policy proposals to the rest of the committee.

The GSL is the default state of a committee when the debate is open, and when caucuses are concluded, the committee reverts back to the GSL.

**TIP** - *The default GSL speaker's time is 60 seconds. If you want the speaker's time to be longer or shorter, you are one motion away.*

### **GSL Rules**

You can only be on the GSL once at a time. However, when you finish your speech you can get right back on the GSL.

You can get back on the GSL by sending a note to the Chair asking to get back on the list or waiting for the Chair to ask if any delegates wish to be added to the GSL.

There must always be a delegate on the GSL at any given time. If the GSL has no one on it, it is considered that there is nothing left to say and the committee automatically moves to voting procedure.

**Tip** - *It's a good thing to always be on the GSL.*

### **Yielding Time**

During the GSL a delegate can yield their time to the chair, to another delegate or to questions.

- **Yield time to the Chair** – If you have 10 seconds or more left to your speech, and decide not to yield time to another delegate or questions, your remaining speech time should be yielded to the chair.
- **Yield time to another Delegate** – If you have over 10 seconds, you can yield your time to anyone. There is no double yield. If you yield your time to a delegate who does up the remainder of speakers' time they must yield it to the chair.
- **Yield time to Questions** – Yielding to questions allows other delegates to ask you a question (15 seconds each).
  - The remaining speaker's time is allocated to the answer. You get to use the remainder of your time to answer it.
  - You can answer multiple questions during a 'yield to question', as long as you have additional speaker's time.

### **Point of Information**

After a GSL speech, other delegates can ask the previous speaker a question, called a Point of Information (POI).

The delegate who finished speaking can choose whether to accept POI's.  
A delegate can receive up to two POI's.

### **Point of Information (POI) Process**

- A delegate raises a POI after a speech
- The chair asks the delegate who finished speaking accept POI's
  - If yes - POI is accepted
  - If no - Return to GSL
- The delegate who asked for the POI has 15 seconds to ask the POI
- The delegate answering gets 30 seconds to answer the POI
- END of POI and Return to GSL

### **Informal Debate (Moderated And Unmoderated Caucuses)**

The informal debate includes all discussions outside of the General Speaker's list. This begins when the Chair decides to open the floor to motions (*Motion = proposal*).

The informal debate takes place when you pass a motion for a Moderated Caucus, an Unmoderated Caucus or an extension of a previously passed caucus. Once a motion for a caucus is raised, the Chair asks for seconds and objections.

To enter an informal debate, you need to offer a motion for the type of caucus you would like, and for how long you would like the caucus to take place. When you motion for a moderated caucus, you need to give a topic for the moderated caucus discussion. Caucuses cannot exceed 20 minutes.

### **Seconds and Objections**

**Second** - When a delegate formally shows support for the motion that was raised. Almost every motion needs at least one second in order to be considered.

**Objection** - When a delegate does not support a motion.

*Delegates can't Second or Object a motion they raised themselves.*

If there are no seconds, the motion automatically fails. If a motion has a second, the Chair will ask for objections. If no objections are raised, the motion will pass without further voting. When a motion gets seconds and objections, the motion gets put on a list with other motions that also received seconds and objections. When the chair decides they have received enough motions,

the committee proceeds to vote on the motions. Voting on all motions is mandatory for delegates.

### **Which motion is voted on first?**

Whichever motion is the most disruptive to the GSL gets voted on first.

Unmoderated caucuses disrupt the flow of debate more than moderated caucuses.

A longer caucus is voted on before a shorter one.

Longer speaker time is voted on before shorter.

### **Order of voting**

- Extension of a previous caucus
- Unmoderated caucus
- Moderated caucus

### **Moderated Caucus**

A moderated caucus is for delegates to discuss subtopics related to the main topic. The committee topic is usually very broad, so moderated caucuses are used to narrow the discussion and go into more detail on certain aspects.

***TIP** - Even if the topic suggested is phrased as the opposite of your country's position, you could support the motion: after all, it's an opportunity to argue AGAINST that position and in favor of your own!*

The length and topic of a moderated caucus are chosen by the delegate who offers the motion. For example: "Venezuela motions for a **10 minute moderated caucus, 45 seconds speakers time** on the topic of ' **How we can protect people from rising sea levels** '".

### **TIP**

*A moderated caucus should be about what serves your purpose at a given time. You can use your caucus to present a new idea, further expand on what was said, discuss what took place in other parts of the debate, compare policies, compare draft resolutions and much more!*

Once a moderated caucus passes with a majority, the Chair chooses delegates to speak one at a time. The moderated caucuses are less formal than the GSL. Delegates who finish speaking sit down, and the next delegate speaks. There is no yielding time or POI's during a moderated caucus.

## Unmoderated Caucus

An unmoderated caucus, informally called unmod or lobbying time, is when delegates get out of their seats, meet, form blocs, discuss ideas, negotiate, start writing their working papers/draft resolutions and finding support for their draft resolutions.

When the unmoderated caucus finishes, delegates return to their seats. The Chair will then decide whether to open the floor to motions or return to the GSL.

Moderated Caucus	Unmoderated Caucus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Delegates remain in their seats.</li><li>• Decorum is maintained during a delegate's speech.</li><li>• Speakers are chosen by the chair.</li><li>• Delegates sit down when they finish their speech/speaker time has elapsed.</li><li>• Delegates do not yield time, not to the chair or each other.</li><li>• Points of Information are not raised. Delegates can respond to each other's comments in their own speeches.</li><li>• Can be extended twice.</li><li>• Extension time cannot exceed the time of the original motion.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Delegates can walk around freely.</li><li>• Delegates can engage with each other in groups and individually.</li><li>• Delegates can write working papers and draft resolutions.</li><li>• Blocs are formed.</li><li>• Lobbying and negotiation take place between blocs and within them.</li><li>• Can be extended twice.</li><li>• Extension time cannot exceed the time of the original motion.</li></ul>

## Working Papers & Draft Resolutions

Working papers, which turn into draft resolutions, are written during an unmoderated caucus.

### Working Papers

Informal documents containing policy proposals by one or more delegates. Working Papers do not need to be formatted according to the United Nations specification in the same way a draft resolution does.

A working paper can be submitted to the Chair to be put on a screen and discussed, either during an unmoderated caucus or during a moderated caucus dedicated to discussing a working paper.

**TIP** - A moderated caucus discussing your working paper/draft resolution ideas is a great way to learn which delegates support your ideas!

### **Draft Resolutions**

Draft resolutions are formal documents which contain your policy ideas, and those of other delegates, written according to United Nations formatting rules.

In order to get a draft resolution approved by the Chairs, the content needs to be sound, the formatting needs to be correct, and you need a minimum amount of supporters (10% of the delegates in the committee as Sponsors or Signatories). The draft resolutions which are approved by the chair are the documents the committee will vote on after the closure of the debate.

- a) **Sponsors** – Delegates who wrote the resolution or played a key roll in the resolution (Minimum 2, Maximum 4)
  
- b) **Signatories** – Delegates who support the draft resolution, or at least want to see the ideas discussed. (No limit on the number of Delegates listed as Signatories)

The Chair has to approve the text in the document for a draft resolution to be introduced. After approval, the draft resolution will be given a number by the chair and can then be addressed and discussed.

**TIP** - Sometimes the Chairs take time reviewing the draft resolution. In those cases, you can bring up your policy ideas in moderated caucuses without officially referring to the document. That way, the ideas are already familiar to other delegates by the time the draft resolution is approved.

### **Amendments**

After a draft resolution has been introduced, delegates are able to propose changes to the draft resolution, called amendments. Amendments include adding a new clause, striking out a clause or changing the text of an existing clause.

To submit an amendment to the Chair, you have to get at least 5% of the committee to sign the amendment. Amendments are voted upon during voting procedure, before the draft resolutions are voted on as a whole. Each amendment is introduced and voted on separately.

## Voting Procedure

### Closure Of Debate

A motion to close debate can be brought up during the GSL. Once enough delegates feel their positions are represented and there are enough draft resolutions on the floor, delegates can motion to close debate.

Closure of debate requires two speakers in favor and two speakers against, with a speaking time of 30 seconds each.

A two-thirds majority is required to close debate and move on to the voting procedure.

### Voting Procedure

The committee goes into voting procedure once the debate is closed. The committee will be closed until voting procedure is concluded or there is a motion to reopen debate.

#### Roll call **Present vs Present & Voting**

- **Present**  
Can abstain from voting on the resolution.
- **Present & Voting**  
Can't abstain from voting on the resolution.

*These rules apply to voting on amendments and draft resolutions.*

#### **Order of the voting procedure**

First all of the amendments are voted on. After that, the floor is open to motions which specifically deal with the draft resolutions.

#### **- Amendments**

Only unfriendly amendments are voted on at this time.

**Unfriendly amendments** - Amendments that are not supported by at least one sponsor of the draft resolution.

**Friendly amendments** - supported by all the sponsors and automatically added to the draft resolution.

### **Voting Procedure Motions**

After all the amendments are voted on, the delegates can offer the following motions in relation to the draft resolutions.

#### **Motion to reorder draft resolutions**

When there is more than one draft resolution on the floor, a delegate can motion to reorder the draft resolutions by proposing an order different from the default, which is the order in which they were recognized by the Chair. If the motion passes, the draft resolutions are voted upon in the new order.

#### **Motion to divide the question**

A motion to “divide out” some of the operative clauses into a new draft resolution, to be voted upon separately. If the motion passes, the two draft resolutions are voted on separately.

#### **Motion to vote clause by clause**

Each clause in the draft resolution is voted on separately.

#### **Motion to vote roll call**

Roll Call vote means each delegate says their vote out loud, instead of raising placards and a majority being counted. Roll Call vote adds excitement to the voting process.

#### **Motion to adopt a draft resolution by acclamation**

Adopting a draft resolution by acclamation is when the committee feels there is consensus. If the motion passes, the Chair will then ask if there is any objection to the adoption by acclamation. If there is no objection, the draft resolution passes. If even one delegate votes against adopting by acclamation, the draft gets voted on by the regular majority.

After some, all or none of the above motions are raised and pass, or fail, the drafts resolutions are voted on. Draft resolutions are voted on until one passes. Only one draft resolution can pass. If no draft resolution gets a majority all the draft resolutions fail.

**TIP** - *If you don't think you'll have a majority for your draft resolution, you can merge your document with another draft resolution. As long as your ideas don't oppose, combining your clauses (some of which might be similar) is a way to get the majority you need!*

## Adjournment

After the draft resolution passes you can motion to adjourn, which closes the committee and conference as a whole.

## Points

A point is something you raise when it concerns something you'd like to address for yourself. There are four points.

### **Point of inquiry**

When a delegate is unsure of the rules and would like an explanation from the chair.

### **Point of personal privilege**

When the delegates experience is impacted. Going to the bathroom or turning on the air conditioner are points of personal privilege. Other PoPP are that a delegate can't hear the speaker or read the projected draft resolution.

### **Point of information**

Asking another delegate a question about their speech after their speech concludes. This is done during the GSL.

POI's can **only** be asked after a GSL speech of the delegate who finished speaking. POI's cannot be asked of a delegate who has received yielded time.

### **Point of order**

When a delegate believes the Chair has made an error made in the formal procedure.

## Motions

Motions are collected by the chair and put to vote. The chair has discretion as to when to allow motions to be offered and which to consider out of order at a given time.

**Motion to open debate** - To begin discussion at the beginning of the first session.

**Motion to suspend debate** - To break for lunch, coffee break, end of committee session at the end of the day but not the conference as a whole.

**Motion to adjourn the debate** - To close the committee as a whole.

**Motion to change speakers time** - This motion changes the default time on the GSL.

**Motion to set the agenda** - To set one topic before the other at the agenda-setting stage.

**Motion for moderated caucus** - "The delegate of Vanuatu motions for a moderated caucus of 8 minutes, individual speaking time 45 seconds, to discuss issue/outcome of the previous caucus / working paper/draft resolution 1,2,3, etc."

**Motion for unmoderated caucus** - "Egypt motions for an unmoderated caucus of 12 minutes."

You do not need to give a reason for an unmoderated caucus.

**Motion to close the debate/move to the voting procedure** - "The delegate of Canada moves to close debate /move into voting procedure."

**Motion to introduce working paper/draft resolution/amendment** - "The delegate of Spain motions to introduce Draft Resolution 1.2."

### **Right of Reply**

If a delegate feels offended by the content of the other delegates speech during the GSL they can ask for a Right of Reply (RoR). If the chair accepts the reason, the delegate gets to give a 30-second speech to respond to the offense.

## **Voting Terms**

**Procedural votes** - Voting on what happens in the committee. Procedural votes are everything that is not voting on an amendment or draft resolution. The only options are "yes" and "no". No abstentions are allowed.

**Substantive votes** - Voting on something that is legally binding and can have real-world impact. In MUN this is draft resolutions and amendments. Member States may vote "yes", "no", "abstain" or "pass" (The last two are only applicable to Member States who say "Present" during Roll Call).

**Placard vote** - When all delegates raise their placards in favor or against the motion. The Chair counts the votes and the winner is the side with a simple majority. All procedural votes are taken by placard vote.

**Roll call vote** - The Chair reads the roll and each country answers “yes”, “no”, “abstain” or “pass” (The last two are only applicable to Member States who say “Present” during Roll Call). Roll call vote is only relevant after debate is closed. When offered, this motion automatically passes.

Countries who say pass wait out the roll call, but need to vote for or against when asked in the second round of voting.

Motion/Point	Debate	Who initiates	Vote
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Setting the Agenda	No	Delegate	Simple majority (50%+1)
Quorum	No	Chair	No
Motion to Open General Speakers List	No	Delegate	Simple majority
Adding countries to the GSL	No	Chair	No
Open the floor to motions	No	Chair	No
Motion for a moderated caucus	No	Delegate	Simple majority
Motion for an unmoderated caucus	No	Delegate	Simple majority
Motion for suspension or adjournment of a meeting	No	Delegate	1/3 majority
Motion to close debate	1 for /1 against before vote or none if none want to speak	Delegate	2/3 majority
Motion to introduce working paper/draft resolution/amendment	No	Delegate	Simple majority vote
Motion to vote roll call	No	Delegate	Automatically passes
Point of Parliamentary Inquiry	No	Delegate	No Vote
Point of Personal Privilege	No	Delegate	No vote
Point of Information	No	Delegate	Decision of the speaker
Point of order	No	Delegate	Chairs decision
Right to reply	No	Delegate	Decision of the Chair