

MODEL UN CRISIS KIT PART 1

HOW TO RESEARCH YOUR ROLE

& WRITE A POSITION PAPER

LEVEL: For Intermediate MUN Delegates, Ages: 14 - 18



CRISIS TRACK
BY BEST DELEGATE

How to Research Your Role

Your Crisis Toolkit

Any information you can find about your crisis, your portfolio, or your character could be useful in committee. Make sure before walking into a committee that you can answer all of the following questions to make sure you have all the “tools” you need to rock your crisis. If you can’t find any of these answers after extensive research, you’ll need to decide what’s best for each of these items!

Guiding Questions

What is your job? What responsibilities does that job entail, and what are you in charge of?

Have you had any past relevant jobs in government, in the military, as a business leader, or some other public figure role that you could now leverage through past contacts and expertise?

Do you have any family? Spouses, parents, children, and siblings can be used both for you and against you in a crisis. Also, do you have any remarkable financial resources?

Do you have any political allies or other important links to people in your country? Any special relationships with foreign governments?

What is the currency, and how does that compare to currencies you’re familiar with (so you can appropriately allocate resources)? What weapons were used in your country during this time? What other time-dependent specifics do you need to consider? (if your crisis is historical).

What does your country look like? Find major cities, military installations, topography, and border crossings on a map to bring with you.

What is your personality? If you can’t find out through your research, pick a consistent personality and political leaning that you’ll represent throughout the crisis.

What if your character is made up?

With fantasy committee, committees from very far back in history, or committees of informal organizations, it’s possible your character will be made up. If your character does not exist, check the background guide to see if the chair has written position blocs or character bios. If not, it is important to see the title of your character and consider the topic and committee you are in. A good step is to check on the actions and opinions of previous or current real people who may have held the same position, and base your ideas on that real person. If the position never existed, it’s on you to determine what your portfolio might be, and what your policies are. Feel free to be creative and design your own character. As long as your crisis staff allows it, you’re good!

How to Write a Crisis Position Paper

Many conferences may require you to submit a position paper for a crisis committee. These are very different from traditional MUN position papers, because now you're representing a person, rather than a Member State. Crisis Committees also are discussing topics more fixed in time than ongoing global issues like "Extreme Hunger" so much of the time spent on historical context and "Past International Action" is irrelevant here. Instead, the entire paper should be a coherent narrative hitting on the major sub-issues of the topic, and proposing solutions for each of them— basically just the Topic Background and Possible Solutions sections of a normal Position Paper.

Crisis position papers are much more flexible in structure.

Keep in mind:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the crisis, so your Chair knows you researched. Feel free to write with the bias of the character you're representing and using the language of the time.
2. Talk about what you think will be the major sub-issues of the crisis, and propose solutions for each of them that your character would support. (What are the economic, political, military, social, and other subtopics?)
3. Talk about what you want the committee to do, but also discuss how your character and your office are critical to solving the crisis. (Do you have any special responsibilities pertaining to this crisis?)
4. Write in first person, and with your character's bias. Feel free to get more creative and less diplomatic than normal Position Papers, and use rhetoric if you want to.

Sample Crisis Position Paper

Committee: US National Security Council

Topic: The Crisis in Ukraine

Position: James Clapper, Director of National Intelligence

School: Best Delegate High School

The current situation in Ukraine and Crimea stems from the issue of the country's European Union membership. Former Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich, a supporter of Ukraine siding with Russia, was removed from his office by Verkhovna Rada, after he vetoed an EU agreement and ordered special police forces to suppress the protesters against his policies. On March 16th, Crimea seceded from Ukraine after a largely criticized and boycotted vote. This peninsula provides a strategic location for Russia, who has jurisdiction over a Crimean port city named Sevastopol. Currently, militants are fighting over Donetsk Airport with heavy shelling and artillery fire, largely ignoring the cease-fire signed on September 5th. Although Petro Poroshenko, the current Ukrainian president, reported that about 70% of Russian troops have withdrawn, the lack of progress in peace talks in Italy between Russia and Ukraine only continues the violence that has totaled over 3,500 deaths, according to the United Nations. Peace and stability in Ukraine is of vital US interest for three core reasons: countering Russian expansionism toward Eastern Europe, economic stability in the energy market for our European allies, and naval security in the Black Sea.

Looking to our upcoming discussions as the National Security Council, I must express my strongest sentiment that we must take more of a proactive approach to this crisis. We have exhausted our diplomatic options; now we must step up our support for Ukrainian forces to protect their territory. Our involvement should take three different forms, leveraging our strategic capabilities in the region to counter Russian aggression. First, we must continue to support the Ukrainian army, but with expanded support in the form of lethal defense weapons. Secondly, we must expand our degree of intelligence sharing with Ukrainian intelligence forces. We have assets and information critical to the Ukrainians and they have information relevant to our interests, however without a policy of expanded intel sharing we will miss out on a strong opportunity to support Ukraine. Third, we must revitalize our intelligence capabilities concerning Russia. While during the Cold War we had enormous intelligence assets and policy experts on Russia, as well as Russian speakers throughout our intelligence organizations, we have significantly scaled back these capabilities to support Counter-Terrorism initiatives. We need more funding, expertise, and intelligence assets to counter this renewed Russian threat and implant more agents within Eastern-European countries. Only through these actions spearheaded by our Directorate of National Intelligence can we combat the Russian threat to our interests and our allies.

Yours Truly,
James R. Clapper
Director of National Intelligence

MODEL UN CRISIS KIT PART 2

HOW TO RESEARCH YOUR CRISIS

LEVEL: For Intermediate MUN Delegates, Ages: 14 - 18



CRISIS TRACK
BY BEST DELEGATE

How to Research Your Crisis

In MUN crisis committees, there are two different kinds of research you'll need to do to prepare—research about the “topic” (meaning the committee, crisis, and historical context) and research about the person you're representing. However, while in traditional MUN committees you may be researching UN topics using UN sources, it gets trickier for crisis topics. Where do you find information about the Biafran Revolution in Nigeria in 1969? Or the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan? While many crisis delegates simply rely on Wikipedia as their crutch for topic research, there are a few other ways to get information you can much better leverage for your committee.



Tip: Research for Historical Crises:

If you're in a historical committee, it's tempting to research everything that happened in the crisis, along with its date and time, so you can walk into committee like Nostradamus. However, once you've started committee, the actions of your committee will mean the crisis will diverge from what actually happened historically. While it's important to study what happened during and after the crisis, these events may not transpire in the alternate course of history your committee is taking. Keep this in mind— the most important research for you to do is the lead up and beginning of the crisis!

What You Should Be Looking For

Your objectives in researching for a crisis committee are to 1. Understand the topic and intelligently discuss solutions, and 2. To find tools that you can use in committee to help you win the crisis. By tools, we mean information other delegates don't have. This lets you demonstrate expertise, write better crisis notes and committee directives, or give you speech and your solutions more power and realism based on what your research has uncovered.

To understand the topic, some major things to look for are:

- General time-line of the crisis from beginning to end (or present)
- Overview of the tensions and conflicts that caused the crisis
- The major issues that caused one side to win or lose, what the major subtopics are
- What each side wanted in the conflict, and why
- What other major events were going on at the time, and what foreign powers had interests

To find tools for you to use during the crisis, some major things to look for are:

- Maps from the time of the crisis that show major cities, roads, and military installations
- List of the weapons and equipment used by the involved parties to the conflict
- Economic, Political, Religious, and Social Tensions in the involved countries
- Names of important individuals leading opposition parties and rebel groups
- Economic, Military, and Intelligence (spying) capabilities of the involved parties
- Organization charts of the country or body your country is representing

Crisis Research Resources

Books

Reading 100 1-page summaries of the crisis isn't going to help you very much. It'll be exclusively high-level details, few of which will differ. Reading a book (or even a chapter of a book), however, will let you go deeper into the conflict and find information nobody else in your committee will have found. Your school or local library probably have books about this topic, or you can look through Google Books to see what you can find online!

Wikipedia

We're not going to bother repeating every teacher you've had in explaining why Wikipedia can be a dangerous source to use. However, it is put together in such an easy-to-read fashion, and for modern or historical conflicts it's easy to see why Wikipedia can help you define the major actors in the conflict, the casualties of each sides of the conflict, and all the major high points. However, the most valuable thing you'll find on a Wikipedia article about the crisis is at the very end- the sources! Go directly to the sources Wikipedia uses for more credible and more specific information about your crisis.

Academic Databases - LexisNexis and National Security Archives

Googling can only take you so far- 99% of the content on the internet isn't indexed by Google, and that especially pertains to huge troves of information such as LexisNexis. Looking for transcripts of phone conversations on a topic from former Secretary of State? Declassified CIA documents about the crisis? Newspaper articles in their original form from the time? Sites like LexisNexis, the George Washington University National Security Archives, or the US State Department Office of the Historian are critical resources for historical crises, but are also a great source for modern crises as well (though fewer government documents will be declassified, of course!)

International Relations Think Tanks

While many think tanks come with their own biases and may be funded by political organizations, they can be great sources for well-researched articles, and often are more readable than other scholarly sources. They're especially helpful for modern conflicts- the Council on Foreign Relations runs an ongoing "Global Conflict Tracker" following the biggest issues around the world right now, and the International Crisis Group has continual updates on the world's biggest crises, and even recommends some solutions to these conflicts for policymakers to consider.

Research your title, not just your person (and vice-versa)

Using the above resources, as well as government websites, search to see if the government organ you're in charge of still exists or if there's much information about what specifically it could do. Otherwise, infer based on similar titles and departments in other countries (for example, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in France is similar to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Sierra Leone as far as what areas of work they deal with). Make sure to research what the sub-divisions of your department or ministry are- even small agencies could add more to your portfolio in times of crisis, like a policing force, intelligence wing, or any other specialization under your command.

MODEL UN CRISIS KIT PART 3

HOW TO FRAME DEBATE

LEVEL: For Intermediate MUN Delegates, Ages: 14 - 18



CRISIS TRACK
BY BEST DELEGATE

Public Speaking Strategy: Framing Debate

In crisis committees, debate is usually conducted as a continuous moderated caucus (usually with one minute speaking time), with delegates moving for different specific topics for debate related to the crisis.

This means two things:

1. Don't be that delegate that moves for a moderated caucus to "further debate"- that's not a topic, and your Chair will often frown upon it.
2. You can use moderated caucuses to make the committee focus on the parts of the crisis most related to your solutions or your portfolio, or to avoid topics you aren't willing to discuss.

Use moderated caucuses to keep debate in the areas of the topic that you're strong with, and present your solutions as the main solutions to these sub-issues. During moderated caucuses, advanced delegates may do something like the following to "frame" the debate in a way that is favorable to themselves.

Committee: Winston Churchill's WWII War Cabinet

Moderated Caucus Topic: Aid to Vichy France

Minister of Economic Warfare: "It seems like the committee is in agreement that intelligence sharing and signals interception are the most critical sub-issues of this topic for our committee to address. I would like to draw the committee's attention to the directive "Just Turing Paris" which in detail addresses intercepting and decrypting German troop marching orders and supplying Vichy France with critical information to survive this war, and we encourage the entire committee to come on board with these solutions and commit any additional ideas you have pertaining to these issues.

Committee: Turkish Cabinet 2016

Moderated Caucus Topic: Border Security

Minister of the Interior: "As we discuss Border Security, there are two main things we should consider: intercepting weapons shipping into Syria, and managing the flow of refugees out of Syria. Both can be addressed in the directive I have submitted, "Operation Fierce Turkey", which stems the flow of refugees crossing our border through internal refugee camps, as well as leveraging UNODC and NATO resources to interdict weapons shipments into Syria. I ask all of you to join with me in supporting this directive for the betterment of this country.

Crisis Committee Rules of Procedure Tips

In a crisis committee, the Rules of Procedure tend to be much more flexible than in other committees, and your chair may make any changes they see fit to make sure the committee continues to run well. However, the normal MUN crisis committee has the following characteristics to its rules of procedure:

Continuous Moderated Caucus: Instead of a Speakers List, most of debate is conducted in moderated caucuses on different topics, so debate is flexible and you never know when your next speech will be.

Round Robins: One of the only times you wouldn't be in a moderated caucus is if somebody requests a "Round Robin"- this means that starting at one side of the room, each and every delegate in the room will deliver a statement on their stance on the issue, to get the entire committee's opinion on the issue.

Informal Voting and Introduction of Directives: The Crisis version of Resolutions, known as "Directives", don't need a formal voting procedure to be considered. Normally, a simple motion to "introduce x directive" and "vote on x directive" will do, and there will nearly never be Question and Answer sessions about directives, roll call votes, or other formalities associated with MUN Resolution Voting.

Crisis Updates: Throughout a Crisis Committee, the Crisis Staff will burst into the room and give updates on how the crisis is progressing. These can take many forms, from videos, newspaper updates, and briefings from "officials", or even acted-out scenes in the committee room. Generally, after these updates are delivered, delegates will have the opportunities to ask questions of the Crisis Staffer delivering the update to gain more information or clarify the facts of the crisis. Delegates may also be able to request outside representatives come in to deliver an update.



TIP

During Crisis Updates, sometimes the staff delivering the update will have to make up details to answer your question. What they make up now becomes part of the crisis, so if you can ask insightful enough questions, you may get them to twist the crisis in your favor!

MODEL UN CRISIS KIT PART 4

HOW TO WRITE DIRECTIVES, PRESS RELEASES AND COMMUNIQUES

LEVEL: For Intermediate MUN Delegates, Ages: 14 - 18



CRISIS TRACK
BY BEST DELEGATE

How to Write Directives

How to Write Crisis Notes (Personal Directives)

Crisis Notes are the dominant medium for taking individual action in committee by using your portfolio powers. Delegates will continually send Crisis Notes to shape the crisis at hand, to both fix the issue and bring more power or prestige to themselves.

Main Components of a Solid Crisis Note

- Memorable Title (can be funny or serious, but needs a name)
- Addressee (Somebody under your command, or just their title)
- Specific orders or actions that you would like to see undertaken
- What you expect/hope will be the result (So the Crisis Staff can figure out what the result will be if they don't understand your goal)
- Signature, with your title

Goals

- Demonstrate expertise and thorough planning to impress Crisis Staff
- Clearly state what you want, and why, so they can decide to grant or deny it
- Do it so well that the crisis staff is afraid to shoot you down without good reason

Personal Directive: Operation Lockdown

To all Heads of Embassies and Consulates in North Africa,

In light of the current hostage crisis in Libya, immediately place embassy and consular security on high alert, and close all visa and consular offices until further notice. Make sure all ambassadors have assigned personal security at all times, and cease any field work in dangerous areas.

Work with the governments in your respective governments to find any information you can about the captors of the 2 US Aid Workers captured earlier today, and make it clear that their cooperation is critical to our bilateral relationships. Specifically, try to find the name of the organization that has captured these aid workers, their demands, and the location where our citizens are being held. Report back immediately with any information you obtain.

-Secretary of State, John Kerry



Branding Tip

Write your notes on colored paper so the crisis staff always knows its you, and you can keep track of your notes as they circulate through the room!

How to Write Committee Directives (Public Directives)

While Crisis Notes are how you take individual action, Directives are how you take committee action, instead of long-form resolutions. Just like in any Model UN Committee, the goal is to sponsor (write) as many strong directives as possible.

Main Components of a Solid Committee Directive

- Memorable Title (can be funny or serious, but needs a name)
- Specific orders or actions that you would like to see undertaken
- What you expect/hope will be the result (So the Crisis Staff can figure out what the result will be if they don't understand your goal)
- Signatures, with portfolios of all signatories (Note: In different committees, the Chair may require different numbers of signatories, anywhere from three to half the committee)

Goals

- Demonstrate innovative ideas that the rest of the committee isn't thinking of
- Position yourself as the leader of the idea, and defend it against opposition
- Pass it as a committee to positively impact the crisis with your ideas

Committee Directive: Operation Tripoling Down

Signed: Secretary of Defense, Secretary of State, Secretary of Agriculture, Vice President

In reaction to the current hostage situation in Libya, the US National Security Council determines to undertake the following measures:

1. Direct intelligence resources to find out the exact location of these hostages and how well protected this location is,
2. Prepare plans and intelligence for two blackhawk helicopters and a team of Navy SEALs to rescue the hostages from their location at the order of this committee,
3. Cooperating with the Libyan Government, secure and set up a hospital outside Tripoli to provide emergency medical care for the hostages once rescued,
4. Issue an order that all information about this hostage situation is to be kept Top Secret without any leaks to the media, in order to protect the security of this mission, until after the mission is complete.

Once the location is obtained, report back to this committee before launching the rescue mission.

How to Write Communiques & Press Releases

How to Write Communiques

Communiques are tools used to contact entities outside of your committee in order to involve them with the crisis in a certain way. They are written as formal correspondence to outside actors as a way of enticing them to take action, even though they aren't under your direct control. You can write communiques as an individual delegate or as a committee.

Main Components of a Solid Communique

- Header that says "Communique" (so it isn't mistaken as a directive)
- Addressee, with formal title and full name if possible
- The specific action or information you want them to undertake or give you
- What you'll give in return (your offer) OR what you'll do otherwise (your threat)
- Signature/ Signatures

Goal

- To get an outside actor/party to act for you or your committee to impact the crisis

Communique

ATTN: Nouri Abusahmain, President of Libya
Dear Mr. Abusahmain,

It has come to the attention of the United States Government that two of our nationals have been kidnapped and are being held hostage by the Al Qaeda terrorist organization. We request that you, in all your capacities as President of Libya, use this authority to have the American aid workers found and returned to either an American embassy, or a UN outpost where they can be safely repatriated. We also ask that you find those responsible for these kidnappings, and persecute them accordingly. Failure to do so will be considered a sign that Libya no longer wishes to have cordial and cooperative relations with the United States, and the US will withdraw investment and aid accordingly.

Sincerely,
US Secretary of State John Kerry

How to Write Press Releases

Press Releases are tools used by committees or individuals to inform “the public” in the crisis about certain facts, or to spread misinformation about the ongoing crisis. Often, delegates may use these to try to influence public opinion against certain plans to help their own, to encourage the public to be safe, to stop protesting, or even to get involved with the crisis somehow.

Main Components of a Solid Press Release

- Header stating that it is a Press Release
- Descriptive Headline
- Information that you want the public to have and react to
- Signature/s

Goals

- To inform/ misinform the public about the crisis to get the public to react in a certain way
- To share information with the committee that was previously a secret
- To encourage a response from the international community

Press Release

American Aid Workers Successfully Rescued in Joint US-Libyan Effort

Washington, D.C.: In a joint statement made this morning by US President Barack Obama and Libyan ambassador to the United States, both parties announced the successful retrieval of two American aid workers who were held hostage in Libya. The workers, who have now been identified as Bridget Campbell and Sophia Swarsky, were captured by members of Al Qaeda while serving with Doctors Without Borders three hours south from Tripoli, the nation’s capitol.

The two workers underwent emergency medical treatment in Libya, as well as follow up treatments and counseling in America, the statement read. Libyan troops were also able to capture the kidnappers, which are, according to the Libyan government, being put through the justice system to pay for their crimes.

“This is a great day for US-Libya relations,” said President Obama in the statement. “This is a sign that we can work together to keep our citizens safe while abroad, and do so with the help and cooperation of foreign governments. Peace is not a unilateral goal, but a global process. This is an excellent start”

Signed: Secretary of Commerce, Secretary of State, Secretary of the Interior



MUN INSTITUTE SUMMER 2020



We offer beginner, intermediate, and advanced Model United Nations programs for high school students ages 14 to 18. Students learn about leadership, public speaking, and much more!

PROGRAM LOCATIONS

Georgetown University

Boston University

UPenn

Columbia University

Cambridge, MA

Fordam - Westchester

Emory University

University of Miami

UCLA

UC Berkeley

UC Irvine

DePaul - Loop Campus

University of Houston

OUR STUDENTS...

- Learn from passionate & professional staff
- Receive personalized instruction
- Gain self-confidence
- Access advanced Model UN resources
- Meet new friends from around the world



IMAGINE YOUR CHILD AS WORLD LEADER

We see leadership potential in every student. At the MUN Institute, students learn how to unlock leadership skills while representing a country to discuss global problems.

REGISTER FOR THE MUN INSTITUTE TODAY

muninstitute.com | mun@bestdelegate.com