

# Parliamentary Procedure Guide



**GSMUN 2012**



# Parliamentary Procedure Guide

For novices, the most confusing aspect of Model United Nations is usually parliamentary procedure. “Parli Pro” provides order to large gatherings, such as UN committees. Even if the following descriptions don’t seem clear, don’t worry. Once you are actually in committee, everything will be much clearer. Remember, you can always ask your chair a question about procedure by raising a point of parliamentary inquiry (more about that later).

## INTRODUCTORY RULES

### 1. Scope of the Rules

These introductory rules, in their entirety, apply to all Governor’s School Model United Nations Conference committees and should be followed by all delegates.

### 2. Attire

All delegates are expected to wear Western Business Attire during the conference. For boys, this entails a shirt and tie. For girls, this means a skirt, slacks, or a dress. Delegates must wear professional attire befitting the professional setting of the conference.

### 3. Conduct

All delegates are expected to maintain courteous conduct and decorum during all sessions by respecting staff rulings and other delegates.

## THE COMMITTEE

### 4. Functions of the Committee Chairperson

A chairperson shall open and close each session, enforce the rules, recognize speakers, put questions to a vote, and announce rulings. All of these actions are subject to the chair’s discretion with the best interests of the committee in mind.

### 5. Roll Call

Roll call is the first order of business for any session; it is crucial because a quorum (one-half of the members plus one) is required for a committee to take action on an issue. If a delegation is present, it shall answer either “present” or “present and voting” when the name of its country is called.

Answering “present” simply means that the delegation is attending the committee session, will vote on all procedural matters, and can vote “yes,” “no,” or “abstain” on resolutions. However, a delegate who answers “present and voting” is obligated not only to vote on all procedural issues, but also to either vote “yes” or “no” on all resolutions.

If a delegate arrives after the opening roll call, he or she must send a note to the dais informing them of his or her presence and voting status.

### 6. Voting Rights

In General Assembly committees, each member state shall have only one vote. Abstentions on a matter may only take place when voting on a resolution or an amendment. All delegations must vote on procedural matters.

*Note:* Observer states may vote only on procedural matters, not on amendments or resolutions.

## DEBATE

### 7. Setting the Agenda

To begin debate on setting a topic, a temporary speakers' list will be created by a delegate's motion. In the event of a delegate making a motion to set the topic, one speaker in favor and one against will address the committee for 30 seconds each. A simple majority sets the topic, and if the motion fails, the speakers' list continues until a topic is selected.

### 8. Speakers' List

After a topic is selected, a speakers' list will be created with a set speaking time by a delegate motion. Speakers may comment on the topic, as well as any resolution or amendment pertaining to the topic. Once a speakers' list is exhausted of all names, debate on the topic will cease, and the committee will move into voting procedures.

### 9. Closing and Re-opening the Speakers' List

A delegate may make a motion at any time either to close or to re-open the speakers' list. When it is closed, debate continues, but no more nations can be added to the list. The list can be re-opened at a later time. To do either action, one speaker for and one against are required, as well as a simple majority vote.

### 10. Time Limit

A strict time limit shall be placed on all speakers in order to promote the flow of debate. To change the speaking time, a motion may be made on the floor. One speaker for and one against are required, as well as a simple majority vote.

### 11. Yielding

A speaker who is discussing a substantive issue may yield his or her time to the following: points of information from the body, the Chairperson, or to another member, who cannot yield that time to another. A yield must be specified by the speaker, and if time is yielded to the chair, no comments are allowed. Any yield must be made before a delegate begins his or her speech. Sitting down without yielding is considered a yield to the chair.

### 12. Right of Reply

If a delegation feels a remark made was unjustly injurious to them or their country, a right of reply may be granted at the Chair's discretion. In order to request this, the delegation must immediately send a note to the dais explaining how their country was insulted. The Chair's ruling may not be appealed.

## POINTS AND MOTIONS

### 13. Points in Committee

*Point of Order:* This is made when a member wishes to draw attention to a possible procedural error by the chair. The point of order and the Chair's ruling must be immediate.

*Point of Parliamentary Inquiry:* This is made when a question exists regarding these rules and is used for clarification.

*Point of Information:* This is a question to a speaker made when the speaker yields to points of information. Once recognized by the Chairperson, a delegate may ask a concise question; only the answer shall count against the speaker's time limit. If any clarification of the question is needed, it will be made by the Chair, who will ask the questioner.

*Point of Personal Privilege:* This point may be made if at any time a delegate experiences a personal discomfort which impairs his or her ability to participate in the proceedings. The Chair will attempt to relieve the cause of discomfort if possible. This is the only point which may interrupt a speaker.

#### **14. Motions**

*Motion to Postpone Debate:* If it becomes necessary to postpone debate on a topic, this motion should be made. To re-open debate, rules regarding the speakers' list will be followed, and the old speakers' list will be used.

*Motion to Close Debate:* If a member wishes to close debate and move into voting procedure, this motion may be made. There will be two speakers for and two against this motion, and a two-thirds majority is required.

*Motion for a Moderated Caucus:* The committee may digress from the speakers' list and the Chair will moderate. The delegate raising the motion must recommend a total time for the caucus as well as a speaker's time and the subject of debate.

*Motion for an Unmoderated Caucus:* During debate, this motion may be made at any time. The time limit is set at the discretion of the chair and will not exceed thirty minutes. The motion will be put to immediate vote and will require a simple majority to pass. No rules of formal debate will exist at this time, and delegates are free to discuss committee matters with others.

*Motion to Recess:* This motion can be made at any time at the Chair's unappealing discretion. It requires a simple majority to pass.

### **RESOLUTIONS AND AMENDMENTS**

#### **15. Resolutions**

All business at the conference is passed in resolution form. A resolution is introduced by one or more members of the committee who wish to sponsor it. For it to be introduced and considered, one-fifth of the members present must place their country's signatures on the resolution. These signatories do not necessarily have to support the resolution, but they must wish to see it considered. More than one resolution may be signed by a delegation. A resolution is called a "working paper" until it has gone through the above steps and has been formally read to the committee. After the paper has been introduced, it is henceforth referred to as a "draft resolution." At the discretion of the Chair, a moderated caucus may be given to the sponsors in order to discuss the resolution and to answer questions.

#### **16. Amendments**

An amendment changes a working paper, draft resolution, or resolution by adding, striking out, or substituting a word or phrase in an operative clause. A friendly amendment is one agreed on by all sponsors and must be submitted to the Chair with the signatures of all sponsors. After being reviewed by the Chair, the amendment becomes part of the original document. An unfriendly amendment is one that is not supported by all of the sponsors. Therefore, it requires the signatures of one-fifth of the members present to be considered. Unfriendly amendments are voted on before the draft resolution to which they correspond and in the order in which they were submitted. An unfriendly amendment requires a two-thirds vote to pass.

### **17. Withdrawal of Resolution or Amendment**

If all sponsors agree on the withdrawal of an amendment or draft resolution, it will be formally removed from debate and all discussion on the former resolution will immediately cease.

## **VOTING**

### **18. Voting on Procedure**

Members present must vote on all procedural matters.

### **19. Voting on Resolutions**

Resolutions require a simple majority to pass. A member who answered “present and voting” during roll call may not abstain.

### **20. Conduct**

When voting begins, the chamber will be sealed and silent, and no entry or exit is permitted. All points or motions not pertaining to the vote are out of order.

### **21. Roll Call Votes**

Upon request by a member and with the Chair’s permission, a roll call vote will commence. The Chair shall call out each member’s name, and they shall respond with: Yes, Yes with Rights, No, No with Rights, Abstain, or Pass. Once the list is read through, all members who passed shall then vote; delegates who pass may not then abstain. Explanations from those who voted with rights should be concise and concern only those instances when a vote goes against policy. If a member answered “present and voting” during roll call, then they may not abstain from voting on a resolution.

### **22. Resolution Reordering**

If multiple draft resolutions exist, they are considered in order of submission. However, a motion for reordering may be made before voting. When it is made, the new order of voting must be stipulated by the member who requests the adjustment. There shall be one speaker for this motion and one against, and it requires a simple majority to pass.

### **23. Dividing the Question**

Immediately after debate is closed and before unfriendly amendments are considered, a motion for division may be made. This means that a member wants two or more parts of a draft resolution to be considered separately; these parts shall be specified by the speaker. Two speakers both for and against are required. Once the speakers are finished, a vote on the division shall be made. The motion requires a simple majority to pass. Should it pass, the sections that were divided shall be voted on separately. If there is more than one motion for division, the Chair shall decide their order of consideration.

## **OTHER**

### **24. Appealing the Chair’s Decision**

A delegate can move to appeal rulings on a discretionary matter by first speaking in favor of a reversal, after which the Chair will speak in favor of his or her ruling. A two-thirds vote must be made to overturn a ruling.

**Note: All of the above rules are derived from modified versions of Robert’s Rules of Order and other Model United Nations Parliamentary Procedures.**

## *Technology Code of Conduct*

1. All computer users have the responsibility to use computer resources in an efficient, effective, ethical, and lawful manner. The following policies, rules, and conditions apply to all users of computer resources and services. Computer resources include, but are not limited to, the following: host computers, file servers, workstations, stand alone computers, laptops, software, data projectors, and internal or external communication networks.
2. Any student who intentionally damages or destroys Maggie L. Walker Governor's School's (MLWGS) hardware, and/or software, whether directly or indirectly, shall also be responsible for all costs associated with repair and/or replacement.
3. Fraudulent, harassing, embarrassing, indecent, profane, obscene, intimidating, or any unlawful material shall not be sent by email or any other form of electronic communication or displayed on or stored in Maggie L. Walker Governor's School's computers and networks. Users encountering or receiving such material must immediately report the incident to the Director of Technology for investigation.

## RULES OF PROCEDURE- SHORT FORM

### PROCEDURAL MOTIONS (NO ABSTENTIONS)

<b>Motion</b>	<b>Speakers</b>	<b>Vote to Pass</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Setting the Agenda	1F, 1A	Majority	
Postpone Debate	1F, 1A	Majority	
Close Debate	2F, 2A	2/3	
Moderated Caucus	none	Majority	Subject to Chair's Approval
Unmoderated Caucus	none	Majority	Subject to Chair's Approval
Recess	none	Majority	Subject to Chair's Approval
Closing Speaker's List	2F, 2A	Majority	
Time limit on speech	2F, 2A	Majority	
Division of Resolution	2F, 2A	Majority	
Question of Competence	1F, 1A	2/3	Subject to Chair's Approval
Roll Call Vote			Subject to Chair's Approval

### POINTS

<b>Point</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Order	Calls attention to possible procedural error
Parliamentary Procedure	Inquiry to Chair regarding the rules
Information	Questions to Speakers
Personal Privilege	Personal Discomfort

### RESOLUTIONS AND AMENDMENTS (ABSTENTIONS PERMITTED)

<b>Rule</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Resolutions	Require signatures from 1/5 of body
Friendly Amendment	Automatic inclusion with signatures of all sponsors
Unfriendly Amendment	Requires signatures from 1/5 of body and 2/3 vote to pass

### COMMENTS AND YIELDS

<b>Yield</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Chair	No comments/questions allowed
Points of Information	To questions from the Floor
Another Delegate	He/she may not re-yield the time

## RESOLUTION FORMAT

Committee Name:

Official Name of Sponsoring Country or Countries:

Signatories:

Topic:

SKIP TWO LINES AND CENTER THE TITLE WHICH CANNOT BE CHANGED BY  
AMENDMENT

The General Assembly (or other organ),

*Recalling* that five spaces should be indented before each preambulatory phrase,

*Recognizing* that one line should be skipped after the title and before and after every phrase,

*Gravely concerned* that delegates may forget to use a comma at the end of preambulatory phrases,

*Noting* that every resolution begins with the name of the organ, not with the name of the committee,

*Recalling* that preambulatory phrases cannot be amended,

*Aware* that the format of a resolution may be changed by the Chair,

1. Nevertheless recognizes that this format is used at most conferences;
2. Urges that three lines separate the preambulatory portion from the operative portion of the resolution;
3. Welcomes clear and simple wording and splitting complex ideas into sub-operative clauses with:
  - (a) A colon introducing the first sub-operative,
  - (b) One line between each sub-operative, and
  - (c) No underlining within the sub-operative;
4. Observes that a resolution, being only one sentence, always ends with a period.

## RESOLUTION INTRODUCTORY PHRASES

### Preambulatory Phrases

Affirming	Expressing its satisfaction	Keeping in mind
Alarmed by	Fulfilling	Noting further
Approving	Fully aware	Noting with regret
Aware of	Fully alarmed	Noting with satisfaction
Believing	Fully believing	Noting with deep concern
Bearing in mind	Further deploring	Noting further
Cognizant of	Further recalling	Noting with approval
Confident	Guided by	Observing
Declaring	Having adopted	Realizing
Deeply concerned	Having considered	
Deeply conscious	Having considered further	
Deeply convinced	Having devoted attention	
Deeply disturbed	Having examined	
Deeply regretting	Having heard	
Desiring	Having received	
Emphasizing	Having studied	
Expecting		
Expressing its appreciation		

### Operative Clauses

Accepts	Emphasizes	Proclaims
Affirming	Encourages	Reaffirms
Approves	Endorses	Recommends
Authorizes	Expresses its appreciation	Reminds
Calls for	Expresses its hope	Regrets
Calls upon	Further invites	Resolves
Condemns (UNSC only)	Further proclaims	Solemnly affirms
Congratulates	Further reminds	Strongly condemns (UNSC only)
Confirms	Further recommends	Supports
Considers	Further requires	Takes note of
Declares accordingly	Further resolves	Trusts
Deplores	Has resolved	Urges
Draws attention	Notes	
Designates		

## SAMPLE RESOLUTION

### Disarmament and International Security Committee

**Sponsors:** Afghanistan, Bolivia, China, Guinea-Bissau, Malaysia, Philippines

**Signatories:** Yugoslavia, Canada, USA, Luxembourg, Peru, South Africa, Zambia, United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Finland, Mexico

**Topic:** Disarmament

### RESOLUTION 1-2

The General Assembly,

*Recognizing* the need for international compliance and trust while moving toward the eventual goal of disarmament,

*Recalling* the original goal of the UN to promote a healthy global environment through cooperation,

*Believing* that participation in the Conventional Arms Register, although voluntary, would benefit the global community,

*Noting with concern* the lack of a diverse population in the current Conventional Arms Register,

1. Defines conventional arms transfer as a movement of conventional arms from Nation “A” to Nation “B” by sale, trade, or barter;
2. Further defines transparency as the act of making known to the global community clear, concise, and easily understandable information concerning arms;
3. Designates a participatory nation as one that yearly submits to a register by April 30th, declaring what conventional arms it may have traded; and
4. Calls for the establishment of incentives for participatory nations in the form of:
  - (a) Non-military technology including:
    - i. Agricultural,
    - ii. Medical, and
    - iii. Educational;
  - (b) Refers the designation of incentives to:
    - i. Regional bodies,
    - ii. Committee on Sustainable Development, and
    - iii. Committee on Science and Technology.

## **PARLIAMENTARY RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR SPECIALIZED AGENCIES**

See the standard **Parliamentary Procedure Guide** for general rules.

Cabinets, country-specific security councils, and other specialized agencies will function by default in a **moderated caucus** for the purpose of moving debate along quickly. Chairs will determine speaking time. Chairs will also recognize speakers, who may stand up at their table or at a podium depending on the Chair's discretion. Chairs will **NOT** ask for Points and Motions between speakers. Therefore, delegates must make a point or motion before the chair calls on the next speaker by raising their placards to get the Chair's attention. Since resolutions are not used in most specialized agencies, unmoderated caucuses will be allowed only if necessary.

After a cabinet sets the agenda for the first topic, the delegates will move between both topics continuously in response to the crises that will follow. Thus, there is no need to vote to "close debate" or "postpone debate."

### **Memoranda:**

Each memorandum should follow the example provided. Although there are no specific clauses for memoranda, the wording of the writing should be diplomatic since other countries' leaders will be reading communiqués and press releases.

Communiqués, Directives, and Press Releases will be introduced by the writer after submitting the memorandum to the Chair. The Chair will ask the writer to give a brief introduction to the memorandum before reading the memorandum to the committee. All memoranda requiring approval by the entire committee will be passed by a simple majority vote.

Information Requests will be sent directly to the Chair, who will forward the question to the appropriate department.

## RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR SPECIALIZED AGENCIES – SHORT FORM

### PROCEDURAL MOTIONS (NO ABSTENTIONS)

<b>Motion</b>	<b>Speakers</b>	<b>Vote to Pass</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Setting the Agenda	Minimum 1F, 1A	Majority	Subject to Chair's approval
Unmoderated Caucus	None	Majority	Subject to Chair's approval
Recess	None	Majority	Subject to Chair's approval
Question of Competence	1F, 1A	2/3	Subject to Chair's approval
Roll Call Vote	None	None	Subject to Chair's approval
Adjourn	None	Majority	Subject to Chair's approval

### POINTS

<b>Point</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Order	Call attention to possible procedural error
Parliamentary Procedure	Inquiry to Chair regarding the rules
Information	Questions to Speakers
Personal Privilege	Personal Discomfort

### MEMORANDA

<b>Memorandum</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Communiqués	Sent out to correspond with cabinets of other countries (Example: <i>see below</i> )
Press Releases	Can be used to send condolences to the public after failed missions or inform the public of any news  Example: <i>The Pakistani Government would like to offer its condolences to the families impacted by the attack last night in Karachi and inform the public of the undergoing investigations on suspect groups behind the attacks.</i>

Directives

Used to instruct any groups under the jurisdiction of the agency

Example: *Move the troops to the border of Pakistan and be ready for any action in case of emergency.*

Information Requests

Sent to respective departments under the jurisdiction of the agency (“home government”) for information on current crisis or debate topics

Example: *Has the C.I.A. gathered any new information regarding the mobilization of troops on the Pakistani border?*

## **FORMAT OF MEMORANDA**

### EXAMPLE OF COMMUNIQUÉ FROM CHECHNYA TO RUSSIAN CABINET

To: Russian Cabinet

From: Chechnya

Chechnya would like to remind the Russian Cabinet of the demands sent regarding the negotiations. If the demands are not met within an hour, Chechnya will declare its independence from Russia and establish itself as an independent nation.

Chechnya Independence Movement