

Chair Handbook



NISC MUN

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Roles

A Chair (or president) moderates the committee. As chairs, you are responsible to establish the flow of debate, answer questions, and set the agenda of the committee. You are expected to stimulate lobbying, coordinate debate and initiate effective resolutions.

This position also comes with great responsibility. You are the face of the conference to all your delegates. You set the tone of the conference, serve as a role model to the delegates, and are the one to encourage young students to rise above themselves in diplomatic debate. It is important for you to act responsibly, to be well prepared and professional at all times.

The quality of your Research Reports will determine the quality of resolutions and debate. However, your personal MUN skills is not everything. Approachable chairs are the ones who give delegates confidence to speak and inspire them. Stimulate rather than intimidate.

General Role of The Chair in an assigned forum

You are ultimately responsible for the activities in the forum. You will be in direct communication with the Secretariat prior and during the conference.

In addition, at the conference, in the respective forum, you are the leading figure of authority; the house is yours.

At the conference, chairs, will attend the Student Officer briefings and debriefings. In briefings, they will be given necessary information with regards to timetables and procedural matters. In debriefings, they will be given a chance to submit some form of evaluation to the Secretariat with regards to that conference day.

Within the confines of their respective committee, you will brief the house on the programme for the day. It is advised that the head chair opens up the committee. You will be in control of all activities within the forum and will answer to the commands of the secretariat, including when to adjourn for lunch and other practicalities of that matter. You will aim to set a smooth debate with all participants being included.

You will also be asked to rate delegates based on a cohesive criterion. You should be attentive to all the aspects: diplomacy, participation, procedure, and position papers. You are expected to be able to provide individualized feedback at the end of the conference at request.

A: Diplomacy

This criterion relates to how a delegate advocates for their assigned country's position, in a manner consistent with economic, social, and geopolitical constraints. Delegates will not be punished for natural leadership tendencies; however, they must recognize that there are limits to what is acceptable given their country's position.

1	2	3	4	5
The delegate has little to no understanding of their country's position as it relates to the given topic, or their actions are frequently at odds with their country's position.	The delegate displays a limited understanding of their country's position as it relates to the given topic, or their actions inconsistently match their position.	The delegate displays a reasonable understanding of their country's position as it relates to the given topic and sometimes takes relevant action based upon this understanding.	The delegate displays a strong understanding of their country's position as it relates to the given topic and frequently takes relevant action based upon this understanding.	The delegate displays a masterful understanding of their country's position as it relates to the given topic and consistently takes relevant action based upon this understanding.
Little to no understanding of how to behave diplomatically during moderated debate.	Limited diplomatic bearing during moderated debates, with frequent actions that are at odds with diplomatic bearing.	Sometimes maintains a diplomatic bearing during moderated debates, with frequent but minor lapses.	Mostly maintains a diplomatic bearing during moderated debates, with only minor lapses.	Consistently maintains a diplomatic bearing during moderated debates.
Little to no understanding of how to behave diplomatically during unmoderated caucus.	Limited diplomatic bearing during unmoderated caucus, with frequent actions that are at odds with diplomatic bearing.	Sometimes maintains a diplomatic bearing during unmoderated caucus, with frequent but minor lapses.	Mostly maintains a diplomatic bearing during unmoderated caucus, with only minor lapses.	Consistently maintains a diplomatic bearing during unmoderated caucus.

Actions Related Criteria A: Diplomacy

Making speeches during moderated debate	Raising POI's during moderated debate
Speaking with other delegations in unmoderated caucus	Negotiating with other delegations in unmoderated caucus
Opening speeches	

B: Participation

This criterion relates to how involved a delegate is in both formal and informal modes of committee debate. Leadership in the room is looked upon favorably, as well as overall contributions to finding a solution to the issues under discussion. There is an emphasis on quality of contribution rather than quantity.

1	2	3	4	5
The delegate has not made an active contribution during debates or caucusing.	The delegate contributes to debate and discussion, but not as a leader. They follow, rather than offering their own solutions, or offer unsuitable points.	The delegate shows some leadership but offers limited solutions or compromises or those offered are not always suitable.	The delegate is a leader in the room, who attempts to propose solutions and compromises.	The delegate is a leader in the room, actively proposing and advocating for compromises and solutions.
The delegate has raised very few or no POI's during debate.	The delegate poses a limited number of POI's, or POI's that are unsuitable.	The delegate poses several POI's, most of which are suitable and relevant.	The delegate challenges or supports other delegates with POI's.	The delegate challenges or supports other delegates with well-constructed and thoughtfully posed POI's.
The delegate has not contributed to the drafting of resolution.	The delegate takes a limited role in the negotiations surrounding draft resolutions but not as a leader and makes only minor contributions to the final document.	The delegate takes a role in the negotiations surrounding draft resolutions but not as a leader and makes some contribution to the final document.	The delegate takes a significant role in the negotiations surrounding draft resolutions and makes a significant contribution to the final document.	The delegate takes a leading role in the negotiations surrounding draft resolutions and is the primary contributor to the final document.

Actions Related Criteria B: Participation

Making speeches during moderated debate

Raising POI's during moderated debate

Drafting resolutions

Defending and amending resolutions

C: Procedure

This criterion relates to how well adheres to rules of procedure during committee debates. NISCMUN uses standard THIMUN rules, and how these apply to the conference are outlined in the Delegate Handbook. Correct modes of address, the correct raising of POI's, motions and interactions with the chair contribute.

1	2	3	4	5
The delegate does not accurately use modes of address, or their actions consistently interrupt the smooth running of the committee.	The delegate attempts to use the correct modes of address, any mistakes cause minimal disruption.	The delegate mostly uses the correct modes of address, with only minor errors.	The delegate consistently uses the correct modes of address and makes some contribution to the smooth running of the committee.	The delegate consistently and accurately uses the correct modes of address during the conference and contributes to the smooth running of the committee.
The delegate makes continued errors in procedure when posing and accepting POI's, with noticeable disruption to the running of the committee.	The delegate makes frequent errors in procedure when posing and accepting POI's, with some disruption to the running of the committee.	The delegate attempts to follow procedure when posing and accepting POI's, with only minor errors.	The delegate mostly follows procedure when posing and accepting POI's.	The delegate expertly follows procedure when posing and accepting POI's and does so with a high degree of accuracy.
The delegate does not follow rules of procedure when raising points or motions or does not attempt to raise motions.	The delegate attempts to follow procedure when raising points or motions but makes frequent errors.	The delegate mostly follows procedure when raising points or motions and does so with only minor errors.	The delegate regularly follows procedure when raising points or motions and does so with a significant degree of accuracy.	The delegate consistently follows procedure when raising points or motions and does so with a high degree of accuracy.

Actions Related Criteria C: Procedure

Raising points and motions	Raising POI's during moderated debate
Formal modes of address	Defending and amending resolutions
Interactions with the chair	

D: Position

You are expected to review position paper submissions by delegates.

1	2	3	4	5
The position paper is not based on factual research.	The position paper is not based on some factual research. It does not make enough reference to past resolutions and actions of the international community in relation to the given topic.	The position paper is based on some factual research. It makes enough reference to past resolutions and actions of the international community in relation to the given topic.	The position paper is based on adequate factual research. It makes enough reference to past resolutions and actions of the international community in relation to the given topic.	The position paper is based on significant factual research. It makes detailed reference to past resolutions and actions of the international community in relation to the given topic.
The country's position is not stated.	The country's position is vaguely stated.	The country's position is somewhat stated in relation to the topic.	The country's position in relation to the topic is clearly stated.	The country's position in relation to the topic of debate is clearly and accurately stated in a formal, diplomatic register.
No solutions to the topic of debate are proposed.	Relevant solutions to the topic of debate are proposed.	Relevant and realistic solutions to the topic of debate are proposed.	Relevant, realistic, and potential solutions to the topic of debate are proposed.	Detailed, relevant, and realistic potential solutions to the topic of debate are proposed.
No evidence of referencing, or significant errors.	Limited use of referencing, or significant lapses/inconsistencies.	Some factual points are referenced using a recognised referencing style.	Factual points are referenced using a recognised referencing style.	Factual points are accurately referenced using a recognised referencing style.

Actions Related Criteria D: Position

Including factual research	Proposing relevant solutions for the debate
Stating the country's position	Referencing sources

Research Reports

One of your responsibilities as chair is the production of research reports, which aim at preparing delegates for the conference. A research report is a document that provides your delegates with all the core information. The information should act as a platform for them to build upon and come up with solutions to the issues at hand.

The following structure will permit you to produce a well-structured research report. This is a formal piece of writing, so a formal register should be used at all times.

A. Introduction

In this section your aim is simply to introduce the topic with particular relevance to the prominence of the issue at hand in today's world, its origin and what the issue revolves around.

Give the reader a glimpse of what is to be expected in the research report.

To emphasize certain words or phrases, use *italics*, but for sub-headings stick to **bold**. Make sure to maintain a consistent structure throughout your research report.

B. Definition of Key Terms

In this section you simply explain the meaning of a number of terms, which therefore enhances the understanding of the report. You are expected to:

- a. define and explain difficult terms
- b. explain highly relevant terms

If the definition is taken directly from another source, please credit the source in the Bibliography), as there is zero tolerance for plagiarism within the MUN.

C. General Overview

This is often the largest section of the research report, seeing as it provides the reader with detailed information highlighting:

1. What the issue is essentially about (in greater detail than was outlined in the introduction)
2. The origin and history of the issue
3. The current situation, including:
 - What has been done up to this point
 - Is the situation escalating or getting better? If one or the other, in which regions is the issue still prominent?

4. Other forms of representation (so as to support the information highlighted in the report)

can be used such as:

- Statistics (represented graphically or in a tabular form)
- Diagrams (pictures, barometers, etc.)

D. Major Parties Involved

In this section, you should focus on the “parties” that play a significant role in the issue. These may be countries, companies or Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). The views of each entity should be clearly stated and elaborated upon. Any measures taken by the parties in relation to the issue should be stated. Try to stick to a small number of significant parties, in other words, ones that influence the direction and path of the issue.

E. Timeline of Key Events

This section should be short and concise, and should only highlight events which play a role in defining the existence and development of the issue at hand. This section should be presented in a clear and coherent manner, preferably in a ‘column form’ whereby a date and the title of the event are present, only. For example:

Issue: Democratic People’s Republic of Congo

May 2005	A new constitution is decided upon and implemented by the government
July 2006	Elections are held. There are no clear majorities, thus elections named redundant. A run-off is held.

F. Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

This sub-heading speaks for itself. In this section, you should highlight any measures which attempted at resolving the issue, and who (which nation or entity) made these attempts. You should evaluate their success and comment on any follow up these attempts received, for example: Did they influence the situation today or not? Will these measures be taken in the future?

It is strongly advised, that you make reference to any treaties or resolutions which are directed towards tackling the issue at hand. Evaluate such documents too, in terms of the causes for their success or failure, as this may enhance the work produced by the delegates.

G. Possible Solutions

In this section you simply suggest a number of possible solutions that may resolve the issue. You are not to suggest any preambulatory or operative clauses and this section should merely set the groundwork

for delegates to build upon. If, via research, you have come across treaties or resolutions that prove to be possible solutions, do not forget to file them into the appendix section.

H. Appendix/Appendices

In this section you may choose to include the following:

1. Treaties or Resolutions related to the issue,
2. Documents or useful articles highlighting the issue,
3. Useful websites,
4. Relevant books or any other useful sources.

Keep it concise and ensure that only relevant information is included.

I. Bibliography

This section is an essential element of your research report. You should aim to cite all the sources (i.e. books, documentaries, pictures, and websites) that have helped you in the process of writing the report. All quotations need to be cited. The bibliography can be written under the MLA7 format. This can be found on the following website: www.easybib.com.

Note: Plagiarism is viewed as a major offense at all THIMUN affiliated conferences. It can lose a student officer their position. Keep this in mind when carrying out research and make sure to assemble all your sources correctly.

Stock Phrases

Stock phrases are simple phrases or words that you can use to explain the procedures during debate. These are very useful in all situations. Some example stock phrases can be seen below:

- Could the house please come to order?
- The next resolution to be debated will be on the question of...
- Would the main-submitter please take the floor and read out the operative clauses?
- The Chair sets the debate time at 40 minutes of open debate
- The floor is now open
- Are there any delegations wishing to take the floor?
- ... you have been recognized
- ... you have floor
- The speaker will [please] refrain from using unparliamentarily language
- The speaker will [please] refrain from insulting other delegates
- An amendment has been proposed by... This is in order. The chair will read it out

- We will now move into voting procedures on the amendment
- The speaker has opened himself to point of information. Are there any such points in the house?
- Please rise and state your point
- Please state your point in the form of a question - Please refrain from asking several questions in one point - Would the delegate please repeat/rephrase the question?
- There will be no direct dialogue between delegates
- The chair apologizes. In interest of time, no further POIs will be entertained. Could the speaker please yield the floor?
- The chair apologizes, but in the interest of debate, could the delegate please yield the floor?
- There has been a point of order in the house
- The chair stands corrected
- There has been a point of personal privilege on the floor
- Could the house please come to order and show the speaker the respect he/she deserves?
- Debate time on this resolution has elapsed
- We will now move into voting procedures on this resolution
- Would the administrative staff please close/secure all the doors, suspend note passing, and take up their voting positions?
- All those in favour of this resolution please raise your placards high - All those against... - All those abstaining...
- By a vote of... in favour, against, with... abstentions, this resolution/amendment passes/fails - Clapping is (not) in order

Chairing Scenarios

During all these scenarios, the most important thing is to stay calm and professional, it takes a lot responsibility to be a chair.

I. A Chair is sick

This can happen during the conference, but also before the conference. The most important thing is that you will inform your MUN director and your CoChairs but also the Executive Team. The Executive Team will then find a replacement and will let you and your Co-Chairs know. If this happens before the conference, you must also send all your research material to your replacement, so that a smooth transition can take place.

II. The Chair makes a mistake

When a delegate inquires into procedural mistakes made by the chair, the chair should first check the NISCMUN procedural guide. If it is truly a mistake, the chair should admit to their mistake. You may say “The chair stands corrected”.

III. A question you cannot answer

If a question is being asked by a delegate that you cannot answer, you can always look it up. Ask a Chair who is not chairing at that moment to look up the question, and inform the committee that the question will be returned to. This is the easiest way to continue the debate and to answer the question.

IV. Maintaining silence

You can say “order in the house” in maintaining silence. Bear in mind, however, that when the situation becomes disruptive, it is important to listen to the reasons of the disorder in order to understand the best way of keeping them calm.

When you call for order, do not proceed before there is order, wait a few seconds. There are a few things you should not do under these circumstances:

- Don't keep saying that they need to be quiet, then it is better to have a recess/wait until there is silence.
- Don't expect there to be complete silence, only mention it if the murmur bothers the speaker.
- Don't lose your temper and do not raise your voice. Never yell, react aggressively or annoyed at delegates; stay calm, and warn them of consequences that may arise from their behaviour.
- Don't suspend note passing if it is not the source of commotion.

Also, bear the following in mind:

- Start with a rather serious chairing style to set the right debating tone. This will also help you establish authority. If everything runs well then you may choose to loosen up.
- Be polite, friendly, helpful, serious, clear, co-operative, committed, involved, un-biased, fair and diplomatic at all times. This way you earn the respect of the delegates.
- Recognize delegates from all over the room, especially delegates in the back corners of the room and the first few rows of the room.
- Be consistent during the debate with your style, policies, and implantations of the Rules of Procedure.
- Move your ego to the back. Never speak condescendingly or arrogantly towards a delegate.

