

Chair GUIDE

Haileybury Astana Model United Nations 2020



WE THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS DETERMINED

- to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and
- to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and
- to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and
- to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.

The Preamble describes four areas that are the pillars of the UN,

- Peace and Security
- Human Rights
- The Rule of Law
- Development

These four pillars are all interconnected. You can't fully achieve one without achieving all of them.

Note: it is essential to keep in mind that committee's discussions must be productive and involve every country's policies and views. Therefore, it is suggested for chairs to follow the next timeline in order to efficiently contribute to discussions and consequent resolutions.

Timeline for the proceedings in the committee

Friday (debate)

Saturday (debate/draft resolutions),

Sunday (Passing resolutions)

Taken from the UN Charter

Being a Chair is such an exciting position to hold at a MUN because it requires you to take on responsibility, but also to think well on your feet and to respond immediately to a committee. In many ways the Chair sets the tone of the committee, so it is important to set and maintain a tone that allows you to keep control of the delegates, but that is comfortable and fun for all involved. Every Chair has their own style and that is something that cannot be taught, however, the manner in which the tone to set is something that is applicable to every Chair in every conference.

Here are some guidelines:

1. Always begin more strictly. This shows the delegates you have authority and gains you respect. This is key. If the delegates do not respect you it will be hard to keep control of them as the conference progresses.

2. Remain approachable, open and friendly throughout the conference. It is important that delegates know they can come to their Chairs if they have questions or problems. You must always be polite and attentive to delegates, as this also helps gain you respect. As the saying goes “Treat others as you yourself would like to be treated”. Treating delegates in the right way will make them more willing to comply to your authority.

3. Never publicly contradict a co-chair. As Chairs you are a team, and to maintain your control you must seem united. Contradicting your co-Chair in front of the house is not only rude and undermining, it can also give the delegates the impression that you are not as strong as a team and can lose you respect. If you feel your CoChair has done or said something wrong, quietly mention it to him/her and talk about it afterwards.

4. Never shout at the house/delegates. As a Chair you must always remain calm and collected. Once you begin shouting you quickly lose respect and control of any situation.

5. Never ignore a point made by a delegate or dismiss a question or remark. Even if a comment is inappropriate, let the house know, but move on swiftly and do not pay too much attention to it. By ignoring or dismissing comments or questions you are not fulfilling your role as mentor to the delegates. As mentioned before, always remain approachable and friendly.

6. Always explain things fully and clearly. This ensures that all delegates are aware of what is happening. Even if it seems obvious to you, it may not be to them. If they ask a question and you answer, ask if they have understood or if there is anything further they wish to know. This avoids confusion or misunderstandings, which can breed resentment or anger towards you as a Chair.

7. Do not abuse your authority. It is tempting to want to use the privileges chairing encompasses. However, always remember the responsibilities you have. Abusing your authority can come off as arrogant and will not make delegates any more respectful or friendly towards you.

8. Never be afraid to admit mistakes. The term “The Chair stands corrected” is very useful! Do not try to overlook mistakes you made or dismiss delegates that point these out. Recognise them, accept them and move on. Admitting your faults will show the delegates that you are fair and, after all, only human.

Stock phrases you may wish to use a chair

Stock phrases are simple phrases or words that Chairs use to explain the procedures during debate. These are very useful in all situations. Some example/important stock phrases can be seen below:

- Could the house please come to order?

- The next resolution to be debated will be on the question of...

- Would the main-submitter please take the floor and read out the operative clauses?

- The Chair sets the debate time at 40 minutes of open debate

- *The floor is now open - Are there any delegations wishing to take the floor?*
- *... you have been recognized - ... you have floor*
- *The speaker will [please] refrain from using unparliamentary language*
- *The speaker will [please] refrain from insulting other delegates*
- *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*
- *The speaker has opened himself to point of information. Are there any such points in the house?*
- *Please rise and state your point*
- *Please state your point in the form of a question*
- *Please refrain from asking several questions in one point*
- *Would the delegate please repeat/rephrase the question?*
- *There will be no direct dialogue between delegates*
- *I am sorry, but there is no more time for points of information. Could the speaker please yield the floor?*
- *I am sorry, but in the interest of debate, could the delegate please yield the floor?*
- *There has been a point of order in the house*
- *Your point is well/not well taken*
- *The chair stands corrected*
- *There has been a point of personal privilege on the floor*
- *Could the house please come to order and show the speaker the respect he/she deserves?*
- *Debate time on this resolution has elapsed*
- *We will now move into voting procedures on this resolution*

- Would the administrative staff please close/secure all the doors and take up their voting positions?

- All those in favour of this resolution please raise your placards high

- All those against...

- All those abstaining...

- By a vote of... in favour, against, with... abstentions, this resolution/amendment passes/fails

- Clapping is (not) in order

Chairing Scenarios

During all these scenarios, the most important thing is to stay calm and professional, it takes a lot of responsibility to be a Chair, however after a conference you feel extremely proud and it is definitely worth it.

I. A Chair is sick

This can happen during the conference, but also before the conference. The most important thing is that you will inform your MUN director and your Co-Chairs but also the Executive Team. The Executive Team will then find a replacement and will let you and your Co-Chairs know. If this happens before the conference, you must also send all your research material to your replacement, so that a smooth transaction can take place.

II. The Chair makes a mistake

If you make a mistake, the easiest way is to say you are wrong, therefore just admit it. You should just say “The chair stands corrected”.

III. A question you cannot answer

If a question is being asked by a delegate that you cannot answer, you can always look it up. Ask a Chair who is not chairing at that moment to go to a computer room and to look up the answer to the question. This is the easiest way to continue the debate and to answer the question.

IV. A declaration of war

Declarations of war are absolutely out of order. Make this clear to the entire committee, but do not award it with too much attention and continue with debate.

V. Maintaining silence

You can say “order in the house” numerous times, however sometimes this simply does not work, especially at the end of the day, when delegates get tired or if you are chairing a big committee. It is important to listen to the delegates to understand why they are being so rowdy, in order to understand the best way of keeping them calm. When you call for order, do not proceed before there is order, wait a few seconds. There are a few things you should not do under these circumstances: Don’t keep saying that they need to be quiet, then it is better to have a recess/wait until there is silence. Don’t expect there to be complete silence, only mention it if the murmur bothers the speaker. Don’t lose your temper and do not raise your voice. Never yell, react aggressively or

annoyed at delegates; stay calm, and warn them of consequences that may arise from their behaviour. Don't suspend note passing if it is not the source of commotion.

Also, bear the following in mind:

§ Start with a rather serious chairing style to set the right debating tone. This will also help you establish authority. If everything runs well then you may choose to loosen up.

§ Be polite, friendly, helpful, serious, clear, co-operative, committed, involved, unbiased, fair and diplomatic at all times. This way you earn the respect of the delegates.

§ Recognize delegates from all over the room, especially delegates in the back corners of the room and the first few rows of the room.

§ Be consistent during the debate with your style, policies, and implantations of the Rules of Procedure.

§ Move your ego to the back. Never speak condescendingly or arrogantly towards a delegate.

VI. Chair gets criticism

The idea of having a mutiny amongst the delegates, or notes threatening to impeach the Chair does seem quite daunting, but the most important thing is to stay in control and stay calm. Do not pay too much attention to it, as that way you will give it importance. Remind the house that they are not being constructive and that it is not relevant to the debate. Just say something along the lines of "Thank you for your point, but it is hardly relevant to the debate. It is important that you all try to focus on a constructive debate." Should there be a motion "to remove the Chair", ask your Co-Chair to state that this is out of order.

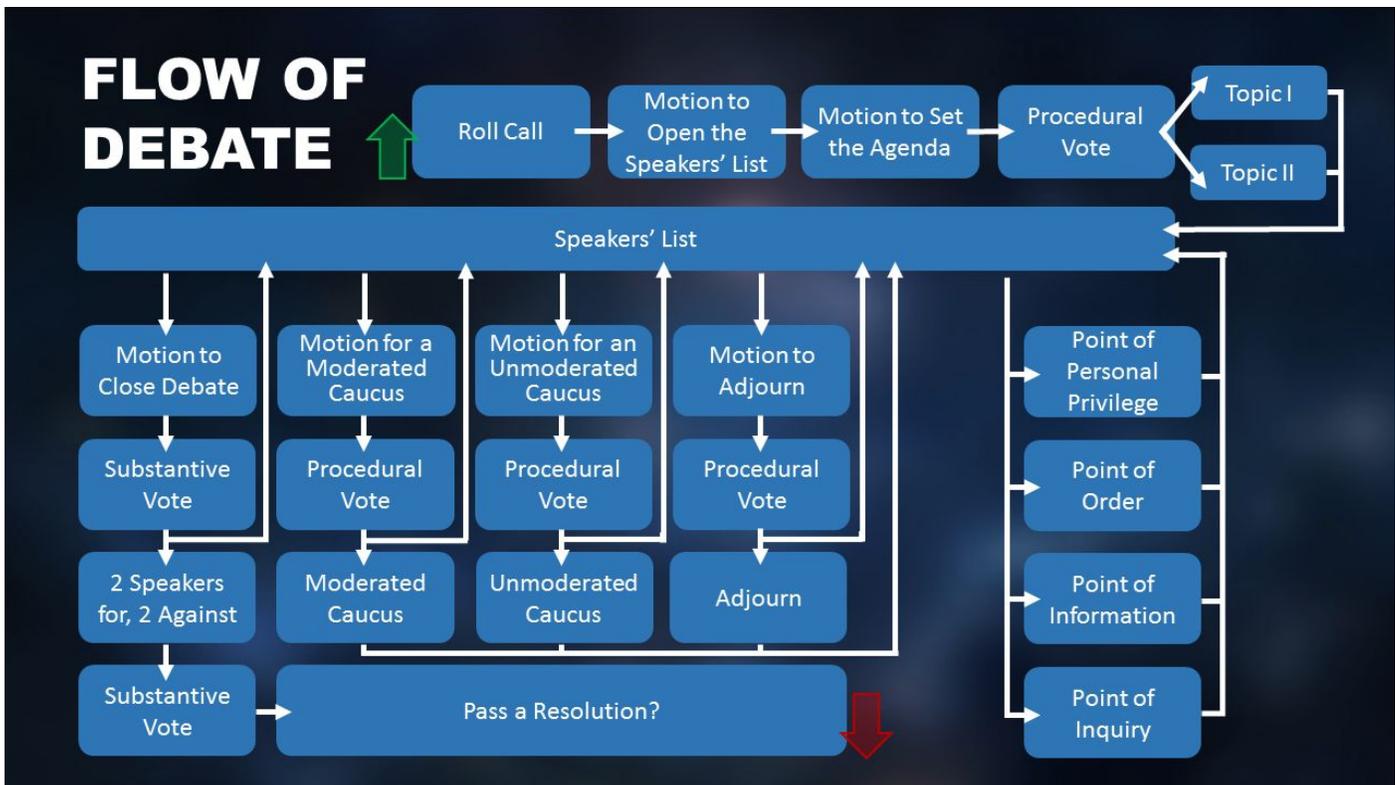
VII. Dealing with disruptive delegates

Chairs will occasionally have to deal with "disruptive" delegates, who are usually simply seeking attention. Chairs should not take their remarks or behaviour as a personal insult, but deal with them quietly and calmly. Chairs should react when the general conduct of a delegate is inappropriate to the conference and shows a lack of respect or politeness or if a delegate voices opinions. In both cases the following steps can be taken. Take them aside privately, explain the situation, and ask them nicely to stop their current behaviour. Try to do this privately without making it public in front of the whole forum. If the delegate continues to disrupt the forum, send them to one of the Executive Team. They will then deal with those delegates. In extreme cases, the Executive Team may decide to confiscate the badge and remove the delegate from the forum and conference. MUN directors should also be informed about this. These disruptive delegates will be reported to the Board of Directors, who will consider further action, such as banning the school from participation in future conferences.

TOP TIPS

You should keep the C-strategy in mind. Your behaviour should tie in with these words: Calm Creative Considerate Co-ordinated in Control Cooperative

2. If you are feeling insecure about the authority you have over the delegates do not ever show this in arrogant behaviour towards them.
3. When you are stressed or unsure about how to deal with a situation always discuss with you Co-Chair. You are a team for a reason!
4. Always take your time. You do not need to rush things- it can impede your ability to make good decisions and can cause you more stress than is necessary.
5. Use stock phrases; they are useful and explain exactly what you want to say in most situations.
6. Never yell at delegates, make sure to stay calm and professional at all times. Speak loudly and firm.
7. You are attending this conference as a Chair, a position that comes with a lot of responsibility, but don't forget to enjoy and have a laugh with your delegates at times.



Adapted from:

"Student Officers Manual." The Hague Model United Nations, THIMUN Foundation. Revised by Secretariat
2011 ed. 2011. Print.