

# WESMUN 2023

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## MUN PROCEDURE: A GUIDE

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### Resolutions: the aim of MUN

A resolution is the UN version of a parliament bill. A resolution is composed of perambulatory clauses and operative clauses. For further details on resolutions and resolution-writing please see our page on **Resolution-writing: A Guide**.

All delegates are welcome to submit a resolution to their committee on one of the topics which that committee will be debating. You can find the topics for your committee on the **Committees and Agenda Topics** page on our website.

For those in the Special Commission and Security Council, please be aware that no pre-formed resolutions are debated. Please see the individual procedure sections on these committees for more detail.

### Lobbying

In Model United Nations, the chair will declare an 'Unmoderated Caucus' before debating on individual resolutions begins. This basically means time for delegates to 'lobby', namely, presenting their resolutions and discussing them with other committee members. The aim of this lobbying process is to convince delegates to 'co-submit' your resolution (i.e to say they support its proposals and sign a form to that effect).

To succeed with lobbying, delegates should understand their resolution entirely, be prepared to summarise it to other delegates and present its strengths in a persuasive manner. Before a resolution can be submitted, it must have a number of co-submitters. Delegates will be informed of the required number by their committee chairs at the beginning of lobbying.

In order to ensure that each resolution does indeed have widespread committee interest, a maximum of two delegates from the same school may co-submit a resolution. A 'main submitter' (the principal author of the resolution) may therefore only have one other signature from their own school.

All co-submitters should preferably be countries which are themselves allied with the main submitter's nation or share a common aim for the particular issue that the resolution deals with. Chairs will be aware of the relationships between nations in the UN and will be able to distinguish between realistic and inappropriate allegiances.

### Merging a resolution

If two or more delegates agree with each other's proposals, it is possible to merge resolutions. Merger effectively involves the creation of one resolution from many, and the resulting document will have multiple main submitters.

This is often a very successful strategy in MUN, since one can call upon the allies of more nations to co-submit the resolution. Indeed, merged resolutions will be prioritised at WesMUN, since it is thought that resolutions resulting from collaboration will produce better quality proposals and broader committee support.

## Submitting a resolution

Once all the requisite signatures have been canvassed, delegates should submit their resolutions to the Approval Panel. The Approval Panel is essentially a body of your advisors, who will read the submitted resolutions and check the content for appropriateness and accuracy. The Approval Panel at WesMUN will also try to prioritise high-quality resolutions for debate, as well as ensuring a broad spread of contributions from each school.

The individual Committee Chairs will explain to delegates how to submit their resolution. Typically, however, you will need to take an electronic copy of your resolution, together with a record of your co-submitters' signatures, to the Approval Panel. They will then either approve it for debate or call you back to make changes if necessary.

## Debate procedure

The chair will firstly propose an allocated amount of time for debate for and against a resolution. The time is restricted to this allocated amount, unless a motion is proposed to extend debate time. The motion must have no objections and be permitted by the chair.

The main submitter will be entitled to take the floor for a short speech (the chair will allocate a specific time for the speech on a case by case basis). The speech will count in time for the resolution. Points of information (a brief question relating to the resolution or speech) may be entertained at the discretion of the speaker and the chair. The main submitter should briefly outline the operative clauses of the resolution and then offer a short speech on why they believe the resolution should pass. The delegate may then yield to another delegate (again at the chair's discretion) or may return the floor back to the chair.

It is important that delegates maintain parliamentary language throughout. This includes not referring to themselves in the first person and only referring directly to their country or using plural pronouns such as "we".

It should be noted by all delegates, as is common MUN procedure, that there is no need to debate funding amounts for resolution as it is assumed that the UN has essentially infinite amounts of money. Debate may, however, be entertained on whether the resolution is an effective use of funds. After the main submitter has spoken, the chair will open the floor to other delegates who may also offer speeches on the resolution. These speeches may also be followed by points of information as mentioned afore.

In time against, along with further speeches, amendments to the resolution may be submitted. Amendments are essentially a proposed change to the resolution, either by altering a clause, adding a clause or deleting some or all of a clause. These will be debated in a mini-version of a resolution debate (with 'for' and 'against'), before the committee vote on the amendment as a whole. Delegates should note that abstentions are not permitted in amendment voting, since it is thought that an amendment can only ever improve or detract from a resolution.

## Motions during debate

If a delegate is unsure about committee procedure or would like to inquire if the chair or another delegate is correctly following protocol, they may raise a '**Point of Parliamentary Inquiry**', at which point the chair will ask them to stand and state their point clearly. If a delegate has a personal issue, such as not being able to hear a fellow delegate, they may also raise a '**Point of Personal Privilege**'.

## Voting

After speeches and points of information have been entertained both for and against a resolution, delegates will be able to vote on a resolution. In voting on a resolution delegates are able to abstain if they wish.

For voting on amendments to the resolution (which are submitted in time against) no abstentions are permitted and all delegates must vote either in favour or against the amendment.

Whilst voting, delegates should raise their placards when instructed to do so by the chairs according to their voting decision. If the number of abstentions is significant enough to change the outcome of the vote, delegates may motion to divide the house. If this is entertained by the chairs then a second vote will commence.

### **General Assembly (G.A.)**

Debate in the General Assembly will follow in the same manner as above, with the caveat that abstentions are not permissible.

### **More information**

Should you want to find out more about MUN procedure and debate, you may find the following websites helpful:

- <http://www.una.org.uk/content/model-un-rules-and-procedure>
- <http://bestdelegate.com/mun-made-easy-how-to-get-started-with-model-united-nations/>

Westminster will also be running workshops for inexperienced delegates in the run-up to WesMUN. If you are reasonably local, please do come along!