

MUN Conference Guide

Step 1 - Topic Research:

Begin by reading the background paper on the topic(s). It should address the following questions. If not, use these as your research points:

- a. What is the problem and how has it evolved?
- b. Where is the issue most problematic?
- c. How has the issue directly or indirectly affected your country?
- d. What has your country done to combat the problem?
- e. What does your country plan to do to combat the problem?

Position Paper 1st Paragraph:

Provide an overview of the topic in the global context, followed by your country's perspective. (For example, Saudi Arabia might view transgender rights differently than England.)

Step 2: Country Research:

Gather general geographic, political, and economic information about your country. Explore these questions:

- a. What resources does your country have or not have and how does it influence interactions with countries near or far from them?
- b. What type of government does your country have? (democracy? dictatorship? communist? socialist?)
- c. What countries does your country ally itself with?
- d. What is the status of your country's economy? Are you considered a developing, lesser developed, or highly developed country? What's your Human Development Index (HDI) rating? What are your chief exports?
- e. How do your government and your people feel about globalization?
- f. What do the World Bank and IMF reports say about your country? (Are you a contributor or a receiver of \$?)
- g. What are the big important parts of your country's history?
- h. What are the top 5 issues in your country at the moment?

Here is a list of sources to help in country and topic research:

- UN General Assembly
- CIA World Factbook, US State Department, British Foreign Ministry
- BBC News
- BBC Country Profiles
- The Economist News
- Google News
- the official government site for your country, particularly their foreign ministry site or equivalent if available
- the Permanent Missions to the UN Site
- the Foreign Ministry (or equivalent) site for your nation
- NYT News
- Washington Post News
- Transparency International NGOs discussing corruption in governments
- geo.worldbank.org (Great place to start before looking at World Bank) World Bank, IMF
- Organization of American States
- Globalization Index
- Economic Freedoms Index
- Freedom House ranking of democratic and political freedoms
- UN main website, from there you can access particular committees
- Library of Congress Country Studies
- US Institute for Peace (Peace Agreement Database)
- World Economic Forum
- International Crisis Group
- UN Peacekeeping Operations
- UN Millenium Development Goals
- UN Declaration of Universal Human Rights
- UN Security Council
- Disarmament
- World Health Organization
- Economic and Social Council
- UN and Human Rights
- UN Development Program
- Duke University NGO database

Position paper paragraph 2:

Discuss past actions taken by your country, the UN, and other international or regional organizations related to the topic. Describe your country's relationship to the topic at the national, regional, and international levels.

Step 3 - Topic Research Writing Your Country's Position, & Third

Paragraph/Opening Speech):

Explain your country's official position on the topic. This may be explicitly stated online, or you may need to infer it from past actions or treaty support. Recommend NGOs, states, UN bodies, or other entities that should be involved in solving the problem.

NOTE: Sometimes you may need to infer your country's position (not always the case)! A person may need to infer their country's position when it isn't explicitly stated, requiring them to analyze past actions, alliances, and treaty support to deduce a likely stance.

Position Paper Formatting Guidelines:

- Approximately 2 pages in length, double spaced (requirements may differ by conference)
 - One-inch margins
 - 12 pt. Times New Roman font, black print only
 - Heading: Committee Name, Topic, Country Name, School Name, and Delegate Name(s) in the upper left-hand corner
 - No title
 - Include in-text citations and a works cited page in MLA format
-

Guidelines for Opening Speeches:

Your opening speech should be concise, lasting about 1 minute and 30 seconds. Focus on the key issues most important to your country:

1. Start with a formal greeting (e.g., "Honorable Chair, Esteemed Delegates...").
2. Capture the audience's attention with powerful sentences on the basic issues and their relevance to your country.
3. Elaborate on your key points/problems.
4. Briefly summarize your country's main suggestions and the type of working papers/resolutions you would support.
5. Conclude with a memorable statement that reinforces your country's position.
6. Thank the delegates and the chair.