There are few vehicles as rich for students to practice communication techniques. Lifetime skills assist students to better pursue an education, profession and community interaction involving service club membership, assisting a hospital fundraising team or working out a family dispute. In addition, a wide knowledge base is fostered in history, geography, economics, culture, politics and world issues.

Writing Skills

Pre-conference position paper

Speeches

Notes to other delegates

Working papers to develop resolutions

Resolutions on the issue to be debated by the committee
Speaking Skills

Formal and informal speeches

Strategies for questions and answers

Caucusing: small and large groups

Lobbying: one-on-one with another delegate

Using procedural rules

Problem-Solving Skills

Goal identification, problem analysis from all sides, clarifying strategies

Lateral thinking, generating ideas,

Selecting, strengthening solutions

Planning for action, testing hypotheses

Conflict-Resolution Skills

Consensus building, win/win skills

Negotiation, mediation skills

Listening skills

Leadership, Team-Building, Social Skills

Cultivating allies and working with other delegates
Meeting delegates from other schools and countries

**Research and Knowledge Skills**

Utilizing reference books

Utilizing the Internet

Organizing information

Contacting NGO’s, embassies, people with expertise

Learning about world issues and diverse countries in the global community

**Time-Management, Stress-Management Skills**

Prioritizing

Working under pressure

Pacing, delegating, recognizing your leadership style, strengths and weaknesses

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**How to Make a Good Speech**

© by Mike Keenan

A good speech is based not only on what you say but also on how you say it!
You are trying to persuade others! To be successful, you must attend to their feelings as well as their logic. To convince others that you have a solution to a specific problem or a valid point, you first, must get their attention. Then, using appropriate oral and body language, you must maintain their attention and make them want to act upon your instructions. Don’t forget: what you say and how you say it are equally important. In fact, many think the latter is actually far more important! Once you sit down, there will be many other speakers. How will you be remembered?

**Speaking Techniques**

### Getting Attention

1. Humour is a dangerous technique in debate, particularly when discussing serious topics.
2. The machine-gun: use rapid-fire examples, piling up the evidence.
3. Begin with a quotation: a short quotation, proverb, saying, poem, etc. will often sum up the situation. If you can find it from someone in your represented country, the more appropriate it will be. If you are clever, you can use this technique repeatedly.
4. Begin with a startling statement. Make it lead directly to the problem. If you do not have a specific situation to refer to, begin with: "imagine that…".
5. Begin with a rhetorical question, something that the audience knows the answer to. Beware of this approach. It can be a weak start.
6. Begin with a specific example of the problem. Zero in on one concrete aspect and then build from there. In small-scale debates, you will have many more opportunities to speak. In large debates, however, you might not enjoy the same luxury.
7. Be aware of any time limits on your speech, and give yourself time for a strong finish before the chair cuts you off.

### Maintain Attention

1. Demonstrate the extent of the problem. Use examples, statistics, and expert opinion.

2. Demonstrate the effects of the problem. How does it affect the people? Use examples and facts.

3. Demonstrate the causes of the problem. This might be difficult.

4. Demonstrate how the problem affects the others. Be vivid.

5. Present your solution or better, a joint solution from several delegates. Be clear about time, costs, people and other resources required. Try to show where similar solutions have worked.
6. Try to use visual images as opposed to dry expressions. Paint them a picture. Demonstrate how your solution will:

a. reduce or eliminate the cause(s) of the problem

b. reduce or eliminate the symptoms

c. help people

d. result in advantages

e. reduce costs; increase efficiency

1. Paint the opposite terrible scenario if your plan is not adopted.
2. Appeal for action and their motives of: fair play, desire to save, be helpful, pride, intelligence, community.
3. At the end of your speech, return to the topic sentence and revise it. Ask for their assistance by challenging them to do something, summarizing the important points, and indicating your own intention to do something. Close with a strong appeal for action.

Evidence

© by Mike Keenan

Assume you are a prosecuting attorney. You try to convict someone for a crime. To convince the jury, you must present proof. Your proof must be factual, supported by credible documents, expert witnesses and other established forms of evidence. When you make your summary statement to the jury, your position will have been carefully built up piece by piece with specific examples, clearly presented and covering all of the issues.

Now, assume that you are the attorney for the defense. Your task is to discredit all of the evidence above and to poke holes into every argument.

These dynamics are part of model U.N. debate. One delegate wants to proceed in one direction and sway others; another delegate is determined to proceed in an opposite direction. Often, because of the country that you represent, you may have to argue for things that you, as a Canadian, do not really believe in.
Model U.N. skills allow you to see all sides of an issue and determine the strength and weakness of any stance.

Here is a checklist for evidence:

1. Did you use a variety of sources?
2. Do you have documentation ready to prove the validity of your sources?
3. Did you use the original language versus changing it to your own words?
4. Did you use evidence to support an argument? Evidence by itself is not an argument.
5. Does your evidence prove what is claimed?
6. Did you listen carefully to your opponent’s evidence?
7. Did you keep your argument brief?
8. Did you emphasize key words and phrases?
9. Is your evidence accurate?
10. Are your facts and statistics recent?

The Burden of Proof

Some explanations:

1. A variety of sources demonstrate that you are resourceful and have done your homework. This impresses the judges.

2. Do not say that you used CNN or Time magazine. Western popular media is not good proof.

Try to quote from U.N. sources, resolutions, treaties, conventions, and speeches, recognized documents such as the Declaration of Human Rights, etc.

3. If you do quote from a source such as the U.N. Charter, quote the exact paragraph. A good practice is to use a variation of your topic sentence for your concluding sentence.
10. This can be embarrassing, particularly if things have dramatically changed in your country.

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**A Dissection Manual: Find Weakness in the Opposition**

© by Mike Keenan

**Evidence:**

1. **Is it reliable? Trustworthy?**

   If someone is being quoted or referred to, is that person:

   a. knowledgeable?
   b. unprejudiced?
   c. honest?
   d. consistent?

2. **Is it valid? Does it tell the truth?**

   If data or statistics are presented, are they sound?

   a. gathered scientifically without bias?
   b. reported accurately without being distorted?
   c. representative of a large population or only a minority?

3. **Is it objective?**

   Does it measure what it is supposed to measure?

   a) are there enough pertinent examples to support the conclusion?

   b) is each individual case documented and related to the whole?
c) have reasonable alternatives been considered?

d) has it been shown that a specific event caused a specific result?

e) if analogy was used, were any essential differences overlooked?

f) is the evidence consistent and were standardized methods used to obtain it?

4. Is it up-to-date? Normative?

Does it reveal the actual situation or is it ancient history?

   a. if rapid change is not happening in this area, older evidence may be permissible.
   b. ask for specific documentation, specific areas of applicable treaties, conventions, etc.
   c. have enough examples been provided?
   d. is the evidence based upon a wide distribution of the population?

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**MUN Glossary**

© by Andrew Thomson

**Abstention**- abstaining from a vote means to withdraw from voting on a resolution instead of giving a “yes” or “no” answer.

**Amendments**- are made to resolutions. Friendly amendments require the support of the sponsors in order for changes to be made. Unfriendly amendments can be initiated by anyone in the committee but require supporters and a majority vote.

**Arab League**- a body independent of the UN comprised of Arab states in Africa and the Middle East. Some of its procedural rules differ (eg. Resolutions are non-binding to those who vote against it).

**BATNA (Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement)**- what if your preferred solution cannot be accomplished or agreed upon by the committee? Each delegate should have a BATNA on each
issue that will be debated in order to promote compromise and co-operation.

**Bloc** - a group of countries that form a logical combination because of geographical, economic, or cultural considerations (eg. G8, African bloc, Arab League).

**Caucus** - a forum where the rules of debate are suspended and delegates are able to gather in groups and freely discuss and write with one another (for others a bathroom or socializing break). Usually some of a committee’s most productive work is accomplished during caucuses.

**Comments** - if a delegate doesn’t yield his/her time during a speech in formal debate, the chair may recognize two delegates to make comments specifically on that speech.

**Dividing the Question** - once in voting procedure, a motion to divide the question means splitting up operative clauses to be voted on separately (eg. Vote on Clauses 1 and 3 together, but the rest individually). This is useful if you agree with one part of a resolution but not the whole thing.

**EU (European Union)** - an economic and political union created under the Maastricht Treaty in 1993, it comprises most of Western Europe and Germany, and is poised for future expansion into Central and Eastern Europe. Most customs regulations in Europe have now been abolished and a single currency is now in place, the Euro. As a political unit it has formidable power vis-à-vis the United States.

**Foreign Aid** - money given by one country to another for humanitarian or developmental purposes. It plays a key role in shaping foreign policy.

**Foreign Policy** - the attitudes and interests of a state towards external issues. Foreign policy can be influenced by a variety of factors, i.e. Military strength, trading partners, history, domestic government.

**Formal Debate** - the committee follows a speaker’s list, and each speaker is given a strict time limit within which to make their point. They must also formally yield the floor to questions, the chair, or another delegate. Rules regarding motions, voting and “right of reply” are enforceable only in formal consideration, although at COWAC conferences informal debate is preferred for the most part.

**G8 (Group of Eight)** - a body comprised of eight of the world’s most powerful nations: Canada, the U.S., U.K., France, Italy, Japan, Germany, and Russia.

**Informal Debate** - can be entered into by a simple motion and majority vote. The chair recognizes delegates wishing to speak, but there are no yields, time limits or opportunities to directly question one another. However, it offers the chance to proceed quicker through various issues that arise during debate.
ICJ (International Court of Justice)- the ICJ is a body designed to resolve legal and territorial disputes between states.

Lobbying- refers to informal caucusing between a small group of delegates, usually outside the committee room while debate is still in progress. One may wish to lobby another delegate for support on a resolution or policy option, but use with caution. A delegation of two or more can afford to spare someone outside the room much more easily then a solo debater.

Motions- most motions can only be made in formal debate. In fact, the only motion permitted in informal debate is to move to formal debate. Motions must be made to open, close, postpone, or adjourn debate, to set the agenda, table the topic, enact right of reply, a caucus.

NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization)- security organization created in 1949 by Western powers to provide a collective force against the Soviet Union. In the post-Cold War era it has taken on new responsibilities in peacekeeping and enforcement of international law (Bosnia, Kosovo).

NGO’s (Non-governmental Corporations)- are organizations or associations that are not associated with a specific country or international political organization. Their aims can be broad (World Vision International, Amnesty International, Greenpeace) or quite specific (Doctors Without Borders) in their activities and goals. The United Nations has a history of working closely with NGO’s on issues, especially relating to humanitarian projects.

Non-Members- delegates who sit in a committee and are allowed to speak but don’t have voting privileges.

OAS (Organization of American States)- an international political organization comprised of North and South American states.

Operative Clauses- are written in resolutions following the preamble. These numbered clauses set out actual solutions and initiatives for the committee to undertake.

Placard- is your key prop at all times. Just be sure not to replace it with your own creation, or to wave it hysterically while someone else is speaking.

Points- can be raised in formal or informal debate. There are two points that can interrupt a speech:

   Personal Privilege: if there’s too much noise, heat/cold, etc…
Order: this point can be raised if a rule has been violated.

Two other points also exist:

Parliamentary Inquiry: a question on the rules and procedure of debate.

Information: general questions to the chair.

Position Paper- a written statement by a delegate on a particular agenda topic, outlining one’s foreign policy, proposed solutions and alternatives.

Preambulatory Clauses- these clauses go at the beginning of a resolution, and act to introduce the issue (concerns, previous UN actions, etc.). They are not numbered.

Rhetoric- using language designed to persuade that is often extravagant and laboured. In MUN debating chairs often penalize delegates who rely on rhetoric instead of making substantive speeches.

Right of Reply- This can only be asked for in formal debate, if a delegate feels another debater has insulted and/or slandered their country or them personally. It is easily the most over-attempted and misused motion in MUN debating.

Roll Call- a motion made in voting procedure to individually call out each country’s name for their vote. A delegate can vote for, vote against, abstain, or pass. A country that passes will be asked again at the end of the list, but cannot abstain.

Security Council- the most powerful body within the UN, it is comprised of fifteen members, five of whom are permanent (see Veto Powers). It is responsible for the UN’s peace and security policy, dealing with conflict through peacekeeping, sanctions and other measures.

Speaker’s List- In formal debate the chair follows the speaker’s list to recognize delegates. Your country’s name can’t be on it more than once at a time.

Sponsor/Co-sponsor- Working papers and resolutions require sponsors (the main authors) and in some cases co-sponsors. Being a co-sponsor does not necessarily mean being in support of the ideas presented, you may just want to see them debated in front of the rest of the committee.

UN (United Nations)- a good idea to learn this one. The international organization that was created in 1945 from the legacy of World War Two to promote and protect international peace and security, co-operation, and human rights worldwide. It’s legitimacy comes from the UN
Charter, with its major bodies including the Security Council, the General Assembly, and the various committees that comprise the Economic and Social Council.

**Veto Powers**- the five permanent members of the Security Council (U.S., U.K., France, Russia and China) have the right to single-handedly veto a resolution by voting no.

**Working Paper**- sometimes referred to as an “idea paper” also, although working paper is the preferred formal term. It is drawn up in the form of a resolution, but its status as a “working paper” allows for easily made amendments that do not require the support of the entire committee, only the sponsors themselves. Working papers are one step below being a resolution, and many are often combined into one. Their overall purpose is to set out specific solutions or policy stances on an issue that can be debated within the committee.

**Yield**- In formal debate the delegate must yield his/her time at the beginning of their speech in one of three ways:

- **to the chair**: once the speech is over the chair takes the floor and moves on with the speaker’s list.

- **to questions**: delegates can ask questions to the speaker for his/her remaining time. (A recommended practice)

- **to another delegate**: another speaker uses up the remaining time to give a speech, but cannot yield themselves.

Information on your assigned country will improve your success. Well-prepared delegates work in facts about their countries whenever they speak. Besides formal speeches, include data in questions that are strategically phrased to other delegates. (ex: "In our country, such and such is the case, and this has proven successful. How do you explain your country’s use of such and such which does not appear favourable?" or: "In our country, our leader, so and so, has demonstrated that such and such is the case." or: "Our economy is based upon this stuff. How does what you are saying apply to us?") Your evaluation is determined in part by how well you portray your country. Research makes this the easiest
**Rule number one:** you are no longer a Canadian! You are the ambassador of the assigned foreign country. This is a good learning process. You will soon see world problems and solutions from the eyes of other countries. Some simulations encourage students to dress in the country’s national garb to help get into this spirit. You represent the people and government a non-Canadian country. Best you find out as much as you can about it!

Here is a brief organizer that will assist you. Many questions can be quickly answered by using a *World Almanac* reference book that contains information on every country. The pocketbook version is a wise purchase because it will give you important data on every other country as well. This helps you to understand important geographical, political, historical, cultural and economic differences and similarities.

### 24 Essential Things to Know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your assigned country:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Size:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Location &amp; neighbours:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Major resources in that area:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Major problems in that area:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Population (by age groups if possible):</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Population density:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Population growth rate, life expectancy:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Language(s):</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Religion(s), percentages, issues:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) History</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. early:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
b. recent: _________________________________________________________________

c. Important people: (writers, poets, artists, politicians, inventors, etc.) Include short quotes if possible. _______________________________________________________________________

9) Form of government: __________________________________________________________

10) Government leaders and parties: _______________________________________________

11) Economic system: circle – capitalism, socialism, communism, other

12) Type of economy: circle – agricultural, industrial, diversified, other

13) Gross National Product & average income: ________________________________________

14) Natural resources: ___________________________________________________________

15) Imports -- amount, item & country: ______________________________________________

16) Exports – amount, item & country:
____________________________________________________________________________

17) From above, foreign trading partners in order of importance to you:

a)

b)

c)

d)

18) Do you receive or provide foreign aid (technical or economic)? Amount? From or to whom?

19) Allies: _________________________________________________________________

20) Enemies: ________________________________________________________________

21) UN bloc: Western, Communist, African, Arab, Asian, Latin America, Non-aligned

22) Member of which international organizations: UN, NATO, EEC, OAS, OAU, SEATO,
The most difficult mind-set to change particularly with elementary students but also quite evident in high school debates, is the portrayal of foreign policy that is filtered through a North American bias. This is a natural inclination, yet we should try to immerse students in the culture and history of the country that they represent.

There are several web sites that will help. **Flags of the World** is quite helpful. [http://flagspot.net/flags/](http://flagspot.net/flags/) Each country’s flag is portrayed. There are additional links to provide background on each flag, references which could be worked into a delegate’s speech, making the delegate more knowledgeable and comfortable with the assigned country.

At this site, for example, the Canadian flag has sections devoted to: Canadian flag etiquette, the
Students should fill out this organizer:

1. Country:
2. Draw or reproduce a coloured version of the flag.
3. When was the flag adopted?
4. What is the flag’s nick-name if any?
5. Explain the colours and symbols used and their origins.
6. Is there a pledge to the flag and what is it?

Another immersion technique is the national anthem. Again, lyrics might be worked into a speech. National anthems for each country may be found at this useful site: [http://www.thenationalanthems.com/](http://www.thenationalanthems.com/) Lyrics may be found at: [http://www.geocities.com/CollegePark/Library/9897/](http://www.geocities.com/CollegePark/Library/9897/)

7. What are the lyrics to your national anthem?
8. Translate them into English. (or another language)

The initial task and prime obstacle for all students is a basic understanding of the foreign policies that they must defend as a representative of the country that they have been assigned. Most often, the biggest
drawback is a North American bias vis-a-vis other countries. This is understandable as the established North American media generally portrays only one viewpoint on world events.

Thus, Rule Number One: you are no longer a Canadian! You are a Kenyan or an Indonesian or Swedish or the ambassador of whatever country you have been assigned. You speak for THAT nation. No other. This is where the fun begins! However, always remember, you must represent that nation accurately. We have recently added media links to the world press in our research section. Now, you may read newspapers from all over the world!

**The best place to begin all of your research is right at our site.** You will notice a Research section on our main page. It is composed of many useful Links and a separate COWAC search engine that will allow you to search through all of our study guides.

One practice that most MUN's support is that they allow delegates to dress in the native garb of their specific country. For example, wearing a robe and a headband might help make you feel more like an Arab. Anything that you can do to get into the shoes of a person from that country will make your role easier. If native dress is not an option, delegates dress as they would at the actual U.N. building. Time to get out the shirt, tie and suit, gentlemen! U.N. delegates do not wear jeans!

Sometimes, you will represent the most powerful economic nations in the world. On other occasions, you will represent the poorest, most backward countries on earth. During these varied experiences, you will begin to discover firsthand how various groups of countries act in their own best interests. You will uncover both allies and enemies. You will struggle with common problems and those unique to your country. You might have access to nuclear energy and satellite technology or you may be placed farther back in an agrarian economy, dependant on animals rather than machines.

If you are portraying a poor country, the issue of foreign aid will allow you to court other nations, often, however, at the expense of various tradeoffs. To succeed and prosper, you will become a strong negotiator. At MUN's, despite your country's relative stance in the world pecking order, you will have what every other nation there wants and desperately needs: one vote. That evens up the playing field. In fact, many students soon realize that it is far easier and advantageous to represent a country that others do not know much about versus one of those whose faults are always on display on CNN.

Politically, you might live in a democratic country or under the rule of a despot. Your country might welcome diverse religious choice or be committed to narrow fundamentalism. You might represent China with one-quarter of the population of the entire world or a nation of miniscule proportions. Your country may be at peace or at war. Your key initial contacts should be officials of those particular countries in Canada or at the UN itself, in New York City. We have links provided for you to accomplish this in our COWAC Search Engine & Links section. (see main page)

To succeed at any Model United Nations, a delegate needs to be well prepared by research into the following key areas: General information concerning the nation and/or region that they are representing
and specific information on the current position taken on the simulation's issues or topics.

Libraries do not always contain adequate information to thoroughly deal with these issues. It is often useful to write directly to a representative of "your" country for some specific information. Remember these simple guidelines: Write early! You are not likely to be a top priority for an embassy's diplomat. Four to six weeks (or more) may be required for a reply. Use the full address and direct the letter to the attention of the "Public Information Officer". Be brief and business-like, but be certain to identify yourself and your role, the exact nature of the topic(s) and the exact type of material requested. Request copies of any statements or policy papers made on your topic. Also request a copy of the opening speech at the beginning of the current U.N. General Assembly. Frequently, this speech will provide good background material on that country's views of the most vital issues of the day.

The more specific you can be, the easier it is for the official to organize relevant information and get your request en route to you. If possible, type the letter in full business letter format on school letterhead. Look professional! Remember your return address!! Remember that English is probably not the first language of communication for "your" country, and indicate if you can work with materials in another language. For French or Spanish-speaking countries, this device, with your teacher's concurrence, could easily become an interesting component of your high school language course.

For both efficient country and issue research, our COWAC Search Engine & Links page has been designed to allow you to perform all of your research from our site alone. From our site, you may easily research your country, world issues, treaties and conventions, material from the U.N., etc., etc.

In fact, you will end up with far more material than you know what to do with. This becomes a MUN skill, prioritizing material. During the course of debate, you may work in your material to demonstrate that you know your country and its foreign policy. Anyone can prepare for a specific issue; however, your task is quite different and more challenging. You must accurately represent the country that you have been allotted.

Often, you will be arguing against things that you as a Canadian, might not actually believe in. This is one of the goals of MUN, to force you to look at all sides of an issue. You will become a far superior debater when you are able to see all sides.

A word of warning: if you represent countries that play a large role in world issues, you had best know their foreign policy. I recently witnessed a Russian delegate in an "experienced" Security Council simulation actually vote against his veto power! Knowledge of foreign policy should constitute a large portion of the delegate's evaluation. Otherwise, the simulation is lacking in history, accuracy and depth.

**Use our COWAC Search Engine & Links section to your advantage!** There, you will find amongst other things, links to:

- the United Nations Homepage

MUN TOOLS

- a list of Permanent Missions of the UN Member States in New York (many of which now have e-mail addresses or even web sites),
- a list of Foreign Embassies and High Commissions in Ottawa,
- a United Nations Web Locator,
- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
- Canada's Dept of Foreign Affairs, Dept of National Defense and Statistics Canada,
- World Governments - alphabetical list of countries with many valuable links to make your country research that much easier.

Begin your speeches and questions with allusions to your country even if it is only your country's name. Every time you speak, even in caucus, try to bring in some relevant information about your country. You are the ambassador!

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Position Papers

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As part of the research process prior to an MUN competition, delegates are often asked to submit a position paper. This is a brief overview, which clearly outlines the delegate's strategy vis-a-vis the committee issues and the country that is being represented. It indicates to both conference organizers and faculty advisors whether or not the student is on track. It is a valuable early warning sign if something is amiss. More importantly, whether the position paper is demanded or not, its use will serve as an important organizer from which the delegate may maintain consistent direction.

Long essay type position papers in which the student rewrites the history of the nation are counter-productive. A simple organizer that is succinct is needed. After all, it is basically employed as a road map.

I have enjoyed an opportunity to participate in a workshop led by Harvard's Roger Fisher, co-author of Getting To Yes. As a consequence, this conference position paper outline is adapted from co-author, William Ury and his work, Getting Past No.

Students are first encouraged to read the following material and to research their country carefully before writing a position paper.
Key Concepts

1) Interests

In multi-country negotiations on specific issues, joint problem solving centers upon the interests that lie behind each side's position. Your position will normally state the concrete things that you say that you want - the specific terms and conditions. Your interests, however, are the motives behind that position: your fears, desires, needs, concerns, aspirations. To achieve agreements that begin to satisfy all sides, you need to begin by trying to determine the nature of each side's interests. An obvious interest for all states is security. This applies to the state in its geographical position amidst allies and foes and also the state’s domestic political security involving an interaction with its citizens.

a) Your interests may be determined by asking why? Why does Syria want the Golan Heights? Why does the U.S. want to be on friendly terms with the Saudis? Why do you want that? What problem are you trying to solve? Is it geographical security or economic prosperity? Rank your interests such that you may be able to trade off lesser interests.

b) Their interests - place yourself in their shoes; forget your perception of the facts. What is their perception of the facts? Why do they act as they do? Why would someone deliberately bomb civilians?

2) Options

Once you know each side's interests, you can try to develop creative options. These are possible agreements or parts of agreements. Effective diplomats must learn how to expand the pie rather than slice a diminished area. Common mistakes at this point are single solutions or counterproductive criticism and evaluation versus suspended judgment, which will enable multiple ideas. Try to keep your options open. Another mistake is to try to accomplish too much, to solve all the problems of the world. Be realistic. Often, a major achievement is simply to get two adversarial sides together to talk.

3) Standards

A contest of wills degenerates into a conflict of egos. Effective negotiators search for fair and mutually satisfying solutions. Fair standards are useful measuring sticks that will help lead to fair solutions. These include the law, precedent, equal treatment, market value, UN resolutions and such. The key is that all sides may more easily defer to that which is seen to be fair.

4) Alternatives

The purpose of negotiation is not always to reach an agreement. The purpose of negotiation is to explore whether you can satisfy your interests better through an agreement versus pursuit of your own best
alternative to a negotiated agreement. (BATNA) This is a significant issue.

The better your BATNA, the more leverage and power you will enjoy. For example, in the Security Council, a permanent member's BATNA might be a veto. If your BATNA's are weak, they may be developed and strengthened. In addition, several weaker countries might ultimately form a stronger alliance. Often, there are ready-made country blocs to help facilitate this. You must lobby and caucus with your fellow delegates. This is a significant portion of the MUN process. The use of a veto might cause lack of cooperation on other issues. You must assess the pro's & con's of each alternative, both short term & long term.

5) Proposals

Try to select an option that satisfies your interest particularly one better than your BATNA.

a) Aspirations: countries that begin with realistically high aspirations often enjoy better agreements. Realistic aspirations are bound however, by standards of fairness and the other's BATNA.

b) Content with: what agreement, far from perfect, would satisfy my basic interests to make me reasonably content?

c) Live with: What agreement would satisfy my interests marginally better than my BATNA?

---

Position Paper Template

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Mark /20

Your committee:________________________
Your Country: __________________________

Your name(s): _____________________ / _____________________

Your School: __________________________

Choose:

a) a topic or issue from the study guide:
_______________________________________________________________________

b) a country in your committee, deemed to be adversarial on the topic:
______________________________________________

Carefully fill in the following organizer:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your Interests:</th>
<th>Their Interests:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>3.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your Options:

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

Standards (be specific):

1. 

2.
3.

4.

Your BATNA (Best alternative to a negotiated settlement):

Their perceived BATNA:

Proposals (be specific):

1) Aspirations:

2) Content with:

3) Live with:

Finally: Summarize your county's position on one of the assigned topics. More importantly, indicate some ways in which your strategies might be altered or adjusted during the conference debate. Type one-quarter page.

In smaller committees, the chair will often allow opening speeches by each country. In the larger committees, the chair might designate one nation to be the honorary opening speaker.

Keep this outline handy during the debate. Refer to it, and use it to help guide your efforts in debate and caucus. It will help to make you appear consistent and keep you on track.
Your committee: Security Council

Your Country: USA

Your name(s): Ryan Sills

Your School: A.N. Myer

a) a topic or issue from the study guide: Conflict between Israel and the Palestinian Authority

b) a country in your committee, deemed to be adversarial on the topic: Syria

Your interests:

1. Demonstrate power & security to homeland & world.

2. Maintain Israel as a client state

3. Stability of supply & price of oil

4. Prosecute the war on terrorism

Their interests:

1. A secure border with Israel.

2. Fear of Turkish-Israel alliance

3. Halt aggressive actions of Israel in Lebanon


Your Options:

1. Denounce terrorist acts & encourage resumption of peace talks.

2. Seek a multilateral solution through coalition building, which results in pressure from all sides on the parties to negotiate a settlement.

3. Provide economic & perhaps military support for nations who prosecute terrorists.
Standards:

1. Negotiated peace.
2. Rule of law.
3. Mediated settlement.
4. Cessation of hostilities to allow dialogue.

Your BATNA (Best alternative to a negotiated settlement): Veto any resolution which targets Israel solely as the belligerent.

Their perceived BATNA: Continue to condemn Israeli actions and peace initiatives that do not include the Golan.

Proposals

1) Aspirations: A permanent solution which provides for Israel’s security & creates an autonomous Palestinian state.

2) Content with: Resumption of peace talks.

3) Live with: An end to hostilities.

Research Tips

By Chris Bittle, Shannon-Marie Soni and Mike Keenan

The following is an outline that may be used by teachers and students to prepare for MUN
MUN TOOLS

activities:

Discussion of bias

…or why you should not get China’s foreign policy from a Tom Clancy book.

• Everything in politics is contestable…all writing is slanted in one way or another, even the author who states that he/she is basing their work on empirical data.

History

…issues in MUN can most often be rooted in history. It explains much about a given situation…ie Muslim/Serb conflict began on the Field of Blackbird in 1389 at the Battle of Kossovo and not a few years ago with some random ethnic cleansing.

• Look at old UN resolutions about a given situation.

• Often nations will act in predictable ways….ie the US will not send troops to Africa, China is opposed to the decline in importance of state sovereignty (ie NATO attack on Kossovo)

• Go through the resources available, focusing on the wonderful tool that is the internet…explain some websites….major benefits and downfalls.

• www.un.org ….great website…first one that we will rely on this year for a research project of our own…however be careful because the internet can also be a vast wasteland.

• Discuss books (remember those dust covered things in the school library), embassies, journals, newspapers and TV news. What is the alternative press? Who is Noam Chomsky and why is he not allowed into the mainstream press?

• Touch briefly on the fact that School Libraries may not be the best place to do research (even though their librarians may be great)…Use the University Library particularly if they have UN resources.

• What to do when you have to represent a Micro-state….it may be difficult to find the foreign policy of Mauritius for the next couple of years in the Security Council.

• Look at regional interests, alliances and organizations.
• Examine economic interests – if 75% of their trade is with the US, they will probably be friendly to American policies.

• The same with foreign aid.

• Be aware of the domestic politics, the political splits and leaders and how that impinges on foreign policy. A good example is Israel’s Knesset. The role and power of the fundamentalist minority, etc.

Quotes to Spark Discussion

Words of Wisdom

• France will remain in Algeria. The bonds linking metropolitan France and Algeria are indissoluble.

Guy Mollet, French P. M., 1956

• After Chiang Kai-Shek has landed and maintained himself for three months on the mainland, the communist menace to Asia will be finished and the whole of Asia will turn anti-Communist.

Henry Luce, Publisher of Time, 1952

• Castro has been accused of communist sympathies, but this means very little since all opponents of the regime are automatically called communists. In fact, he is further to the right than General Batista.

The Economist, 1958

• Don't ask me to make diplomatic relations with Israel. Never.

Anwar Sadat, Egyptian President, 1970

• The French people are incapable of regicide.

King Louis XVI of France, 1789

• The socialist German Democratic Republic and the capitalist Federal German Republic cannot be merged, let alone reunited. It is impossible as bringing together fire and water.
Oskar Fischer, East German Foreign Minister

- Confidence exists between me and my people. They trust me. I trust in them.

The Shah of Iran, 1974

- Thank you for your continued support in our mutual efforts to suppress illicit drug trafficking and to ensure a safer and healthier environment for all of our citizens.


- Gaiety is the most outstanding feature of the Soviet Union.

Joseph Stalin, 1935

- We have the happiest Africans in the world.

Ian Smith, Prime Minister of Rhodesia, 1971

Add your own!

Model United Nations Procedure:

Guide For Novice's

© by Mike Keenan

For debate to run smoothly and efficiently, the committee's delegates must follow an agreed-upon procedure. This guide will explain some key concepts and outline a typical committee scenario.

In debate, there are three types of consideration:

1. **Formal Consideration**: Your country must be on the speaker's list in order to speak. There is usually
a time limit for your speech, which may be adjusted (increased or decreased) as the debate proceeds.

2. **Informal Consideration**: Delegates simply raise their placards in order to be recognized in ad hoc fashion by the chair. The time limit for discussion may be flexible and at the discretion of the chair. Often, there will be a rapid-fire exchange from one country to another. The chair must moderate this sequence in order to maintain order. Informal discussion is a good technique to brainstorm, problem-solve, gather data and flesh out issues. The chair must ensure that delegates stay on track.

3. **Caucus**: This involves important discussion and arm-twisting in both large and small informal groups. The non-moderated discussion allows nations to actively lobby each other for ideas and support. There is normally a time limit set by the chair. If there are two delegates assigned per team, good strategy would dictate for one to lobby the actual bloc that the delegate is attached to and the other listen in on the strategy being discussed by the rest. Because of the latter strategy, some caucus groups will move to more private areas, outside the committee room. In full day and multi-day debates, informal "caucus" may take place anywhere including lunch or at night on the phone. In this fashion, delegates follow the actual practice employed by real diplomats. Although hard to monitor, a good conference will evaluate the performance of delegates during caucus. (see MUN Tools for more notes on country blocs.)

In debate, Points (of Order) largely determine procedure. The following are important types:

1. **Point of Order**: Used to correct a mistake in the parliamentary procedure.

2. **Point of Parliamentary Procedure**: Used to inquire about proper procedure. The chair will rule and explain.

3. **Point of Information**: Used to correct or ask some information.

4. **Point of Personal Privilege**: Used to alleviate a personal discomfort or distraction that impedes your participation in debate. (noise, room temperature, volume, movement, etc.)

When a delegate speaks during formal consideration, s/he may **Yield** time to another delegate. This is a difficult decision because most delegates wish to maximize their own speaking time. Sometimes, it is done as a favour to a like-minded country. Some delegates believe that a yield to another is a sign of weakness. You will have to determine if it fits within your overall strategy or not.

When speaking, Yields are as follows:

1. **Yield to the Chair**: The remaining time is left to the chair, and s/he will normally select the next speaker. Yielding one's remaining time to the chair prevents anyone from asking you tough questions, but it also indicates a weak position. If you want to avoid the hot seat yet curry favour, why not yield to a friendly country?
2. Yield to Questions: This is the preferred course. The speaker's remaining time is utilized for question(s) on the delegate's speech. Only questions on the speech are permitted. This demonstrates that the delegate is both secure and prepared to deal with harsh objections. Beware that by yielding your remaining time to questions from the floor, you allow adversaries to lead off with their own mini-speech preamble before they actually ask their question.

If you see this happening, immediately interrupt the mini-speech by saying to the chair: "Point of order, is there a question?" The chair will normally concur and demand a specific question. Another strategy that you might promote in your caucus is to encourage friendly nations to ask non-aggressive questions, which will provide you with yet another springboard for extended speeches.

3. Yield to Another Delegate: As above. The remaining time is given to another delegate.

If a delegate has said some extremely uncomplimentary things about your country, you might stand up and say: Right of Reply. Here, a delegate is given the opportunity to defend the nation's integrity after being slandered or misrepresented. A right of reply will not be granted in cases of personal (versus country) slander. Right of reply is granted at the chair's discretion, and should not be abused. If the chair grants such an action, the offending party will be asked if they wish to apologize. Slandering your fellow delegates does not impress either them or the chair.

Resolutions: This is what the committee is aiming at, a particular recommended course of action that will adequately address some specific issue. The proposed resolution forms the basis of debate.

Committees should not try to pass a resolution no matter what. The resolution must be viable. Because there are multiple interests and countries, this becomes a difficult process. A resolution can be the product of a productive council. It outlines the recommendations suggested by the committee. Often, a resolution, in order to pass, will be changed or amended a great deal such that the majority can live with it. If you are provided with a ready-made resolution for debate at your conference, be aware that there will be many weaknesses deliberately built into it to encourage this process of amendment.

Voting: In the Security Council, there are five veto powers. They are the United States, United Kingdom, France, Russian Federation, and China. These nations may arbitrarily vote 'no' to a resolution, and it is automatically defeated. In all other bodies, there are no veto powers, and you will operate on a simple majority. If a permanent member country might veto your resolution, your strategy might be to try and persuade that country to abstain in the vote. Otherwise, in the other committees, everyone has one vote and is therefore, a potential ally for a simple majority. There is no advantage in other committees to being a permanent member. In fact, they are often greatly outnumbered by other blocs.

Committee Procedure: A Typical Flow Chart

For the novice to get a better idea of how things actually happen in committee, the following is the sort of procedural dynamic that will typically occur:
1) Motion to open debate. Some chairs will simply declare debate open. If this is the case, there is no need to utilize this motion.

2) Motion to set agenda. The topics are usually set ahead of time. If there are multiple topics, a speaker for and a speaker for and against are required. A vote is taken, and the majority rules.

3) Motion to open the speaker's list. All nations wishing to be on the speaker's list raise their placards or write a note to the chair.

4) Motion to set a time limit on speeches. Used in formal consideration only.

At this point procedure can move in many directions. For example, after a few speakers, the following may occur:

5) Remain in formal consideration (on speaker's list)

OR

6) Motion to move into informal consideration. If the latter, after much discussion, there are many ideas, therefore -

7) If in informal consideration, motion to move back into formal consideration.

8) You might motion for a caucus (usually 5 -10 minutes). The purpose would be to further develop the ideas into a working paper, and to obtain sponsors in support of these ideas. A working paper is the beginning of a resolution. There might be several working papers being developed by different groups at the same time. Your task is to bring together those that are similar into a larger more powerful bloc that will enjoy greater chance at success. (votes)

9) After the caucus, the council is back in formal consideration. Someone may motion to move into informal consideration, or you will remain in formal consideration. (Speaker's list)

10) After collaboration, the working paper needs to be presented to the chair with the sponsoring countries listed. Often, you will be given a minimum number of sponsors to obtain before the chair will look at your working paper.

11) If the chair deems your working paper to be in order, indicate that your nation wishes to introduce it as a resolution before the council.

12) Once the chair has approved the working paper (proper format, spelling and grammar), the chair will allow for it to be introduced.
13) In order to introduce a working paper, the council must be in formal consideration. The speaker's list will be utilized.

14) The nation that led the writing of the working paper will read it to the council. The time limit is suspended for the duration of the reading.

15) The chair acknowledges that the working paper is now a resolution. Debate continues over the resolution until it is ready to be finally voted upon. When the resolution has been amended, and is meets the satisfaction of the council,

16) Motion to enter voting procedure. A speaker for and a speaker against are required at this time. Simple majority rules. Another way to end debate and force a vote is to move that the speaker's list be closed, which effectively stops debate by preventing additional countries to speak. The chair will not normally allow this if considered premature and much too early in the debate.

At this time, there are several motions that could be made.

a) Motion to divide question. This motion allows the council to separate the operative clauses into sections. For example, if a resolution were composed of seven clauses, each recommending some specific course of action, each section would then be voted on separately. This might be a last ditch effort by some nations to vote down one particular clause (or more) that they cannot live with.

OR

b) Roll call vote. Each nation is called upon in alphabetical order. Each nation may say yes, no, abstain or pass. If a pass is taken, the chair returns to that delegate. At this point, the delegate may say yes or no. Abstentions are no longer permitted.

If the resolution is passed, a new topic is selected. If the resolution is not passed, the resolution fails and does not exist. The topic goes back into debate. Try not to rush through your topic merely to pass a resolution. Often, because of the nature of the topic and a complete lack of consensus, a resolution simply cannot be passed. Students must accurately represent the interests of their foreign country. You are no longer good-natured Canadians. You might be imperialistic, socialist, rich or poor. You might be one of many world faiths including those that you don't necessarily agree with. Your country might treat women as equals to men or keep them servile. You might sanction terrorism or look the other way at it. The key is that you must execute an accurate portrayal. In multi-day conferences, one topic might be discussed for many hours and several days. Keep in mind that some of these U.N. issues have been argued for years, not mere days. It's up to you to be creative yet not sacrifice your country's interests. You will be evaluated on how well you can perform this difficult task.
Suggested Rules of Procedure for MUN's

General Rules

1. **Powers of the Chair** - The chair enjoys absolute power, and reserves the right to take whatever measures deemed necessary in order to ensure decorum. The president and officers make all decisions regarding motions, amendments, questions, etc.

2. **Staff** - Pages may be on hand for the service of delegates through the chair.

3. **Delegations** - Each delegation will have a predetermined number of students, which will vary with the committee.

4. **Participation of Non-Members** - Any nation or organization with observer status has full rights of member nations except the right to vote. Any non-member who is not an observer must seek permission from the president before commencing any activity.

5. **Courtesy** - Along with respect for the authority of the chair, delegates must be courteous to staff and other delegates.

6. **Agenda** - If the chair deems it appropriate, this will be the first order of business for the committee. The only motion entertained is one to place a certain resolution on the floor for debate. This motion requires a second. After hearing both sides of the issue (pro & con speakers), the assembly votes with a simple majority passing.

Speaking

1. **Speaker's List** - The speaker's list is open at all times for countries wishing to speak on issues unless it is has been formally closed. To access the speaker's list, a nation must submit a written request or raise their placard at the appropriate time.

2. **Time Limit on Speeches** - Normally, there is no time limit. The chair reserves the right to limit time if necessary.
3. **Relevancy** - A delegate may rise on a point of relevancy during a fellow delegate's speech if the speaker's comments are not relevant to the proceedings. Judgement is at the discretion of the chair.

4. **Yields** - Note: The intention to yield must be declared before a delegate begins to speak! Assuming an imposed time limit, any delegate speaking on a substantive issue may yield in any of the following ways:
   - **Yield to another delegate** - the speaker yields remaining time to another delegate; only one such yield is permitted.
   - **Yield to the chair** - if the delegate does not wish to answer questions or yield time to another delegate, he/she may yield the remaining time to the chair and then sit down.

5. **Comments and Points of Information** - If the chair deems appropriate, comments will be allowed after a delegate's speech (substantive speeches only). Also included are *Points of Information*, which can be directed to the speaker after he/she is finished speaking.

6. **Right of Reply** - A delegate whose personal or national integrity has been slandered or misconstrued may request a *Right of Reply*. Granting of this right is at the discretion of the chair.

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**Points**

1. **Point of Personal Privilege** - If a delegate experiences personal discomfort that constitutes a hindrance to following the proceedings, he/she may request a *point of personal privilege*. (This might include items such as noise, distractions, etc.)

2. **Point of Parliamentary Inquiry** - This is designed to allow a delegate to question the chair as to correct parliamentary procedure. This is merely a clarification point and should be used as such.

3. **Recess or Adjournment** - If the floor is open, a delegate may move to recess or adjourn. The delegates should use their own judgement when asking for a recess or an adjournment.

4. **Caucusing** - A delegate may move to caucus at any time prior to closure of debate. The chair will set a time limit for the caucus and explain its purpose. The chair may also rule a motion to caucus out of order if it is not deemed to be needed.

5. **Informal Consideration** - When informal discussion of the entire issue under consideration appears beneficial, the President or delegate may propose that the body move into a session of informal consideration. The purpose shall be to clarify points of confusion through informal discussion. This action shall be taken upon by a simple majority vote. The chair may subsequently entertain a point-of-order to return to formal consideration.
6. Postponement and Resumption of Debate - In order to debate a particular amendment or to discuss other matters, a delegate may move to postpone debate. This is at the discretion of the chair. Similarly, during a postponement, a delegate can move for resumption of debate.

7. Division of the Question - After closure of debate on a resolution or an amendment, a delegate may move to have the operative clauses of the resolution or amendment voted upon separately. The chair will then accept proposals for division. A vote shall be called upon the way in which to divide the question after which the operative clauses will be voted on.

Voting

1. Voting - Each member nation shall have one (1) vote. A nation may either vote for, against, or abstain from a resolution or amendment.

2. Roll Call Votes - The chair calls upon each member nation and allows that nation to either vote for, against, abstain, or pass. Any nation that passes is asked again after the first round of voting. Particularly when their foreign policy is suspect, a country may request the right to explain their vote.

3. Reconsideration - Only votes on resolutions and amendments may be reconsidered. A reconsideration motion must be made by a nation that voted on the majority side of the issue.

4. Explanation of vote - This is a very serious maneuver that requires careful thought. However, should a nation feel that another nation has seriously misrepresented their foreign policy, they may ask the chair for an explanation of vote. This is formally begun in this fashion: Immediately after the vote, there must be a verbal communication to the chair (through a point-of-order) announcing the intent, followed directly by a note to the chair. Should the chair deem the request reasonable, the chair may ask the particular nation if it wishes to reconsider or change its vote. If negative, the nation will then be given one minute to publicly explain their vote.

<table>
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<th>Item</th>
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<th>Interrupt Speaker</th>
<th>Debate: pro/con</th>
<th>Vote Required</th>
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### Country Blocs

©by Mike Keenan

A bloc is a group of nations that have common interests whether they are economic, defense, ethnicity, etc. Oil-producing countries are an example of an economic bloc. Canada, Mexico and the United States are in NAFTA, a small, three-country economic bloc. Sometimes, a nation may straddle more than one bloc.

Where a single country may be at a disadvantage in a committee, particularly when pitted against powers like the United States and China, a well-organized bloc of countries has great power in decision-making and negotiation. Often, an effective bloc will ultimately help defeat or pass important resolutions. It is important to quickly get your bloc established and to try to play a leadership role in the process. Becoming spokesperson for a bloc is a definite advantage.

During a MUN simulation, delegates or the chairperson will ask for caucus time to work in a bloc, draft a working paper, develop a resolution, etc. This is prime time to display your leadership skills that will be surely noticed by the judges.

Caucusing in blocs or in mixed groups of countries will be orderly or chaotic depending upon the skill levels of the delegates. At the beginning, there is often a great deal of shouting and jostling for position. If you can insure that everyone may be heard, your leadership will be recognized. Suggest that everyone sit in a circle to be seen and heard. Or stand on a chair and call your bloc there. Or organize your bloc against a wall, facing you. I've seen determined students crawl through a tangle of legs to get to the

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### MUN TOOLS

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<td>Majority</td>
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Model U.N. Research Organizer    Mike Keenan

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center of a bloc. A girl once used the heel of her shoe as a gavel to chair the bloc. Be resourceful. One of the best techniques is to be the delegate that asks for a ten-minute caucus in the committee, suggesting at the same time while everyone is listening, that your bloc meet at a specific place.

Sometimes, there is a formal election of a bloc leader who supposedly represents the strongest nation in the bloc. The problem is that often there will be much stronger delegates more capable of performing the task for the bloc.

Model U.N. Research Organizer ©Mike Keenan

Caucusing Blocs

The following are six geographic blocs, which we will try to use at the conference. It is conceivable that some of these blocs might unite for various reasons. As you may determine, three or more blocs may effectively control the outcome of any vote. It is strongly recommended that you try to play a leadership role within the bloc system.

Other blocs are: NATO, Commonwealth countries, Group of 77, and the European Union. Within these blocs are other, smaller blocs. For example, the Arab bloc consists of two radically different groups of countries, those that are oil-rich and sell heavily to the West, situated around the Gulf and those that are poorer and prone tend to political unrest in the Middle East. Blocs indicate common interests. Blocs may be based upon geography, politics, trade, and even religion. Within Muslim countries, there is a complete range of representation from conservative to moderate to terrorist.

Use these blocs to your advantage! Although the Western bloc, representing the most powerful, industrialized countries, does have a slight numerical edge (as they should in our simulation), other blocs may easily combine to challenge the West.
<table>
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<td>Italy</td>
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</tbody>
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This is a difficult issue. On one hand, conference organizers have worked long and hard and reasonably wish to formally welcome the participating delegates. On the other, it is imperative to get the conference underway without undue delay.

Conference size is one dynamic that should dictate the procedure that is taken. Often, at large MUN conferences such as Harvard or The Hague, there are thousands of delegates. A long, tedious opening ceremony, however well intentioned, with students talking, milling about, restlessly preoccupied with their opening speeches and such, is counter-productive to the desired intent.

I have attended Harvard's December MUN for more than a dozen years. I remember only one occasion when there was rapt attention and complete silence from the huge audience. At that particular time, an AP (Associated Press) wartime correspondent delivered the opening address. With a quiet voice that sometimes emotionally broke during recollections, he vividly described a brutal conflict during which he desperately had tried to save a young man's life. He was forced to drive this seriously wounded person to the hospital, through enemy lines. The victim had been shot in the head, and the correspondent captured the horrible immediacy of the situation with graphic details. Suddenly, in mere moments, future delegate committee debate had become much more meaningful and focussed.

That should be a prime focus for opening ceremonies. Make the debate realistic and experiential. Help the delegates to delve deeper into the actual portrayal of foreign countries. Unfortunately, succeeding Harvard events didn't repeat this kind of dramatic introduction, favouring safer speeches that were less emotional and interesting. Eventually, I permitted delegates the option to skip the opening ceremonies. It had become a photo op and a waste of delegate time.

Thus, conference organizers are presented with a dilemma. There are some creative options, and I'm sure that balance will eventually be obtained. One method to deal with the issue would be to have committee chairs provide a short address to smaller groups. Another would have the Secretary-General make a short speech in each committee. Another would be to employ the closing ceremonies for the more formal speeches. In short, delegates want to get into the debate. Whatever is said, beyond a brief welcome, should set the actual tone for debate.

I recently witnessed an excellent opening MUN ceremony in Bath, England. Throughout the entire ceremony, over 500 delegates sat quietly and carefully listened. The two key speeches, back-to-back, were delivered by the Secretary General and an adult guest from the University of Belfast in Ireland. Each speech complimented the other and provided a sense of immediacy, a true springboard for debate for the assembled delegates.
Secretary-General, Jake Eliot of host school, Kingswood, delivered the first address. The following is his slightly abridged text:

"Honourable Chairs, Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen. Welcome to the tenth Bath Schools' Model United Nations conference. You are most welcome at Kingswood this weekend and we hope you will enjoy the conference and fully exploit all the opportunities open to you.

The first conference was, relatively speaking, quite primitive. However, since that time, a few thousand students have taken part in our program over the years, with many having built on this experience to go on to other conferences, and in some cases, careers, with a direct link to issues which have been debated. Ten years on, we are particularly pleased that, in the spirit of the UN, this has become a truly international event.

Before this opening address turns into thinly disguised trip down memory lane, let me say, that to all intents and purposes, any sense of an anniversary conference is superfluous because, really what makes MUN conferences so valuable is their relevance to today.

In effect, of course MUN is a role-play, and is atypical in the normal course of our educational program. It is widely held that our generation is not interested or engaged in what we might call political matters or international affairs. Certainly, much of the media coverage of these events tends to be presented in a sketchy, even disjointed fashion. Given the pressures of a news agenda is increasingly difficult for us to acquire a knowledge and interest in what is going on outside our immediate environment. Editorial discretion does sometimes mean that we are left in the dark. The latest twist in the colourful life of Posh (Spice) is, perhaps, always likely to receive more coverage than the humanitarian disaster in Sierra Leone, the plight of Children in conflict situations or the effects of the Economic sanctions on Iraq.

We should not need reminding that the issues we are debating this weekend are real. One needs only to look to the current crisis in Mozambique. There has been a great deal of coverage of events there in the past seven days. One of those journalists wrote the following after he joined a helicopter mission to pluck survivors from the floods.

"Even from the air, the sight of a whole town underwater is almost impossible to describe. The eye struggles to make sense of it. The first impression is of driftwood littering a pond. It is only a moment later that it becomes clear that the debris is actually the tops of houses and huts, that entire families are sitting on roofs. On a narrow strip of dry land, cut from all sides by murky water, bewildered children squatted before a line of villagers who had spent a day and a night waiting to be rescued. Next to the helicopter's landing spot, a stick jutted out into freshly dug earth, where Flora Ngomane's baby had been buried the previous day. She had also lost a seven-year-old child when the Limpopo River's floodwaters submerged the village of Lionde.

The joy of the survivors mixed with the despair of those who could not find relatives. A woman carrying
an infant on her back staggered out of the South African helicopter and gave a long inconsolable wail. She had lost one of her three children in the village of Guija. Pilots have said they have seen many corpses in the water, but it is impossible to tell how many have died."

Woven into this horrifying story line are remarkable stories of human bravery and endurance, born out of the desperate situation. South African pilots and rescuers say they have seen five children perched carefully on top of the roof of a small submerged car, staying perfectly still for fear of falling for hours on end.

One woman, utterly isolated on a tiny patch of raised ground, seeing the last helicopter flight before nightfall realized that she would not be rescued that day, possibly never rescued at all. Her one last maternal act was to fling her small child into the hovering helicopter she could not reach herself; knowing that, even if she did survive the night ahead her child might not.

Another story, another human experience. A woman rescued on Wednesday, who, heavily pregnant, had given birth while perched in a tree. Her survival, and that of her child is, perhaps, a metaphor for indomitable human spirit.

As the delegation of Mozambique at this conference probably realizes, their assignment carries with it additional responsibilities this weekend.

There may well be, after all, a larger case of cause and effect at work here. If we, as individuals, are ignorant about an international issue, then we are unlikely to make an effort to help. Likewise therefore, making a difference must primarily involve a degree of awareness. Awareness comes first, then the action. Perhaps the biggest challenge we face then, is not what we do at this conference, but what we use our experience to go on to do after it.

But I believe, fellow MUN'ers, that our presence here today shows that we are not apathetic, that we do want to know more, and, above all, that we will be heard."

Jake Eliot will be attending Oxford University next September. It is obvious that he is someone who is capable of making a difference, someone like many others of those gathered there that day in his generation that surely will be heard.

Rev. Henry Keys from Belfast University in Ireland followed Jake Eliot and immediately allowed that he was just a little terrified at the prospect of speaking to a group that was so politically aware and intelligent. He further explained that he had heard another speaker address a group and describe to them three methods of learning.

The first method, customarily employed by professors, is that of the lecture wherein the professor empties his brain of pearls of wisdom and the students blindly copy them down dutifully into their
notebooks with neither professor nor student having the burden to think hard in the process. This technique has a 20% retention rate.

The second method, employed frequently in the school classroom, is the reflective technique wherein students are actually encouraged to ask a few questions. This alone doubles the retention rate to 40%.

Finally, the third method is kinesthetic, what others and I would describe as learning by doing. This is the best way to learn anything as it involves active participation and, accordingly, a retention rate of 80%.

Rev. Keys explained that that was precisely what a Model United Nations conference was all about, the progressive act of kinesthetic learning. He encouraged the students to throw themselves into the debate, to actually learn by doing.

This opening ceremony was an excellent example of how to set an appropriate tone for the delegates. It briefly welcomed them, acknowledged their political awareness and encouraged them to make the conference a realistic experience. This would enable them to actually learn stronger skills and develop richer appreciation, which would inevitably enable them to better contribute to society.

The crowd of approximately 500 students appreciably applauded both speakers. Delegates from Ireland, Canada, the United States, France and Germany were now prepared to more fully enter into debate. Thanks to Steve Pagan and Morag Lemmy, conference coordinators, for an excellent MUN opening ceremony.