

Rules of Procedure

University of Toronto Model United Nations
2018 Conference



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1 General Rules

1.1 Rules of Procedure

These rules shall apply to all regular committee sessions of the University of Toronto Model United Nations (UTMUN), hereafter known as the committee.

1.2 Authority of the Rules of Procedure

The authority of these rules is derived from the University of Toronto Model United Nations secretariat, and shall constitute the prime authority for procedural matters. In cases not covered by these rules, the decision of the Secretary General or his/her representative shall constitute the authority for procedural matters.

1.3 Amendments to the Rules of Procedure

These rules of procedure may be amended at the discretion of the University of Toronto Model United Nations Secretariat.

1.4 Majorities

For the purposes of these rules of procedure, and with regard to voting on resolutions and motions, “a simple majority” is defined as fifty percent plus one of all non-abstaining votes. A “two-thirds majority” is defined as two thirds plus one of all non-abstaining votes.

1.5 Language

English is the working language of the assembly. No translation/interpretation will be provided. Delegates may address the assembly in any other language; however, they must provide translation/interpretation into English for the benefit of the assembly.

2 Dais

2.1 Terminology

For the purposes of the committee, the terms 'chair' and 'Dais' refer interchangeably to the person or persons presiding over the committee. In this document, 'Dais' will be used exclusively; in committee, delegates are free to use either.

2.2 Impartiality

The Dais shall maintain complete impartiality on any matter considered by the committee. The Dais may not vote on any matter being considered by the committee

2.3 Authority

The Dais, while exercising the duties necessary to the functioning of the committee, derive their authority from the constitution of UTMUN.

2.4 Composition

The composition of the Dais is predetermined by the Secretariat. If any member of the dais is unable to attend the committee session, another person appointed by the Secretariat shall assume the powers and duties encompassed for the position on an interim basis.

3 Committee Sessions

3.1 Conduct

Delegates must follow the UTMUN guidelines for appropriate behaviour, distributed in the delegate handbook, at all times.

3.2 Meeting Environment

Adequate measures shall be taken by the Secretariat and the UTMUN logistics team to ensure the safety and comfort of all participants, within areas we can control.

3.3 Quorum

A simple majority of the assembly, or fifty percent plus one, shall constitute a quorum, unless the specific rules of a committee state otherwise.

3.4 Absence of Quorum

During the absence of a quorum, voting on non-procedural motions shall not be permitted. However, the dais reserves the right to determine whether regular assembly proceedings may continue.

3.5 Roll Call

At the beginning of each committee session, a member of the dais shall take a roll call of delegates present. A subsequent roll call or count of delegates may be taken at any later point if the existence of a quorum should seem in doubt. When called, delegates must declare whether they are ‘present’ or ‘present and voting.’ Delegates who are ‘present and voting’ are not able to abstain from substantive votes.

3.6 Rights of Non-Members

A United Nations-acknowledged representative of a non-member nation, territory or organization has full speaking rights. However, a non-member does not have the right to present a motion, or vote on any privileged matter.

3.7 Content of the Committee

Committees shall be based on the topics prescribed by the Secretariat prior to the conference, outlined in the background guide distributed online.

3.8 Speakers List

The Speakers List, maintained by the dais and made visible to all delegates, lists the order in which delegates will be invited to address the committee. Delegates wishing to be added must either send a note to the Dais indicating their desire to be on the speakers list, or raise their placards when prompted. Additions to the list will not be accepted until the speakers list is declared open. If there are no points or motions on the floor, the default of the committee will be to revert to the appropriate Speakers List. There are two types of Speakers Lists:

3.8.1 Primary Speakers List

General speaking list used to discuss the setting of the agenda.

3.8.2 Secondary Speakers List

More specific list used once the topic has been set in after having discussed the agenda in the Primary Speakers List.

3.9 Amending the Speakers List

A delegate may motion to amend the Speakers List. As well, the Dais may also amend the speakers’ list at their own discretion. A motion to amend the Speakers List may only be made after the first two speakers on the Speakers List have taken the floor.

3.10 Setting the Agenda

When in order, a delegate may motion to set the agenda to any topic that has not been explicitly closed by the committee, and therefore open debate on it. A simple majority carries the motion.

3.11 Interruption of Speakers

A delegate may interrupt a speaker who has the floor only on a point of order or personal privilege, or to request a right of reply. A speaker may not be interrupted by a point of information.

4 Ordinary Points and Motions

The following points and motions are listed in their order of precedence.

4.1 Point of Personal Privilege

A delegate may rise on a point of personal privilege in order to bring to the attention of the Dais any physical difficulty that is disrupting the proper functioning of the assembly.

4.2 Point of Order

A delegate may rise on a point of order if they feel that some irregularity in procedure has occurred. Delegates may not use points of order to address substantive matters (e.g. Content of resolutions or amendments).

4.3 Point of Information

A delegate may direct a point of information towards the Dais when uncertain of procedural or substantive matters. A delegate may not interrupt a speaker on a point of information directed towards the Dais.

4.4 Motion to Adjourn

A delegate may motion to adjourn when the body in question no longer has resolutions available on its agenda, or if time available for the session of the assembly has expired. Such a motion ends all debate and cancels the agenda.

4.5 Motion to Recess

A delegate may move for a recess at set times as per the agenda, or at the discretion of the Dais. If carried, a motion to recess shall cause the immediate cessation of the committee session. The proceedings of the committee will be resumed at the point at which the recess specified.

4.6 Motion for an Unmoderated Caucus

A delegate may motion to enter an unmoderated caucus, where delegates may leave their seats and speak freely with one another for a specified length of time. It is primarily intended for the purpose of discussing and drafting resolutions, and will only be entertained after substantial debate on the current topic.

4.7 Motion for a Moderated Caucus

A delegate may motion to enter a moderated caucus, where delegates remain seated and are called upon by the Dais. To motion for a moderated caucus, delegates must set a topic, duration and speaking time. Delegates may motion for a moderated caucus any time during formal, or informal debate. The delegate who motions for the moderated caucus has the choice of speaking first or last.

4.8 Motion to Exhaust a Moderated Caucus

A delegate may motion to exhaust a moderated caucus if time remains in the caucus with no more delegates wishing to speak.

4.9 Motion to Change the Speaking Time

A delegate may motion to change the speaking time of a Speaker's List.

4.10 Motions Regarding Draft Resolutions

A detailed description of the motions regarding draft resolutions can be found in the subsection entitled "Drafting Resolutions."

4.11 Motion to Resume Debate

A delegate may motion to resume Debate after the committee has reached quorum following a recess.

4.12 Motion to Close the Topic

A delegate may move for closure of debate after all pertinent resolutions have been introduced and voted upon, or withdrawn. The debate may be closed after the committee has sufficiently addressed a topic.

4.13 Motion to Shelve the Topic

A delegate may move to temporarily shelve all debate on a Topic at any time. Delegates may motion to reopen a shelved Topic.

5 Extraordinary Points and Motions

The Dais reserves the right to entertain these points and motions in whatever order they see fit.

5.1 Censure

A delegate may move for the censure of another delegate if he/she feels that the delegate, delegation or officer has been consistently and purposely out of order or disorderly. This motion should be used with caution. If censured, a delegate loses the right to speak in committee for the remainder of the day, or for a period of time prescribed by the Dais. Censure is considered a privileged motion, as outlined in rule 18.

5.2 Foreign Policy

A delegate may rise on a point of order if he or she feels that a delegation has committed a serious breach of its country's foreign policy; a delegate rising on such a point shall be required to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Dais that the breach is sufficiently serious to warrant the attention of the assembly. If the allegedly offending delegate cannot successfully substantiate their actions, the Dais may rule them out of order. As a last resort, a major breach of foreign policy is grounds for censure.

5.3 Suspension of a Meeting

If a majority of the assembly becomes disorderly during a meeting, the Dais may suspend the meeting.

5.4 Right of Reply

A delegate may rise to request a right of reply if they feel that their person or state has been insulted, misquoted, slandered or misconstrued by the speaker on the floor. The Dais may accord the delegate the right of reply, upon which the delegate will be given thirty seconds to explain their position. This address must be directly linked to the offending delegate's speech, and should not introduce new ideas or issues. If appropriate, the offending delegate will then be asked whether they wish to apologize; regardless of what the delegate decides, the session shall immediately continue.

5.5 Motion for a Round Robin

A delegate may motion to enter a Round Robin where all delegates have an opportunity to speak in consecutive order once. When motioning, the delegate must include a speaking time. The delegate has the right to speak first or last.

5.6 Motion for a Straw Poll

Delegates may motion to conduct a straw poll on a resolution or question, in order to assess the committee's feelings on said topic. This poll follows all the rules for regular voting procedure, but has no substantive weight in the committee.

5.7 Motion for a Question and Answer Period

A delegate may motion for a question and answer period on a resolution. This motion provides an opportunity to ask questions on the nature of the resolution and receive responses from the sponsors. The delegate must specify the speaking time of the question and answer period. The delegate has the right to ask the first or last question.

6 Further Rules Regarding Points and Motions

6.1 Precedence of Motions of the Same Type

If multiple motions of the same type are introduced, such as multiple unmoderated caucuses, they will be voted on from longest in length to shortest of length. If there is not a length of time associated with the motion, such as entering voting procedure, they will be voted on in the order that they are introduced, or at the discretion of the Dais.

6.2 Precedence of Motions of the Same Type and Length

If two motions are of the same time and length, such as two separate moderated caucuses lasting ten minutes, the motion with the shorter speaking time shall be voted on first. If they have identical speaking times, they will be voted on in the order that they are introduced, or at the discretion of the Dais.

7 Resolutions

7.1 Motion to Introduce a Draft Resolution:

Only draft resolutions approved by the Dais may be introduced for debate. A draft resolution is considered to be introduced once sponsors of the resolution have, at the request of the Dais, read the resolution aloud to the assembly. Before a resolution can be introduced, it must have at least one sponsor and signatories totaling one fifth of the members of the committee plus one. Once these requirements have been met, a sponsor can motion to introduce the draft resolution. Should this motion be carried, sponsors must read the motion aloud to the committee.

7.2 Amendments

An Amendment is an attempt by a delegate or group of delegates to delete, add to, or revise the operative clauses of a resolution. Pre-ambulatory clauses may not be amended once the resolution has been introduced. All amendments must be submitted to the Dais. There are two types of amendments:

7.2.1 Friendly

If all the sponsors of the resolution are in favour of the amendment, it is considered a friendly amendment and becomes automatically part of the resolution. Delegates wishing to introduce an amendment first should make an attempt to discern whether it is friendly.

7.2.2 Unfriendly

If at least one sponsor of the resolution is not in favour of the amendment, it is considered unfriendly. To be adopted, it must be carried by a simple majority vote of the assembly.

8 Voting

8.1 Voting rights

Each member nation of the assembly shall have one vote.

8.2 Voting on Procedural Matters

Delegates shall vote normally by visibly displaying the placards of their countries. Only United Nations member states may vote. All delegates are required to vote on procedural matters; there are no abstentions.

8.3 Voting on Substantive Matters

Before a resolution may be voted upon, a delegate must motion to enter voting procedure. If this motion carries, the doors are closed and the committee is in voting procedure. Delegates have the choice to vote in favour, against, or abstain from votes on resolutions. Delegates who indicated during roll-call that they are “present and voting” may not abstain from voting

8.4 Motions on Voting Procedure

Once the committee has decided to enter voting procedure on a resolution, the following motions may be entertained.

8.4.1 Motion to vote by Roll Call

A delegate may motion for the vote to be done by roll call. If the motion is carried, the name of each member of the committee shall be called during the vote, and each delegation shall announce its vote in response.

8.4.2 Motion to vote Clause-by-Clause

A delegate may request a clause-by-clause vote on a resolution. A clause-by-clause vote applies only to the operative clauses of a resolution, which are each voted on separately. If any one operative clause is passed by a vote, the entire preamble is considered adopted.

8.4.3 Motion to Divide the Question

A delegate may motion to separate a clause or set of clauses from the resolution as a whole, and allow them to be voted upon separately.

8.5 Adoption of Resolutions

A resolution is considered adopted if it receives a simple majority in voting procedure. If a vote is tied, the resolution or motion in question shall be considered rejected. In cases of clause-by-clause voting, all of the clauses which receive a simple majority shall be considered adopted.

9 Specialized Committees

9.1 Security Council Membership

The security council shall consist of fifteen (15) members of the United Nations of which five – the People’s Republic of China, the Republic of France, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and the Russian Federation – are permanent members and possess the power of veto.

9.2 Special Decisions of the Security Council

A quorum of the security council shall be nine members. Resolutions before the security council must be approved by at least nine members in order to pass.

9.3 Public Directives

Public Directives are documents drafted by delegates, stating the intentions of the committee. If passed, the terms of a public directive are implemented in the simulation. Public directives have the same requirements as resolutions, regarding quorum and voting procedure.

10 Crisis Committees

10.1 Directives

Crisis committees shall operate using public and private directives in place of resolutions. There are two types of directives:

10.1.1 Public Directives

Public Directives are documents drafted by delegates, stating the intentions of the committee. If passed, the terms of a public directive are implemented in the simulation. Public directives have the same requirements as resolutions, regarding quorum and voting procedure.

10.1.2 Private Directives

Private directives are individually authored by a delegate and sent directly to the crisis room. They do not require the committee's approval or knowledge, and are immediately implemented in the simulation.

10.2 Portfolio Powers:

Every delegate in crisis has access to private resources and/or powers, which are either outlined in the character bio, or explicitly given by the Dais. These can be used to affect the simulation through the use of private and public directives.

10.3 Speakers List

There shall be no speakers lists for crisis committees. Crisis committees run in a perpetual moderated caucus without any topic, and with a default speaking time of one minute. When all points and motions are exhausted, the committee reverts to the perpetual moderated caucus.