United Nations Student Association

The Complete Guide for Members

2012-2013

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INTRODUCTION TO UNSA

WELCOME TO UNSA!

The United Nations Student Association of the University of Minnesota is dedicated to raising awareness of the role of the United Nations in the global polity via a wide range of activities, both on-campus and off. In the past, UNSA has sponsored lectures and simulations. This year, our activities will expand significantly as we strive to reach out to a broader audience in the student body. Open forum debates and panel discussions will join the repertoire of activities UNSA sponsors. We in UNSA firmly adhere to the belief that the future of the United Nations, and indeed the world, hinges on the ability of people to engage in free and open discourse on contemporary issues facing the international community and the transnational organizations that buttress it.

For most UNSA members, each semester culminates in a major Model United Nations Conference for which members spend a great deal of time preparing. The fall conference is sponsored by the American Model United Nations Organization, and takes place in Chicago towards the end of November. In spring we will be attending the University of California Berkeley's Model UN and National Model United Nations in New York City.

As much as the activities UNSA sponsors and the conferences it attends are meant as serious forums for discussing pertinent issues facing the global community, fun and socializing form a vital component of our organization. Members frequently cite the conferences as the premier social activity of the semester – from delegate parties in hotel rooms to lively late-night discussions and caucusing, there's a little something for everyone. We believe that academic and intellectual connections often lead to social ones, and UNSA provides the ideal extracurricular outlet for the "globally minded".

Again, welcome to UNSA and we look forward to an exciting, fun, and productive year!

Sincerely,
Zach Levinger, UNSA President

Seth Wester	Kyle Kroll	Jessica Lansi and Alyssa Wisk	Aidan Yee
Vice-President	Treasurer	Public Relations	Secretariat

THE U.N. SYSTEM

THE CHARTER

The cornerstone of the United Nations and the system of international organizations over which it presides is the U.N. Charter, signed in July 1945 and ratified by its primary signatories by October of the same year. The Preamble of the Charter, much like the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution, introduces the basic principles for which the organization stands, including an affirmation in fundamental human rights, a call for a new era of peaceful settlement of conflict, social and economic progress, and respect for international law. Following the Preamble are 19 chapters, with a total of 110 articles, laying out the primary organs of the United Nations and their competencies. The Charter established six such organs: the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the Trusteeship Council (suspended regular operation in 1994), an International Court of Justice (ICJ), and the Secretariat. For the complete text of the Charter, visit.

THE PRINCIPAL ORGANS OF THE UNITED NATIONS

I. General Assembly

The composition, function, and competencies of the General Assembly are described in Chapter IV, Articles 9-22, of the U.N. Charter. The General Assembly is the main deliberative organ of the United Nations. It is composed of representatives of all Member States (some 191 countries are represented in the GA), each of which has one vote. Decisions on important questions, such as those on peace and security, admission of new Members and budgetary matters, require a two-thirds majority. Decisions on other questions are reached by a simple majority.

Under the Charter, the functions and powers of the General Assembly include:

- to consider and make recommendations on the principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security, including the principles governing disarmament and arms regulation;
- to discuss any question relating to international peace and security and, except where a dispute or situation is being discussed by the Security Council, to make recommendations on it;
- to discuss and, with the same exception, make recommendations on any question within the scope of the Charter or affecting the powers and functions of any organ of the United Nations;
- to initiate studies and make recommendations to promote international political cooperation, the development and codification of international law, the realization of

human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, and international collaboration in economic, social, cultural, educational and health fields;

- to make recommendations for the peaceful settlement of any situation, regardless of origin, which might impair friendly relations among nations;
- to receive and consider reports from the Security Council and other United Nations organs;
- to consider and approve the United Nations budget and to apportion the contributions among Members;
- to elect the non-permanent members of the Security Council, the members of the Economic and Social Council and those members of the Trusteeship Council that are elected;
- to elect jointly with the Security Council the Judges of the International Court of Justice; and, on the recommendation of the Security Council, to appoint the Secretary-General.

The General Assembly's regular session usually begins each year in September. The 2003-2004 session, for example, is the 58th regular session of the General Assembly. At the start of each regular session, the Assembly elects a new president, 21 Vice-Presidents and the Chairspersons of the Assembly's six Main Committees. To ensure equitable geographical representation, the presidency of the Assembly rotates each year among five groups of States: African, Asian, Eastern European, Latin American and Caribbean, and Western European and other States. At the beginning of each regular session, the Assembly holds a general debate, often addressed by heads of state and government, in which Member States express their views on the most pressing international issues.

In addition to its regular sessions, the Assembly may meet in special sessions at the request of the Security Council, of a majority of Member States, or of one Member if the majority of Members concurs. Emergency special sessions may be called within 24 hours of a request by the Security Council on the vote of any nine Council members, or by a majority of the United Nations Members, or by one Member if the majority of Members concurs.

Most questions are then discussed in its six Main Committees:

- **First Committee** - Disarmament and International Security Committee
- **Second Committee** - Economic and Financial Committee
- **Third Committee** - Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee
- **Fourth Committee** - Special Political and Decolonization Committee
- **Fifth Committee** - Administrative and Budgetary Committee
- **Sixth Committee** - Legal Committee

Some issues are considered only in plenary meetings, rather than in one of the Main Committees. All issues are voted on through resolutions passed in plenary meetings, usually towards the end of the regular session, after the committees have completed their consideration of them and submitted draft resolutions to the plenary Assembly.

Voting in Committees is by a simple majority. In plenary meetings, resolutions may be adopted by acclamation, without objection or without a vote, or the vote may be recorded or taken by roll-call.

Also directly subsidiary to the General Assembly are a large group of related programs, funds, and research/training institutes (see p.

While the decisions of the Assembly have no legally binding force for governments, they carry the weight of world opinion, as well as the moral authority of the world community.
The work of the United Nations year-round derives largely from the decisions of the General Assembly - that is to say, the will of the majority of the Members as expressed in resolutions adopted by the Assembly. That work is carried out:

- By the committees and other bodies established by the Assembly to study and report on specific issues, such as disarmament, peacekeeping, development and human rights;
- in international conferences called for by the Assembly; and
- by the Secretaria of the United Nations - the Secretary-General and his staff of international civil servants.

II. Security Council

The competencies and functions of the Security Council are covered in Chapter V, Articles 23-32, of the U.N. Charter. The Security Council has primary responsibility, under the Charter, for the maintenance of international peace and security. It is so organized as to be able to function continuously, and a representative of each of its members must be present at all times at United Nations Headquarters. There are 15 Member states sitting on the Security Council at any one time. Five of the 15 are permanent members of the Security Council: China, France, Russia, United Kingdom, and the United States. The remaining 10 seats on the Security Council rotate among Member states for two-year terms. The Presidency of the Council rotates monthly, according to the English alphabetical listing of its member States.

When a complaint concerning a threat to peace is brought before it, the Council's first action is usually to recommend to the parties to try to reach agreement by peaceful means. In some cases, the Council itself undertakes investigation and mediation. It may appoint special representatives or request the Secretary-General to do so or to use his good offices. It may set forth principles for a peaceful settlement.

When a dispute leads to fighting, the Council's first concern is to bring it to an end as soon as possible. On many occasions, the Council has issued cease-fire directives which have been instrumental in preventing wider hostilities. It also sends United Nations peace-keeping forces to help reduce tensions in troubled areas, keep opposing forces apart and create conditions of calm in which peaceful settlements may be sought. The Council may decide on enforcement measures, economic sanctions (such as trade embargoes) or collective military action.

A Member State against which preventive or enforcement action has been taken by the

Security Council may be suspended from the exercise of the rights and privileges of membership by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Security Council. A Member State which has persistently violated the principles of the Charter may be expelled from the United Nations by the Assembly on the Council's recommendation.

A State which is a Member of the United Nations but not of the Security Council may participate, without a vote, in its discussions when the Council considers that that country's interests are affected. Both Members of the United Nations and non-members, if they are parties to a dispute being considered by the Council, are invited to take part, without a vote, in the Council's discussions; the Council sets the conditions for participation by a non-member State.

Decisions on procedural matters are made by an affirmative vote of at least nine of the 15 members. Decisions on substantive matters require nine votes, including the concurring votes of all five permanent members. This is the rule of "great Power unanimity", often referred to as the "veto" power.

The functions and competencies of the Security Council are:

- to maintain international peace and security in accordance with the principles and purposes of the United Nations;
- to investigate any dispute or situation which mightlead to international friction;
- to recommend methods of adjusting such disputes or the terms of settlement;
- to formulate plans for the establishment of a system to regulate armaments;
- to determine the existence of a threat to the peace or act of aggression and to recommend what action should be taken;
- to call on Members to apply economic sanctions and other measures not involving the use of force to prevent or stop aggression;
- to take military action against an aggressor;
- to recommend the admission of new Members;
- to exercise the trusteeship functions of the United Nations in "strategic areas";
- to recommend to the General Assembly the appointment of the Secretary-General and, together with the Assembly, to elect the Judges of the International Court of Justice.

III. Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is covered in Chapter X, Articles 61-72. The Economic and Social Council coordinates the work of the 14 UN specialized agencies, 10 functional commissions and five regional commissions; receives reports from 11 UN funds and programs; and issues policy recommendations to the UN system and to Member States. Under the UN Charter , ECOSOC is responsible for promoting higher standards of living, full employment, and economic and social progress; identifying solutions to international economic, social and health problems; facilitating international cultural and educational cooperation; and encouraging universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. ECOSOC's purview extends to over 70 per cent of the human and financial resources of the entire UN system.

In carrying out its mandate, ECOSOC consults with academics, business sector representatives and more than 2,100 registered non-governmental organizations. The Council holds a four-week substantive session each July, alternating between New York and Geneva. The session includes a high-level segment, at which national cabinet ministers and chiefs of international agencies and other high officials focus their attention on a selected theme of global significance. The Council will adopt a Ministerial Declaration, providing policy guidance and recommendations for action.

ECOSOC consists of 54 Members of the United Nations elected by the General Assembly. Terms last for 3 years, so that every year 18 new Members join ECOSOC. Specifically, the Charter grants ECOSOC the ability to make or initiate studies and reports with respect to international economic, social, cultural, educational, health, and related matters and may make recommendations with respect to any such matters to the General Assembly to the Members of the United Nations, and to the specialized agencies concerned. It may make recommendations for the purpose of promoting respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all. It may also prepare draft conventions for submission to the General Assembly, with respect to matters falling within its competence and may call, in accordance with the rules prescribed by the United Nations, international conferences on matters falling within its competence. Furthermore, the importance of ECOSOC as a liaison between the General Assembly and the specialized agencies cannot be underestimated. The Charter empowers ECOSOC to coordinate initiatives and activities with the specialized agencies (though the specialized agencies **are not** directly subsidiary to ECOSOC), and to obtain regular reports from those agencies as it sees fit. ECOSOC, like most of the principal organs of the U.N. is co-dependent on other U.N. organs, and must often report to the Security Council and the General Assembly on its affairs and those of the specialized agencies.

Directly subsidiary to ECOSOC are 10 functional commissions and 5 regional commissions. The functional commissions are as follows: **Human Rights**, **Narcotic Drugs**, **Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice**, **Science and Technology for Development**, **Sustainable Development**, **Status of Women**, **Population and Development**, **Commission for Social Development**, and the **Statistical Commission**.

The regional commissions are: **Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)**, **Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)**, **Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)**, **Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)**, and the **Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)**.

IV. Trusteeship Council

Chapters 11-13, Articles 73-91 of the Charter cover the "non self-governing" territories and the institutional mechanisms of the U.N. that administer these territories. The Trusteeship Council suspended operation on November 1, 1994, with the accession of Palau to the United Nations as a free and sovereign state. By a resolution adopted on 25 May 1994, the Council amended its rules of procedure to drop the obligation to meet annually and agreed to meet as occasion required -- by its decision or the decision of its President, or at the request of a majority of its members or the General Assembly or the Security Council.

In setting up an International Trusteeship System, the Charter established the Trusteeship Council as one of the main organs of the United Nations and assigned to it the task of supervising the administration of Trust Territories placed under the Trusteeship System. Major goals of the System were to promote the advancement of the inhabitants of Trust Territories and their progressive development towards self-government or independence. TheTrusteeship Council is made up of the five permanent members of the Security Council --China, France, Russian Federation, United Kingdom and United States.

The aims of the Trusteeship System have been fulfilled to such an extent that all Trust Territories have attained self-government or independence, either as separate States or by joining neighboring independent countries.

Under the Charter, the Trusteeship Council is authorized to examine and discuss reports from the Administering Authority on the political, economic, social and educational advancement of the peoples of Trust Territories and, in consultation with the Administering Authority, to examine petitions from and undertake periodic and other special missions to Trust Territories.

V. International Court of Justice (ICJ)

Chapter 14, Articles 92-96 of the Charter cover the International Court of Justice (ICJ). The International Court of Justice is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations. Its seat is at the Peace Palace in The Hague (Netherlands). It began work in 1946, when it replaced the Permanent Court of International Justice which had functioned in the Peace Palace since 1922. It operates under a Statute largely similar to that of its predecessor, which is an integral part of the Charter of the United Nations.

Functions of the Court

The Court has a dual role: to settle in accordance with international law the legal disputes submitted to it by States, and to give advisory opinions on legal questions referred to it by duly authorized international organs and agencies.

Composition

The Court is composed of 15 judges elected to nine-year terms of office by the United Nations General Assembly and Security Council sitting independently of each other. It may not include more than one judge of any nationality. Elections are held every three years for one-third of the seats, and retiring judges may be re-elected. The Members of the Court do not represent their governments but are independent magistrates.

The judges must possess the qualifications required in their respective countries for appointment to the highest judicial offices, or be jurists of recognized competence in international law. The composition of the Court has also to reflect the main forms of civilization and the principal legal systems of the world.

When the Court does not include a judge possessing the nationality of a State party to a case, that State may appoint a person to sit as a judge *ad hoc* for the purpose of the case.

Contentious cases between States

The Parties

Only States may apply to and appear before the Court. The Member States of the United Nations (at present numbering 191) are so entitled.

Jurisdiction

The Court is competent to entertain a dispute only if the States concerned have accepted its jurisdiction in one or more of the following ways:

1. by the conclusion between them of a special agreement to submit the dispute to the Court;
2. by virtue of a jurisdictional clause, i.e., typically, when they are parties to a treaty containing a provision whereby, in the event of a disagreement over its interpretation or application, one of them may refer the dispute to the Court. Several hundred treaties or conventions contain a clause to such effect;
3. through the reciprocal effect of declarations made by them under the Statute whereby each has accepted the jurisdiction of the Court as compulsory in the event of a dispute with another State having made a similar declaration. The declarations of 65 States are at present in force, a number of them having been made subject to the exclusion of certain categories of dispute.

In cases of doubt as to whether the Court has jurisdiction, it is the Court itself which decides.

Procedure

The procedure followed by the Court in contentious cases is defined in its Statute, and in the Rules of Court adopted by it under the Statute. The latest version of the Rules dates from 5 December 2000. The proceedings include a written phase, in which the parties file and exchange pleadings, and an oral phase consisting of public hearings at which agents and counsel address the Court. As the Court has two official languages (English and French) everything written or said in one language is translated into the other.

After the oral proceedings the Court deliberates in camera and then delivers its judgment at a public sitting. The judgment is final and without appeal. Should one of the States involved fail to comply with it, the other party may have recourse to the Security Council of the United Nations.

The Court discharges its duties as a full court but, at the request of the parties, it may also establish a special chamber. The Court constituted such a chamber in 1982 for the first time, formed a second one in 1985, constituted two in 1987 and two more in 2002. A Chamber of

Summary Procedure is elected every year by the Court in accordance with its Statute. In July 1993 the Court also established a seven-member Chamber to deal with any environmental cases falling within its jurisdiction

Since 1946 the Court has delivered 79 Judgments on disputes concerning *inter alia* land frontiers and maritime boundaries, territorial sovereignty, the non-use of force, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, diplomatic relations, hostage-taking, the right of asylum, nationality, guardianship, rights of passage and economic rights.

Sources of applicable law

The Court decides in accordance with international treaties and conventions in force, international custom, general principles of law and, as subsidiary means, judicial decisions and the teachings of the most highly qualified publicists.

Advisory Opinions

The advisory procedure of the Court is open solely to international organizations. The only bodies at present authorized to request advisory opinions of the Court are five organs of the United Nations and 16 specialized agencies of the United Nations family.

On receiving a request, the Court decides which States and organizations might provide useful information and gives them an opportunity of presenting written or oral statements. The Court's advisory procedure is otherwise modeled on that for contentious proceedings, and the sources of applicable law are the same. In principle the Court's advisory opinions are consultative in character and are therefore not binding as such on the requesting bodies. Certain instruments or regulations can, however, provide in advance that the advisory opinion shall be binding.

Since 1946 the Court has given 25 Advisory Opinions, concerning *inter alia* the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the occupied Palestinian territory, admission to United Nations membership, reparation for injuries suffered in the service of the United Nations, territorial status of South-West Africa (Namibia) and Western Sahara, judgments rendered by international administrative tribunals, expenses of certain United Nations operations, applicability of the United Nations Headquarters Agreement, the status of human rights rapporteurs, and the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons.

VI. The Secretariat)

The Secretariat of the United Nations is discussed in Chapter 15, Articles 97-101 of the U.N. Charter. The Secretariat -- an international staff working in duty stations around the world -- carries out the diverse day-to-day work of the Organization. It services the other principal organs of the United Nations and administers the programs and policies laid down by them. At its head is the Secretary-General, who is appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Security Council for a five-year, renewable term.

The duties carried out by the Secretariat are as varied as the problems dealt with by the United Nations. These range from administering peacekeeping operations to mediating international disputes, from surveying economic and social trends and problems to preparing studies on human rights and sustainable development. Secretariat staff also informs the world's communications media about the work of the United Nations; organize international conferences on issues of worldwide concern; and interpret speeches and translate documents into the Organization's official languages.

The Charter describes the Secretary-General as "chief administrative officer" of the Organization, who shall act in that capacity and perform "such other functions as are entrusted" to him or her by the Security Council, General Assembly, Economic and Social Council and other United Nations organs. The Charter also empowers the Secretary-General to "bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security". These guidelines both define the powers of the office and grant it considerable scope for action.

The Secretariat has a staff of about 8,900 under the regular budget drawn from some 170 countries. As international civil servants, staff members and the Secretary-General answer to the United Nations alone for their activities, and take an oath not to seek or receive instructions from any Government or outside authority. Under the Charter, each Member State undertakes to respect the exclusively international character of the responsibilities of the Secretary-General and the staff and to refrain from seeking to influence them improperly in the discharge of their duties. There are 14 subsidiary offices of the Secretariat. They are: **Office of the Secretary-General (OSG)**, **Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS)**, **Office of Legal Affairs (OLA)**, **Department of Political Affairs (DPA)**, **Department for Disarmament Affairs (DDA)**, **Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO)**, **Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)**, **Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)**, **Department for General Assemble and Conference Management (DGACM)**, **Department of Public Information (DPI)**, **Department of Management (DM)**, **Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries (OHRLLS)**, **Office of the United Nations Secretary-Coordinator (UNSECOORD)**, and the **United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)**.

The United Nations, while headquartered in New York, maintains a significant presence in Addis Ababa, Bangkok, Beirut, Geneva, Nairobi, Santiago and Vienna, and has offices all over the world. There are offices of the Secretariat in Geneva, Vienna, and Nariobi.

THE RELATED U.N. ENTITIES

The following entities and categories of entities are direct subsidiaries of the General Assembly, meaning they have to report and "answer to" the G.A. Furthermore, these entities have a relationship, though non-subsidiary in character, with ECOSOC.

Programs and Funds

1. **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)** - www.unctad.org

2. **United Nations Drug Control Program (UNDCP)** – www.undcp.org

3. **United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)** – www.unicef.org

4. **United Nations Environment Program (UNEP)** – www.unep.org

5. **United Nations Development Program (UNDP)** – www.undp.org

6. **United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)** – www.unfpa.org

7. **Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)** – www.unchr.ch/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home

8. **World Food Program (WFP)** – www.wfp.org

9. **United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)** – www.un.org/unrwa

10. **United Nations Human Settlements Program (UN-HABITAT)** – www.unchs.org

Research and Training Institutes

1. **United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Center (UNICRI)** – www.unicri.it/

2. **United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)** – www.unitar.org

3. **United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD)** – www.unrisd.org

4. **United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR)** – www.unidir.org

5. **International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW)** – www.un-instraw.org/en/index.html

Other U.N. Entities

1. **Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)** – www.unhchr.ch/

2. **United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)** – www.unops.org

3. **United Nations University (UNU)** – www.unu.edu

4. **United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC)** – www.unssc.org/unssc1/

5. **Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)** – www.unaids.org

THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES

The specialized agencies function as autonomous organizations within the U.N. system. They do, however, work closely and coordinate activities and initiatives with ECOSOC.

1. **International Labor Organization (ILO) –** www.ilo.org/public/english/about/index.htm

2. **Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO)**– www.fao.org/UNFAO/about/index_en.html

3. **United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** – www.unesco.org – click on "The Organization"

4. **World Health Organization (WHO)** – www.who.int

5. **WORLD BANK GROUP –** www.worldbank.org

    1) **International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)** – www.worldbank.org/ibrd

    2) **International Development Association (IDA)** – www.worldbank.org/ida

    3) **International Finance Corporation (IFC)** – www.ifc.org

    4) **Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA)** – www.miga.org

    5) **International Center for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID)** – www.worldbank.org/icsid

6. **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** – www.imf.org

7. **International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)** – www.icao.org/int/

8. **International Maritime Organization (IMO)** – www.imo.org/

9. **International Telecommunications Union (ITU)** – www.itu.int/

10. **Universal Postal Union (UPU)** – www.upu.int/

11. **World Meteorological Organization (WMO)** – www.wmo.ch/

12. **World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)** – www.wipo.int/

13. **International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)** – www.ifad.org

14. **United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)** – www.unido.org/

15. **World Tourism Organization** – www.world-tourism.org/

RELATED ORGANIZATIONS

1. **World Trade Organization (WTO)** – www.wto.org

2. **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)** – www.iaea.org – has a close, but non-subsidiary relationship with the Security Council and General Assembly.

3. **PrepCom for the Nuclear Test-Ban-Treaty Organization (CTBTO PREP.COM)** – www.ctbto.org/ - has a close, but non-subsidiary relationship with the General Assembly.

4. **Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)** – www.opcw.org/ - also has a close, but non-subsidiary relationship with the General Assembly.

HOW TO BE A GOOD DELEGATE: PROCEDURES AND PROTOCOL OF MODEL U.N.

INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Model United Nations conferences, though extremely fun and interesting events, require a certain degree of seriousness and preparation on the part of the individual in order for the experience to be a worthwhile one. Participants should expect a high caliber of debate and discussion, and should conduct themselves appropriately. As you could probably figure on your own, how you dress is an integral part of projecting a professional image. All Model U.N. conferences require delegates to wear business attire, and will usually not allow delegates to wear jeans, t-shirts, shorts, or athletic shoes when in session.

PREPARATION AND ROLE PLAYING – GETTING TO KNOW YOUR COUNTRY AND ISSUES DEAR TO ITS HEART

Delegates are fundamental to any Model UN Conference. A delegate's job is to research the positions of a UN Member State, both on the specific topics that will be discussed at the conference and as a general overview of that nation's policies. Delegates should then be ready to discuss the issues with their counterparts and to prepare draft resolutions which codify solutions to problems. These draft resolutions may be submitted for debate at the conference. Draft resolutions can be submitted in advance for placement on a draft resolution web page that is made available to all delegations, can be prepared for submission at the conference, or can be written with others at the conference.
Finally, delegates attend the conference to *represent* their nation in discussing the various issues presented. **When delegates reach the floor of a Model UN Conference, they assume the role of the Distinguished Representative from their country, with all the rights and responsibilities which that entails.**

At the conference, Representatives in the role of their countries' spokesperson will debate the issues on the agenda to seek solutions to the problems facing the world community. They will also create and discuss draft resolutions, caucus with Representatives who are role playing other countries, and work to solve the problems facing the world. In the UN today, nations will usually debate an item in an attempt to reach a consensus that can be agreed to by all, or at least by most, nations.

ROLE PLAYING

Model U.N. is a **simulation** of the UN. By its very nature, the quality and tone of debate will be dramatically different than in the "real" UN. At the UN, Representatives and their consular staffs spend months in preparation, "behind doors" caucusing, and interacting with other nations *before* an issue is brought to a vote. A UN Representative, or Head of State, will almost always make a prepared speech that will not be "news" to the other Representatives present.

At a model U.N. conference, representatives will only have a few days to assume the role of their nation's representative and simulate the actions of the UN. This consolidation of time leads to many different circumstances with which each delegation will have to contend. Among the considerations is the fact that Representatives will rarely have the opportunity to make a pre-written speech on a topic. Instead, they will often be forced to verbally react to circumstances as they arise, and they may be in a position where it is reasonable to reinterpret their nation's position in light of new facts. Representatives should not simply read from their country's established record on the issues presented; they should be prepared to compromise with the other nations represented, and adapt their policies where needed to meet the current circumstances of the world as simulated at the conference.

Note that this in no way gives delegations – you included – license to act "out of character." Representatives should research and generally follow the policies of their country, modifying these as new circumstances dictate. Successful role playing involves walking a careful line on policy: avoid the extremes of either reading verbatim a country's past statements, or creating ad hoc policy with no previous basis.

RESEARCH AND PREPARATION

As a general rule, representatives should become familiar with several items in their preparations for the conference, from the UN system as a whole to the specifics of their country's position on the topics of discussion for their respective committees. Research and preparation can be divided into six sections:

1. The UN System as a whole: It is vitally important to understand the basics of the organization which you are simulating, the United Nations. A well-prepared student should not only know the basics of the UN's structure but should have a good understanding of how the committee they will be working on fits into the organization (If you have read this guide carefully, you should already have a good grasp of the functions, structure, and competencies of the major organs of the United Nations).

2. Current statistical information and a general background of the represented nation's history and policies: This is the first key to understanding what actions a nation may prefer on the specific issues. Research should include, but certainly not be limited to, such areas as population, government type, natural resources, and trade data for the nation being represented. Traditional allies and adversaries should also be noted. Additionally, a country's history can be crucial to its contemporary actions, including the question of whether that country was previously colonized, or possibly a colonial power, when the country gained statehood, and what means were used in gaining independence (civil war, violent struggle, peaceful movement, etc.).

3. Specific background of the nation's viewpoints on the issues to be discussed at the conference: This is the pivot point of most Model UN preparation - focused research on the issues being discussed in each committee and on your government's position on those issues. Research can come from a variety of sources, beginning with UN documents (which you can often find on the Internet or in paper form in a library or documents depository) and moving to

articles, periodical sources, books, and Internet resources beyond the UN web site. UN resolutions and reports on the issues under discussion are especially helpful because they provide a quick reference to what has already been accomplished by the UN, and to what still needs to be done in the future. These documents also frequently provide voting information, which allows you to quickly determine your country's past positions on issues. Contacting the represented country's Permanent Mission to the UN can also be helpful, but the level of assistance provided varies with each country's policies and the resources they have available to help others. Also, for some countries it will be very easy to find specific information to determine a position on most or all topics, and for others this information will be difficult to come by or simply not available. When clear-cut information is not available, it is incumbent on you to make the best possible inference of what the country's policy would be, given the facts available. This might include knowing the country's background, their traditional allies, the stance of a regional group with whom they tend to agree, or a variety of other factors. Regardless of the facts available, knowing *exactly* what a country would do in a given situation is not always possible. You should strive in your research to know as much as they can about the country and its stance on each topic, and to educate yourself enough to make reasonable policy assumptions on issues which are not totally clear.

4. The current world situation as it applies to the nation: This is a subset of the previous two areas of research, but is important enough to be mentioned in its own right. There is a significant difference between the policies of the only remaining superpower and a nation with very little military might. Even more significant at the UN is the difference between the policies of the relatively rich, industrialized nations and the relatively poor, developing (and especially least developed) nations on many issues. Additionally, a nation which is currently involved in a civil war, or a nation which is under UN sanctions, may have unique responses on some issues which are very different from those of the remainder of the international community. Knowing where the nation you represent fits in the current world geo-political context, as a complement to your country specific research, can answer many questions which will come up during the simulation.

5. A specific background of the perspectives of nations with differing viewpoints on the issues: This is one of the more difficult areas in preparation. While it is reasonable to expect that a Representative will know who their general allies and adversaries on a given issue should be (regional partners, long-standing allies, etc.) it is very difficult to have detailed information on what the policies of each country in the simulation will be on a given issue. Limitations in preparation time by definition require that students focus *primarily* on the policies of their own country, often learning about others through references in their own research. This is an area where complete knowledge will serve participants well, but it is much more likely that each Representative will be learning the formal policies of the other countries in the committee when they give speeches from the floor and confer behind the scenes in caucus sessions.

6. The rules of procedure for the conference: While substantive discussions of the issues form the basis of any good simulation of the UN, the rules of procedure are what is used to facilitate the substantive debate which occurs. In general, these rules are intended to provide an even playing field, allowing each country to accomplish its individual goals in speaking their

policies, while also maximizing opportunities for the group to reach agreement, or even consensus, on the issues. Several levels of preparation are possible on the rules. If you are new to Model UN, it is recommended that you have a working knowledge of the principal motions which can be made during the simulation (included in this guide). The chairperson of each committee will assist Representatives in using these rules on the first day of the Conference, and assist in bringing everyone onto an even playing field. For those of you with experience, try reading the conference's rules in-depth, both as a refresher on these rules of procedure and to note differences from other conferences UNSA might attend. Most Model UN Conferences use at least slightly different rules of procedure, and in some cases the contrasts are significant. In order to best facilitate everyone's experience, it is incumbent upon every participant to learn and use the rules as laid out for a conference.

Preparing as an Individual and as a Group

Research on the areas described above is the essential element in preparing for a conference. It is strongly recommended that you combine your efforts whenever possible in doing research. Each individual will have a fair amount of responsibility for researching and formulating a position to defend at the conference, but the officers and experienced Model UN-ers will help in organizing research "groups" and getting newcomers started. This guide will give you a lot of the conceptual and factual tools you will need to familiarize yourself with the UN system and how Model UN conferences work. After all, the more educated and prepared you are for the conference, the more you will get out of the experience and the more fun it will be!

Strategy at the Conference

Toward the end of your preparation process, we as a delegation will meet together, pore over our research, at formulate a working strategy for the conference. The idea is to be involved in working toward solutions to the problems placed before the United Nations. This requires a great deal of negotiation and compromise, often at the expense of certain positions which may be of concern to you individually or to the delegation as a whole. Consequently, it is imperative that the research be completed in the weeks before a conference so we as a delegation can decide what is of greatest importance to the country we are representing and set our strategies accordingly. The important questions we want to be asking at this point include:

• What kind of role will our delegation play at the Conference? (Examples: Conciliatory, obstructive, aggressive, neutral or leading)
• Will our delegation seek leadership positions in each Committee/Council and in the General Assembly Plenary?
• How can our delegation achieve the goals and interests identified in our research?
• With which other nations will our delegation attempt to work? (this may vary by committee or by topic)
• What delegations will be our main adversaries on each topic?
Remember, passing resolutions is not the true measure of success at the Conference.
While you are encouraged to write and/or propose resolutions on the various issues, you must stand ready to **compromise** to achieve any real solution to the problems being discussed!!

POSITION PAPERS

Well crafted position papers can serve as an excellent preparatory tool for Model UN Conference participants. A position paper can be used either as a device for internal preparation among the members of a delegation, or as a "public" statement of the delegation's positions on the issues being discussed at the conference. Most Model UN conferences will request that delegations submit public position papers to the Conference, but will also suggest that each delegation prepare internal position papers which more clearly and completely define their nation's perspective. The most important information a delegation can furnish to other delegations prior to the Conference is its basic public policy on each issue to be discussed. Consequently, most Model UN conferences will require that position papers are submitted before pre-conference draft resolutions, so IT IS IMPERATIVE that you turn in the position paper on the date the officers designate.

"PUBLIC" POSITION PAPERS

This type of position paper is intended as a public statement of your country's positions on the topics being discussed at the conference. It should include brief statements about where the country we're representing stands on the issue in question and on what the UN has done to confront this issue. It should also include the country's public position on the options for the UN in the future, noting proposals which we have sponsored or intend to sponsor, support, or not support and why. Public papers do not need to go into detail about our delegation's negotiating positions or other "behind the scenes" issues, but should rather be seen as something that a diplomat might say in a public speech on the topic.

Items to include in "public" position papers

While the position papers sent to the conference can include any material that we deem appropriate for public consumption, a number of items should be included in a well written position paper. **First, each section of the paper should specifically state the one or two key points on each topic that our country believes is the most important**. While other important issues can be included, no more than two (or possibly as many as three) main points should be highlighted. The paper can then go into specific details on why these points are important, and on what our country believes should be done by the UN or its member states to improve the situation in question. Many papers will then sum up by recapping the most important points.

      Also, there are a number of things which you may want to include in your position paper. These will vary by topic based on the issue and the information available. Important items to incorporate in each section of the position paper include:

            • References to past UN resolutions and international treaties, providing the specific number or name of that document and the year it passed,
            • References to the UN Charter, as appropriate for the topic,
            • Past statements by the Secretary-General, a senior UN Secretariat member or by a representative of a UN agency on the topic,

• Reference to the work the UN has already done on the topic, whether by specialized agencies, regional bodies or working with non-governmental organizations,
• Past statements on the topic by representatives of our country's government, especially if these mention the significance of the specific issue to the country we are representing,
• Specific suggestions of action(s) that our country will support in solving the issue in question.

Finally, it is important to note that a well written public position paper is **not** about our country, but rather about what our country would like to accomplish on the topics of discussion in each simulation. Thus your public position papers should not talk about the problems facing our country, but rather the problems facing the international community. Other countries do not care as much about internal issues, but rather are interested in where our country stands on the external issues under discussion at the UN. If our country is a clear example of a successful UN program in action, or if it is a member of an affected group, you may want to include a brief reference to that in your paper; otherwise, there is usually no need to even mention specifics about our country in a position paper.

Submission and Format

It is absolutely essential that you submit your position paper on the date indicated by the officers, for reasons noted above. The length will vary with each conference, but generally position papers are somewhere in the neighborhood of 2-3 pages.

THE CONFERENCE – HOW TO DO IT LIKE A DIPLOMAT

So you've done your research, written your position paper, and you're ready to go to the conference. We know that this all probably *seems* intimidating, but any nervousness you feel going into the conference will dissipate as soon as you get involved in the first debate. The conference experience is really a fun one, and with the aid of this guide, you should feel confident that you're going into the conference well-oriented to its ins and outs.

1) RESOLUTIONS AND RESOLUTION-WRITING

Resolutions are the primary tools for action at the United Nations. Debate at the UN focuses on solving, at least in part, the many problems facing the world community. After months of debate and behind-the-scenes discussion on a topic, the Member States will come to an agreement on how their countries should proceed on the issue. This agreement is then codified in the form of a "draft resolution." The text of a draft resolution is usually worked out well in advance of being brought to the floor, with many nations making suggestions and many changes occurring behind the scenes. When a draft resolution is brought to the floor, it may also be formally discussed, amended, rejected or adopted as circumstances dictate. Note that it

is very rare for a UN resolution to be rejected: most Member States prefer to only bring a draft resolution to the floor if they are sure that it will be adopted, and it is not uncommon to wait until they are sure that all members present will agree to the resolution and adopt it by consensus. Resolutions usually state a policy that the UN will undertake, but they also may be in the form of reports, treaties, conventions and declarations in some bodies. They range from very general to very specific in content. Depending on the body involved, they may call for or suggest a course of action, condemn an action, and require action or sanctions on the part of the member states. The General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council may only call for or suggest actions. It should be noted that no body other than the Security Council may require action or sanctions from member states. In some cases, final conventions and treaties may also require action, but this would only be on the part of the ratifying nations.

Amendments to draft resolutions are the means by which resolutions may be altered by the body involved. Amendments can create additions, deletions or changes to a draft resolution in order to increase its acceptability to all nations involved. Amendments are usually needed for a body to move toward a consensus on a draft resolution. When all sponsors of a draft resolution agree to an amendment, the change is automatically made (without a formal debate or vote); this type of change is called a "friendly amendment."

Draft Resolutions

The draft resolution is the genesis and locus of debate in any council or commission of Model U.N. The term generally refers to resolutions drawn up by delegations prior to or during the conference that are submitted before other delegations have had a chance to read and caucus over the resolution. Here would be an appropriate time to lay out some general points to consider when writing draft resolutions:

• In the preambulatory clauses, describe the recent history of the situation and the issue as it currently exists;
• Reference past United Nations actions and previous resolutions passed on the topic, when available;
• In the operative clauses, include actions which will solve the problem, not just make a statement;
• Do not be blatantly political in the content of the draft resolution -- this may damage efforts to reach a consensus on the issue;
• Take into account the points of view of other nations whenever possible;
• Write the draft resolution from your country's side of the "international" or "United Nations" perspective, not just from your country's individual point of view;
• Refer issues which need further discussion to appropriate, existing bodies;
• Do not create new committees/commissions/working groups/etc. without considering funding for these groups, or if other, similar bodies already exist;
• Always consider previous UN resolutions on the topic -- do not duplicate what other resolutions have done without referencing the appropriate sources.

Rules on format differ according to the conference, but generally you will follow this format:

• Single spaced throughout, with double spacing between clauses,
• Clauses must begin with proper introductory words/phrases, in italics,

• Preambular clauses end with commas and operative clauses end with semi-colons,
• Each operative clause must be numbered and indented,
• The final operative clause ends with a period,
• Lines in the margin of the resolution should not be numbered.

In order to be considered "on the floor", a draft resolution must have a minimum of 25% of the delegations in attendance in attendance listed as sponsors (this will have to be done while in caucus; to ensure that your resolution gets on the agenda, work to gather the necessary number of signatures as early as possible in the session). Once this is done, the resolution should be brought to the Chair for acknowledgement and placement on the Working Agenda.

2) COMING TO ORDER AND OPENING THE SESSION

Like all legislative environments, the U.N. and Model U.N. are governed by a set of rules and protocols that help to maintain order in the chamber. The rules are quite lengthy, so for the sake of expediency, a "short form" of important rules is attached to this guide, labeled "Appendix A". You can obtain a complete copy of the Rules of Procedure for the General Assembly and ECOSOC at http://www.amun.org/Handbook03/RP_ch8_03.pdf.

The key to moving debate forward is making procedural **motions**. Motions are structured in a hierarchical order, which means that some motions have precedence over others. Procedural motions often require a **second**, or an affirmation of the motion by one or more delegations. Refer to Appendix A for the order of precedence of the motions you will most frequently use.

The session opens and closes with an official declaration by the Chairperson. For General Assembly and ECOSOC committees, a Working Agenda of topics and issues to be discussed will usually be predetermined, especially if the conference decides to make a packet of draft resolutions available. Therefore, when the Chair asks for any motions, the first motion will typically be **to Suspend the Meeting** (Rule 7.1) for the purposes of caucusing. The delegate moving to suspend the meeting must specify for how long he or she wishes to suspend the meeting.

3) CAUCUSING

A great deal of the time at Model U.N. conferences is spent in **caucus**. **Caucusing** allows delegations to mix freely – without the rules of procedure binding them – and engage in open parley with each other. When the session first opens, caucus time should be spent engaging probable allies and canvassing for support of your delegation's draft resolution. Keep in mind that 25 % of the delegations in attendance must be signatories to your draft resolution(s) before it can be submitted to the **Dais** (another term you will often here in place of "the Chair").

Learning to use caucus time effectively is as central to doing well in Model U.N. as learning the forehand is in tennis. Since it is a chance for delegations to engage freely in dialogue with one another, it is virtually the only time that you can "wheel and deal", work on resolutions,

and forge alliances or resolve disagreements. Though there is no one "style" of caucusing, you should be at your "diplomatic best", and if you're armed with the knowledge you gained from researching, you should do very well. We (UNSA officers and seasoned members) will help you get comfortable with a caucus environment and give specific pointers at the practice simulations and working meetings before the conference.

3) OPEN SESSION I – DEBATE, SPEECHES, AND ALL THAT JAZZ

Debate within Model United Nations sessions (as is the case in the real U.N.) takes place via a series of speeches. Whether the subject of debate is a resolution, the order of the agenda, or a debatable procedural motion, *at least* one speech for or against the proposition in question is allowed. Whenever sessions begin, either for the day or following a caucus period, the Dais will ask the chamber to come to order, announce that the body is once again in session, and ask for any motions or speeches. Open debate usually doesn't start until most of the delegations present have had their fill of preliminary caucusing and a few resolutions submitted to the Dais for consideration.

Changing the Agenda
At this point, it would be appropriate to discuss the agenda of the session in greater detail. As mentioned earlier, the order of debate is governed by the Working Agenda, which in the case of the General Assembly and ECOSOC is determined largely by the draft resolution packet made available before the conference, and the order in which signed resolutions are received by the Dais for consideration. **Rule 7.8 – Consideration of Agenda Items**, is the motion you make to change the Working Agenda. You usually make this motion if you want to introduce a resolution on a topic with lower precedence on the *status quo* agenda. This motion is not debatable, and requires a simple majority vote. A motion can be made to change the Working Agenda only when debate has been adjourned (**Rule 7.3**) or closed (**Rule 7.4**).

Speeches
Once the Dais has received draft resolutions with the required number of signatures, they will queue them according to the order in which they were received, and according to the order of topical precedence as expressed by the Working Agenda. The Dais should always read a resolution aloud before allowing debate to begin on the corpus of the resolution itself. Once the resolution is read, the Dais will ask for an authorship speech as the initial speech in affirmation of the resolution. It is the prerogative of the primary sponsor of the resolution to deliver this speech, which often is meant to explain the reasoning behind the resolution, meditate upon its strengths, and give pre-emptive responses to possible critiques. Once this speech is finished, the Dais will then ask for any motions or speeches in negation of the resolution. Whenever you want to give a speech, be it in affirmation or negation of a resolution or debatable procedural motion, you must raise your placard. Speakers are recognized in order of precedence, so that those individuals who have given fewer speeches will be given preference over those who have spoken more frequently.

4) OPEN SESSION II – CLOSING DEBATE AND COMING TO A VOTE

When enough delegates get tired of debating a particular resolution, someone will inevitably make the motion to close or adjourn debate (**Rule 7.4 – Closure of Debate** and **Rule 7.3 – Adjournment of Debate**), both of which are debatable and require a simple majority vote. A majority vote in favor of closing debate brings the resolution being discussed to an immediate vote (in favor or against), while a majority vote in favor of adjourning debate has the effect of tabling a resolution open to debate *without* a vote on the content of the resolution. There are several methods of voting employed in Model U.N.:

- Roll-call votes, called in English alphabetical order, in which delegations should respond "yes" or "no"
- Usually, voting will occur by a show of raised placards.

5) TERMS OF ADJOURNMENT

When delegates wish to adjourn for lunch or for the day, the same motion used to go into caucusing should be made – to suspend the meeting (**Rule 7.1 – Suspension of the Meeting**). Of course, a there must be a majority vote in favor of the motion and a time to reconvene set in order for it to pass.

When closing out the conference, the motion to adjourn the meeting (**Rule 7.2 – Adjournment of the Meeting**) must be made. This motion means that all the business of the Committee/Council has been completed, and that the Committee/Council will not convene until the next annual session. It requires a majority vote for passage, and the Dais reserves the right to refuse this motion if the Committee/Council still has business before it. The motion is not debatable, and will be put to an immediate vote.

THE END (FOR NOW…)

That brings the UNSA Members' Guide to a close! Keep in mind that this document isn't the final word on everything, but it is a good, comprehensive general guide for your reference as you get started with Model U.N. Just remember that we in UNSA are here to help you. You are embarking on an exciting, fun, and extremely rewarding adventure. We're glad to have you along!