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Parliamentary Procedure Guide



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Welcome, delegates and Senators!

As the Secretary-General, I would like to personally welcome you again to the first inaugural annual session of the South Miami Model United Nations simulation. After weeks of hard work, we have been able to pull off the miracle of a century and managed to organise this conference into something that you will hopefully enjoy.

We hope that you will have the opportunity to debate, practise diplomacy, and collaborate with your fellow classmates in a way that allows you to practise what you have learned in history in a real-world setting. While there may be kinks in the system, I encourage you to make the most of the days ahead to prepare for this simulation in order to maximise your potential rather than to simply let it go because it is at the end of the year.

Nevertheless, some of you still be very confused about how these sessions will be run. In order to have a successful simulation, you have to know the very basics of parliamentary procedure and observe decorum. Inside this guide, you will find a simplified, but very helpful guide as to how to properly perform in such a setting. As a casual reminder, you will be receiving some of your final grades of the year from your performance (and we may be having guests pop in from time to time), so it would be wise to be prepared.

As a general reminder, your position paper deadline has been extended to Sunday, May 21st at 2359h to smsh.mun@gmail.com. Please carefully read over your background guide and do additional research. Late submissions may not be accepted. Working papers and resolution deadlines will be discussed at the official opening of the session.

With that in mind, I look forward to seeing you all and wish you the best of luck!

Sincerely,

Jesse Davila
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Secretary-General
South Miami Model UN Simulation I
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Delegates: welcome to SMMUN I!

Below, you will find a guide to the parliamentary procedure that will be utilised during the conference. In order for us to move quickly and have a fun time, we ask that you understand these rules prior to the opening session. In order of precedence, we use the following to run each committee:

Individual committee's official rules of procedure (i.e., *Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly*, *Provisional Rules of Procedure of the Security Council*, *Standing Rules of the United States Senate*)

This guide (i.e., *Parliamentary Procedure Guide*)

Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, 11th edition by Gen. Henry M. Robert, III

This guide applies to all committees unless the committee's supplementary rules (listed above), which apply only to that body) mention otherwise.

This session consists of three committees, one American, the other two U.N.: the UN General Assembly, the UN Security Council, and the U.S. Senate. There will be no representation present for any non-governmental organisations (NGOs) (e.g., Amnesty International, Doctors Without Borders (MSF)), regional bodies (e.g., the European Union, the Arab League), or press agencies (e.g., Al Jazeera, the New York Times).

Each delegate or Senator has been assigned to one state or State, and, correspondingly, each state or State will usually be represented by at least one delegate in each committee. Delegates will have formal sessions (official sessions), lunch breaks, informal sessions (caucuses), and several breaks. In the case that a delegate or Senator is in an AICE level course, the delegate will be allowed to alert the Chair that their attendance is required elsewhere with no penalty.

Time has been frozen for the duration of the conference. All updates will be provided by the Secretary-General, the respective committee chairs, and/or the Rapporteur (at the request of the Secretary-General): any other information will not be considered to be true. Events during the conference (in real life) will not be considered unless stated otherwise.

Decorum

Do not whisper when others are speaking. Do not interrupt a speaker. When the Chair speaks, delegates shall remain quiet. If you have anything to say, please send a note. If you agree or do *not* agree with a delegate or Senator's remarks, keep quiet and add your name to the speaker's list. We rely on respect first and foremost; and if you choose not to follow these very simple rules, be careful. If your state is known for being caustic, feel free to do so, but within reason!

The Dais

Each committee's dais will be composed of a Chair (and possibly a Vice-Chair(s)) as well as assistants called "rapporteurs". These officials are responsible for conducting the session and voting procedures of the committee, deciding how the rules are interpreted, applied and who is recognised to speak.

Although this sounds as if the Chair has ultimate authority in regard of the rules, it is possible to challenge these decisions. Though the chair will generally have considerable experience, they are human and can make mistakes. If a delegate thinks that the dais has made a mistake, they should rise

for a point of order or even appeal the decision of the chair (which will be explained later). In addition, contrary to the rules of the real United Nations, the chair will not be elected from or by the committee.

Procedural vs. Substantive

Procedural matters are those related to the conference and policies (e.g., speaking time, parliamentary procedure, votes, points, motions etc.). Substantive matters are those related to a topic (e.g., resolutions, content of debate, etc.). When speaking on a procedural matter, one may only speak about procedural topics and not on substantive topics, and vice versa. As an additional note, one may not abstain from voting on a procedural matter; but may on a substantive matter (if not present *and voting*).

Voting

Once voting procedures begin, the doors to the chamber shall be closed and no delegate/Senator will be allowed to leave until the procedure has ended. Should the delegate/Senator not be present when voting has begun, they will be locked from the room and will not be allowed in until the procedure has ended. If voting is required, the Chair shall hold the power to recall all delegates/Senators. Note passing and talking are prohibited, and all delegates shall remain in their seats.

Abstentions will not be counted towards votes in favour of a motion or resolution.

Motions

Voting on motions will always begin with the most extreme, or *disruptive*. If there are multiple motions on the floor, the first motion to pass by simple majority will be considered to be the will of the committee and all other motions will be passed over. Any similar motions brought up after will be ruled dilatory.

General Flow

Session Opens: The Chair opens the session

Roll Call: The Chair or Rapporteur will complete this at the end of a recess as well. Members of a committee can be present, present and voting, or absent. If a delegate or Senator misses the roll call, please send a note stating that the delegation is now present or present and voting.

Calculation and Announcement of the Majorities

Debate on Topic: The Chair will ask for volunteers in the committee to speak, usually with two in favour of and two against Topic A and the same for Topic B.

Voting on Topic

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Speakers List: A member of the body will motion for the Chair to open the speaker's list (this requires no vote). A new speakers list will be opened without further motions at the beginning of the discussion of a new topic. During a caucus, the speakers list remains as it is (none are added or removed). When a new speakers list is opened, the Chair will ask the committee who wishes to be put on it to raise their placards. In big committees, it is normally not possible to recognise every delegate doing so. If you are not recognised, send a note to the Chair and you may be put on the list. A motion to close the speakers list may be raised at any time.

Setting of the Speakers List Time: This may occur at any time and will be voted on from most to least disruptive.

Formal and Informal Session(s)

Voting Procedure: Starts when the speakers list is exhausted or a motion for the closure of debate is brought upon the floor. If the speakers list is exhausted before a draft resolution is voted upon, the Topic will be discarded and no substantive vote will be conducted.

Closure vs. Adjournment of Debate

Motions for closure of debate should be made once all draft resolutions and appropriate amendments have been submitted. This requires a double majority and, if passed, will allow no further speakers or draft resolutions to be added on the topic and will move the committee into voting procedure. This can be reversed if two-thirds of the fixed membership votes in favour of reversal.

Motions for adjournment of debate should *only* be made if further debate is futile and no voting procedure shall occur. If passed by a double majority, then debate will cease, no working papers or draft resolutions may be submitted, and the committee moves onto the next topic. This can *not* be reversed, so this motion should only be made at the end of a session. The Chair will not entertain this motion should it be raised before the last day.

Precedence of Motions

Motion for Recess

Motions on changing procedure

Minor motions on speaker's time

Status

Present: If a delegate or Senator wishes to have the possibility of abstaining in substantive votes, the delegate/Senator must answer 'present' during a roll call or send a note to the Chair stating so.

Present and Voting: Delegates and Senators marked as 'present and voting' may not abstain.

Absent: Delegates and Senators absent during the roll call will be marked as 'absent' if no response is made during roll call.

One's status may change. To do so, please send a note to the Chair. In addition, regardless of status, one may not abstain from voting on a procedural matter. Being marked 'present and voting' is equated to holding a strong position on the given topic(s).

Voting Procedure

Disruptive behaviour such as eating, talking, the passing of notes, the re-entrance of the chamber, or exiting the chamber is prohibited once the voting procedure has begun. Delegates or Senators who exit the chamber will not be allowed to return until the procedure has ended, unless recalled. Procedure begins with a roll call and only six motions will be entertained during the process: an appeal to the decision of the chair, a motion for the division of the questions, a motion for division of a question, a motion to vote by clause, a motion for a roll call vote, and a motion to adopt by acclamation.

Explanation of a vote may be given after the voting procedure has been completed (and only if voting

against or abstaining). One is barred from explaining if one is a sponsor or co-sponsor of a draft resolution.

Glossary of Motions

Decision on the Competence of the Committee: If a delegate or Senator decides that the topic discussed is one out of the jurisdiction of the committee, one may raise this issue. Doing so requires no debate and requires a simple majority. If passed, this topic may never be discussed again.

To request: “Honourable Chair, the People’s Republic moves to decide upon the competence of this committee to deal with this topic.”

Point of Information to the Speaker: If one wishes for a speaker to clarify something in their speech, one may raise one’s placard and request it. One will not have the right of reply, unless otherwise specified, and may not respond to the speaker’s comments. To reply, one must be recognised by the Chair again and request another point. Should one be recognised, one reserves the right to not answer a question as the speaking delegate.

To request: “Honourable Chair, the People’s Republic moves for a point of information to the speaker: is it possible to ask the delegate of the Republic of Belgium further questions?”

Point of Order: To make a comment on procedure, one may raise one’s placard and state the issue.

To request: “Honourable Chair, point of order.”

Right of Reply: If an insulting comment or an action was made about or on one’s delegation, the delegation of the state/State may request right of reply. During the delegation’s statement, the delegation’s speech is given at the pleasure of the Chair and may be interrupted if the comments veer towards insulting comments or false accusations. Comments are limited to 45 seconds and a right to reply to a right of reply will be ruled dilatory.

To request: “Honourable Chair, right of reply!” *“Distinguished delegate of the People’s Republic, please rise and state your point.”* “Honourable Chair, the People’s Republic of China moves for a right of reply

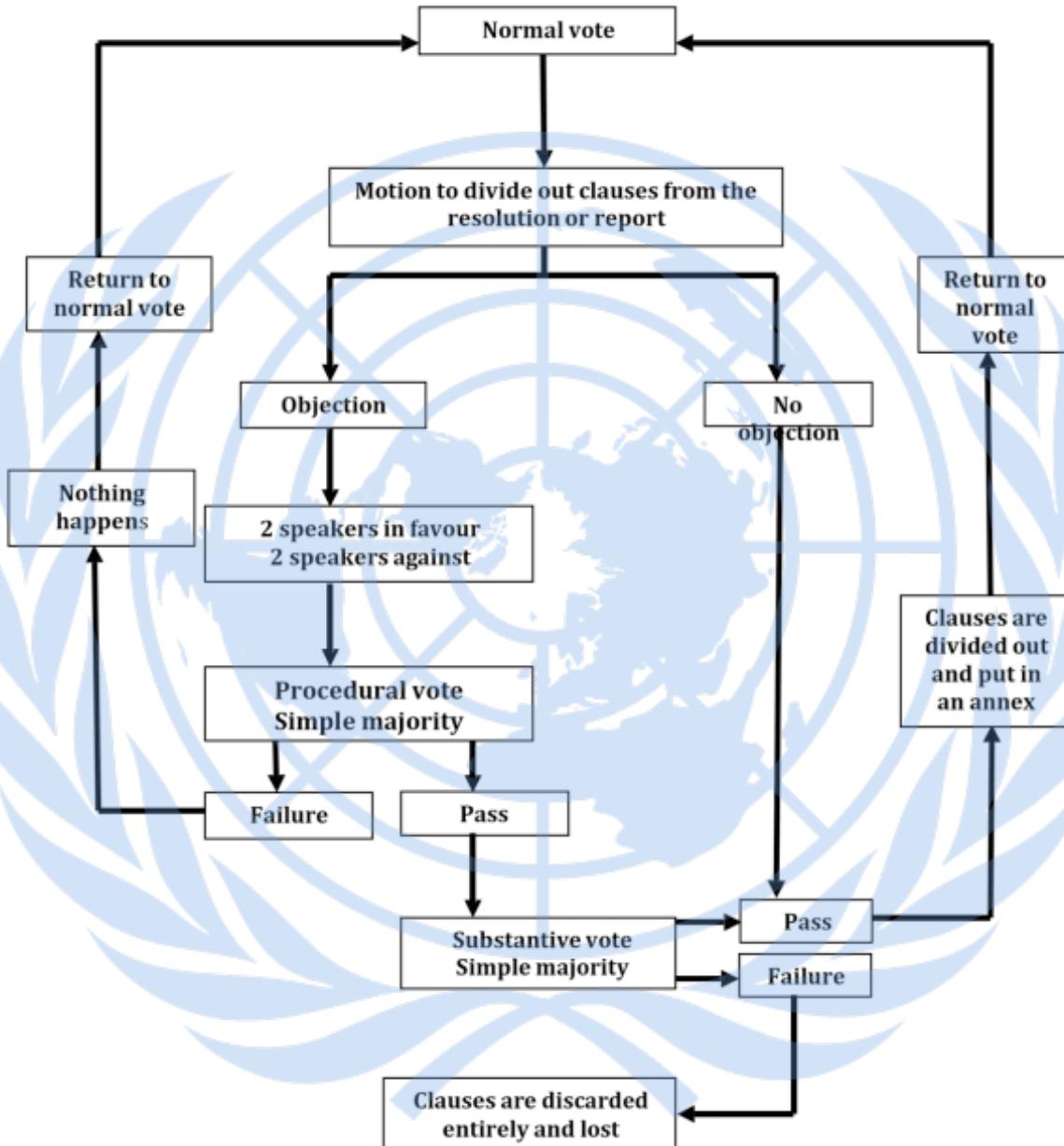
Suspension of the Meeting/Rules: Depending on the context, the suspension of a formal session is to move to an informal session or recess. Moving to an informal session allows one to know one’s fellow delegates in an informal manner. Unmoderated and moderated caucuses (both classified as informal sessions) can last from five minutes to several hours and can pass with a simple majority and no debate. Unmoderated caucuses must be requested with the purpose and length of the suspension. Moderated caucuses must be requested with the purpose and length of the suspension along with the time allotted to individual speakers. This allows other comments by delegates/Senators to be directly addressed.

To request an unmoderated caucus (informal session): “Honourable Chair, the People’s Republic moves for a suspension of the rules.” *“Distinguished delegate of the People’s Republic, you must state the purpose and for what length when motioning for a suspension of the rules.”* “Honourable Chair, the People’s Republic of China moves to suspend the meeting for the purpose of an unmoderated caucus of 20 minutes to discuss the impending resolution.”

To request a moderated caucus (informal session): “Honourable Chair, the People’s Republic moves for a suspension of the meeting for the purpose of a moderated caucus of 15 minutes (90 second speaking time) to discuss the humanitarian crises surrounding the bombing of Seoul.”

To request a recess: “Honourable Chair, the People’s Republic moves to recess for thirty minutes for the purpose of lunch.”

Division of the Question



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Motion	Purpose	Debate	Vote	Motion	Purpose	Debate	Vote
Adjournment of debate	End debate without vote	2 pro / 2 con	Simple majority	Division of the question (first vote)	Vote on specific operative clauses separately (see chart on page)	2 pro / 2 con	Simple majority
Adjournment of the meeting	End the meeting	None	Simple majority	Point of information to the chair / permission to approach the dais	Ask the chair about the rules of procedure	None	None
Adopt by acclamation	Adopt a resolution without voting upon it. This motion is only possible if there is no objection by the committee.	None	None	Point of information to the speaker	Pose questions to the current speaker when the speaker's time has not yet elapsed	None	None
Adoption of the agenda	Approval of a specific order of the agenda	None	Simple majority	Point of order	Correct a procedural error or a disregard of diplomatic conduct	None	None
Amendment of the agenda	Add a new agenda item to the primary agenda	None	Simple majority	Reconsideration of a topic	Resume negotiations about a topic which has already been concluded	2 con	Two-thirds majority
Appeal the decision of the chair	Challenge a decision of the Dais	None	Simple majority	Roll call vote	Vote by roll call	None	None
Closure of debate	Move to substantive voting Immediately	2 con	Two-thirds majority	Set the speaker's time	Set or change the speaker's time limit	2 pro / 2 con	Simple majority
Close/re-open the speakers list	No further speakers can be added to the speakers list	None	Simple majority	Suspension of the meeting	Suspends the meeting, usually for the purpose of a (moderated) caucus	None	Simple majority
Decision of competence	Declare the committee incompetent to deal with a particular issue	None	Simple majority	Voting clause by clause	Vote upon each clause of a draft resolution separately	None	None
Declare a topic an important question (restricted to the General Assembly)	Recommendations about the maintenance of international peace and security	2 pro / 2 con	Simple majority	Withdrawal of a motion	If a delegate changes his / her opinion, a motion can be withdrawn	None	None

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