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Preparation Paper/Study Guide:

Security Council (SC)

“Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflicts”

Welcome

Honorable Delegates of the Security Council!

A very warm welcome to the beginning of your preparations for Vienna International Model United Nations 2016! It is truly admirable that you will be convening along with the rest of the Security Council for what promises to be...no, needs to be a constructive session this August.

The United Nations Security Council is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations and has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. It is the most powerful body of the United Nations with the ability to pass binding resolutions. The Security Council consists of 5 permanent members (China, France, Russian Federation, United Kingdom and the United States) and 10 non-permanent members, elected on a 5 regional basis to serve two-year terms.

In contemporary armed conflicts, innocent civilians often constitute an overwhelming majority of victims and have at times been deliberately targeted. The most vulnerable populations at risk include women and children, who are often killed, raped and sexually abused, kidnapped and enslaved, and children, who are taken and forced to become soldiers. Survivors are often displaced, by force or for lack of choice, taking refuge in camps where they are often defenceless against armed attacks and harassment. Many are maimed by mines and other indiscriminate munitions. Even more die of the indirect effects of armed conflict: disease, malnutrition, and famine.

The quality and insightfulness of this debate will lie in your hands this July. Prepare well. We will see you in a month!

Your Security Council Board

1) Introduction to the Committee

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations and is charged with the maintenance of international peace and security. Its establishment and nature is enshrined in Chapter V of the United Nations Charter. Its powers include the establishment of peacekeeping operations, the establishment of international sanctions, and the authorization of military action through Security Council resolutions; it is the only UN body with the authority to issue binding resolutions to member states.

The Security Council held its first session on 17 January 1946. It consists of fifteen members. The great powers that were the victors of World War II— Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States — along with France and China, serve as the body's five permanent members. These permanent members can veto any substantive Security Council resolution, including those on the admission of new member states or candidates for Secretary-General. The Security Council also has 10 non-permanent members, elected on a 5 regional basis to serve two-year terms. The body's presidency rotates monthly between its members.

The UNSC was designed to address some of the flaws of the UN's spiritual predecessor, the League of Nations, which was often paralyzed as complete unanimity among its members was required in order to be able to act. The Security Council was designed to act as a quasi-executive for the UN, and to be able to respond rapidly to international crises as and when they arose. This was actually not too dissimilar from the former League of Nations, which like the modern United Nations, had as its principal organs; a General Assembly of all members, an International (permanent) Court of Justice, and an Executive Council. However, unlike the League's Council, the United Nations Security Council has a far larger set of powers, and enjoys a more comprehensive membership than the League's Executive Council. With the addition of the United States and the former Soviet Union as permanent members, the UNSC not only had unprecedented legal powers, but also effectively controlled the balance of power in the world, with the 'hard power' and political will to act. The United Nations Security Council is, in many ways, a unique institution. It exercises legislative, judicial and executive powers; operates with few legally binding checks and balances and has even been described as being 'unbound by law'.

The Council has broad powers to maintain international peace and security, most notably under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, and its decisions are binding on UN members. There are two systems of voting in the Security Council. On procedural matters the affirmative vote of any nine members is necessary, but on substantive matters the nine affirmative votes required must include those of the five permanent members. This requirement of Big Five unanimity embodies the so-called veto. In practice the council has, on most substantive matters, not treated an abstention by a permanent member as a veto. In two situations, however, those of recommending applicants for UN membership and of approving proposed amendments to the charter, the actual concurrence of all permanent members has been required. The veto has prevented much substantive action by the UN, but it embodies the reality that resolution of major crises requires agreement of the major powers.

Under the charter the council may take measures on any danger to world peace. It may act upon complaint of a member or of a non-member, on notification by the Secretary-General or by the General Assembly, or of its own volition. In general the Council considers matters of two sorts. The first is "disputes" (or situations that may give rise to them) that might endanger peace. Here the council is limited to making recommendations to the parties after it has exhausted other methods of reaching a solution. In the case of more serious matters, such as "threats to the peace," "breaches of the peace," and "acts of aggression," the council may take enforcement measures. These may range from full or partial rupture of economic or diplomatic relations to military operations of any scope deemed necessary. By the terms of the charter, the UN was forbidden to intervene in matters "which are essentially ... domestic," but this limitation was not intended to hinder Security Council measures to prevent threats to peace. The charter was intentionally ambiguous regarding domestic issues that could also be construed as threats to peace and left a potential opening for intervention in domestic issues that threaten to have dangerous international repercussions. The five permanent members, France, Great Britain, the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation, as well as the United States and ten elected, non-permanent members, together form the United Nations Security Council.

Elected members hold their place on the Council for a two-year term, with half of these places being contested each year. To ensure geographical continuity, a certain number of members is allocated to each of the five UN regional groupings. Angola, Egypt, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Senegal, Spain, Ukraine, Uruguay and Venezuela currently serve as non-permanent member states.

2) Introduction of the Topic

The Secretary-General's Five Year Action Agenda (2012) outlined the United Nations' priority of building a safer and more secure world, including through enhancing partnerships for peacekeeping; building a global, accountable and robust humanitarian system; revitalizing the global disarmament and non-proliferation agenda; enhancing global collaboration towards the fight against terrorism, scaling up counter-terrorism efforts, addressing organized crime, piracy and drug trafficking. Further, within the context of broader UN priorities, it has also been emphasized the UN has an essential role in promoting disarmament and it is essential to develop new tools and strategies for collective action to counter global security threats.

The seventieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations, in 2015, provided a unique opportunity to reflect on achievements and prospects. Significant progress has been made, in particular at the normative level, since the Security Council took the historic step, in 1999, of recognizing the protection of civilians as central to its mandate. Nonetheless, the huge number of civilians whose lives are being devastated by armed conflict makes it clear that much more needs to be done in order to fulfil the pledge contained in the Charter of the United Nations to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. At the end of 2015, more than 60 million people had been forced to flee their homes as a result of conflict, violence and persecution.

Humanitarian needs are at record levels and more than 80 per cent of United Nations humanitarian funding is directed at conflict response. The plight of civilians in conflict has been so grave that I issued an unprecedented joint statement with the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross on 31 October 2015 in which we called for urgent action to uphold international law and address human suffering. In the majority of today's armed conflicts, civilians suffer most severely. Every day, they are deliberately or indiscriminately killed or injured, often with complete impunity. Sexual violence shatters the lives of women, men, girls and boys. Towns and cities are pummelled by heavy artillery or air strikes that kill thousands of civilians, destroy vital infrastructure and trigger mass displacement. Data collected in 2015 by the organization Action on Armed Violence indicated that, when explosive weapons had been used in populated areas, an astonishing 92 per cent of those killed or injured were civilians, including those in playgrounds, hospitals and crowded streets and queuing for food. Behind those figures are families separated and in mourning, entire communities devastated, a cultural heritage lost to the world and a generation of children without an education.

3) The Beginning of "Protection of Civilians"

In 1998, the United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan, identified the protection of civilians in places of armed conflict as a "humanitarian imperative." In response to this statement, the Security Council decided to request recommendations from the Secretary General on how to better monitor and report the human rights violations occurring during armed conflicts. As a result, the Secretary General has presented to the Security Council five reports on this topic. In his first report, the Secretary General reminded the Security Council that "(I)nternational humanitarian law sets standards for parties to an armed conflict on the treatment of civilians and other protected persons." Additionally, the Secretary General cited the Geneva Conventions of 1949 as a treaty that a majority of Member States signed. The Geneva Conventions lay out the rights of those captured during armed conflict. Article 27 of the Geneva Conventions states, "Protected persons are entitled, in all circumstances, to respect for their persons, their honour, their family rights, their religious convictions and practices, and their manners and customs. They shall at all times be humanely treated, and shall be protected especially against all acts of violence or threats thereof and against insults and public curiosity."

One approach to achieving the protection of civilians in armed conflicts was to implement safe zones. The noble concept of safe areas envisages the creation of special zones designed to protect non-combatants from the harms of armed conflict. On many occasions since the early 20th century, civilians have placed their faith in designated zones, which have promised to deliver shelter and protection on the frontlines. Safe areas are regarded as a pragmatic way of mitigating the horrific outcomes of recent conflicts and humanitarian catastrophes, with international observers even suggesting that safe zones be established in response to civilian massacres in Syria.¹ The issue to be resolved is whether the imposition of safe areas can be regarded as a comprehensive and effective practice in international law. To understand this topic it is therefore important to be familiar with the concept in the Fourth Geneva Convention and Additional Protocols. On the one hand, the law gives belligerents the right to agree to and establish safe areas. On the other, the law takes into account the role of the international community and its right to impose and enforce safe areas. However, neither approach offers an effective, stable and sustainable approach to sheltering civilians. Of greater concern are the rights of the inhabitants of safe areas, which are largely disregarded by the current law. These circumstances necessitate a revision of the legal framework underpinning the establishment and function of safe areas. In pursuing this revision, article shall rely on two alternative aspects of international law. First, there is an emerging framework for the protection of internally displaced persons, which has generated various norms and practices strengthening the concept of safe areas. Secondly, international human rights law should be brought into the corpus of the law pertaining to safe areas. These complementary legal frameworks can provide stronger and more consistent protection for civilians seeking refuge in safe areas, entitling individual victims to fundamental rights while placing more stringent duties on authorities.

Safe areas imposed by the Security Council aim to set up spaces for sheltering civilians and facilitating humanitarian relief in war zones without needing the consent of belligerents. Their imposition is a manifestation of worldwide condemnation of civilian massacres. Such safe areas also reflect the international community's humanitarian conviction to shoulder the responsibility of protecting civilians, even if it requires disregarding state sovereignty. Imposed safe areas complement existing tools available to the international community when responding to humanitarian catastrophes. Perhaps the greatest accomplishment is the disposal of the requirement of belligerent consent. There is acknowledgement that international and non-international armed conflicts are being fought in an increasingly asymmetric manner. Parties often lose control of their forces. Warring factions have not always demonstrated a desire or even a capacity to comply with international humanitarian law. Imposed safe areas would therefore divorce the concept from consent by permitting the international community to employ diplomatic and military measures to enforce a humanitarian zone.

4) Peacekeeping Operations

UN peacekeeping operations were originally conceived as interpositional military forces deployed to carry out observation and ceasefire monitoring. The end of the Cold War heralded a quantitative and qualitative shift, with many more peacekeeping missions deployed and the range of tasks significantly expanded. Where early peacekeeping missions had sought to freeze a conflict, the next generation of peace operations sought to address the root causes through peace building activities, including electoral assistance, promotion of human rights, disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of combatants, security sector reform, and other rule of law-related activities.

Due to growing international concern with the humanitarian situation in several countries, spurred by the 'CNN effect', a number of UN missions were deployed into less permissive environments of on-going internal conflict with a mandate to use force to ensure a safe and secure environment and to support the delivery of humanitarian assistance. There were several high-profile failures to protect civilians during the early to mid-1990s, including in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia.

It was not until 1999 that the first UN peacekeeping mission was specifically mandated to use force 'to protect civilians', a mandate that has been provided to almost all UN peacekeeping missions established since. Yet the origins of the protection of civilians mandate in UN peacekeeping are deeper and richer,

reaching back almost to the beginning of UN peacekeeping itself. UN peacekeeping operations have been involved in the protection of civilians since the deployment of the UN Operation in the Congo (ONUC) in 1960. ONUC Operational Directive No. 8 asserted: Where feasible, every protection will be afforded to unarmed groups who may be subjected by any armed party to acts of violence likely to lead to loss of life. In such cases, UN troops will interpose themselves, using armed force if necessary, to prevent such loss of life. However, the ONUC deployment was exceptional.

As a result of the escalating conflict, the activities of the UN forces bordered on war-fighting. The resulting political and financial strains placed on the organization acted against the deployment of similarly expansive and robust operations for some time. The UN Protection Force established in 1992 and deployed to the former Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR) was the UN's first peacekeeping mission to make a concerted attempt to protect civilians, although it was not mandated or resourced to provide direct physical protection to the civilian population. UNPROFOR proceeded with an indirect civilian protection strategy based on two components: protection through the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and protection through the demilitarisation and defence of territory ('safe areas'). At the height of its mandate, UNPROFOR was authorised to use force in three main situations: to 'deter attacks against the safe areas'; to 'ensure the freedom of movement of UNPROFOR'; and to 'protect humanitarian convoys'. There was however no specific 'protection of civilians' mandate, and UNPROFOR's authorisation to use force was presented as acting in self-defence.

Following the delivery of reports on the UN peacekeeping failures in Bosnia and Rwanda in the 1990s, the Security Council embarked upon a programme of thematic activity, examining civilian protection issues and determining measures to increase UN involvement in their resolution. It also began using UN peacekeeping operations as a tool to address protection concerns. In 1999, the Security Council mandated the UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) to 'take the necessary action ... within its capabilities and areas of deployment, to afford protection to civilians under imminent threat of physical violence, taking into account the responsibilities of the Government of Sierra Leone and ECOMOG [the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group]'. The language used in the UNAMSIL mandate resolution set a precedent that has been employed in most subsequent UN peacekeeping missions. The meeting records from the Security Council debate preceding the adoption of the protection of civilians mandate for UNAMSIL demonstrate recognition, on the part of the Security Council members, that the mandate represented the advent of a new dimension of UN peacekeeping operations. Security Council members demonstrated express intent that UN peacekeepers be mandated to use force to provide direct physical protection to civilians. Despite the protection of civilians mandate being consistently provided to UN peacekeeping missions from 1999 onward, the clarity of purpose demonstrated in the early Security Council debates dissipated. In the absence of operational guidance for implementation, the mandate became open to the widely varying interpretations of senior mission leadership on the ground, and many peacekeeping missions that had been provided with the mandate were unable to implement it in any meaningful way. The focus of international debates on the political and security aspects of the protection of civilians were channelled into the overarching normative dilemmas associated with the concept of the 'Responsibility to Protect'.

It was not until 2007, following the significant failures of UN peacekeeping missions to protect civilians, particularly in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), that focus returned to the protection of civilians mandate. In response to such failures, the Security Council began to explicitly prioritise protection efforts in several UN peacekeeping missions, such as those deployed to Darfur (UNAMID), the DRC (MONUC), Chad and the Central African Republic (MINURCAT), and more recently, South Sudan (UNMISS) and Liberia (UNMIL).

Highlighting the importance of peacekeeping in furthering the overarching protection agenda, the thematic resolutions on the protection of civilians in armed conflict adopted between 2007 and 2011 focused to a large extent on the implementation of protection mandates in UN peacekeeping operations, stressing that protection activities should be given priority in resource allocation. Momentum on the issue also grew in other fora. In the General Assembly, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (commonly known as the C34) included language on the protection of civilians in the report of its 2009 regular session and every subsequent annual report. During this time, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO)

and Department of Field Support (DFS) undertook several major projects to support the effective implementation of the protection of civilians mandate. These included the joint commissioning, with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, of a comprehensive study on mandate implementation, the development of an operational concept on the protection of civilians to guide missions' implementation efforts, and the development of training materials for military personnel.

In the context of the violent conflict in Libya, in March 2011 the Security Council authorised member states to 'take all necessary measures ... to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack'.³⁰ In this instance, the 'protection of civilians' language was used to authorise what was essentially a Responsibility to Protect intervention. This was because the mandate provided for Libya was concerned equally with the broader strategic basis for intervention (for which Libya had not provided its consent) as with the operational-level use of force. In comparison, the protection of civilians mandates in UN peacekeeping are usually focused on the operational-level use of force in the context of the host state's consent to the deployment of the mission (whether genuine or coerced). It had taken time, as well as nuanced and sustained political engagement, to get to the point where the concept and language associated with the protection of civilians peacekeeping mandate had been widely accepted. There was concern that the fallout of the Libya intervention, which was criticised by some as being a vehicle for regime change rather than for protection of civilians, would jeopardise the ongoing support for and development of the protection of civilians mandate in UN peacekeeping missions. Several commentators have highlighted the impact that the Libya intervention had on the willingness of some Security Council members to support intervention in response to the conflict in Syria.

Since the Libya intervention, the Security Council has introduced a new dimension to protection of civilians issues. In March 2013, the Council authorised the deployment of an Intervention Brigade as part of the UN Organization Stabilisation Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) to operate alongside the regular UN forces, with the mandate to 'ensure ... effective protection of civilians under imminent threat of physical violence'. The Intervention Brigade was provided the mandate to 'neutralise' rebel armed groups by carrying out targeted offensive operations against them. This development could have a significant impact on how the original protection of civilians mandate is understood and, in particular, whether it is unable to be conceived as incorporating an inherent authorisation to carry out pre-emptive offensive operations.

The protection of civilians mandate provided by the Security Council to UN peacekeeping operations is distinct from the related humanitarian and human rights concepts, but is located within and forms a critical part of the broader protection agenda. As the protection of civilians has become increasingly prominent in international relations discourse and humanitarian practice, the existence of conflicting conceptions of 'protection' by various international actors has become starkly evident and has created confusion. This has been particularly so where UN peacekeeping missions have been deployed and peacekeeping, humanitarian and human rights actors have needed to work closely together, including in 'integrated missions'.

5) Bloc Positions

United States

Too often the failure of peacekeepers to protect civilians was not reported to the Security Council, as required. The United States is convinced this must change, and all countries collectively have to be the ones to make that change. Without reporting, impunity persisted and bad practices became all too common, often at the peril of civilians' well-being. They emphasize that the Council must take steps to improve the way in which it planned and adapted missions to conditions on the ground so as to ensure greater protection of civilians. It must also improve at matching the will and capacity of troop-contributing countries with mandates. Troop and police contributors with qualms about the mandate or doubts about their capacities should no longer deploy to missions simply because nobody else would, she stressed. "Blue helmets" unwilling or unable to do what was expected of them should not be left on the ground, and the United Nations should attach greater weight to a contributing country's commitment to the Kigali Principles on the Protection of Civilians when deploying missions.

Russian Federation

The Russian Federation is convinced that the primary responsibility for ensuring the protection of civilians lies with the parties to a conflict. At the same time, in the difficult conditions of an acute crisis, the host country is not always able to carry out those functions. In that connection, most of the peacekeeping missions endorsed by the Security Council have a mandate to protect civilians, to assist national efforts. That is one of the key aspects of peacekeeping operations. They stated that the actions of peacekeepers should be holistic and involve close cooperation among the military, police and civilian components, in coordination with national authorities, local communities and relevant humanitarian organizations.

United Kingdom

The United Kingdom often claims that all too often United Nations peacekeeping was not meeting the high standards set for it. Peacekeepers must be prepared for what seemed like an impossible task. New technology could help, but peacekeepers must be trained to use such tools, and only those troops who could definitively protect civilians effectively should be deployed. Situations such as in Syria, South Sudan and Yemen demonstrated the need for better compliance with international humanitarian law. Primary responsibility for protecting civilians lay with parties to conflict, but accountability was necessary to prevent breaches of international law. When States could not provide justice, international mechanisms should be brought in.

France

The French Republic believes it is essential to set clear civilian-protection mandates and respect them fully. More must be done, particularly for missions operating in very dangerous environments. The French call for an integrated policy characterized by the deployment of judicial experts, cooperation with non-governmental organizations in developing early-warning networks, and measures to ensure that those arrested would be brought to justice. The political will of concerned countries to exert pressure on belligerents and advance sustainable political solutions was essential, he said, emphasizing that the veto should not be wielded in cases of crimes against humanity. France would continue to push for stronger Council action to end the Syrian regime's war against its own people. It would also convene a ministerial conference on protection of children in armed conflict, in Paris next February. With 900 soldiers deployed, France was the second largest troop contributor among permanent Council members, he noted. It would train 20,000 African soldiers annually, and organize a ministerial conference in Paris later in 2016 on training peacekeepers to serve in French-speaking countries. France would also apply the zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse to its own forces.

Ukraine

Since 2014, OHCHR recorded more than 9,000 people killed and more than 21,000 injured in the conflict area in eastern Ukraine. Up to 2,000 civilians have been killed in armed hostilities, mostly as a result of the indiscriminate shelling of populated areas from various artillery systems. As a non-permanent member, Ukraine knew first hand that sometimes the Security Council could not react promptly in the event of threats to civilians due to lack of a host-country consent, which stood in the way of the rapid deployment of a peacekeeping mission. Still, it was difficult to explain the Council's inaction in response to a direct request for a United Nations mission, the presence of which would provide additional protection to civilians and contribute to stopping violence.

6) Final Remarks

This guide is meant to introduce you to the topic and invite your further research. The majority of your will represent with your advocacy and creative ideas. If you are uncertain of the next steps in your research, we suggest trying to answer the following questions:

- Has your country experienced armed conflict?
- If so, how were civilians affected?
- When it comes to international humanitarian standards, such as the Geneva Conventions, does your country abide by these standards?
- Does your country support nations in conflict?

- Does your country house refugees?
- Does your country support NGOs like the ICRC and if so, which ones?

It is important to consider the sensitivity of the topic of civilians in conflict. All affected civilians are coming from different nations with different circumstances and needs. It is also important to recognize how political ties might affect a nation's level of support. For example, in the tender case of the Rwandan Genocide, many nations hesitated to label the crisis as 'genocide' thus, possibly effecting the level of support given to the civilians in question. Consider your country's political ties and relate them back to issues of armed conflict and civilian protection.

7) Further Readings

Last report - <http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/cross-cutting-report/protection-of-civilians-in-armed-conflict-1.php>

Last resolution - http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2286.pdf

Last meeting record - <http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/>

The Peacekeeping Operation - <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/issues/civilian.shtml>

Fourth Geneva Convention - <https://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/385ec082b509e76c41256739003e636d/6756482d86146898c125641e004aa3c5>

How to Get Prepared

You probably cannot wait until it is the end of July and VIMUN 2016 is about to start – at least we cannot! However, before the conference starts, there is still some work to be done.

You are the ones that fill the conference with life, that lead interesting discussions and fruitful debates and make innovative resolutions reality. This requires some preparation on your side. **While conducting research, try to keep in mind that your primary goal is to represent your country as realistically as possible.**

In advance to the conference we expect all delegates to research your state's position and become experts for the given agenda topic, to familiarize yourself with the rules of procedure (which you can find on our VIMUN homepage) and to practice your debating and writing skills.

Here are some useful hints on how to get prepared for the VIMUN conference:

Do Some Research

The first step after you have been assigned your state and committee will be to do some research in order to prepare for the conference. These are areas you should look into:

- The structure and history of the UN
- Your assigned member state
- Research your committee
- Your member state's role in the committee
- Your agenda topics

Central Questions that Should Guide your Research

- What sort of government does your country have?
- What types of ideologies (political, religious or other) influence your country's government?
- Which domestic issues might influence your country's foreign policy?
- What are some major events in your country's history? Why are they important?
- Which ethnicities, religions and languages can be found in your country?
- Where is your country located and how does its geography affect its political relationships?
- Which countries share a border with your country?
- Which countries are considered allies of your country?
- Which countries are considered enemies of your country?
- What are the characteristics of your country's economy?
- What is your country's gross domestic product (GDP)? How does this compare to other countries in the world?
- When did your country become a member of the UN?
- Does your country belong to any intergovernmental organizations outside the UN system such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) or the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)?
- Does your country belong to any regional organizations such as the European Union (EU), the African Union (AU) or the Organization of American States (OAS)?
- Does your country belong to any trade organizations or agreements such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) or the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)?
- What are the key issues of your agenda topics?
- Why are these issues important?
- What are possible solutions?
- What is hindering those solutions?
- What has the UN (or other international agencies) done so far, in order to solve these problems?
- What should be done from the perspective of your state to resolve the issues?
- Which other states share your view, which are opposed to your position?

For further research apart from reading the study guide we greatly recommend:

- The UN homepage
- NGO (particularly those accredited by the UN)
- Country reports and data published by international or regional organizations such as the World Bank, WHO, OECD, APEC, etc.
- General socio-economic data: e.g. CIA World Factbook has served delegates in previous years in gaining a first overview of a particular member state
- Your country's government website
- Search for speeches made by your country on the topic
- Search for important resolutions regarding your topic

How to Write a Position Paper

Writing a position paper might appear to be a daunting task, especially for new delegates. But with enough research, you will find that writing a position paper will be easy and useful.

Position papers are usually one to one-and-a-half pages in length. Your position paper should include a brief introduction followed by a comprehensive breakdown of your country's position on the topics that are being discussed by the committee. A good position paper will not only provide facts but also make proposals for resolutions.

Many conferences will ask for specific details in a position paper, so be sure to include all the required information. Most conferences will provide delegates a background guide to the issue. Usually, the background guide will contain questions to consider. Make sure that your position paper answers these questions.

A good position paper will include:

- A brief introduction to your country and its history concerning the topic and committee;
- How the issue affects your country;
- Your country's policies with respect to the issue and your country's justification for these policies;
- Quotes from your country's leaders about the issue;
- Statistics to back up your country's position on the issue;
- Actions taken by your government with regard to the issue;
- Conventions and resolutions that your country has signed or ratified;
- UN actions that your country supported or opposed;
- What your country believes should be done to address the issue;
- What your country would like to accomplish in the committee's resolution; and
- How the positions of other countries affect your country's position.

Position Paper Tips

- **Keep it simple.** To communicate strongly and effectively, avoid flowery wording and stick to uncomplicated language and sentence structure.
- **Make it official.** Try to use the seal of your country or create an "official" letterhead for your position paper. The more realistic it looks, the more others will want to read it.
- **Get organized.** Give each separate idea or proposal its own paragraph. Make sure each paragraph starts with a topic sentence.
- **Cite your sources.** Use footnotes or endnotes to show where you found your facts and statistics. If you are unfamiliar with bibliographic form, look up the Modern Language Association (MLA) guidelines at your school's library.
- **Read and reread.** Leave time to edit your position paper. Ask yourself if the organization of the paper makes sense and double-check your spelling and grammar.

- **Speech! Speech!** Do you plan to make an opening statement at your conference? A good position paper makes a great introductory speech. During debate, a good position paper will also help you to stick to your country's policies.
- **Let the bullets fly.** Try not to let your proposals become lost in a sea of information. For speechmaking, create a bulleted list of your proposals along with your most important facts and statistics so that you will not lose time looking for them during debate.

Sample Position Paper

Delegation of the **Republic of India**

Represented by **XXX**

Topic: Primary Education

The Republic of India acknowledges and has responded to the call of the United Nations for a universalization of primary education with fierce engagement and enthusiasm over the past 10 years. India firmly believes that the challenge of guaranteeing every child the opportunity to primary education can and shall be overcome by raising greater awareness among the public and by public involvement through respectful regional cooperation, e.g. the cooperation with Village Education Committees and Local Government substatal Bodies. Furthermore it is crucial not only to focus on the quantity of students, but on the quality of the education they receive.

The Republic of India recognizes the need and urgency to address universal primary education. Primary Education is of crucial importance to India. Although India is still facing difficulties in its efforts to guarantee every child the education it deserves, the Indian country will not succumb, but face the challenge with effective policies which have shown immersive and lasting effects in the past.

In 2010 The Right of Free and Compulsory Education Act was ratified, making the fundamental Right To Education Act the first of its kind in the world, which puts the responsibility of ensuring enrollment, attendance and completion of primary education to the government. To enforce implementation of this act, India strongly supports its governmental organizations, which have brought positive long-term effects, e.g. "The Education for All"- Movement, which has as a main objective the universalization of elementary education, making education free and compulsory for children between 6-14 years. In addition to this program, India launched the Mid-Day Meal Scheme in 1995, revised and improved it over the last ten years. Mid-Day Meal Scheme, as the world's largest school feeding program, reaches 1.2 million children across the country.

Furthermore a stronger emphasis is put on unprivileged and disadvantaged sections of the Indian society. As a result to the 10th five year plan of India the joined forces to tackle illiteracy, the number of elementary schools has increased by 216.054, the number of enrolment in the lower and upper primary school classes has increased about 30 million students, only in the period between 2000 and 2006.

In the 11th five year plan of the Republic of India, the focus is set on achieving an 80%- literacy rate, on reducing the gender gap in literacy rate to 10%, to reduce dropout rates of children at the elementary level from 52, 2% in 2003-04 to 20% by 2011-12, and to support low literacy States, disadvantaged groups, minorities and to reduce regional, social and gender disparities and on granting the quality of the given education.

However, universal education cannot be established in isolation, therefore the Indian government has successfully joined hands with the UN on this matter, as extensive cooperation within the United Nations Development Program prove. Together we can bring the MDGs in achievable and reachable range. Therefore the issue of primary education should be discussed realistically and on a basis, where not only providing quantity, but quality plays an immense and even more important role. Due to India's ideals which are Socialism, Democracy, Justice, Equality, Fraternity the Indian Republic believes that the question on how to provide and ensure qualitative education with well-equipped and modern schools and on the basic training of teachers should be raised.

In conclusion, India is striving to guarantee its pupils the universal access to education, regardless of their gender. Moreover it is of the main concerns to support tribal States, rural areas, disadvantaged groups, religious/ethnic minorities and to extinguish any kind of disparities which influence the access to education.

These main concerns remain to be: access, equity, quality, relevance, resources, planning and management of educational programmes.

Therefore the Republic of India highly approves of all expenditures which were made to tackle the problem of primary education and warmly welcomes every effort made on capacity building, modern education programmes, teacher training programmes and progressive use of instructional materials.

Sources

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How to Make an Opening Speech

- First, you should thank the presiding official by saying "Thank you Mr./ Madame/ Honorable Chair/ President..."
- Then begin by providing a brief history on the issue as it relates to your country.
- Speak about how the issue is currently affecting your country.
- your country's position on the issue. Include an explanation for your country's stance, such as economic or security concerns or political or religious ideology.
- You may choose to give an explanation of how your country's position relates to the positions of other member states such as the major powers or countries in your regional bloc.
- You should discuss some of the past actions taken by the UN, member states and NGOs to address the issue.
- Present ideas for a resolution, stressing your country's objectives for the resolution.
- Talk about the role that NGOs or regional organizations have to play in addressing the issue.
- Indicate to the committee members whether your country is willing to negotiate.

Vocabulary: Sample Preambulatory Phrases

Accept	Notes Proclaims	Designates
Affirms	Reaffirms	Draws the attention
Approves	Recommends	Emphasizes
Authorizes	Regrets	Encourages
Calls	Reminds	Endorses
Calls upon	Requests Solemnly affirms	Expresses its appreciation
Condemns	Strongly condemns Supports	Expresses its hope
Confirms	Takes note of Transmits Trusts	Further invites
Congratulates	Encourages	Further proclaims
Considers	Endorses	Further reminds
Declares accordingly	Expresses its appreciation	Further resolves
Deplores	Expresses its hope	Has resolved
Designates	Further invites	Further recommends
Draws the attention	Deplores	Further requests
Emphasizes		