



ROTARY DISTRICT 9810 MODEL UNITED NATIONS ASSEMBLY (MUNA)

RULES OF DEBATE

Rotary International District 9810 welcomes you to MUNA. This is a fun weekend, and we hope you will add to your knowledge of how the United Nations operates as well as learning and explaining to your friends how different countries view different subjects of world significance.

The National costumes add to the atmosphere and occasion of the event and we ask you to wear them at all sessions.

This is not an extension of school, marks are not being awarded at the end of the weekend although we are looking at how you represent the country. There are a few awards to add to the fun. There are many aspects that affect which teams will win these awards, especially:

- Your contribution to world peace and understanding within the Assembly
- Teamwork - both team members must participate in the debates
- Active participation; specifically contributions which build on debate rather than reading prepared speeches which don't add to the flow of the debate
- Costumes – how well the outfits convey the culture and costumes of “your” country
- Unwarranted interruptions and disruptions that negatively affect the flow of debate

Whilst schools will naturally take pride in the performance of their students at MUNA, we strongly encourage inter-school friendships and we hope all MUNA participants will see this is an example of what MUNA can achieve.

Everyone will get a list on the first morning of **all** the students and the countries they represent. This not only assists you during MUNA, but as previous delegates have found, also provides a valuable network of friends with whom you might wish to keep in touch, long after MUNA has finished.

Remember that, as we are in Parliament House, there are a few rules we need to observe - in particular, no smoking in or out of the building and no eating or drinking in the Chamber.

Over the two days we will keep the rules to a minimum so you are not overburdened and we will introduce them progressively as your skills and confidence develop.

You will be asked to complete a questionnaire to assist us in organising next year's event. It will be collected before you finish.

Rule 1 How to Address the Assembly

To maintain order, permission to address the Assembly is granted by the **Secretary General**. Any delegate wishing to speak must stand up and wait to be recognised by the **Secretary General**.

Delegates (i.e. you) should open with: -

“Mr. Secretary General, we the delegates from.....(then state your country)..”

You are reminded that, where possible, the views you put forward in debate are the likely views of the country you represent, not your personal views.

For a resolution to be carried, it requires 51% support of the Assembly, not merely a majority. You may abstain from voting, but no country has a veto.

Rule 2 - Rules of Debate

When a resolution is to be debated, the **Secretary General** will call for a **Proposer**, a **Secunder** and an **Opposer** by a show of hands. He will then ask for countries that wish to speak in support of the motion and then ask for countries that wish to speak against.

The **Proposer**, then the **Secunder** followed by the **Opposer** will open the debate. The **Opposer** followed by the **Proposer** will be given the opportunity to make closing statements.

The closing statements should be used to summarise, support or oppose the motion and to rebut arguments put forward during the debate, and not be used as an opportunity for introducing new arguments.

The **principal speeches** (proposer, secunder and opposer) will be limited to **four minutes**, whilst **other speeches** will be limited to **two minutes**. This is to try and ensure all delegates have the opportunity to speak.

Note: For fairness and to give every “country” an opportunity to participate, no delegation may propose or second a resolution more than once during the two days.

Rule 3 - Bloc Meetings

Throughout much of UN history, resolutions have been upheld or defeated as a result of the support or otherwise of regional Blocs that have common interests. Broadly speaking they fall into the regional groupings of European, Western, Asia/Pacific, Developing Nations and Middle Eastern Countries.

We will set up these Blocs within the countries represented during the weekend and, during the debate, delegates may call for a Bloc Meeting. A listing of Blocs is provided once participating teams have been allocated the countries they are to represent.

Each Bloc should try and adopt a common debating and voting position on the resolution. If you think one of the other Blocs might support your position, you may wish to send a delegate to solicit their support during a break for Bloc Meetings. Should you be successful, this will almost certainly ensure your position is carried when the resolution is put to a vote.

Hint – when you arrive on Saturday morning seek out member countries of your bloc and commence diplomatic discussions.

Rule 4 - Amendments

If, during a debate, a resolution appears to require amendment in order to achieve majority support, any country may submit (as the **Mover**) a proposal to the **Secretary General** written on the paper supplied on your arrival. The **Secretary General** will seek acceptance of the amendment from the **Proposer** and **Secunder** of the original resolution. If accepted, "the amended resolution" then becomes the resolution without a vote. If not accepted, it is either withdrawn or put to an assembly vote.

If it is put to a vote, then a maximum of four speakers, including the **Mover** of the amendment, may speak to the amendment proceeding alternately for and against.

When the **Mover** and the **First Against** have been nominated, a **five-minute Bloc Meeting** will be held. Thereafter the amendment debate will proceed.

After the four speakers to the amendment, the proposed amendment will be put to a vote and the **Secretary General** will announce the results. If passed, the amendment becomes the resolution for debate.

The amendment will be ruled invalid if it: -

- i) substantially changes the nature of the resolution
- ii) is insignificant

No amendment will be considered until the debate on a resolution is underway.

The **Secretary General** has the power to override motions or amendments when doing so in the interests of fairness and equality of debate.

Note: Only one amendment shall be allowed per resolution.

Rule 5 - Points of Order

Any delegate may interrupt the debate by rising from their seat and calling upon the **Secretary General** for a ruling on a Point of Order. For Points of Order to be upheld, they will generally need to be **factual or relate to the conduct of a delegate** in the Assembly.

For a Point of Order regarding the conduct of a delegate in the Assembly to be allowed, it will normally be for the use of language considered inappropriate for the Assembly (specifically, denigration or anything that might be considered an affront to the religion or traditions of another delegate).

For example:

For a Point of Order relating to information being presented to the Assembly to be upheld, it must generally be based on established fact, not on opinion. It will not be accepted if used by delegates to make debating points. Points of Order should be used sparingly so the flow of debate on resolutions is not being constantly interrupted.

If, during the course of debate, a delegate makes a slanderous or grossly inaccurate comment in respect of another member country's actions, reputation, the integrity of the country's delegates or Head of State, the representatives of the country impugned may wish to respond and call for a Point of Order.

Rule 6 - Motions of Dissent

Delegates can introduce Motions of Dissent, if in their opinion the **Secretary General** appears to be showing bias in his rulings or his conduct of debate. These motions require a **Mover** and a **Second**.

The **Secretary General** is then obliged to accept the Motion of Dissent and is required to vacate the chair. The **President** will then call for a vote on the motion, which if supported by a majority of the delegates, will result in another Chairperson replacing the **Secretary General** for the remainder of debate on that resolution.

Rule 7 - That the Resolution be Put

If a debate is going nowhere and nothing new is being said or if there is general agreement either to support or reject the resolution, then any delegate can require that "The resolution be put". A **Second** is required. The **Secretary General** will call for a vote on the "put" motion. If this vote has a majority, then the resolution being debated is put. If the motion "That the resolution be put" fails, then debate continues with the countries still to speak being allowed to do so.

The **Secretary General** may refuse to allow that "The Resolution be Put" in the interest of fairness and equality.

Rule 8 - Diplomatic Notes

These are passed between Bloc Members and used to persuade delegates who are yet to speak to add a Bloc Member's view during a presentation. The delegate sending the note may not have been invited to speak when speakers were initially called for. **Use Diplomatic Notes sparingly.** Diplomatic notes are not a substitute for social media. Please refrain from sending personal messages or witticisms. If they start to appear like confetti they will be collected and the less erudite will be read out to all.

Rule 9 - Leave (permission) to make a Statement

This is only granted to clarify an error in debate.

Rule 10 - Propose a Suspension of Standing Orders

This is used by the **Secretary General** to suspend debate to acknowledge the arrival of a special guest, e.g. the **District Governor**.