



HOW TO WRITE A POSITION PAPER

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I. Why should you write a Position Paper?

Writing a position paper will help you structure your research on the topics set forth in the council agenda. It will help you organize your facts, ideas and possible solutions so that you can share your country's position with the rest of the council easily. In short: a position paper is a summary of your country's interests and policy regarding the topics on the agenda.

II. What does a good structure look like?

Generally speaking, a good position paper should include a brief introduction into the topic, followed by your country's position. It should not only contain facts but also proposals for solutions.

A position paper should always start with a header stating the represented country, the topic of the position paper, the committee, the delegates' names and their university. After a brief introduction into the topic, you should state how the issue affects your country. Following that, you should describe your country's policies regarding the issue and your justification for these policies. You can also mention actions taken by your government with regard to the issue, as well as UN resolutions and conventions your country has ratified and which have a link to the topic. You can also refer to past UN actions (e.g. peace-keeping missions) that your country has supported or opposed. The most important part will be the description of what your country believes should be done to address the issue and to solve the problem. In this part you should mention what your country wants to see in a possible resolution. You can state what or whom the resolution should address, which part of the problem should be stressed and how the UN could contribute to a solution. You can also refer to past UN resolutions in order to stress your arguments. The final part of your position paper could also refer to other countries and describe how their positions affect your country's position or how you want to cooperate in order to achieve your goals. However, you should always try to avoid accusations and remain diplomatic even in face of conflicting opinions.

III. Do's and Don'ts

Do ..

- .. make your own research. The PP should be a product of your own research and should be concise and substantial.
- .. cite all your sources by using footnotes or endnotes and cite the statistics and data you use.
- .. use quotes from your country's leaders in order to underline your arguments.
- .. use statistics to back up your country's position
- .. structure your position paper well and give each separate idea or proposal its own paragraph.
- .. make your position paper official and professional looking, use an official letterhead, a formal layout and proper English.
- .. try to answer the questions your chair raises in the background guide

Don't ..

- .. use the first person. You speak with the voice of the country you have to represent. Therefore use the third person. e.g. “The United Mexican States believe that...”
- .. write more than 1,5 pages per topic.
- .. make it too complicated. Avoid flowery wording and stick to uncomplicated language and sentence structure.

IV. Further Help

If you need more detailed help you can have a look at the following websites, which explain in detail how to write a position paper. If you have any specific questions, do not hesitate to contact the Executive Team!

- http://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/wiki/MUN_Position_Papers
- <http://www.unausa.org/global-classrooms-model-un/how-to-participate/model-un-preparation/position-papers>
- http://worldmun.org/upload/WorldMUN_101.pdf *Paper by MUNAM e.V. - www.munam.org*