

M.I.T. Model United Nations Conference China

RULES AND PROCEDURE

1. Committee Timeline Overview:

- **Role Call** - Roll call is conducted in the beginning of each committee session to take attendance of all present delegates and establish voting majority amounts. The chair will announce each delegation in the very beginning of each committee session. Delegates must say “present” or “present and voting” once their delegation is called.
 - **Present** means that a delegate commits to being present at the current committee session.
 - **Present and voting** means that a delegate commits to being present at the current committee session and **also** commits to voting and not abstaining during each voting session.

E.g. Chair: “We will now begin the process of role call. Please say present or present and voting when I call your delegation. Ukraine.”

 - Delegate of Ukraine - “Present”
 - Chair: “Venezuela.”
 - Delegate of Venezuela - “Present and voting” and so forth
- **Setting the Agenda** - determines which topics are addressed in the committee session
 - Motion to set the agenda: This motion sets forth the specific committee topics that will be addressed throughout debates

E.g.: “The delegation of [name] motions to place [topic A] on first on the agenda, followed by [topic B]”

 - 2 delegates speak in favor of the motion, 2 delegates speak against the motion
 - Requires a simple majority vote to pass.
- **Debate** -
 - **Formal Debate** - each committee session starts in formal debate
 - Motion to open the speaker’s list - see the “Types of Debate” section below for a more comprehensive description of the speaker’s list
 - Speeches in the beginning of session should focus on individual country positions and recommending actions
 - After resolution blocs have formed, speeches should focus on explaining draft resolutions, encouraging others to support draft resolutions, raising questions about resolutions, or explaining why the delegate agrees / disagrees with the resolution
 - Speeches at the end of debate should focus on presenting amendments to resolutions made to address any concerns raised during debate
 - **Informal Debate** - requires motion to suspend debate (eg: Motion for a)

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- Committees start forming resolution blocs to develop positions
 - Writing starts as countries bloc to draft resolutions
 - Countries gather support for their specific draft resolutions
 - Delegates finalize draft resolutions
 - Countries gather more support for their resolution by accommodating others' ideas via friendly amendments
- **Voting Bloc** - starts if speaker's list is exhausted or if a successful motion is made to close debate and move into voting procedure
 - No one may enter / exit the committee room during the entirety of voting bloc
 - Delegates vote on amendments first and then resolutions
 - **Start of next topic** - the entire timeline repeats for the second topic

2. **Types of Debates:**

There are 2 types of debate during committee session, formal debate and informal debate, or caucusing.

Formal Debate

During formal debate, delegates will make speeches, answer questions, and introduce and debate resolutions in front of the entire committee. The order in which delegates are allowed to speak is determined by the **speaker's list**, a list of delegate names which opens at the beginning of the committee session and is updated throughout committee session by the chair. When the speaker's list is first created, delegates may request to be placed on the list by raising their placards. Once a delegate on the speaker's list is allowed to speak and exhausts their time, they are removed from the speakers list and may add themselves to the bottom of the list if they wish to do so. Delegates can add themselves to the bottom of the speaker's list by passing the request in a note to the chair. Each delegate may only be on any current iteration of the speaker's list once but may re-add themselves multiple times throughout committee session. The amount of time given to delegates per speech is set by the chair at the start of committee. If delegates do not take up all of their allotted time in their speech, they may not yield any remaining time to another delegate; instead, all remaining speaking time is automatically absorbed by the chair.

Informal Debate

There are two types of informal debate: unmoderated caucus and moderated caucus. During either type of caucus, the rules of procedure are temporarily suspended. The speaker's list is temporarily closed until the end of caucus.

A committee can go into **moderated caucus** if a motion by a delegate to suspend debate and enter into moderated caucus is successful after being voted on by the committee. In moderated caucus, delegates raise their placards to be called upon to speak by the chair. The speaking time per speech

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and the total length of the moderated caucus is set by the original motion made to enter moderated caucus.

A committee can go into **unmoderated caucus** if a motion by a delegate to suspend debate and enter into unmoderated caucus is successful after being voted on by the committee. During unmoderated caucus, delegates will talk informally with one another with the goal of writing resolutions to be presented to the entire committee by discussing potential resolutions, analyzing viewpoints, forming resolution blocs, negotiating possible amendments or merging of resolutions, and garnering signatories.

The Chair / Director

The **dais**, which comprises of the Director and the Assistant Director(s), controls the flow of committee sessions. The chair, as also known as the committee director, is mainly responsible for guiding committee developments.

3. Basic MITMUNC China Motions and Points:

A **motion** is used in committee when a delegate wants to have an action passed that affects the entire committee. Considering a motion usually requires a general committee vote.

- **Motion to open the Speakers' List** - starts the speaker's list at the beginning of each topic and allows delegates to sign up to speak requires an immediate vote and simple majority to pass.
- **Motion to set the agenda** - sets the order in which the topics will be debated; requires 2 speakers for and 2 against the motion; requires a simple majority to pass.
 - E.g.: "Motion to place [topic A] on first on the agenda, followed by [topic B]"
- **Motion to set the speakers time** - sets or changes the amount of time each delegate has to speak; requires simple majority to pass.
- **Motion for a right of reply** - allows a delegate to respond if a member of the committee makes a personal attack on them (but not if the member attacks a delegate's position); chair makes ultimate ruling.
- **Motion to suspend debate (specify amount of time, type of informal debate, and purpose)** - moves the committee from formal debate to caucusing; requires simple majority to pass.
 - E.g.: "Motion to suspend debate and move into a 10 minute moderated caucus with 1 minute speaking time in order to discuss draft resolutions."
 - E.g.: "Motion to suspend debate and move into a 10 minute unmoderated caucus."
- **Motion to introduce Working Paper / resolution / amendment** - used to introduce (read it to the committee and make it an official document) a working paper/ resolution/ amendment; no vote necessary.
- **Motion to close Speaker's List** - means that no more countries will be added to the speakers list; voting bloc automatically happens as soon as all the speakers on the speakers list have spoken

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- **Motion to close debate and move into voting procedure** - moves the committee into voting bloc, usually when there are enough draft resolutions on the floor and all have been discussed thoroughly; requires 2 speakers against and 2 for; requires 2/3 majority to pass.
- **Motion for a roll call vote** - means that each country will be called on individually to cast their vote (as opposed to raising placard); automatically adopted with the chair's approval. During roll call, a country can vote yes, no, yes with rights, no with rights, abstain, or pass:
 - Yes - in favor of the resolution
 - No - against the resolution
 - Abstain - does not wish to vote
 - Yes / No with rights - the delegate wishes to explain their vote, and will get a chance after the completion of the roll call vote to give a 30-second speech explaining their position
 - Pass - unsure of how to vote and will be called upon to vote at the end of the roll call vote (if the delegate passes, they can't vote with rights)
- **Motion to adjourn committee** - ends the committee session until the next session (eg: next year's conference, after lunch or dinner); requires simple majority to pass.
- **Motion to adjourn committee / motion to table debate** - suspends all of the work that the committee has completed on a particular topic and switches the committee topic; requires 2 speakers for and 2 speakers against; requires 2/3 majority to pass.
- **Motion to question the competence of the committee to discuss...** - used to remove a discussed topic from a resolution/discussion if a delegate believes the topic is out of the jurisdiction of the committee; requires 2 speakers for and 2 speakers against; requires 2/3 majority to pass.

A **point** allows a delegate to ask a question in committee.

- **Point of order** - used when a delegate believes the chair has made an error in parliamentary procedure, specifically in formal committee procedure; resolved by the chair
- **Point of inquiry / point of parliamentary procedure** - used when a delegate asks the chair a question regarding the rules of procedure; may only be made when the floor is open (no other delegate is speaking)
- **Point of personal privilege** - used to inform the chair of a physical discomfort a delegate is experiencing, such as not being able to hear another delegate's speech.
- **Point of clarification** - used to clarify a non-substantive point (grammar, spelling, awkward phrasing) in a resolution / amendment
- **Point of information** - used in order to pose a question to a speaker during formal debate. The speaker chooses whether or not to yield his or her time to points of information.
- **Appeal to the chair's decision** - used when the delegate believes the chairperson has incorrectly decided a point or motion; requires a 2/3 majority vote to pass. The appealing delegate speaks and the chairperson defends himself or herself before the vote.

4. **Position Papers**

All delegates to MITMUNC China will be required to submit an original position paper describing the represented delegation's posture towards the committee topics elaborated upon in the position paper. A position paper **must not exceed a page** in length.

Plagiarism: If a delegate uses external sources in writing their position paper, they must be properly cited in a **references section** of the position paper, which does not count towards the one-page limit of the position paper. Position papers that fail to cite external resources and/or substantially demonstrate lack of originality will not be accepted.

