



NHSMUN

National High School Model United Nations

About IMUNA

Founded in 1979, IMUNA is an educational non-profit organization devoted to global issues education through simulation of international debate. To achieve this goal, we strive to build up the Model United Nations (MUN) community at all levels by leading premier MUN conferences, connecting students with the world of professional diplomacy, and creating resources that can put the power of MUN in every classroom.

Our flagship program, [NHSMUN](#), is the largest MUN conference for secondary school students in the world. Every year, we welcome more than 5,000 participants from more than 60 countries to the United Nations Headquarters in New York City for four days of lively debate and critical thinking. NHSMUN is run by a diverse, all-volunteer staff of more than 150 university students from the top colleges and universities. Our talented staff have gone on to become prominent diplomats, academics, business leaders, and lawyers who shape global politics today.

IMUNA's impact is not just limited to NHSMUN. To foster the growth of quality MUN experiences everywhere, we publish the resources that drive NHSMUN's success online, free of charge. We also partner with organizations in numerous countries, including China, Italy, Mexico, and the United Arab Emirates, to build high quality conferences in every region of the world. To support MUN in the classroom, we hold personalized training sessions for students and faculty to help them make the most of their MUN experience. We also partner with various UN agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to provide unique opportunities for students to experience first-hand the world of diplomacy and international relations.

What separates IMUNA from other MUN organizations is our belief that exceptional educational quality must be at the core of the MUN experience. Our staff prepares research materials for delegates that push them to develop critical thinking skills about complex global issues. For our faculty partners, we provide resources to expose students to new ways of thinking in clubs and classrooms around the world. At the conference, delegates learn from each other as they work to achieve consensus across diverse points of view. This passion for educational quality has earned IMUNA the reputation of being among the most academically rigorous conferences in the world.

IMUNA's goal is to shape next generation of globally-minded leaders through global issues education. Through MUN, we are able to prepare students for an increasingly interconnected future that will require cross-cultural understanding. If you are interested in working with us, please don't hesitate to contact us at info@imuna.org.

Overview

NHSMUN continues to attract some of the best MUN delegates from around the world, so it is our pleasure to introduce our Crisis Delegate Guide. In the past, IMUNA's training materials have focused on training delegates in non-crisis committees. However, because we host a variety of crisis committees unique from other MUN conferences, we want to produce content that prepares delegates for these types of committees.

This guide is intended for students and teachers interested in participating in an IMUNA crisis committee. This guide will assume that the reader knows the basics of MUN, such as the parliamentary procedure required in typical MUN committees. In terms of content, this guide will discuss the foundations of crisis committees, how crisis committees are different from other committees, and how to prepare for participating in a crisis committee. Throughout the materials, we will regularly reference concepts from the worlds of professional diplomacy, business, and education, which should all be considered avenues for further research.

At the end of the guide, there are example activities designed for delegates interested in preparing for crisis committees. Many of these activities are written with teachers in mind but can also be used by student leaders as well. The activities are generally designed for teachers leading an after-school club since that is the most common way students participate in MUN. For teachers fortunate to have a class dedicated to teaching MUN, these activities can be easily converted into lesson plans.

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If you have any questions about this guide, please contact IMUNA at info@imuna.org. We are always seeking to refine this guide based on your questions!

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Introduction to Crisis Committees

Crisis committees feature fast-paced debate that challenges delegates to think quickly and adapt to a situation that is constantly changing (like the real world). These committees encompass and cover some of the world's most sensitive issues, and delegates must face them in a diplomatic and responsive manner. Around the Model UN circuit, different conferences have different expectations for their crisis committees and the way that they are structured and run. In this section, we will outline some of the differences between the crisis committees run at IMUNA conferences and those run by other organizations.

Types of Crisis Committees

When it comes to the structure of crisis committees, as with many things about MUN, there is a lot of variety between conferences. The most common type of crisis committee is the **simple crisis committee**. In these committees, delegates often represent the members of a committee, such as a national cabinet or the leadership of an international body like the European Union. However, delegates may also represent governments or other large organizations like corporations, trade unions, and NGOs. Delegates are expected to research their representative and the overall topic being discussed. However, once in committee, they will receive simulated updates that will push the debate in new directions. This requires delegates to use their research and policy knowledge to react to new scenarios.

Another type of crisis committee is the **joint crisis committee (JCC)**. This committee structure emphasizes cooperation between numerous committees at the same conference. These committees are tasked with solving the same crisis. Their actions affect each other, and their responses impact the overall solutions to the crisis. For example, a conference could offer a JCC about Brexit, with one committee representing the Cabinet of the United Kingdom and the other committee representing the European Commission (part of the European Union). These committees are better than ad-hoc committees because they still allow delegates to prepare their research. In each committee, delegates may also decide if they want to be cooperative or combative with the other committee.

Finally, some conferences offer chaotic **ad-hoc crisis committees**. In these committees, delegates only find out about the topic and crisis just days before the first committee session. Delegates are then forced to debate issues on which they have done little to no research. Often, these committees are advertised as committees for experienced or college-age delegates, further promoting a debate-heavy, competitive atmosphere. This committee structure limits the ability of the delegates to spend adequate time researching, learning, and preparing for the committee. IMUNA conferences **never** host ad-hoc committees. Instead, we prefer that delegates can research their topics. This way, the committee's solutions are based on sound evidence and critical thinking.

Crisis Updates

What makes crisis committees truly unique is that updates are presented throughout the conference. Starting in the first committee session, the crisis staff craft crisis updates that challenge and test delegates' knowledge about the topic. The updates are always diverse and unpredictable. The delegates might have to face situations like a financial crisis, terrorist attack, or political scandal. No matter the update, delegates must use their knowledge to consider how their representative or country would react to the changing world. Like other committees, our crises still have an educational and diplomatic focus, with awards deemphasized and diplomatic discussion and education about the issues centered.

Delegates also have several tools to react to these updates, which we will discuss in this guide. These tools include committee-wide actions and individual actions—another unique element of crisis committees. While delegates exercise these powers, the crisis staff represent the “outside world.” For example, if a committee is simulating the US cabinet, and a member

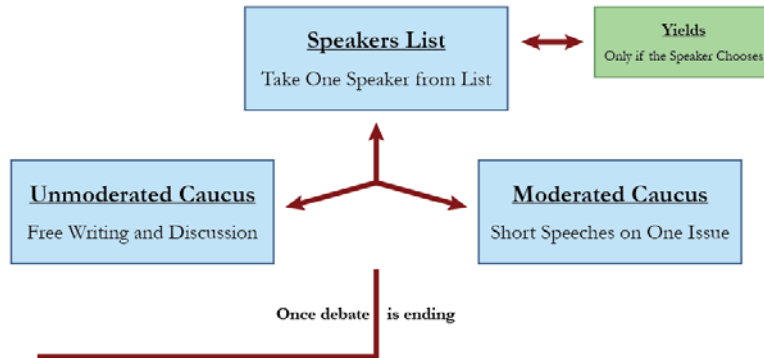
OPENING DEBATE

Every Model UN committee begins with a session calling the debate to order. This will take some time if your debate has multiple topics, which is typical at conferences, not classroom debates. Opening debate will be very quick for classroom debates with only one topic.



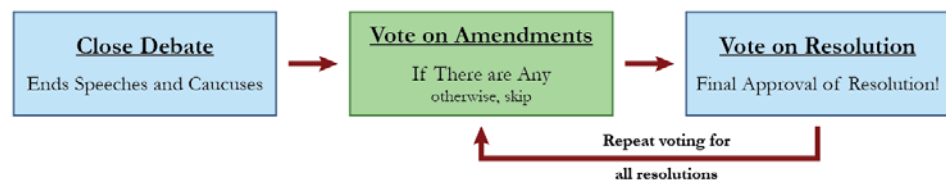
MAIN DEBATE

The vast majority of time in a Model UN committee will be spent switching between these three forms of debate. Delegates may propose changing the form of debate with a motion that the committee votes on. These three forms of debate do not need to be used equally.



VOTING PROCEDURE

Debate ends with a motion to close debate, which starts voting procedure on all draft resolutions that the delegates have written. The committee may pass multiple resolutions and amendments, so do not stop voting when a resolution passes. Repeat voting for all submitted resolutions.



wants to send a message to a journalist, the crisis staff will respond to the delegate as that person. As the committee continues, delegates will continue to make individual and committee-wide decisions, and they will continue to confront new updates from the crisis staff. These actions form a story that is called a crisis arc. By sharing this story, the crisis staff and delegates can develop a close-knit relationship, allowing crisis committees to be uniquely proactive in the delegates' learning experiences.

IMUNA's crisis committees emphasize diplomacy and education. Therefore, our topics are focused only on the most pressing issues facing our global community. In committee, delegates can expect attentive, well-researched chairs who are prepared to guide debate. With respectful dialogue, thoughtful crisis notes, and creative solutions, our crisis committees are world-class experiences that shape how the next generation of global leaders think about our changing planet.

These elements of NHSMUN crisis committees also create a welcoming environment for delegates who have heavy experience with crisis committees and those with very little. By prioritizing a cohesive learning environment, NHSMUN crisis committees allow delegates with every background to become immersed in the simulation and learn about the crisis and how to adequately respond to committee operations.

Crisis 101

Flow of Committee

The first difference is the flow of committee. Standard committees follow the first flow of committee shown above.

MAIN DEBATE

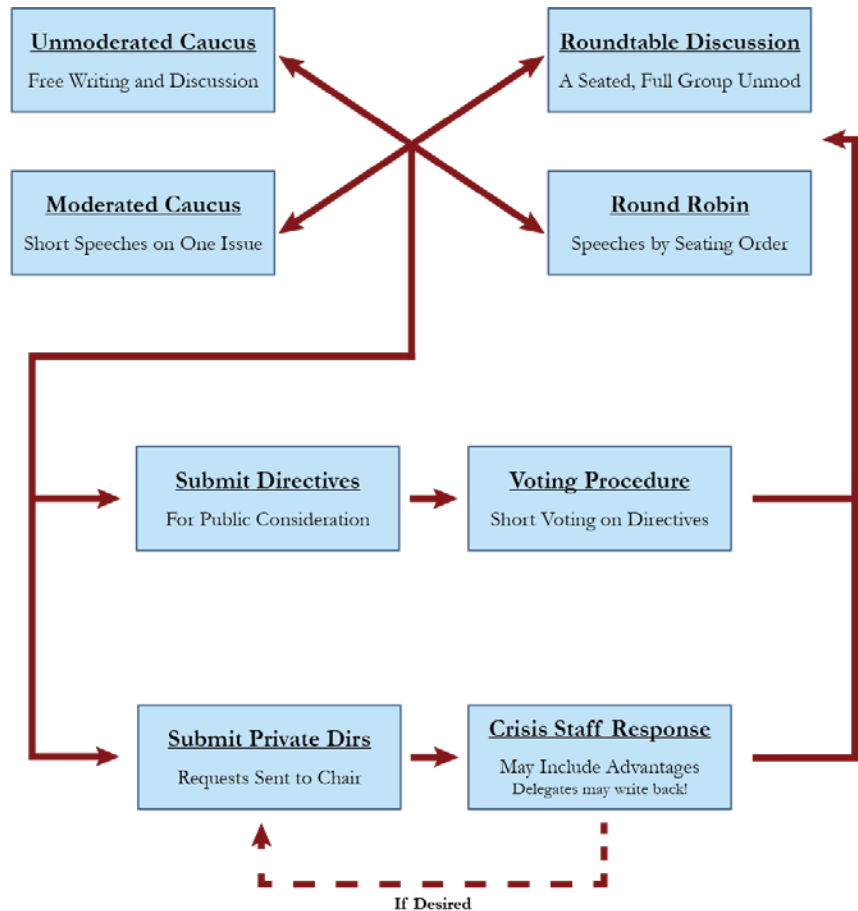
After a brief motion to open debate (not shown), the majority of time will be spent switching between these forms of debate. Delegates may propose changing the form of debate with a motion that the committee votes on. These forms of debate do not need to be used equally.

DIRECTIVES

Throughout the conference, delegates will propose and vote on numerous public directives and communiqués. Once a document is approved or rejected by the committee, debate **returns** to the forms of debate shown above. No motion is required to resume debate.

PORTFOLIO POWERS

Delegates may also exercise their portfolio powers at any given time. These are not voted on by the committee, and the dais will likely entertain numerous private directives and communiqués at all times. However, delegates may bring information gathered from portfolio powers to the committee.



In standard committees, typically one or more of these steps are completed during each committee session. On the other hand, crisis committees typically flow in the second diagram shown on this page.

When comparing the two diagrams, there are fewer steps in a crisis committee, but there is more happening simultaneously. Note that working papers and voting on draft resolutions are not part of a crisis committee. Instead, crisis committees create directives (discussed more later) to respond to the constant crisis updates throughout the committee. The frequency of these updates can vary depending on the committee session and the nature of the committee. However, it is expected that there will be at least one update per hour. After each update, the committee would need to evaluate how to respond to this crisis update and pass a Directive to address this issue. Of course, as the committee progresses, the delegates will likely be grappling with multiple issues simultaneously. This might include the unintended consequences of previous directives!

Parliamentary Procedure

The rules of procedure from standard MUN committees still apply in crisis committees. In fact, only motions related to working papers and draft resolutions are not applicable in crisis committees. However, some new rules are available to delegates in a crisis committee.

One of these procedures includes a **round-robin**. A round-robin is a form of debate similar to a speakers list and a moderated caucus. During a round-robin, every delegate will be offered a set time to speak on the topic in the order they are seated. After each speaker has finished their speech, the next speaker will be allowed to speak either clockwise or counterclockwise from that delegate. If a delegate wishes to not speak on the issue, they can simply yield their time to the chair.

There is no motion to start a round-robin. This is because in crisis committees, the round-robin is the default form of debate. The default form of debate is the form of debate the committee returns to when there are no points or motions on the floor. The default form of debate in a standard committee is the speakers list. This is also why there is no motion to return to the speakers list in a standard committee. In crisis committees, the same concepts apply, but the round-robin is the default. In crisis committees, the delegates can adjust the speaking time for the round-robin via a motion.

Another new form of debate is the **roundtable discussion**. This special procedure is similar to an unmoderated caucus in that delegates may freely discuss issues related to the topic. However, delegates must remain in their seats and cannot split into blocs or small groups. Generally, this form of debate is useful if the committee needs to work together on one directive or if previous unmoderated caucuses were ineffective. When proposing a roundtable discussion, delegates must specify the time required for the procedure. Like an unmoderated caucus, there is no set topic when making the motion. Therefore, a delegate would simply say, “I move for a roundtable discussion for 10 minutes.”

There is also a new point (remember, the chair asks for “points or motions”) that is typically called a **straw poll vote**. The delegate moving for a straw poll vote will pose a question, which delegates will then be required to answer. These polls are used to measure the committee’s overall opinion on a certain topic. The responses to these questions are usually non-binding, meaning delegates can change their minds about the question posed after the vote is conducted. An example of a straw poll vote includes asking committee members whether they are in favor of a certain policy action or not. Because they are considered points and not motions, straw polls are not voted on by the delegates. This is similar to how delegates would not vote to approve another delegate’s point of inquiry. Instead, they are implemented as delegates request them and with the consent of the chair. A delegate can ask the chair for a straw poll vote when the dais looks for motions or points, and if the chair agrees that it is useful, they will conduct the straw poll immediately.

Crisis Delegate Tools

Delegates have many more tools than just working papers and resolutions in crisis committees. The number of different tools may seem overwhelming to first-time crisis delegates. However, these tools offer delegates more options to respond to crises. For example, if a committee representing NATO receives a report from the IAEA describing Iran’s violations of a denuclearization agreement, committee members may have different ideas about responding to this crisis. A delegate representing the United States may respond unilaterally with a private directive requesting that Congress pass additional sanctions against the entity. On the other hand, the committee may respond with a less aggressive approach, such as a press release. These crisis tools will be effective in different scenarios and allow delegates to utilize additional diplomatic tools besides those from non-crisis committees.

Directives

A **directive** is a written document that concisely outlines the committee’s or a delegate’s actions in response to a crisis update. Unlike resolutions, directives do not require preambulatory clauses and only use operative clauses. Additionally, directives are shorter than resolutions. There are two different types of directives: public and private.

Public directives are directives that are from the committee as a whole. These directives exercise the committee’s mandate and powers. Therefore, public directives must obey the committee’s mandate. For example, a simulation of the US Cabinet could not order a NATO airstrike because NATO has its own chain of command, but the committee could request one from NATO. Public directives must be presented to the entire committee and must be voted upon by all committee members. The number of votes required for a directive to pass depends on the simulated committee, but a simple majority is required in many cases. Like

resolutions, signatories are neither recognized nor required for directives.

Below is an example of a public directive from a historical simulation of the US Cabinet.

Public Directive

Title: End the Hostility in Cambodia and Vietnam

Sponsors: Secretary of Defense, Secretary of Agriculture

Orders the Joint Chiefs of Staff to deploy 5,000 troops to the Cambodia-Viet Nam border immediately.

Requests the Central Intelligence Agency to focus on counterintelligence missions in Cambodia, specifically those related to insurgencies in the area.

Calls upon the government of Viet Nam to immediately cease all hostile military actions against Cambodian civilians, refugees, and international workers.

Note: Resolutions are often strictly formatted, but directives are usually not. Committees will vote on so many different directives that it isn't worth the committee's time to focus on formatting and punctuation. Still, to help other delegates understand the directive, delegates should strive to keep the formatting recognizable.

Private directives do not need the consent of the entire committee to be passed and enacted. Instead, private directives only require the approval and sponsorship of the delegations whose participation is needed. Delegates may send private directives unilaterally, or multiple delegates can work together to pass **joint private directives** that take advantage of the powers of multiple roles.

Private directives are often confusing to first-time delegates. They involve decisions that most MUN students don't make in com-



mittee. Instead, private directives exercise **portfolio powers**. This term refers to the unique actions a representative in a crisis committee can take by merit of their role in the committee. For example, if a delegate serves as the Secretary of Defense in the US Cabinet, their portfolio powers will relate to the armed services. The Secretary of Energy will enjoy portfolio powers related to the US energy grid and energy production.

Portfolio powers are not unlimited! They are often constrained by mandates, constitutions, laws, and other legal instruments. For example, the US Secretary of Defense cannot declare war on another country. That power is reserved for the US Congress. US laws also require Presidential approval for many decisions, like launching an airstrike. Delegates may find information about their role in their committee's background guide, but they should also conduct their own research. Crisis delegates must understand their portfolio powers before entering a crisis committee.

Another common limitation of portfolio powers is the **notepad system**. The notepad system requires that delegates wait for a response to their most recent request before making a new request to prevent delegates from spamming the dais. The term notepad system refers to how portfolio powers used to be exercised by writing requests on a notepad. The entire notepad was submitted to the dais with each request and returned with a response. If the notepad system is in place, delegates should be sure that each request is meaningful and purposeful. Frequent, frivolous requests could mean that the delegate doesn't have their portfolio powers available when an urgent need arises. Of course, delegates also shouldn't avoid using their portfolio powers entirely either.

Here's an example of a private directive from a committee simulating the Cabinet of Nigeria from the delegate representing the Minister of Aviation.

Joint Private Directive

From: Minister of Aviation and Minister of Police Affairs

In light of the recent revelations that private aircraft are being used to smuggle foreign small arms to Boko Haram, please have the Ministry of Aviation begin drafting and implementing revised regulations on private aircraft ownership. All flight plans must be submitted at least 24 hours in advance until further notice. Aircraft without flight plans must not be permitted to take off or land from commercial airports. Any aircraft found violating these rules may be subject to fines or the seizure of aircraft at the Ministry of Aviation's discretion.

Additionally, the Ministry of Aviation will begin assisting the Ministry of Police with periodic searches of aircraft in hangars at commercial airports. Personnel from the Ministry of Aviation should help facilitate these searches and identify potentially dangerous aircraft. The Ministry of Police should work to make police personnel available for these searches.

Tips for Writing Directives

1. Clearly label public directives versus private directives.

When writing directives, make sure to clearly mark whether the directive is public or private. The dais will consider many public and private directives throughout the committee, and they may be confused if the directive is not labeled.

2. Be specific when writing directives.

Whether a delegate is writing a private or public directive, it should be specific. If the delegate is requesting a meeting with a spy from another country, specify the time and where the meeting should take place. If a delegate is sending military or police per-



sonnel, specify what kind of personnel, how many there should be, where they're going, and what they should do once they reach their destination. Without this guidance, delegates may find that people make decisions that have undesirable consequences. A good rule of thumb is to make the directive as specific and as detailed as possible so that the dais can understand why that specific request is being made.

Here's an example of a bad directive:

Private Directive

From: Minister of Foreign Affairs

Please set up a meeting with the US Secretary of State.

This directive is particularly bad because it does nothing to indicate what this meeting is about or how urgent it is. The US Secretary of State likely has a busy schedule and probably does not schedule meeting without a clear purpose. It would also be frustrating if a student didn't know what class they were going to next until they arrived at the classroom!

Here's a better directive:

Private Directive

From: Minister of Foreign Affairs

Please arrange a high-level meeting between myself, the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the US Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken, in Washington, DC. I would like to discuss with him the escalating rhetoric from the US about the situation in Ukraine. However, please inform the Secretary that I would like this meeting to be highly televised and publicized as a show of resolve against Russia.

Compared to the other directive, this directive specifies what the delegate will be discussing with the person. It also indicates what they hope will be accomplished by this meeting. By explaining these details, the dais can better understand the motives behind this private directive and is more likely to grant what is requested in the private directive.

3. Work with others on directives.

Similar to resolutions, delegates should work on directives with other committee members. While sometimes, secrecy might be advantageous, collaboration is often more helpful. By combining resources and portfolio powers with one or more other delegates in the room, delegates can achieve much more. Additionally, the information received through private directives is more likely to be trusted by the committee. It also supports the collaborative, diplomatic spirit that underlies all of Model UN. All in all, there are many advantages to collaboration!

4. Write the objective/purpose behind the private directive.

When receiving private directives, the dais may be confused about the delegate's goals and intentions when reading the private directive. Therefore, it may be helpful at the end of the private directive to clearly state the objective. This will make it easier for the chair to deliver the response delegates seek.

Here's an example of an objective that a delegate could add below the previous example directive.

Objective: I would like to promote closer collaboration between our diplomats and their American counterparts so that we can use parallel language and show a united front. Hearing directly from the US Secretary of State will ensure that our two countries' goals are aligned.

Communiqués

The previous documents are all related to making decisions and taking action. However, sometimes, it is helpful to communicate or gather information first. Communiqués are how the committee or individual delegates may communicate with external actors who are not being represented in committee. Communiqués can be purely informative. However, delegates may also request external actors to come into committee, request external actors for support with public or private directives, or encourage others to take their own actions.

Like directives, communiqués may be public or private. **Public communiqués** are communications to an external actor on behalf of the entire committee. In contrast, **private communiqués** are sent by one or more countries and do not need to be shared with the committee. Public communiqués must be voted and approved by the committee, while private communiqués only need to be sent to the dais from the delegation requesting one. Communiqués should clearly state the message, the sender, and the receiver of the communicate.

Here's an example of a private communiqué:

Private Communiqué

From: Italy and the United Kingdom

To: The Vatican

Good morning Your Holiness, As the United Kingdom and Italy are sure, the Vatican must be aware of the ongoing crisis and international security threats posed by the Covenant of John. The delegations of the UK and Italy, on behalf of the United Nations Security Council, would like to invite Your Holiness to the Security Council to participate in a question and answer session, with the main goal of disseminating to the public that the Covenant of John is not an accurate representation of the Christian Faith.

Thank you and most sincere regards, The Delegations of the United Kingdom and

Italy

Here is an example of a public communiqué:

Public Communiqué

From: The Government of France

To: al-Qaeda

The Government of France is united in our refusal of your exorbitant and illegal ransom of EUR 10 million in exchange for two of our citizens. We again demand their immediate and unconditional release. Know that the French Republic will hold your organization responsible for any harm to French citizens with overwhelming force.

Press Releases

Communiqués, whether private or public, are only sent to the designated recipients. However, sometimes, delegates will choose to communicate with the public. **Press releases** function as communiqués that are sent to the entire world via news outlets. Press releases are particularly helpful when the committee wants to condemn certain states or groups or inform the public about any relevant security incidents. Press releases will need to be voted on by the committee before being released to the public. Individual delegates may occasionally also issue press releases, but they should be wary of possible consequences within the committee or from the outside world.

Here's an example of a press release that could accompany the previous communiqué:

Press Release from the Government of France

On April 12, two French citizens were abducted by unnamed militants from a clinic run by Médecins Sans Frontières. Now, we have learned who their captors are. Al-Qaeda has made an outrageous demand that the French people pay a ransom of EUR 10 million for the safe release of our citizens. They are hoping that by keeping their demands silent, we will comply with them in the darkness. To al-Qaeda and any other group that seeks to harm the French Republic, know that we will neither bow to your demands nor tolerate harm befalling our citizens. All French citizens are under our protection, and we will not hesitate to respond to threats against citizens in kind.



Research

Just like any other MUN committee, delegates must arrive well-researched. This research should include information about the committee's mandate, procedures, and powers. Further, it is important for delegates to fully understand the role of their assigned character, who they are, and what powers are granted to their office. Similarly, delegates must understand the assigned character. This includes questions like how they have contributed to the committee, how they have responded to the crisis in the past, and how the position operates relative to other positions on the committee.

Committee Specific Information

To fully immerse themselves in the committee experience, delegates should familiarize themselves with the committee they are participating in. Above all else, it is important to understand the powers available to the committee and its environment. For example, a country's cabinet enjoys many executive powers, but most countries have powers reserved for the legislature. To understand these powers, delegates should look at different challenges the committee has faced before and how it responded to them.

Additionally, delegates should understand their committee's relationship with other entities. Continuing with the Cabinet example above, does the committee have a friendly or adversarial relationship with the legislature? Is the country well regarded in the international organizations it is part of? If the committee is the leadership of a UN Peacekeeping force, it will be helpful to know if the force is under scrutiny (due to budget, public perception, mandate, etc.) or in a more relaxed position. Information like this will help delegates map the relationships and tools available during debate.

Character Specific Information

When researching their assigned character, delegates should look for a few key items. First, it is important to grasp an understanding of who the character is and what their role is. Delegates should focus on both the individual and the position they hold. For example, when considering the individual, delegates should be asking themselves things like where are they from? What have they accomplished, or what are they trying to accomplish? What kinds of policies and solutions have they advocated for in the past? What crises have they responded to, if any? By learning information about the specific individual they will be portraying in the committee, delegates will be able to portray realistic views that mirror their character.

In some cases, delegates may be asked to represent a country. For example, the members of the European Commission (the executive branch of the EU) are individuals, but they are also appointed by their home country and are, to a degree, responsible for representing their interests. In such cases, delegates will also need to understand their relationship with their country as well as their role.

Delegates should also consider the history and function of the specific role that their character holds. Questions they should ask and seek knowledge on include but are not limited to: how long has my position existed? Why was it created? Who has sat in this role before, and what did they achieve? What is the goal of this position? What are some of the limitations of the position? The question of what powers the position holds is especially important, as this will impact the character's role in the committee. For example, in simulating the US Cabinet, the delegate portraying the role of the Attorney General will have a much different role to play than the Secretary of Agriculture. If the delegate is responding to a military crisis overseas, it is not within the scope of the Secretary of Agriculture's responsibilities to advise and oversee the deployment of military troops. Instead, the Secretary of Agriculture may focus on boosting food production overall or the production of certain crops, or perhaps even pursuing rationing for civilians to ensure that soldiers have food. The Secretary of Agriculture may also focus on the global food trade to protect farmers' economic interests. So it is ultimately important for delegates to research and understand the specific role their

character plays and the powers they hold inside and outside the specific committee.

Delegates should further examine the character's role in the committee by examining the motivations and priorities their character has in the committee and ask the same questions about the other committee members. It isn't necessary to develop as deep an understanding of others' roles, but familiarity will help delegates navigate the debates. Before committee starts, delegates should familiarize themselves with the other characters and the relationships between their character and the others. Does the delegate's role work closely with certain members? Where does their work intersect? Examining the relationships between committee members will help delegates understand how to best work together to respond to the crisis.

Where to Research

Often, finding the right information to use can seem overwhelming. As outlined previously in this guide, a good way to find out where delegates should research is to narrow down what they want to know. By identifying the key information delegates want to research, they will have a better idea of where to look.

For starters, the best place delegates can start when it comes to researching for the committee is by reading their committee's background guide. NHSMUN background guides are thoroughly written and reviewed by NHSMUN's world-class staff and are written with a central focus on what the committee chairs anticipate debate will focus on. These guides are a great starting point for delegates seeking information on the specific crisis they are examining, the committee responding to it, and the characters involved.

Within the background guide, delegates will find research and preparation questions. These questions focus on the issues the dais staff feel are most important for delegates to research before coming to committee. Examples of some of these questions may ask how the committee should respond to certain situations, how the character would advocate for solutions, and what the economic or political interests of the committee are in certain areas. In addition to these questions, delegates will find the important documents section in each background guide. These sources were determined to be of utmost importance to the dais during their research. Therefore, they believe delegates should review and familiarize themselves with these resources to prepare for debate. By utilizing these sources and the NHSMUN background guide, delegates are provided a starting point for their research and are provided with thought-provoking questions and sources to expand their knowledge.

When examining the person's specific characteristics they will be portraying in the committee (or even examining a further history of that committee or the crisis it is responding to), delegates should consider a wide range of source material. While delegates will want strong source material specific to their topic, Wikipedia is a great way to start learning about a new country or issue. However, once a basic understanding has been reached, delegates should start looking at sources like the website of their committee. Primary sources (UN resolutions, executive orders, annual reports, etc.) will always be powerful research assets. Ultimately, the specific sources that delegates use will depend on the committee and their assigned role. The research needed to simulate a meeting of the International Monetary Fund would be very different than the research needed to simulate SIGINT Seniors Europe, a meeting of intelligence heads from various European countries.

Suggested Activities

Activity: Current Events

Objective: Students will be able to analyze major global events through multiple lenses and appreciate the multi-pronged approaches needed to solve major global issues.

Materials Required: None

Time Requirement: 2-3 minutes per student

Procedure: Many MUN clubs and classes ask students to make presentations about current events, in which students summarize news articles about the various things taking place in the world today. These activities are great for helping students understand the diverse range of issues we face. However, students tend to develop only a surface-level understanding of each issue. This is because each student is summarizing vast global issues in only a few minutes or less.

For this exercise, we add a twist to the standard current events project. Instead of asking each student to find a current event, the teacher should ask everyone to research the same major global issue. These should be long-term, comprehensive issues that can be analyzed from different perspectives. Larger groups may want to select two topics to prevent repetitive speeches.

Next, assign each student a perspective to research. This could be broad topic areas depending on the topic (trade, military, poverty, etc.). Students could also be assigned to evaluate the issue from the different perspectives of their country's cabinet or executive leadership. For example, if a major hurricane strikes the coast of the United States, students could be assigned to look at it from the perspective of different cabinet positions, such as the Secretary of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Labor, Transportation, etc.

Once the assignments are made, students should research the issue from their assigned perspective. Continuing the previous hurricane example, the student assigned to represent the perspective of the Department of Transportation might focus on efforts to rebuild road and rail links to ensure that food and water can be delivered. The student researching the Department of Defense might focus on how military personnel and resources are being used to deliver aid.

On the day of the presentations, give each student a few minutes to present their findings. If time permits, it might also be helpful to allow students to answer questions about what they found. Through this process, encourage the students to consider how these diverse operations take place at the same time. Ask them to think about what kind of coordination is needed to ensure that everyone can do their jobs.

Activity: Pursuit of Power (A Board Game)

Objective: Students will learn how to handle information asymmetry (common in crisis committees) and unexpected obstacles while working towards a broader strategy.

Materials Required: Potentially none. Ideally, the game board is printed out and a game piece is used from the classroom to represent each team on the board.

Time Requirement: 60 minutes

Procedure: This is a team-based board game for two to five groups. To prepare, print out the board and the crisis cards on the following pages. If a printer is not available, the game board could be drawn on a chalkboard/whiteboard or projected. Then,

organize the students into two to five groups of roughly equal size and ask them to come up with group names. Give each group 40 resources (or dollars, euros, or other unit) and explain the following story and rules to the group.

The story of the game is that in the Earth's future, there is a new cold war taking place between new global superpowers. The teacher can assign each team a country to represent, or each team can choose a country they want to envision as a superpower. The game is divided into simultaneous rounds. In each round of the game, students will deal with a military conflict in a non-represented country, and they will be trying to win a proxy conflict during that turn. Each superpower can decide whether they want to support that country's existing government or oppose it by sponsoring rebel groups. The country that each conflict takes place in does not matter to the rules, so the teacher might choose countries at random. For example, the first turn in a three-team game might see the futuristic superpowers France, Mongolia, and Viet Nam competing in a proxy conflict in Norway. As each team wins proxy conflicts, they will increase their global power, represented by moving forward on the game board.

Each round of the game is broken down into two phases: discussion and decision. We'll start by explaining the decision phase because that will inform the discussion phase.

In the decision phase, each group submits a written decision about what they want to do that turn to the teacher. The decision has two parts:

- Whether they want to **cooperate** with or **oppose** the existing government that the conflict is taking place in
- How many resources the group wishes to spend (between 1 and 5)

Once everyone has turned in their decisions, the teacher opens the decisions and moves the game pieces according to the following rules. First, add up the number of resources spent by all groups that chose cooperate and all groups that chose oppose.

- If more resource points were spent by the cooperating teams, move each cooperating team forward by the **average** number of resources spent by all cooperating groups. This should be rounded to the nearest integer. Teams that chose oppose do not move this turn.
- If more resources are spent by the opposing teams, move each opposing group forward by the average number of resources spent by all **cooperating** (not opposing) teams. Teams that choose cooperate do not move this turn.
- If no team chooses to cooperate, no team's pieces move forward because a chaotic civil war breaks out. If no team chooses to oppose, then all teams move forward by the same amount.

The discussion phase before the decision phase allows the students to strategize and negotiate. The discussion stage should start with two-minute team discussions about what they want to do. Then, students should have one minute to talk to anyone in the room. Finally, each team should have one more minute to discuss by themselves before submitting their decision.

Here are some strategies that students might use:

- Each team wants to move as far forward by spending as few resources as possible, so they should convince other teams to spend more resources by promising to also spend more.
- Alternatively, consider a three-team game in which Teams A and B convince Team C to cooperate and spend the maximum number of resources. If Teams A and B then oppose with the minimum number of resources, they also get to move forward while only spending a few resources.
- Teams might also encourage other teams to spend more resources to encourage them to run out early, effectively removing them from the game.
- Teams might choose to form and test alliances over the course of the game, which may lead to betrayals in dramatic

moments.

Once a team reaches the end of the board, they have won. If two or more teams reach the end at the same time, the team with most remaining moves after reaching the end is the winner. If two or more teams still have the same number of moves remaining, then those teams share the victory. If a group runs out of resources, they can no longer move their piece. If all teams' resources are exhausted and nobody has reached the end of the board, then the team whose piece travelled the furthest wins.

For additional layers of complexity, teachers could randomize the number of resources given for each team between 30 and 70, reflecting that not all superpowers are equally powerful. Teachers might also decide that random events happen on certain turns or when teams land on certain squares, such as movement being doubled for a particular turn. One constant in international diplomacy is that there will always be unexpected variables! Finally, another variant rule might be to require a minimum resource investment to move. For example, a teacher could say that regardless of whether cooperating or opposing teams spend more resources, if there is not a minimum number of resources spent (perhaps two per team), then no team moves forward and the country for that round joins the "non-aligned bloc."

Game Board

20					25						30
	PURSUIT OF POWER										
15											35
10											40
5											45
START											FINISH

Glossary

Ad-Hoc: A format of crisis committee where delegates are given information regarding their committee, its topic, and their role only immediately before the committee. Often, delegates are only given a few days or less to prepare.

Crisis Update: Updates given to the committee related to pressing issues the committee debates. The committee will need to respond to these updates.

Directive: A written document that concisely outlines the committee's or a delegate's actions in response to a crisis update.

Joint Cabinet Crisis (JCC): Format of crisis committees where delegates are placed in different committees at the conference, although they are all working in the same simulation. Actions taken in one committee will often impact the other committees.

Notepad System: Used in many conferences, the notepad system ensures that delegates use private directives and communiqués in a tactful manner. In this system, delegates submit private directives and communiqués on a “notepad” (sometimes literally, sometimes figuratively), and the crisis staff's response is recorded on the notepad. Because delegates do not have their notepad while each request is being considered, delegates cannot use their portfolio powers until they receive their response.

Portfolio Powers: The unique powers and responsibilities of each delegate's role in the committee. Private directives and communiqués leverage each delegate's portfolio powers to pursue information and advantages in committee.

Press Release: Statement distributed from the committee that represents the beliefs and opinions of a representative in the committee but does not take any tangible action. The purpose of a press release is to publish information or opinions to the entire world.

Private Directive: Directives from one or more delegates in committee that only require the approval and sponsorship of the delegations whose participation is needed. These directives are not presented to the entire committee and are only visible to the delegates sponsoring the private directive.

Public Directive: Directives that are from the entire committee and exercise the committee's mandate. Public directives must be presented to the entire committee and must be voted upon by all committee members.

Roundtable Discussion: A special parliamentary procedure where delegates are in an unmoderated caucus where only one delegate can speak at a time for as long as they would like. Delegates must also remain in their seats and cannot split into blocs or small groups.

Round Robin: A format of debate in which each delegate will be allotted time to speak on the topic. If a delegate wishes to not speak on the topic, they may “pass.” Those who motion for this debate format may select to go first or last.

Straw Poll Vote: A request by a delegate to test the committee's opinion on a particular issue where individual votes are non-binding.

The National High School Model United Nations Conference (NHSMUN) is a project of IMUNA, a non-profit organization formally associated with the United Nations Department of Global Communications (UNDGC). IMUNA is dedicated to promoting global issues education through simulation.

Prepared by IMUNA

