

WESMUN 2023

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SPECIAL COMMISSION AND SECURITY COUNCIL PROCEDURE: A GUIDE

Both the Special Commission and Security Council committees are intended for experienced delegates who feel confident about Model United Nations.

Special Commission

The Special Commission differs from other committees in that it does not require delegates to submit whole resolutions. Rather, delegates offer up individual clauses and a single resolution is drafted by the committee in response to a particular issue. Debate on these clauses is free and not restricted by time for or time against. Anyone may speak on the resolution and amendments will be welcomed by the chairs.

Security Council

For the Security Council delegates do submit entire resolutions, however, debate is entertained on each clause of a resolution independently. Amendments to clauses may be submitted and debate for these follows in time against an individual clause. The President of the Security Council will set time for and against an individual clause. The Security Council is the only committee or body in the United Nations which may “demand”, “condemn” or “decide”. It is also the only committee which is able to employ economic sanctions or deploy UN peacekeepers. It therefore holds a prestige and as such we advise that delegations put their most experience delegates forward for the Security Council.

Voting

Clause voting permits abstentions in these committees, however, when voting upon amendments it is not in order to abstain from voting. For the Special Commission a simple majority vote is needed to pass a clause or amendment.

For the Security Council, amendments require a simple majority to pass; abstentions are not in order. Clauses require a three/fifths majority to pass, provided that none of the P5 Nations (Russia, USA, China, France and the UK) exercise a no vote, colloquially known as a ‘veto’. If a P5 nation holds an intention to veto a clause, they should make this known to the committee delegates before voting procedure begins to avoid a frivolous vote. In these cases, an unmoderated caucus is usually permitted by the President to try and pass the clause, or at least amend it suitably.

These resolutions (one from the Special Commission and one from the Security Council) will both be debated in the General Assembly at WESMUN. Note that the neither of these committees is presided over by chairs, rather the Special Commission is headed by commissioners and the Security Council by a President.