



Meeting Procedures

Diplomacy Tactics

Meetings of the Model United Nations are symbolic of the actual proceedings conducted by United Nations. Diplomacy is exercised in all forms of informal and formal debate. Diplomacy is defined as the art of negotiations between representatives of groups or states. Delegates in the SK MUN are expected to adhere to diplomatic conduct throughout the proceedings, and are expected to treat fellow participants with objectivity and respect.

'Caucusing' is a parliamentary term for diplomatic negotiation. Effective multilateral caucusing methods vary considerably depending on the respective policies of individual Member States or NGOs and the forum in which deliberation is taking place.

Informal caucusing is the primary type of caucusing to be employed by delegates at the SKMUN Conference. This occurs when the committee is not in formal session and can take place through personal discussions within the committee chambers. Delegates at this time are able to interact informally with other delegates to diplomatically generate support for their country's position.

Delegates should gain a historical understanding of the individual and specific situation within their respective States, and then seek out those who may share common concerns. For example, two Island States may caucus and decide to combine forces on issues related to global warming. Additionally, two States otherwise historically divided on ideological issues may find themselves collaborating when an issue of mutual concern is the topic under discussion. This is a rare occurrence, but one that is in character in a limited number of instances. Delegates should realize though that the real delegates work with each other everyday and rhetoric is usually used solely for the benefit of people back home, while delegates usually used much more conciliatory tactics while caucusing.

Regional and trade blocs represent a basic starting point for delegate caucusing endeavors. On a regional level, the UN recognizes five blocs: African States, Asian States, Eastern European States, Latin American and Caribbean States, and Western European and Other States. Additionally, States operating within trade blocs such as NAFTA, the EU, or ASEAN will often consult and work with one another on many global issues. Implementing a more advanced negotiation strategy, a delegate will employ international instruments pertinent to the topic of discussion and, through caucusing efforts, gain cumulative support for a resolution.

Conversely, delegates must also be aware of potential opposition, and those Member States from whom it should be expected. For instance, the Western Bloc, (the United States of America, Canada, and the European States) will routinely ally themselves, whether in support or opposition, on the overwhelming majority of topics deliberated by UN. However, this bloc also maintains radically different policies regarding a few specific issues.

As previously noted, the majority of successful diplomatic negotiation occurs within informal caucusing sessions between delegations. While formal debate is employed specifically for public announcement regarding the policy of delegations, much of the exchange occurring within informal caucus is off-the-record and designed to inspire negotiation on resolutions or reports. Delegates should exploit informal caucus sessions to introduce State policy initiatives, as well as gather the input of other Member States, observers, experts and NGOs regarding options for resolutions. Additionally, informal caucusing is employed to remedy contrasting opinions regarding both broad policy proposals and the specific language of formal resolutions and reports. An effective use of informal caucus sessions may also include negotiations extending beyond the current topic under deliberation. All delegates must remain aware that in both the UN and Model United Nations forums, too much focus on an individual proposal or the language contained therein can halt the momentum of the committee. Therefore, an effective delegate will be recognized by her or his ability to employ negotiation strategies designed to expedite resolution of the topic under discussion. Informal caucus sessions provide the best opportunity for the deployment of negotiation strategies.

Amending Proposed Resolutions

Acceptable amendments may add and/or strike words, phrases or full clauses of a resolution. The addition of new operative clauses is also acceptable. Please note that only operative clauses can be amended. Preambular clauses cannot be changed in any way (except to correct spelling, punctuation or grammar) following formal submission of the resolution to the floor of the committee. Corrections in spelling, punctuation, or grammar in the operative clauses are made automatically as they are brought to the attention of the dais, and do not need to be submitted as official amendments. All amendments, whether friendly or unfriendly, must be presented to the dais and approved prior to the onset of voting procedure. Time permitting, the Director will have amendments printed and distributed to the committee before voting procedure. Otherwise, the Director will read the amendment to the committee before the vote.

Amendments

Before voting on a resolution, the committee considers all unfriendly amendments to that resolution. In the event there is more than one unfriendly amendment to a resolution, the amendments is voted on in order of furthest removed from the substance of the resolution to the least removed. This allows the committee to decide, vote by vote, how much damage they wish to inflict

upon the original resolution. It is at the Director's sole discretion to order amendments for a vote. Determinations by the Director concerning the substance of the resolution and relation of amendments to the substance of the resolution are not subject to challenge by the committee. In addition, the chair will entertain 2 speakers in favor and 2 speakers against each unfriendly amendment.

Methods of Voting

Placard and roll call are the two permissible types of voting. All procedural votes must be taken by placard as there is no roll call option. The committee volunteer staff will count placards of Member States when they vote on particular issues, and announce the result of the vote. A roll call vote occurs only on substantive votes, and only if a Member State requests a roll call vote. It is the right of any country to request a roll call vote, and there is no vote on the motion as the motion is automatically honored. The chair reads the roll and each Member State casts its vote aloud when called upon; countries may pass once, but then must vote in the affirmative or negative when asked again (they may not abstain). Roll call votes typically take quite a long time, particularly in large committees; at the NMUN, these are usually reserved for politically important resolutions or for resolutions on which a very close vote is expected.

Types of Votes

For a **procedural** vote, the only options are yes or no votes; abstentions are not allowed. In addition, all States must vote on procedural matters. On **substantive** matters (resolutions, amendments, and the second vote on divisions of the question), States may vote yes, no or abstain. Abstentions are essentially non-votes, and are not included in the tally when determining the passage of a resolution; a resolution will pass with a vote of 10 in favor, 5 opposed, and 170 abstentions. Likewise, in consensus bodies, abstentions do not affect the passage of the final document.

Explanations of Vote

A Member State may explain its vote on a particular resolution, briefly addressing the committee immediately after the vote on the resolution in question occurs. Delegates may not address the substance of the resolution in question, speaking only to the reasons for their vote. Sponsors of a resolution may not explain their vote in favor of the resolution, and abstentions cannot be explained. Requests for an explanation of vote must be submitted in writing **before** debate is closed.

Voting Procedure

Following closure of debate or upon exhaustion of the speakers list, the committee moves immediately into voting procedure. Absolute decorum is to be maintained in the committee room at all times, it is essential that there is no talking, note passing or moving about the room during voting procedure. While the committee is in voting procedure, only Faculty advisors and volunteer staff members will be allowed to enter the committee room.

Committee members leaving the room during voting procedure will not be allowed to re-enter. This stricture is necessary to ensure efficient explanation of confusing procedural processes and an accurate tally of votes. Observer delegations and NGOs in a committee are limited in the types of votes that they may cast. Only full members of a committee may cast substantive votes, which are votes on resolutions, amendments or divided clauses. All other votes in the committee are procedural votes, and all members, observers, and NGOs may vote on procedural questions (like motions). Observers and NGOs in a committee may not vote on any substantive matter. Please be aware that voting procedure is typically a long process, and in a large committee can last for several hours, depending on the number of resolutions, divisions and roll call votes. Under no circumstance are breaks allowed during voting procedure as the procedure must be completed in its entirety before the room is opened. Voting on resolutions occurs in the order in which they were submitted to the committee. However, before the final vote on a resolution, two significant procedural questions may arise. First, the resolution may be the subject of unfriendly amendments; second, the resolution may be the subject of motions to divide the question.

Closure/Adjournment of Debate

A motion to close debate may be made at any time, but requires the support of two-thirds of the committee to pass. Following closure, no further speakers will be heard on the topic, no further resolutions or amendments will be accepted, and the committee will immediately move into voting procedure. Please note that, as indicated above, closure of debate also occurs automatically when the speakers list is exhausted.

If the committee believes that no decision will be reached on a topic and further debate is futile, a simple majority can adjourn debate on (table) the topic. If debate is adjourned, no further discussion of the topic will occur and no resolutions will be accepted on the topic. The committee is precluded from returning to the topic for the rest of the conference unless there is a successful motion to reconsider the issue. Once debate is adjourned, the committee moves on to begin discussing the next item on the agenda.