

Chapter III. Resolutions

Resolutions are the primary tools of discussion and decision-making at the United Nations. They form the basis for all UN debate, bringing one or several issues to the floor in a form that Representatives can discuss, amend, and reject or ratify as circumstances dictate.

Resolutions usually state a policy that the UN will undertake, but they also may be in the form of treaties, conventions and declarations in some bodies. They range from very general to very specific in content. Depending on the body involved, they may call for or suggest a course of action, condemn an action, and require action or sanctions on the part of the member states. The General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council may only call for or suggest actions of members. They may also give specific or general directions to the UN Secretariat at any time. It should be noted that no body other than the Security Council may require action or sanctions from member states. In some cases, final conventions and treaties may also require action, but this would only be on the part of the signatory nations.

Amendments to resolutions are the means by which resolutions may be altered by the body involved. Amendments can create additions, deletions, or changes to a resolution in order to increase its acceptability to all nations involved. Amendments are usually needed for a body to move toward a consensus on a resolution.

DRAFT RESOLUTIONS

Because of the unique flow of debate at UNIMUN, draft resolutions are not “brought to the floor” until the final phase of discussion on the topic. Any nation may draft a resolution at any time, and this can be discussed during informal debate as the members of the body see fit.

UNIMUN strongly recommends that the drafters of resolutions seek additional sponsors during the informal debate period. This provides several benefits:

1. Sponsors denote that a resolution has increased support, and is more likely to reach the floor and pass in formal debate,
2. Seeking additional sponsors serves to draw in the viewpoints of other countries in the body, often resulting in changes to a draft resolution to satisfy additional sponsors and gain support, and thus bringing the resolution closer to consensus,
3. If any draft resolutions has the sponsorship of 25% of the body (a number which will be announced by the President on the first day of sessions), UNIMUN will provide copies of that resolution to all delegations in the body.

Note that a delegation should only sign onto a resolution as a “sponsor” if that country could currently vote “yes” on the resolution, or could vote “yes” with only minor changes which are agreed to in advance. No delegation should agree to sponsor a resolution which they do not agree with just to allow copies to be made, or to move the resolutions closer to the floor; this would by definition not be within a countries normal diplomatic character – why advocate something if your country doesn’t support it?

To facilitate the process of discussing, combining and changing resolutions to determine which one should be brought to the floor for discussion, suspensions of the meeting are strongly encouraged throughout the informal debate session. It is recommended that Representatives use this time to caucus on the resolutions before the body in an attempt to reach consensus on which resolution(s) should be addressed.

The process of utilizing “draft resolutions” and requiring more than one sponsoring delegation is intended to replicate the United Nations practice of gaining support for resolutions before they are discussed in formal sessions. Further, it should push delegations away from looking at a proposal as “*my resolution*” and toward working with others to gain a consensus opinion on the topics being discussed.



To this end, **representatives will need to work together and most likely combine clauses from a number of draft resolutions or subsequent proposals** by other member states at the conference. Representatives are strongly encouraged to undertake this process during the informal debate period and before resolutions are moved to the floor during formal debate. As in the real UN, building support for one resolution that encompasses the entirety of one part of the topic will be a much better use of the representatives time than trying to work on multiple resolutions, many of which will overlap. Thus UNIMUN **suggests that representatives not contend over which resolution will come to the floor, but rather caucus and compromise to determine how best to combine resolutions** into a coherent, whole product that all nations can accept, either through friendly amendments or through the drafting of a new “omnibus” resolution on that part of the topic. More than one resolution may be moved to the floor during formal debate, but these should be resolutions covering very different parts of the overall topic.

After a draft resolution receives the requisite 25 percent sponsors, it must be brought to the body’s Rapporteur for approval. The President will then announce that the resolution is being copied for distribution to all delegations.

Resolutions which are drafted at or brought to the Conference by delegations must have the requisite 25 percent sponsors before they will be considered by the Rapporteur or processed in Delegate Services.

Security Council resolutions never require more than one sponsor to be brought to the floor

HOW A RESOLUTION IS BROUGHT TO THE FLOOR

At the conclusion of the informal debate period, a delegation may make a motion for the body to move into formal debate. This motion effectively says that all discussion on the resolutions is completed, and that the body has formulated one or more final products which are ready to be voted upon. For this reason, the motion requires an overwhelming 3/4 majority to pass, indicating that the vast majority of the body is in agreement on the resolutions to be discussed in formal debate.

All delegations should take three factors into account when making the very political decisions which come into drafting resolutions and moving into the formal debate period:

1. Have we worked enough on all resolutions which might come to the floor during formal debate, and will 3/4 of the body support the motion to move into formal debate?
2. Does the resolution(s) that your delegation supports have enough backing from other delegations for it to get to the floor?
3. Are there other resolutions similar to the one(s) my nation supports which might have more support, and thus be more likely to move to the floor and pass?

Per the rules of procedure, resolutions (in all bodies except the Security Councils) require a majority vote to be brought to the floor during formal debate. As in sponsorship, there is no reason for someone to vote to bring a resolution to the floor during formal debate *unless* that nation plans to vote “yes” on a resolution, or plans to support amendments which would allow it to vote “yes” on a final product.

Also, if a similar resolution has just been brought to the floor and passed, there is likely no reason to bring a largely duplicative resolution to the floor for debate; that part of the topic has likely already been covered to most nations’ satisfaction. Thus, resolutions without the support of at least one-half of the body are unlikely to actually be moved to the floor during formal debate on the topic. Delegations should plan their tactics accordingly to take this into account when drafting, amending and possibly combining resolutions.

POINTS TO CONSIDER IN WRITING RESOLUTIONS

The following list includes important points to consider when writing a resolution, either in advance or for submission at the Conference. This is by no means an exclusive list, but should provide a good starting point to make your resolutions as realistic as possible. Points to consider include:



- ! In the preambulatory clauses, describe the recent history of the situation and the issue as it currently exists;
- ! Reference past United Nations actions, when available;
- ! Reference previous United Nations resolutions passed on the topic, when available;
- ! In the operative (activating) clauses, include actions which will solve the problem, not just make a statement;
- ! Don't be blatantly political in the content of the resolution -- this may damage efforts to reach a consensus on the issue;
- ! Take into account the points of view of other nations whenever possible;
- ! Write the resolution from your country's side of the "international" or "United Nations" perspective, not just from your country's individual point of view;
- ! Refer issues which need further discussion to appropriate, existing bodies;
- ! Don't create new Committees/Commissions/Working Groups/etc. without considering funding for these groups, or if other, similar bodies already exist;
- ! Always consider previous UN resolutions on the topic -- don't duplicate what other resolutions have done without referencing the appropriate sources.

SUBMISSION OF RESOLUTIONS

UNIMUN will not accept resolutions in advance of the Conference, but draft resolutions may be brought to the Conference or created at the Conference and submitted on the floor by any delegation or group of delegations.

RESOLUTION GUIDELINES

Each draft resolution should be written as a single sentence, with commas and semicolons separating the various parts (see "Sample Resolution" for specifics). In drafting the "heading" of resolutions, Representatives should state their country name, the name of the body to which it will be presented, and the topic of the resolution at the top of the document.

Following the "heading" section, resolutions are split into *preambulatory* and *operative* (sometimes called activating) clauses. Preambulatory clauses are listed first, and they are used to justify action, denote past authorizations and precedents for action, and/or denote the purpose for an action. Operative clauses are the statement of policy in a resolution. They are numbered, begin with a verb to denote an action (or suggested action), and each clause usually addresses no more than one specific aspect of the action to be taken.

DRAFT RESOLUTION FORMAT

The standard format is as follows:

- ! A 2" top margin and 1" side and bottom margins,
- ! Single spaced throughout resolution, with double spacing between clauses,
- ! Clauses must begin with proper introductory words/phrases, in capital letters,
- ! Preambulatory clauses end with commas and operative clauses end with semi-colons,
- ! Each operative clause must be numbered and indented,
- ! The final operative clause ends with a period,
- ! Please do not number lines in the margin of the resolution.



RESOLUTION INTRODUCTORY PHRASES

The following phrases/words are a partial list of the appropriate introductions in resolutions:

PREAMBULATORY PHRASES

Affirming	Deeply concerned	Fully alarmed	Having received	Reaffirming
Alarmed by	Deeply convinced	Fully believing	Keeping in mind	Recalling
Approving	Deeply disturbed	Further deploring	Noting with regret	Recognizing
Aware of	Deeply regretting	Guided by	Noting with satisfaction	Seeking
Believing	Desiring	Having adopted	Noting with deep concern	Taking into consideration
Bearing in mind	Emphasizing	Having considered	Noting with approval	Viewing with appreciation
Confident	Expecting	Having examined	Observing	Welcoming
Convinced	Fulfilling	Having studied	Realizing	
Declaring	Fully aware	Having heard		

OPERATIVE PHRASES

Accepts	Confirms	Endorses	Further resolves	Regrets
Affirms	Considers	Expresses its appreciation	Further requests	Requests
Approves	Declares accordingly	Expresses its hope	Have resolved	Solemnly affirms
Authorizes	Deplores	Further invites	Notes	Strongly condemns
Calls	Draws the attention	Further proclaims	Proclaims	Supports
Calls upon	Designates	Further reminds	Reaffirms	Takes note of
Condemns	Emphasizes	F u r t h e r recommends	Recommends	Transmits
Congratulates	Encourages		Reminds	Urges

SAMPLE RESOLUTION

Please note: the sample resolution presented below is shown for formatting purposes only. It is intentionally simplistic, and is not meant to represent the content of an actual draft resolution.

SUBJECT OF RESOLUTION: Refraining from the Use of Force in International Relations

SUBMITTED TO: The General Assembly

SUBMITTED BY: Sponsoring Country(s)

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

RECOGNIZING that the use of force in international relations cannot be condoned,

AFFIRMING the principals of the UN Charter in regards to the non-usage of force in international relations,

SEEKING solutions to international problems without the use of force,

DEEPLY CONCERNED that some nations still consider the use of force acceptable,

1. REQUESTS all nations to refrain from the use of force in international relations;
2. SUPPORTS the use of the various United Nations bodies for the settlement of international disputes;
3. CONGRATULATES all nations which choose to resolve their disputes in a peaceful fashion.

