



HARVARD MODEL UNITED NATIONS

The Fifty Ninth Session

A PROGRAM OF THE HARVARD INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COUNCIL

OFFICIAL RULES OF PROCEDURE

GENERAL RULES

1. **Scope:** These rules apply to the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Regional Bodies, the Security Council, and the Historical Security Council, except for modifications provided by the Secretariat, and will be considered adopted in advance of session. Other committees are run according to rules set by the Director.
2. **Language:** English will be the official and working language of the conference.
3. **Delegations:** Each member state will be represented by one or two delegates and shall have one vote on each committee. Representatives of accredited observers will have the same rights as those of full members, except that they may not sign or vote on resolutions or amendments. The Secretary-General will provide a list of member states and accredited observers for each committee.
4. **Participation of Non-Members:** A guest speaker, expert witness, or representative of an entity that is neither a member of the committee nor an accredited observer may address a committee only with the prior approval of the Director.
5. **Credentials:** The credentials of all delegations have been accepted upon registration. The Secretary-General shall be the final arbiter of the validity of all credentials. Any representative to whose admission a member objects will provisionally be seated with the same rights as other representatives, pending a decision from the Secretary-General.
6. **Statements by the Secretariat:** The Secretary-General or a member of the Secretariat whom he or she designates may at any time make either written or oral statements to the committee.
7. **General Powers of the Committee Staff:** The Director will declare the opening and closing of each meeting and may propose the adoption of any procedural motion to which there is no significant objection. Subject to these rules, the Director will have complete control of the proceedings at any meeting. The Moderator will direct discussions, accord the right to speak, put questions, announce decisions, rule on points of order, and ensure and enforce the observance of these rules. The Moderator may temporarily transfer his duties to another member of the Committee staff or other designates of the Director. Committee staff members may also advise delegations on the course of debate. In the exercise of these functions, the Committee staff will be at all times subject to these rules and responsible to the Secretary-General.
8. **Appeal:** Any decision of the Moderator, with the exception of those matters for which the Committee Rules of Procedure explicitly prohibit appeal, may be appealed immediately by a delegate. The Moderator may speak briefly in defense of the ruling. The appeal will then be put to a vote, and the decision of the Moderator will stand unless overruled by a two-thirds majority. The Director has ultimate discretion on any ruling, whether it is appealed successfully or not.

9. **Quorum:** The Director may declare a Committee open and permit debate to proceed when at least one fourth of the voting members of the Committee is present. A member of the Committee is considered present if at least one delegate representing that member is in the Committee chamber. The presence of a majority of the members will be required for the vote on any substantive motion. A quorum will be assumed to be present unless specifically challenged by a Point of Order and shown to be absent. A roll call is never required to determine the presence of a quorum.

10. **Courtesy:** Delegates will show courtesy and respect to the Committee staff and to other delegates. The Moderator will immediately call to order any delegate who fails to comply with this rule.

11. **Electronic Devices:** No laptops, tablets computers, cell phones, or other electronic devices may be used in the Committee room during formal debate or moderated caucus. Computers may be used outside the Committee room at any time, or in the Committee room during unmoderated caucus.

RULES GOVERNING DEBATE

12. **Agenda:** The first order of business for the Committee, if the Committee has more than one Topic Area to discuss, will be the consideration of the agenda. If the committee has only one Topic Area, the agenda is automatically adopted. To set the agenda:

- A motion should be made to set the agenda to one of the Committee's Topic Areas as stated by the Director in the committee background guide.
- Two speakers lists will be established, one in favor of the motion, and one opposed to the motion and in favor of the other topic. The Committee will hear alternating speakers from these lists. No motions for moderated or unmoderated caucuses are permitted during this time.
- A motion to close debate will be in order after the Committee has heard at least two speakers for the motion and two against, or when one of the speakers lists is exhausted. In accordance with the normal procedure described in Rule 16, the Moderator will recognize two speakers against the motion to close debate, and a two-thirds majority is required for closure of debate on the agenda.
- When debate is closed, the Committee will proceed to an immediate vote on the motion. A simple majority is required for passage. If the motion fails, the other Topic Area will automatically be placed before the Committee.
- When voting procedure is complete on the first Topic Area, the second Topic Area is automatically placed before the Committee.
- In the event of an international crisis or emergency, the Secretary-General or his or her representative may call upon a Committee to table debate on the current Topic Area so that the more urgent matter may be attended to immediately. Under such circumstances, a delegate may motion to table the topic and temporarily set the agenda to the crisis situation. After a resolution has been passed on the crisis, the Committee will return to debate on the tabled topic. Until a resolution has passed, the Committee may return to debate on the tabled Topic Area only at the discretion of the Secretary-General or his or her representative.

13. **Debate:** After the Agenda has been determined, one continuously open speakers list will be established for the duration of the Topic Area, except as interrupted by procedural points or motions, caucuses, discussion of amendments, and introduction of draft resolutions. Speakers may speak generally on the Topic Area being considered and may address any working paper or any draft resolution currently on the floor. A draft resolution can only be referred to as such once it has been introduced to the committee.

14. **Unmoderated Caucus:** An unmoderated caucus temporarily suspends formal debate and allows members to discuss ideas informally in the committee room. A motion for an unmoderated caucus is in order at any time when the floor is open, prior to closure of debate. The delegate making the motion may briefly explain the purpose of the motion and specify a time limit for the caucus, not to exceed twenty minutes. The motion will be put to a vote immediately, and a simple majority is required for passage. The Moderator may rule the motion dilatory and his or her decision is not subject to appeal. The Moderator may prematurely end an unmoderated caucus if the Moderator feels that the caucus has ceased to be productive, and this decision is not subject to appeal.

15. **Moderated Caucus:** The purpose of the moderated caucus is to facilitate substantive debate at critical junctures in the discussion. A motion for a moderated caucus is in order at any time when the floor is open, prior to closure of debate. The delegate making the motion must briefly specify a topic, a speaking time, and an overall time limit, not to exceed twenty minutes, for the caucus. Once raised, the motion will be voted on immediately, with a simple majority required for passage. The Moderator may rule the motion dilatory and his or her decision is not subject to appeal. If the motion passes, the Moderator will call on delegates to speak at his or her discretion for the stipulated time. Only speeches will be counted against the overall time of the caucus, and each speech will be counted as taking up the full duration of the speaking time. If no delegates wish to speak, the moderated caucus will immediately conclude, even if time remains in the caucus. The moderator may also decide, subject to appeal, to suspend the caucus early.

16. **Closure of Debate:** When the floor is open, a delegate may move to close debate on the substantive or procedural matter under discussion. The Moderator may, subject to appeal, rule such a motion dilatory. When closure of debate is moved, the Moderator may recognize up to two speakers against the motion. No speaker in favor of the motion will be recognized. Closure of debate requires a two-thirds majority to pass. If the Committee is in favor of closure, the Moderator will declare the closure of debate, and the resolutions or amendment on the floor will be brought to an immediate vote. If the speakers list is exhausted and no delegations wish to add their name to the list, debate on the topic at hand is immediately closed.

17. **Suspension or Adjournment of the Meeting:** Whenever the floor is open, a delegate may move for the suspension of the meeting, to suspend all Committee functions until the next meeting, or for the adjournment of the meeting, to suspend all Committee functions for the duration of the Conference. A motion to adjourn will not be in order until three quarters of the time scheduled for the last session have elapsed. The Moderator may rule such motions dilatory; this decision is not subject to appeal. When in order, such a motion will not be debated but will be immediately put to a vote and will require a simple majority to pass.

18. **Postponement and Resumption of Debate:** Whenever the floor is open, a delegate may move for the postponement of debate on a resolution or amendment currently on the floor. The motion, otherwise known as “tabling,” will require a two-thirds majority to pass and will be debated by two speakers in favor and two opposed. No debate or action will be allowed on any resolution or amendment on which debate has been postponed, and if debate on a resolution or amendment has not been resumed before debate is closed, that resolution or amendment may not be voted upon. A motion to resume debate on an amendment or resolution on which debate has been postponed will require a simple majority to pass and will be debated by two speakers in favor and two opposed. Resumption of debate will cancel the effects of postponement of debate.

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RULES GOVERNING SPEECHES

19. **Speakers List:** The Committee will have an open speakers list for the Topic Area being discussed. Separate speakers lists will be established as needed for motions to set the agenda and debate on amendments. A delegation present may add its name to the speakers list by submitting a request in writing to the Chair, provided that delegation is not already on the speakers list, and may similarly remove their name from the list by a similar request in writing. At his or her discretion (usually only when a new speakers list is opened) the Moderator may solicit nations to be added to the speakers list by raising their placard. The speakers list for the second Topic Area will not be open until the Committee has proceeded to that topic.

20. **Speeches:** No delegate may address a session without having previously obtained the permission of the Moderator. The Moderator may call a speaker to order if his or her remarks are not relevant to the subject under discussion, or offensive to committee members or staff. Delegates who are absent when recognized by the dais automatically forfeit their time, and debate will continue.

21. **Speaking Time:** When any speakers list is opened, the speaking time is automatically set to one minute. Delegates may also motion to set a new speaking time at any time when points or motions are in order during formal debate. This motion requires a simple majority to pass.

22. **Yields:** A delegate granted the right to speak from a speakers list may, after speaking, yield in one of three ways: to another delegate, to questions, or to the Chair.

- **Yield to another delegate:** Any remaining time will be given to that delegate, who may not, however, then yield any remaining time. To turn the floor over to a co-delegate is not considered a yield.
- **Yield to questions:** Questioners will be selected by the Moderator and limited to one question each. Follow-up questions will be allowed only at the discretion of the Moderator. Only the speaker's answers to questions will be deducted from the speaker's remaining time.
- **Yield to the chair:** Such a yield should be made if the delegate has finished speaking and does not wish his or her speech to be subject to comments. The Moderator will then move to the next speaker. A yield to the chair is in order, but not automatic, when a speaker's time has elapsed.
- **Yields are in order only on substantive speeches and not during moderated caucus.**

23. **Comments:** If a substantive speech is followed by no yields, the Moderator may recognize two delegations, other than the initial speaker, to comment for thirty seconds each on the specific content of the speech just completed. Commenters may not yield. No comments will be in order during debate on procedural motions, moderated caucus, or debate on amendments.

24. **Right of Reply:** A delegate whose personal or national integrity has been impugned by another delegate may request in writing a Right of Reply. The Reply, if granted, will take the form of a thirty-second speech. The Moderator's decision whether to grant the Right of Reply cannot be appealed, and a delegate granted a Right of Reply will not address the committee until requested to do so by the Moderator.

POINTS

25. **Point of Personal Privilege:** Whenever a delegate experiences personal discomfort which impairs his or her ability to participate in the proceedings, he or she may rise to a Point of Personal Privilege to request that the discomfort be corrected. While a Point of Personal Privilege may interrupt a speaker, delegates

should use this power with the utmost discretion.

26. **Point of Order:** During the discussion of any matter, a delegate may rise to a Point of Order to indicate an instance of improper use of parliamentary procedure. The Point of Order will be immediately ruled upon by the Moderator in accordance with these rules of procedure. The Moderator may rule out of order those points that are dilatory or improper; such a decision cannot be appealed. A representative rising to a Point of Order may not speak on the substance of the matter under discussion. A Point of Order may only interrupt a speaker when the speech itself is not following proper parliamentary procedure.

27. **Point of Parliamentary Inquiry:** When the floor is open, a delegate may rise to a Point of Parliamentary Inquiry to ask the Moderator a question regarding the Rules of Procedure. A Point of Parliamentary Inquiry may never interrupt a speaker. Delegates with substantive questions should not rise to this Point, but should rather approach the committee staff at an appropriate time.

RULES GOVERNING SUBSTANTIVE MATTERS

28. **Working Papers:** Delegates may propose working papers for Committee consideration. Working papers are intended to aid the Committee in its discussion and formulation of resolutions and need not be written in resolution format. Working papers are not official documents, and do not require formal introduction, but do require the signature of the Director to be copied and distributed. Working papers do not have signatories.

29. **Resolutions:** A resolution may be introduced when it receives the approval of the Director and is signed by 25 members in General Assembly committees, 8 members in the Economic and Social Council committees and Regional Bodies, and 5 members in the Security Council and Historical Security Council. Signing a resolution need not indicate support of the resolution, and the signatory has no further rights or obligations and may sign more than one draft resolution. There are no official sponsors of resolutions. The Director's decision not to sign a resolution or amendment may not be appealed. Resolutions require a simple majority to pass unless otherwise stated in specific Committee rules. More than one resolution may be on the floor at any one time, but at most one resolution may be passed per Topic Area.

30. **Introducing Resolutions:** Once a resolution has been approved as stipulated above and has been copied and distributed, a delegate may make a motion to introduce the resolution. This motion requires only authorization by the Moderator. The dais staff, time permitting, may choose to read the operative clauses of the resolution. Once a draft resolution has been introduced and distributed, the Moderator may entertain non-substantive clarificatory points, typically used to address typographical, spelling, or punctuation errors. A resolution will remain on the floor until debate is postponed or a resolution on that Topic Area has been passed.

31. **Amendments:** Delegates may amend any resolution that has been introduced. An amendment must have the approval of the Director and the signatures of 12 members in the General Assembly, 4 members in the Economic and Social Council and Regional Bodies, and 3 members in the Security Council and Historical Security Council. Amendments to amendments are out of order; however, an amended part of a resolution may be further amended. There are no official sponsors of amendments and all amendments on the floor must be debated and voted upon:

- An approved amendment may be introduced when the floor is open. General debate will be suspended and two speakers lists will be established, one for and one against the amendment. Debate

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will alternate between each list.

- A motion to close debate will be in order after the Committee has heard two speakers for the motion and two against, or when one of the speakers lists is exhausted. In accordance with the normal procedure described in Rule 15, the Moderator will recognize two speakers against the motion to close debate, and a 2/3 majority is required for closure of debate on the agenda.
- When debate is closed on the amendment, the Committee will move to an immediate vote. Votes on amendments are substantive votes. After the vote, debate will return to the general speakers list.

RULES GOVERNING VOTING

32. Division of the Question: After debate on a Topic Area or amendment has been closed, a delegate may move to divide the question on any item which is about to be voted on. Division of the question means that a specified set of operative clauses may be voted on separately from the rest. Preambulatory clauses may not be removed by division of the question. The motion may be debated to the extent of two speakers for and two speakers against. This motion requires a simple majority to pass:

- If the motion passes, the Moderator will accept proposals on how to divide the question. Such proposals may divide the question into two or more parts. After all proposals have been accepted, the Moderator will arrange them from most severe to least, and each will be voted on, in that order. If no division passes, the resolution remains intact.
- If any proposal passes, all other proposals are discarded and the resolution or amendment is divided accordingly. A substantive vote must then be taken on each divided part to determine whether or not it is included in the final draft. A simple majority is required for inclusion of each part. After all divided parts have been voted on, those that were voted to be included are recombined into the final draft resolution, which must then be voted upon under regular rules of procedure. If all of the operative parts of the substantive proposal are rejected, the proposal will be considered to have been rejected as a whole.

33. Reordering Resolutions: The default order in which resolutions are voted on is the order in which they were introduced. After debate on a topic has been closed, a delegate may motion to change the order in which resolutions on the Committee floor will be voted on. Such a motion must specify a desired order. Once such a motion has been made, the Moderator will accept alternative proposals for ordering. This motion takes precedence over a motion to divide the question on a resolution. Proposals will be voted on in the order in which they were received and require a simple majority to pass; once a proposal has been passed, all others are discarded and resolutions will be voted on in that order.

34. Voting: Once Committee is in voting procedure and all relevant motions have been entertained, the committee will vote on the resolutions on the floor. Voting occurs on each resolution in succession; once a resolution has been passed, no further resolutions will be voted on. In all matters, both substantive and procedural, each country will have one vote. Each vote may be a “Yes,” “No,” or “Abstain.” All matters will be voted upon by placards, except in the case of a roll call vote. After the Moderator has announced the beginning of voting, no delegate will interrupt the voting except on a Point of Personal Privilege or on a Point of Order in connection with the actual conduct of the voting. A simple majority requires more “Yes” votes than “No” votes; abstentions are not counted toward either total. A 2/3 majority vote requires at least twice as many “Yes” votes as “No” votes. A procedural vote is a vote on any matter besides an amendment or resolution, and requires every country to vote either “Yes” or “No” on the question.

35. Roll Call Voting: After debate is closed on any Topic Area or amendment, any delegate may request a

roll call vote. A motion for a roll call vote is in order only for substantive motions. The Moderator's decision whether to accept the motion for a roll call vote may not be appealed. Such a motion may be made from the floor and must be seconded by 25 members in General Assembly committees and 8 members in Economic and Social Council committees and Regional Bodies. All substantive votes are roll call votes in the Security Council and Historical Security Council. Voting will be at the discretion of the Chair in all other Committees.

- In a roll call vote, the Moderator will call all countries noted by the dais to be in attendance in alphabetical order starting with a randomly selected member.
- In the first sequence, delegates may vote "Yes," "No," "Abstain," "Pass," "Yes with rights," or "No with rights."
- A delegate who passes during the first sequence of the roll call must vote "Yes" or "No" during the second sequence. The same delegate may not request the right of explanation.
- A delegate may only vote with rights if he or she votes "Yes" or "No" in the first round of voting and if his or her vote appears to constitute a divergence from his or her country's policy. After all delegates have voted, delegates who had requested the right of explanation will be granted 30 seconds each to explain their votes.
- The Moderator will then announce the outcome of the vote.

PRECEDENCE OF MOTIONS

36. Precedence: Motions will be considered in the following order of preference. If a point or motion is on the floor, points or motions lower on this list are out of order.

1. Parliamentary Points

- a. Points that may interrupt a speaker:
 - i. Points of Personal Privilege (Rule 25)
 - ii. Points of Order (Rule 26)
- b. Points in order only when the floor is open:
 - i. Points of Parliamentary Inquiry

2. Procedural motions that are not debatable:

- a. Adjournment of the Meeting (Rule 16)
- b. Suspension of the Meeting (Rule 16)
- c. Unmoderated Caucus (Rule 13)
- d. Moderated Caucus (Rule 14)
- e. Motion to change the speaking time (Rule 21)
- f. Introduction of a draft resolution
- g. Introduction of an amendment

3. Procedural motions that are applicable to a resolution or amendment under consideration:

- a. Closure of Debate (Rule 15)
- b. Postponement of Debate (Rule 17)
- c. Division of the Question (Rule 33)
- d. Reordering Resolutions (Rule 34)

4. Substantive motions:

- a. Amendments (Rule 32)
- b. Resolution (Rules 29-30)

5. Other procedural motions:

- a. Resumption of Debate (Rule 17)

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