

**INDIAN SCHOOL BAHRAIN**

**MODEL UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE**

**CHAIR HANDBOOK – ONLINE MUN**

Over the past year, our secretariat has been working hard to organize what we hope will become an exhilarating and stimulating Online ISBMUN conference. We invite you to join us in exploring the excitement of international relations through Model United Nations. With the increase of international communication and globalization, it is important for us, high school students, to be aware of contemporary world events. Model UN facilitates a learning environment for delegates to understand the procedural and decision-making aspects of international relations while mastering the art of diplomacy.

We, the ISBMUN organizing team would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to the Executive Committee, the Principal, Mr. V.R.Palaniswamy, and the Vice-Principal (Senior Section), Mr. Anand R Nair, who gave life to this long-time vision. The teaching faculty has been an amazing pillar of support. From supporting us to giving us advice, they have been very encouraging and understanding. Thank you, Teachers! We extend our heartfelt thanks to the faculty, administrative staff and everyone else who made this event possible.

Through this handbook, you will find the guidelines for online debate. It includes the rules of procedure of a Model U.N., as well as instructions on Position Papers and Resolutions. After being a part of our training sessions, this guide will help you get a broader aspect on all the rules and procedures of our conference.

 The Secretariat looks forward to communicating with you before and during the conference; we hope to provide students with an exciting and memorable experience.

Discuss, debate, solve issues, and most importantly, have fun!

Introduction

A Chair is the leader of a committee, who guides the delegates through debate and gives them the push that they need to become competent delegates of the nations they represent. This position gives you the opportunity to control and coordinate lobbying and debate, instigate successful resolutions, and implement the rules of procedure in the committee. It is also your responsibility to prepare detailed study guides which will determine the quality of resolutions and debate. As a Chair, you must be responsible, well-prepared, approachable, professional and unbiased at all times. Ensure that you recognize each delegate and are fair. You should take measures so as to not come off as intimidating. Your aim should be to inspire, motivate and encourage your delegates. A good chair is approachable and encourages the delegates, giving them confidence to speak up. It is necessary that you set a tone that allows you to control the delegates, and at the same time makes it a comfortable and fun experience for all.

**Tips**

* Always begin more strictly to show the delegates that you have authority and gain their respect, which will make it easier to control the council.
* Remain approachable, polite and friendly throughout the conference. Never speak arrogantly to your delegates, nor be disrespectful to them.
* Never publicly contradict your co-chair. Treat them with respect, and remember that chairing a council is a collaboration with your co-chair. Your teamwork will be a deciding factor in how the council is conducted.
* Always remain calm and collected. Never yell at your delegates.
* Debate can be commenced in a regular manner, followed by a few breaks in order to lighten up the delegates.
* Attend motions from time to time by asking “Are there any points or motions on the floor”
* You can deny motions and points if they seem too vague or unnecessary.
* You may call members from the R&T in case the council sessions are too monotonous in order to address a crisis issue which may help bringing life to a council.
* Do not misuse your authority.
* Never be afraid to admit mistakes. If you’ve made an error, own up and say “The Chair stands corrected.”
* Don’t forget to enjoy and at times have a laugh with your delegates!

Chairs can clip delegates upon the following conditions:    
1. If delegates don’t maintain decorum even upon 2-3 warnings.

2. If delegates are not punctual, or appear late after breaks.

3. If a delegate informally insults another delegate in the council or indulges in some sort of harassment.

Give a warning to the delegate at least 3 times before clipping. If a delegate is clipped 3 times, they will be expelled from the council.

Background Guides

A background guide is a comprehensive document about the issues that will be discussed in the council sessions. As a Chair, it’s your responsibility to prepare a background guide containing basic information about the issues which will help enhance the preparation process of your delegates, and help them come up with solutions.   
The following guidelines will help you prepare a well-detailed background guide.  
  
**Introduction**  
You should begin with describing the importance of the issue at hand in today’s world, its origin and what the issue revolves around. Give a glimpse of what is to be expected in the study guide.   
  
**Definition of Key Terms**   
Define specific terms which may be hard to understand by some delegates and require explanation. Only define terms which are significant to the issue and will be referred to throughout the study guide. Please credit the source of the definition in the Bibliography as plagiarism is unacceptable.

**General Overview**  
This forms the major part of the background guide as it provides complete information about what the issue essentially is, its origin and history, its present situation, details about what has been done so far and the regions where the issue continues to be prominent. You may also include pictures, statistics and diagrams.

**Major Parties Involved**  
Mention the NGOs, companies or countries that play a considerable role in the issue. The views and measures taken by each body must be clearly elaborated upon.   
  
**Timeline of Key Events**   
Stress on events which play a role in the development of the issue. Keep it short and to the point. Present it in a column form whereby a date and the title of the event are present, only.

*For example*:   
Issue: Democratic People’s Republic of Congo

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **May 2005** | A new constitution is decided upon and implemented by the government |
| **July 2006** | Elections are held. There are no clear majorities, thus elections are announced redundant. A run-off is held. |

**Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue**   
Draw attention to any measures taken by bodies/countries in an attempt to resolve the issue at hand, and how those measures influenced the situation. Make references to treaties or resolutions that aim at tackling the issue. Evaluate the causes for the success or failure of such treaties/resolutions.   
  
**Possible Solutions**  
Propose potential solutions that may help tackle the issue at hand. You are not to suggest any preambulatory or operative clauses; this section should merely set the groundwork for delegates to build upon. Do not forget to file treaties or resolutions that prove to be possible solutions into the appendix section.  
  
**Appendix/Appendices**   
In this section you may choose to include treaties or resolutions related to the issue, useful articles, helpful websites, relevant books or any other useful sources.

**Bibliography**   
Cite all the sources (i.e. books, documentaries, pictures, and websites) that have helped you in the process of writing the background guide. All quotations need to be cited.

Rules

**Points**

Points are made by individuals for comfort or inquiry about procedures. They are the most common feature in any MUN conference. A delegate may propose a point by using their raise hand feature and upon recognition by the chair, state the nature of the point. A point cannot be seconded (because there is no need to). Points are not voted on but may be overruled by a chairperson, should they be deemed destructive or unnecessary.

Each point has its own purpose and conditions for use.

Four types of points are recognized in Online ISBMUN conferences:

1. **Point of Personal Privilege**:

It’s used to express concerns about comfort such as the need to use the washroom or the inaudibility of the speaker.

Example: Could the Delegate please be more audible?

**2. Point of Order:**

It’s used when a delegate believes that there has been an error in the running of the council or the rules of procedure, or if a factually incorrect statement is made.

Example: May the Delegate please refrain from using personal pronouns?

**3. Point of Parliamentary Enquiry**

It is directed to the chair and is regarding the rules of procedure or the conference. It is a question asked by a delegate to the chairperson, about parliamentary procedure or related to the factual contents of the debate or in reference to the lunch schedule. This point should not be confused with a point of order. Its aim is to clarify a rule, not to correct the chair.

Example: ‘Could the Chair please explain to the House what the article 22 of the UN Charter states?*’*

4. **Point of Information**

This is a clarifying question about the contents of a speech or statement asked by a delegate to the speaker. The delegate can only speak if recognized by the Chairperson. The Point must be formulated in the form of a question. The delegate must remain attentive when the speaker is replying to their Point of Information. This point can be raised only after a delegate finishes their speech.

Example: ‘Could the Delegate please explain to the House the purpose of Clause 3?’

**Only a Point of Personal Privilege may be used to interrupt a speaker.**

**Motions**

A motion is a formal proposition by a delegate to carry out a certain task within a conference.

A delegate may propose a motion in the same way they may propose a point: by using their raise hand feature and stating the nature of the motion. While delegates may propose motions at their own will, a motion will only be taken into consideration if it is seconded by another delegate in the same council. This is done by raising one’s placard and stating “second” in order to show support for the motion. Should this happen, chairpersons will call on delegates to ‘placard vote’ on the motion. Abstentions are forbidden when voting on motions, so all other uncounted votes will be assumed to be “against”. Motions may be made during a debate or following voting procedure.

Getting a motion to pass is all about proper timing; a poorly timed motion is most likely to be overruled by the chair or voted against.

**1. Motion to extend the debate**

This motion extends the time for the debate of the resolution or the amendment. It needs to be seconded by another delegate, and then agreed upon by a simple majority in order for it to be implemented. The decision is up to the chairs considering the committee time left and the other resolutions.

**2. Motion to reconsider a resolution**

This motion calls for a re-debate and re-vote of a resolution that has already been discussed and adopted, and can only be proposed after all other pending draft resolutions have been debated. It needs a two-thirds majority to be passed.

**3. Motion to withdraw a resolution**

This motion can be done at any time before voting has commenced if all submitters and co-submitters agree on withdrawal, and can be reconsidered by any member of the forum.

**4. Motion to adjourn the debate**

This motion calls for the temporary disposal of a resolution, and requires the delegate to give a short speech on why the item should be adjourned, as well as two speakers in favour of the motion then two speakers against the motion.

**5. Objection to the main motion**

This motion is in order only in exceptional circumstances and may not be used for tactical purposes or without argument. Once proposed, the delegate has one minute to explain his/her proposal. It needs a two third majority to be passed.

**6. Motion to Question-Answer session**

This is when many delegates need to ask questions to a delegate. Any delegate may call for the same and the committee can ask a maximum of up to 10 questions to that delegate. To call for the same, a delegate can motion thus: ‘Motion to move into a question answer session with the delegate of \_\_\_, total number of questions \_\_\_ (maximum of 10 questions)’

**7. Motion to Divide the House**

In the likely event of a vote being particularly close, or even a tie, this motion forces all of those who have abstained to vote either for or against. This could lead to a success or a failure for the resolution.

**8. Motion to Move to Voting**

This motion calls for the disposal of all present procedures and immediately moves on to formal voting.

**Caucusing**

Caucuses can be either moderated or unmoderated. In most cases, more than half of council time is used for unmoderated caucusing. Many delegates feel this is the easiest way for them to collaborate.

1. **Moderated Caucus**

To hold a caucus, a delegate must make a motion and the council must pass the motion. When a council holds a moderated caucus, the Chair calls on delegates one at a time and each speaker briefly addresses the committee. No one speaks out of turn. No one interrupts anyone. No one speaks loudly to anyone else. A moderated caucus enables a freer exchange of opinions than would be possible in a formal debate. Unlike an unmoderated caucus, you do not move around during this caucus. Example: “Motion to open a moderated caucus to discuss \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for the time duration \_\_\_\_\_\_ and time per speaker \_\_\_\_\_. ”(max 1 minute)

1. **Unmoderated Caucus**

A delegate may motion for an unmoderated caucus when the floor is open. Such a motion should specify the purpose for the caucus and its time limit. A simple majority is required to pass this motion. If passed, the council shall depart from formal debate, and speakers shall be allowed to freely debate with other delegates.

Procedure

Online ISBMUN conferences shall follow a general overall procedure, which is a simplified version of that followed at real UN conferences. Chairpersons are responsible for implementing this procedure within their respective councils.

ROLL CALL

LOBBYING AND MERGING

OPENING SPEECHES

**Roll Call**The Roll Call is carried out at the beginning of the committee and after any breaks. Chairs must read out the respective delegate’s countries in an alphabetical and orderly manner. **Opening Speeches**Once roll call is done, chairs proceed to the opening speeches in alphabetical order by country name. Opening Speeches must be graded based on their presentation, skills, confidence according to the grading rubric provided. Since opening speeches should strictly run up to one minute, timing must be recorded. Upon the end of 50 seconds, chairs may signal the delegates to come to their closing remarks by slightly indicating it. In case delegates do not end their speeches in 1 minute, chairs can interrupt the delegates to stop, and for unmatched timing there can be negative marking.

DEBATING

VOTING

**Lobbying**

Lobbying is extremely important wherein blocs are formed and delegates discuss and formulate resolutions. Your job as a chair is to assist the delegates in formulating the best possible resolutions during lobbying. For the online conference, WhatsApp groups will be created for the purpose of discussion for each bloc, and these groups must be created and supervised by the chairs. **The camera must remain on during lobbying and merging.**   
  
Generally, 2-3 hours are allotted for lobbying. The general structure of lobbying is:   
1. Chairs explain how much time will be given for lobbying, how it works (if necessary) and the number of preambulatory clauses and operative clauses each resolution must contain.  
2. Chairs help delegates form blocs. Given that this conference will be conducted online, the chairs will have to create WhatsApp groups for each bloc, as mentioned before.   
3. Delegates begin the lobbying process.  
4. Chairs keep track of the number of resolutions, on which issues, and who the main submitters and co-submitters are. Keep a constant check on the resolutions and who is writing them. This will help you assess the amount of time lobbying will take and hence help you in planning debate. It is also crucial to monitor the proceedings of the bloc to ensure that the bloc is not being overpowered by a particular delegate.   
5. When delegates are finished with the resolution, the Chairs check if the formatting and the content is appropriate. It is important for you to check all resolutions before they are taken to the Approval Panel as this generally saves time for the delegates and for the process in general. Check that the formatting is correct or at least consistent. You can also check that delegates maintain the proper format and do not refer to any specific monetary values (for example they cannot state that $10,000 will be given to Amnesty International. We pretend that the United Nations has unlimited funding). Help delegates improve clauses. This will potentially raise the standard of the resolution, and subsequently, debate.   
6. Resolution passes through Approval Panel process.

7. The resolution is presented before the council by the Chairs via screen-sharing, and is debated upon.

Being a chair, it is your responsibility to check the format of the resolution. You can always ask a delegate to create more detail in a clause. Although specific amounts of money are not to be mentioned in an operative clause, the funding source must be mentioned. Don’t worry about making a resolution perfect, because a lot of times vague resolutions allow more interesting debates to occur.  
  
  
**Debating**Debate begins with calling the main-submitter of a resolution to take the floor. Inform the main-submitter ahead of time about what they must do. This will help set them at ease and help keep everything running smoothly. **In ISBMUN 2020, the delegates will be asked to mail the resolution to the official council email, and the chair in turn will screen-share the resolution so that it is visible to the entire council**. Ask the main-submitter to read out the operative clauses (do not make them read the preambs). After the delegate has finished reading the operatives, inform them that they have 2 minutes to give a speech explaining the resolution and convincing the house.   
The main-submitter can yield the floor to another delegate after asking the chair. In this case, the chair must ask the concerned delegate if they accept the floor; only then can the delegate take the floor.   
  
*Example*: China is the main submitter and wants to yield the floor to the delegate of Albania.   
China: China would like to yield the floor to the delegate of Albania.   
Chair: That will be in order. Delegate of Albania, do you accept the floor?   
Albania: We do.   
Chair: Then please take the floor.

Chair Script

Start with introducing yourselves. Then, elaborate upon the parliamentary procedure, explaining the points and motions, and answer any questions the delegates may have.  
  
“The house will now come to order. We will begin this session with the roll call. Delegates are reminded to use their raise hand feature when their country’s name is called and respond with “present” or “present and voting.”

Call out every country’s name (delegate of...) in alphabetical order.   
Conduct roll calls after each break.  
  
'Any delegates who did not hear their name called please use the raise hand feature now.'  
  
  
**Opening Speeches**  
“We will now proceed with opening speeches.   
“Delegate of ...... . You have one minute and your time starts now.”  
“Thank you delegate.”  
  
  
**Debate**  
“We will begin debate on the resolution submitted by the delegate of ..... (main-submitter). Would the delegate of ..... please read out the operative clauses?”  
“Delegate you have 2 minutes to give your speech and your time starts now.”  
  
After the delegate has finished speaking,  
“Thank you delegate. It is mandatory to take two points of information. Are there any points of information on the floor?”

*After the mandatory points of information,*

“Is the delegate open to any points of information?”  
  
*If yes,* “Are there any points of information on the floor?”  
“Delegate of ..... you’ve been recognized. Please state your point.”

* “There will be no direct dialogue between delegates.”
* “Are there any other points of information on the floor?”
* “Will the delegate please rephrase the question?”
* “Will the delegate please repeat/ rephrase his point of information in the form of a question?”
* “Will the delegate please restate the question/response in a more audible voice?”

*If no,* “Thank you delegate. Do you wish to yield the floor to another delegate? ... That is in order”  
If the delegate wishes to yield the floor to another delegate,  
“The delegate has yielded their time to the delegate of .... The chair calls upon the delegate of ... to take the floor. Does the delegate of .... accept?”  
If the delegate does not yield the floor to another delegate.  
“Thank you delegate. You may be seated.”  
  
**For speeches**:   
“Are there any speeches for this resolution on the floor?”  
**Against speeches**:  
“Are there any against speeches on the floor?  
Chairs call one delegate at a time. At Least two for and two against speeches must be entertained for each resolution. The delegate giving the for/against speech is required to take two points of information.  
  
  
**Amendments**  
“The delegate of ... has submitted an amendment to the resolution. The amendment reads out ...  Delegate, you now have the floor.”  
“Delegates wishing to speak “for” this amendment, please use your raise hand feature.”  
“Delegate of... you have the floor.”  
“Delegates wishing to speak “against” the amendment, please use your raise hand feature.”  
Chairs get to decide the number of for and against speeches for the amendment.  
“We will now move into voting procedures on the amendment.” (See voting below)   
“We will now resume debate on the resolution as a whole.”  
  
It is up to you if you want to entertain amendments to the second degree. If the amendment to the second degree fails, the house must vote on the amendment to the first degree as well. If the amendment passes, the house no longer votes on the amendment to the first degree*.*   
  
**Voting**  
“We will now be moving directly into voting procedures. All delegates voting for this resolution, please use your raise hand feature. All those against …… . All delegates wishing to abstain from the vote please use your raise hand feature.”  *If votes are close, large number of abstentions and a motion to divide the house has been called:*'There has been a motion to divide the house, abstentions are not in order and the vote will be retaken.'   
  
“With a vote of ... for, ... against, and ... abstentions, this resolution has passed/ failed. Clapping is/ is not in order.”  
  
“We will now move onto the resolution of …”

**Diplomatic Notes**

Diplomatic notes allow delegates to communicate by asking or receiving answers. These notes preserve the formal atmosphere of debating by preventing people from wandering around.

**Diplomatic notes need to be in a certain format. The writer and recipient must be indicated clearly by using “from” and “to,” followed by the name of the nation each of them represents. Once the delegates are done writing the diplomatic notes, they should send it to either of the chairs using the chat feature on the platform . If a diplomatic note is addressed to a delegate, it will be handed to the concerned delegate by the chairs themselves.**

Diplomatic notes can be addressed to the chairs, or can be addressed to fellow delegates in the council. The delegates are advised to use diplomatic notes when it comes to raising ‘Point of Personal Privilege’.

**Key Points Regarding Notes**

-Notes should revolve around the debate

-The administrative staff reads the diplomatic notes before handing them to the person they are addressed to in order to make sure they are appropriate

-Undiplomatic comments can lead to delegates’ suspension from the conference.

-During voting procedures, note passing is suspended.

-Diplomatic notes must be written in English.

Stock Phrases

Stock phrases are simple phrases that Chairs use to explain the procedures during debate. Some example/important stock phrases can be seen below:   
  
- Could the House please come to order?  
- Usage of electronic devices for recreational/research purposes is prohibited during debate.   
- Would the main-submitter please take the floor and read out the operative clauses?   
- The floor is now open.   
- … you’ve been recognized.  
- … you have a floor.  
- The speaker will [please] refrain from using personal pronouns/unparliamentary language.  
- The speaker will [please] refrain from insulting other delegates.

- Delegate please come to your final remarks.  
- An amendment has been proposed by… This is in order. The chair will read it out.  
- We will now move into voting procedures on the amendment   
- Are there any points of information on the floor/in the house?   
- Delegate of …., you’ve been recognized. Please state your point.  
- Please state your point in the form of a question   
- Please refrain from asking several questions at one point.  
- Would the delegate please repeat/rephrase the question?   
- There will be no direct dialogue between delegates.  
- Your point is well/not well taken.  
- The chair stands corrected.  
- Debate time on this resolution has elapsed.  
- We will now move into voting procedures on this resolution.  
- All those in favour of this resolution please use your raise hand feature.  
- All those against…   
- All those abstaining...   
- By a vote of… in favour, against, with… abstentions, this resolution/amendment passes/fails   
- Clapping is/is not in order