

Torrey Model United Nations Delegate Guide

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Position Papers (General Assembly)

Once a delegate is assigned an allocation, it is their responsibility to research and gather relevant information that would aid the delegate form ideas for their respective committee. Many conferences require that delegates write a **position paper** that shows two things:

- a. The delegate has researched and understood the background of the issue at hand and their assigned country or NGO
- b. The delegate has **reasonable** ideas and solutions for the issue at hand.

Most position paper outlines are as follows (in this order):

Section 1, Background: This section should be used to outline a robust background to the issue at hand. The background section is your time to show that you have read and understood what the committee is debating. Use of high-quality sources generates high-quality analysis in this section.

Section 2, Past United Nations Action: Like the background section, the past UN action section should be used to elaborate on what the United Nations as a whole has done to combat the issue as outlined in section one. Many times these issues are handled under specialized general assembly bodies (such as UNCTAD or DISEC). Your committees will often be named after these specialized bodies to reflect the issues to be debated.

Section 3, Past Nation Action: This section is the only part of your position paper that is explicitly nation specific. You should detail in this section what your assigned country has done to combat the issue at hand. This section should be a similar length if not longer than the past UN action.

Section 4, Proposed Solutions: This will be your longest section of your paper. Typically a half to three quarters page in length (one solid paragraph), your proposed solution is your time to show your creativity. You should use this section to brainstorm possible actions that the UN and other countries should take to combat the issue at hand. Success in this section relies on your understanding of what the UN can and cannot do. This section is not about what the UN can do for your country but about what the UN can do to help with this issue as a whole.



Position Papers (Crisis)

Crisis is the opposite side of the same Model UN coin when it comes to procedure. This begins with the writing of the position papers. The first and glaring difference is the use of personal pronouns. In a crisis paper, it is not only okay, but encouraged to use personal pronouns such as “I” or “we” because of the fact that in committee you, the delegate, are representing a person or character. This differs heavily from the General Assembly side of Model UN where delegates are expected to only refer to themselves by their allocation (ie: the delegation of Germany) as they are representing a country as a whole and NOT an individual person.

Another stark difference is that your solutions can be a reflection of your own personal ideas for the solution at hand. Like the reasoning behind personal pronouns, you are expected as a crisis delegate to formulate ideas as if you were the actual person you are representing in the very situation you are simulating. Oftentimes you are freed from the restrictive nature of remaining in a formal debate setting as seen in a GA committee.

A typical Crisis position paper is laid out in the following order

Section 1, Background: See GA background section.

Section 2, Past Group Background: Oftentimes, your character or country is associated with a certain group or organization. This section is dedicated to what your group has done to combat or proliferate the conflict at hand.

Section 3, Character: Here is the fun part..you the delegate get to create what is known as a *crisis arc*, or in simple terms, a plan. You should spend this space describing how your character views and understands the issue / conflict at hand, and how you will act in response.



Citations

Like any academic paper, you will be required to list your sources either in a works cited page, footnotes, or both. Formats will vary from conference to conference but most commonly they are required in **Chicago**. It is strongly recommended that you familiarize yourself with this formats.

It is the delegate's responsibility to submit their paper. Once the paper is complete, the delegate must follow the instructions in the background guide and submit their paper. **At most conferences, delegates who do not submit their position papers are ineligible for awards.**

Use of AI in creating your position paper, even as a brainstorming tool, is strictly prohibited. Conferences check this. If there is a suggestion that a paper is AI-generated or AI-influenced, it reflects badly on your team and likely puts the delegate out of contention for an award. TorreyMUN will report suspected AI use to your advisor.

The intellectual growth and skill development that TorreyMUN fosters comes, in part, from the work delegates engage in when writing position papers. MUN builds strong writers, able researchers, and thoughtful analysts of global affairs. In that spirit, we require our delegates to engage in their own original intellectual work and we celebrate the understanding and diligence that work requires.



Crisis Notes

Perhaps the most important part of any crisis committee, these notes are how you, the delegate, progress the committee from your point of view. You will write a note to backrooms describing what you wish to do, and how you want to do it, and they will develop whole committee updates for others to react to and respond to accordingly. Your notes should clarify **what** action you want to take, **who** will do it, **how** specifically you are executing the plan, and what your **goal** is. They should be as specific and measurable as possible, so that backrooms has an easier time processing your note and knowing what happens next.

There are a couple different ways to format these notes, and some conferences will have specific ways they want you to write it out. For example, some conferences may have you submit a google form, or work on a google doc shared with backrooms. Other times, you'll have a dedicated notepad that you pass back and forth, or specific papers that you tear off and deliver.

The type of crisis note can also vary:

Personal Directives: The most common type of note, these are short, quick actions that your character can take within their set powers. These powers may be specifically told to you in the background guide or by the chair, or you may have to include research in your position paper about what you're authorized to do. For example, in a zombie pandemic committee, the Secretary of Health could use a personal note to distribute a special vaccine or develop a cure, but not order the army to forcefully quarantine the infected. These can be sneaky, anonymous, and creative, so have fun with it!

Joint Personal Directives: These are basically personal directives, but with a few allies also working on them. So, you can use multiple different characters' powers to accomplish a shared goal. For example, the Secretary of Health might develop a vaccine, while the Governor of New York orders the national guard to quarantine Manhattan. At the same time, the Canadian Prime Minister might agree to allow in refugees fleeing the outbreak in exchange for the Secretary of Health's vaccine.

Committee Directives: These are the most powerful type of note, and are structured similar to a GA resolution. Everyone votes on whether to implement it or not,



and they can utilize the entire arsenal of the committee's powers. This makes passing Committee Directives difficult, but also extremely useful. For example, the Secretary of Health might sponsor a Committee Directive with a plan for all departments to counteract the pandemic.

There are a couple of different ways to phrase these notes. Sometimes, you write them in the same style as a resolution, with numbered clauses and subclauses. You can also frame it as a letter to someone detailing what they should do for you. For example,

"Dearest husband Gary,

I hear there is an outbreak just a few blocks from our home in Hudson Square! I hope you stay safe, but I need you to help deal with it. Please take \$8000 of my personal savings and buy bulk amounts of first aid kits and canned food. Carrying a shotgun for safety, please drive across 6th Avenue and give out the supplies at the heart of the outbreak in SoHo.

Love, Kathleen "

Sometimes, of course, you can just be quick and clear with what you plan on doing. For example, *"I, Mayor of New York City, will use my personal social media presence to encourage people to follow guidance around avoiding infection. I will make several TikToks, Instagram posts and stories, and tweets to spread a message of teamwork for a safer community, using the slogan "Don't Take a Bite Out of the Big Apple" and information regarding how to avoid zombie attacks."*

Overall, Crisis Notes give you the chance to take immediate action regarding a problem. They are used to further your own goals (including super secret ulterior motives), and you can get creative and have fun with them!



Dress Requirements

Every ModelUN conference uses the same basic guidelines for dress requirements: **Western Business Attire**. Why Western as opposed to Eastern? We don't know. In simple terms, this translates to: Anything fancier than jeans and a polo shirt. Allowable attire is as follows:

- Suits
- Sports Coats / Blazers
- Blouses
- Dress shoes
- Ties (This is hotly debated in this day and age)

While TorreyMUN hopes you will arrive at and leave each conference with flair, we do not require you to go and purchase an expensive suit for you to participate. A simple sports coat and some dress slacks will suffice just fine.

Things you CANNOT wear to a MUN conference

- Jeans
- Athleisure
- Sweatshirts*
- Sneakers / Tennis Shoes

*Note: Wearing sweatshirts is okay to wear TO a conference, just not IN the conference. It is okay to wear a warm outer layer upon your arrival to a conference, however, we ask that you do not wear non-formal attire from the opening ceremony until the closing ceremony.

Shoes: MUN is a lot of standing and often a lot of walking. Due to this nature, it would be wise to pick shoes that are both comfortable and fashionable. DO NOT wear Nike tennis shoes. As comfortable as these are, they are not nearly formal enough to conform to most every dress requirement. Likewise, shoes like Oxfords, heels, etc. are very fashionable, yet become quite painful through the course of a day. Choose shoes that you will be comfortable in, while also remaining professional.



Frequent ModelUN Terminology

ModelUN is a very lingo-heavy activity. It is crucial that you understand these terms in order to be successful.

Caucus: Debate time

Moderated Caucus: This is your formal debate time in MUN. As the name suggests, this time is moderated by the chairs and is guided by a specific topic as proposed by the delegate raising the motion.

Initiation: “Motion for a [Total debate time] moderated caucus with a speaking time of [minutes:seconds] on the topic of [proposed topic].”

Example: “Motion for a 10 minute moderated caucus with a speaking time of 1:30 on the topic of developing urban infrastructure.”

Common Slang: “Motion for a 10-1 on developing urban infrastructure.”

This is a shorthand way of proposing the former motion which most delegates in MUN will utilize.

Unmoderated Caucus: This caucus time is, as the name also suggests, unmoderated. This is the time in which your goal is to lobby your solutions to other delegates and to collaborate towards creating a resolution which you will debate later.

Initiation: “Motion for a [time] unmoderated caucus.”

Example: “Motion for a 10 minute unmoderated caucus.”

Common Slang: “Motion for a 10 minute unmod.” – These mean the exact same.

Motions: Simply, this is the delegates’ way of asking the chairs to do something on behalf of the entire committee. You can motion for the following things:

- Caucuses
- Procedures (such as entering voting)
- Adjourning / resuming debate (for breaks or end of day)

Points: This is the delegates’ way of asking questions or permission for the individual delegate. The most two common points used are:

- Personal privilege: Bathroom breaks, water, etc.
- Inquiry: Asking a question about procedure, chair’s plans, etc.

