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Resolution Writing Overview

Actions of the United Nations are most frequently expressed in resolutions submitted in draft form under the sponsorship of one or more delegations. Resolutions may simply register an opinion, or may recommend action to be taken by a UN organ or related agency. Only the Security Council may make decisions which bind member states to a certain course of action.

While it may be helpful for delegates to come to the Model UN conference knowing what their draft resolution should look like and contain, pre-written resolutions are not recommended. Any papers need to be circulated among other delegates to incorporate different perspectives and to build a base of support. Most draft resolutions are sponsored by several states or by an entire regional or common interest group.

The conference Secretariat will provide for duplication and distribution of resolutions and amendments at the conference.

When drafting and sponsoring a resolution, keep in mind that the wording will greatly influence its appeal (or lack thereof). The resolution should be clear, concise, and specific. The substance should be well-researched, and reflect the character and interests of the sponsoring nations.

Drafting Resolutions

United Nations resolutions follow a common format. Each resolution has three parts: the heading, the preamble, and the operative clauses. It is one long sentence with commas and semicolons throughout the resolution, and with a period only at the very end. Draft resolutions should be single-spaced with each line following the heading numbered in the left-hand margin. The first word in each clause should be underlined, and each clause in the preamble should end with a comma. All operative clauses end with a semicolon except the final clause, which ends with a period.

What follows is a more detailed examination of each section of a draft resolution.

Draft Resolution Elements

Heading:

Format: ODUMUNC/Year/Committee / Topic.draft letter
Committee: the committee or organ in which the working paper is introduced
Topic: the topic of debate
Draft Resolution letter: the letter is in alphabetical order based on the order in which the draft resolution is introduced to the committee. It will become a number based after being passed.
Sponsored by: list of sponsoring countries
Signatories: Signatories and sponsors combined must equal 1/5 of the body present.
Body of the Resolution:

Each attitude, opinion, command, or recommendation made by the United Nations is formally expressed using key introductory words and phrases. Each of these introductions has a specific use and meaning.

Preamble:

The purpose of a preamble is to show that there is a problem that needs to be solved by the world community. This also may mean demonstrating that the problem is within the jurisdiction of the UN. These two purposes are fulfilled by reference to appropriate sections of the UN Charter, by citing the precedent of UN action, or by citing previous resolutions or declarations. It is customary to include the numbers of previous resolutions passed on the same topic. The preamble should also point out the key elements of the current problem by specifically referring to situations or incidents. Finally, the preamble may include altruistic appeals to the common sense or humanitarian instincts of members with references to the Charter, etc.

The importance of the preamble depends on the question under consideration. In some cases, the problem is generally accepted and the preamble is merely a formality. In such situations, it is usually the mechanism of solution that presents the stumbling block. A good example of this is the question of disarmament. Virtually everyone agrees that nuclear weapons are basically bad, but few agree on how to get rid of them. In another case, however, such as the problem of supporting a national liberation movement, the solution might be quite simple, but not everyone would agree that is the correct perception of the problem. In this case, a strong, comprehensive preamble would be necessary.

The preamble begins with the name of the committee in the upper left margin followed by a comma. Each phrase starts with a particular word or phrase and ends with a comma. The opening word or phrase of each phrase should be underlined. The list of our perambulatory words and phrases can be found on the next page. There are additional words available in the UNA-USA delegate Preparation Guide, however, our list highlights the ones that are most commonly used.
Introductory Perambulatory Clauses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alarmed by</th>
<th>Emphasizing</th>
<th>Noting with approval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affirming</td>
<td>Expressing</td>
<td>Fully aware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciation</td>
<td>Expecting</td>
<td>Fully believing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attention to</td>
<td>Expressing</td>
<td>Further recalling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aware of</td>
<td>Fulfilling</td>
<td>Keeping in mind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approving</td>
<td>Fully alarmed</td>
<td>Noting with satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believing</td>
<td>Further deploring</td>
<td>Noting further</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bearing in mind</td>
<td>Guided by</td>
<td>Observing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confident</td>
<td>Having considered</td>
<td>Realizing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convincing</td>
<td>Having devoted</td>
<td>Recalling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contemplating</td>
<td>Having studied</td>
<td>Reaffirming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deeply concerned</td>
<td>Having received</td>
<td>Referring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deeply convinced</td>
<td>Having adopted</td>
<td>Recognizing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deeply regretting</td>
<td>Having considered further</td>
<td>Seeking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declaring</td>
<td>Having examined Having</td>
<td>Taking into consideration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deeply conscious</td>
<td>Heard</td>
<td>Taking into account</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deeply disturbed</td>
<td>Noting with regret</td>
<td>Welcoming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desiring</td>
<td>Noting with deep Concern</td>
<td>Viewing with</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Operative Clauses:

The proposed solution in a draft resolution is presented in sequentially numbered operative clauses. These clauses may recommend, urge, condemn, encourage, or request certain actions, or state a favorable or unfavorable opinion regarding the existing situation. Each operative clause calls for a specific action. The action may be as vague as denunciation of a certain situation or a call for negotiations, or as specific as a cease-fire or a monetary commitment for a particular project.

Remember that the General Assembly can only recommend actions, only the Security Council may make binding decisions. Draft Resolutions may request action by the member states, by a particular state, by the UN Secretariat, or by any of the other UN bodies or agencies.

Introductory Operative Clauses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trusts</th>
<th>Emphasizes</th>
<th>Encourages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transmits</td>
<td>Endorses</td>
<td>Expresses its appreciation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affirms</td>
<td>Expresses its hopes</td>
<td>Further invites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authorizes</td>
<td>Further proclaims</td>
<td>Further reminds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calls upon</td>
<td>Further recommends</td>
<td>Further resolves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congratulates</td>
<td>Further requests</td>
<td>Has resolved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accepts</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>Proclaims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approves</td>
<td>Reaffirms</td>
<td>Recommends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calls</td>
<td>Requests</td>
<td>Solemnly affirms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condemns</td>
<td>Strongly condemns</td>
<td>Supports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirms</td>
<td>Considers</td>
<td>Takes note of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declares accordingly</td>
<td>Deplores</td>
<td>Urges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draws the attention of</td>
<td>Designates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Process for Submitting a Resolution

Pre-written resolutions will not be accepted by the Secretariat before the conference. At the conference, all resolutions are expected to be in good form according to the attached guidelines. Resolutions must be typed and ready to reproduce. Computers will be provided for the delegates’ convenience. Extensive editing will not be done by members of the Secretariat, and resolutions which contain a substantial number of errors will be returned to the authors. Please refer to the sample resolution for proper format.

The process for submitting resolutions will be as follows: 1) Each resolution must be written/typed as a working paper, in the proper format. 2) The sponsor(s) of the resolution must submit the working paper to the Director of the committee to be stamped. 3) The Director may then authorize the reproduction of a limited number of unofficial working copies of the working paper made by the office to be circulated through the committee. 4) In order to submit a resolution officially, the sponsor must obtain the signatures of 1/5 of the committee. The Dias will announce the number needed based on the roll call. 5) The draft resolution with the required signatures must then be submitted to the Director of the committee for final approval. Upon receiving approval, the Director will stamp the paper and make copies. When it is introduced the Chair will assign it an official number. The Director is responsible for the distribution of the official resolution when it is formally proposed on the floor. 6) For a working paper to be formally introduced to the floor as a draft resolution, the sponsor must be on the speakers’ list or yielded time to introduce.

Delegates should not feel that the purpose of a MUN conference is to pass as many resolutions as possible. The success of a committee does not rest on the number of resolutions passed. Rather, delegates should strive toward a valid simulation of the diplomatic interactions of the UN, which may mean that no resolutions are passed.

Resolution Changes

Original Resolution Text Excerpt

“1. Realizing that technology has created new forms of weapons that pose serious and long-term threats to all forms of life on this planet…”

Amendments

Regardless of how brilliant or perfectly crafted the sponsors of an amendment may feel their draft resolution is there should always be at least one country that wants to change it. Sometimes this is done to help the draft resolution, sometimes it is done to hurt the draft resolution. There are two types of amendments:
**Friendly Amendments:** Amendments that are agreed to by all the sponsors of the draft resolution. Once friendly status is verified, the proposed changes get automatically incorporated into the resolution. Unfriendly amendments are those that are not agreed to by the sponsors of the resolution and are voted upon before the resolution during voting procedures.

**Unfriendly Amendments:** Amendments that are presented by a delegation that is not a sponsor or that all the sponsors do not agree on is considered unfriendly. Before the proposed changes can be added to the draft resolution they must be voted on during voting procedures. The amendment furthest removed in content from the original resolution will be voted upon first. Unfriendly Amendments must have the same number of signatories/sponsors as a draft resolution.

All amendments work in one of three ways; Adding words, Striking Out words, and Word Substitution. Amendments must refer to specific lines of draft resolutions. ODUMUNC uses Amendment forms to change draft resolutions. Examples are below.

**Amendment by Addition**

“amend the resolution by adding the word ‘military’ before the word ‘technology’.”

If passed the resolution would read:

“Realizing that military technology has created new forms of weapons that pose serious and long-term threats to all forms of life on this planet…”

**Amendment by Striking Out**

“amend the resolution by striking out the words ‘and long-term’ before the word ‘threats’.”

If passed the resolution would read:

“Realizing that military technology has created new forms of weapons that pose serious threats to all forms of life on this planet…”

**Amendment by Striking Out and Substitution**

“amend the resolution by striking out the word ‘military’ which appears before the word ‘technology’ and substituting in its place the word ‘nuclear’.”

If passed the resolution would read:

“Realizing that nuclear technology has created new forms of weapons that pose serious threats to all forms of life on this planet…”
Examples of Unacceptable Amendments:

1. Any amendment which would make the resolution the direct negative of the sponsor’s intent: “amend the resolution by adding the word ‘not’.”

2. Any amendment which has no relationship to the resolution: “amend the resolution by adding the words ‘affect world food production and’ before the word ‘pose’.”

Friendly amendments are those that are agreed to by the sponsors of the resolution, and are automatically incorporated into the resolution. Unfriendly amendments are those that are not agreed to by the sponsors of the resolution and are voted upon before the resolution during voting procedures. The amendment furthest removed in content from the original resolution will be voted upon first.

ODUMUNC Amendment Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sponsor(s):</th>
<th>Resolution#:</th>
<th>Change (Circle One)</th>
<th>ADD</th>
<th>REMOVE</th>
<th>EDIT/MOVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Operative Clause Change:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|             |              | ____________________________________________________________________
|             |              | ____________________________________________________________________
|             |              | ____________________________________________________________________
|             |              | ____________________________________________________________________

Signatories:
________________________________________________________________________
Example General Assembly Draft Resolution

Resolution: ODUMUNC/37/GA4/3.a
Body and committee: General Assembly, Third Committee
Topic: Strengthening UN Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance in Complex Emergencies
Sponsors: Lesotho, Malawi, Tuvalu
Signatories: Angola, Bangladesh, Yemen, Zambia

The General Assembly,

Reminding all nations of the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which recognizes the inherent dignity, equality and inalienable rights of all Global citizens,

Reaffirming its Resolution 33/1996 of 25 July 1996, which encourages governments to work with UN bodies aimed at improving the coordination and effectiveness of humanitarian assistance,

Noting with satisfaction the past efforts of various relevant UN bodies and organizations,

Stressing the fact that the United Nations faces significant financial obstacles and is in need of reform,

1. Encourages all relevant agencies of the United Nations to collaborate more closely with countries at the grassroots level to enhance the carrying out of relief efforts;

2. Urges member states to comply with the goals of the UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs to streamline efforts of humanitarian aid;

3. Requests that all nations develop rapid deployment forces to better enhance the coordination of relief efforts of humanitarian assistance in complex emergencies, such as:

   a. Appointing an official to be the head of international coordination efforts,

   b. Provide funding and planning for short-notice emergency missions for quick deployment;

6. Requests the expansion of preventive actions and assurance of post-conflict assistance through reconstruction and development.
Example Security Council Resolution

Resolution ODUMUNC/37/SC/1.a
Committee: Security Council
Strengthening UN Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance in Complex Emergencies
Sponsors: Canada, India, United Kingdom, United States of America
Signatories: France, China, Russian Federation,

1. The Security Council,

2. Reaffirming the United Nations role to set the standard in the area of human rights,

3. Guided by Chapter 7 of United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which calls for the basic rights of people regardless of origin, nationality and gender, and General Assembly Resolution 46/37 B,

4. Deeply concerned by the number and consistency of human rights violations in Sierra Leone,

5. Reaffirming the United Nations commitment to exploring and exhausting peaceful means of dispute settlement,

6. Recognizing that conflict resolution through regional organizations such as ECOWAS and the OAU has been successful in the past,

7. Bearing in mind that the UN currently has 37,400 UN military and personnel provided by 89 countries engaged in 15 operations around the world,

8. Taking into consideration that the UN was unable to meet its initial deployment goal of 13,000 for the UNAMSIL mission,

9. 1. Condemns human rights violations;

10. 2. Reaffirms the necessity for peacekeeping forces to remain neutral and objective in the involvement of interstate and intrastate conflicts;

11. 3. Emphasizes the need for the United Nations to sustain its efforts as a peacekeeper and humanitarian observer in the UNAMSIL mission;

12. 4. Calls upon member nations to enforce an arms embargo against the country of Sierra Leone;

13. 5. Authorizes UNAMSIL to execute its mission of peacekeeping once the cease-fire is under observance;
6. Requests increased assistance to organizations such as ECOWAS and the OAU which are committed to providing meaningful solutions to regional problems in order to promote durable peace;

7. Further recommends that the United Nations employ the objectives of preventive diplomacy as defined by former Secretary General Boutros Boutros Ghali in his *Agenda for Peace* pursuant to General Assembly Resolution 46/37 B;

8. Further resolves to stay committed to the peaceful resolution of conflict in the country of Sierra Leone.