

D9820 RULES OF DEBATE

MUNA 2007

We hope this is a fun weekend. We hope you will add to your knowledge of how United Nations operates as well as learning and explaining to your friends here how different countries view different subjects of world significance.

National costumes add to the atmosphere and occasion of the event and we ask you to wear them to all sessions.

This is not an extension of school, you are not being judged, marks are not being awarded at the end of the weekend.....but there are a few awards to add to the fun.

All delegates will receive a list of the delegates names, their contact details and the countries that they represented so that you can maintain contact in the future if you wish to.

Your views and the results of your deliberations over these two days will be forwarded to the United Nations.

Over the two days, we will keep the rules to a minimum so you are not overburdened and we will introduce them progressively as your skills, knowledge and confidence develop. Some follow the rules of debate as you know them and some follow the UN system.

Rule 1 (How to address the assembly)

To maintain order, all comments are addressed to and through the Secretary General. Your comments during Assembly sessions must not be made directly to the delegates of another country. Delegates (ie you) should open any address with

“Mr Secretary General, we the delegates from.... [then state your country]...”

You are reminded that where possible, the views you put forward in debate should be the likely views of the country you are representing and **not your own personal views**. For a resolution to be carried, it requires 51% support not merely a majority (you may abstain from voting). No country has a veto.

Rule 2 (Rules of Debate)

*When a resolution is to be debated, the **Secretary General** will call for a Proposer and a Seconder by a show of hands. He will then ask for countries who wish to speak in support of the motion and then ask for countries against.*

The proposer and the principal speaker against the motion will open the debate and will also be given the opportunity to make closing statements. In most cases these should be used to summarise support or opposition to the motion and to rebut

arguments put forward during the debate, not as an opportunity for introducing new arguments.

Rule 3 (Block Meetings)

Throughout much of UN history, resolutions have been upheld or defeated as a result of the support or otherwise of regional blocks who have common interests.

Broadly speaking, they fall into the regional groupings of Asia, Eastern Block and former Communist Countries, Arab states, Developing Third World Countries and the western Alliance. We will set up these blocks within the countries represented here and during the debate delegates may call for a Block Meeting.

Each Block should try to adopt a common debating and voting position on a resolution. If you think one of the other blocks might also support your position you may wish to send a delegate to solicit their support during a break for Block Meetings. Should you be successful, this will almost certainly ensure your position is carried when the resolution is put to the vote.

Rule 4 (Amendments)

If during a debate a resolution appears to require a minor amendment in order to achieve majority support, any country can submit in writing a proposal to the Secretary General, on the forms provided. He will seek acceptance of the amendment from the proposer and seconder of the original resolution. If accepted that then becomes the resolution without a vote, if not accepted, it is either withdrawn or put to assembly vote.

Introduction of amendments should be limited and only submitted when it becomes obvious that the resolution will not be carried as presented but would be accepted with minor modifications that maintain the integrity of the original resolution.

Rule 5 (Point of Order)

Any delegate may interrupt the debate by rising from their seat and calling upon the Secretary General for a ruling on a point of order. For Points of Order to be upheld, they will generally be factual or related to the conduct of a delegate in the assembly.

For example:

If during the course of the debate a delegate makes a slanderous or grossly inaccurate comment in respect of a member countries actions, reputation, the integrity of the countries delegates or Head of State, the representatives of the country impugned may wish to respond and call for a Point of Order.

Points of Order to be upheld must generally be based on well established fact not opinion and will not be accepted if used as delegates to make debating points. Points of Order should be used sparingly so that the flow of the debate on resolutions is not

being consistently interrupted.

Rule 6 (Motions of Dissent)

*These can be introduced by delegates if in their opinion **the Secretary General** appears to be showing bias in his rulings or his conduct of the debate. They require a seconder. The **Secretary General** is then obliged to accept the Motion of Dissent and is required to vacate the chair. The President will call for a vote on the motion which if supported by a majority in the Assembly will result in an alternate chairperson replacing **the Secretary General** for the remainder of the debate on that resolution.*

Rule 7 (That the Resolution be Put)

If a debate is going nowhere and nothing new is being said or there is general agreement either to support or reject the resolution, then any delegate can require “that the resolution be put”. A Seconder is required. If this vote has a majority then the resolution being debated is put. If the resolution be put vote fails then the debate continues with countries still to speak, being allowed to continue.

Rule 8 (Diplomatic Notes)

These are passed between block members and used to persuade those who are yet to speak to add a block members views during a presentation. The delegate sending the note may not have been invited to speak or did not elect to speak when speakers were initially called for. Use them sparingly. If they start to appear like confetti they will be collected and the more erudite will be read out to all.

Rule 9 (Leave to make a Statement)

Granted only to clarify an error in debate.

Rule 10 (Propose a Suspension of Standing Orders)

Used by the Secretary General to suspend debate to acknowledge the arrival of a special guest. Eg the District Governor.