

## Writing a Position Paper

Submission of position papers by delegates is optional, but strongly encouraged. Writing position papers serves enhance the quality of preparation of the delegates and to focus their thoughts on the topic areas. The WA-MUN gives position paper awards. (Position papers must be submitted in advance of the conference). DELEGATIONS CAN CONDUCT RESEARCH COLLABORATIVELY, AND WRITE A TEAM POSITION PAPER FOR AN AWARD.

A position paper is a two-page statement of a country's policy on both topic areas on the committee's agenda.

[Sample award-winning paper from previous conference.](#)

### **A position paper should include:**

A one-sentence introduction with history of your country's involvement and/or interest in the topic.

(Ex: Norway has actively participated in UN peacekeeping for several decades including operations in \_\_\_ and \_\_\_ with \_\_\_ # of troops)

Discussion of your country's current policies on the topic.

(Ex: Norway takes an active interest in achieving peace in the Middle East and has been fundamental in the signing of the Oslo Accords. Norway is in a unique position as a mediator because it has a clear understanding of Palestinian demands and a working relationship with the PLO, but the Norwegian people also have considerable interest in and support for Israel as a nation.

Policy proposals - list potential solutions to the problems posed in the topic area that your country might be willing to support.

(Ex: Norway is willing to cooperate with other members of the international community that are interested in providing a peacekeeping force for Jerusalem in accordance with Security Council resolution 255. In addition, we would support further resolutions ensuring Israeli compliance with the Peace Accords).

### **Formatting Guidelines:**

1. Cover page: Students names, school, country represented, and advisor name
2. Position paper: Country name at the top of the page; Subheadings for the two topic areas.
3. Two page maximum (not including cover page), double-spaced, Times or Times New Roman font.

Papers to be considered for a position paper award should be submitted by January 10.

E-Mail a Word or pdf email attachment to: [modelun@wichita.edu](mailto:modelun@wichita.edu)

Delegates should have copies of their position papers available during conference so they can refer to them as they make speeches and draft resolutions.

## **Tips on How to Write a Position Paper**

Avoid use of “flowery” language. Try to state what you want to say as succinctly and clearly as possible. Diplomats can be round-about and vague, but position papers should not be.

Writing in the present tense is better than past perfect. Ex: “Finland supports the UN’s efforts to \_\_\_\_\_” NOT “Finland has supported the UN \_\_\_\_\_” (the exception is when you are actually referring to specific events in the past. “Finland has supported historical peacekeeping efforts by contributing over 2,000 troops throughout the Cold War”).

Avoid too much use of first person pronouns (I, We). Refer to your position by country name. “Germany believes...”, “Germany supports...”

Avoid superlatives: greatest, best, most, very, extremely. These tend to sound like exaggerations.

Frequently used terms: international community, global community, member states, mechanisms, guidelines, implementation, conventions, treaties, resolutions, conferences, multilateral, bilateral, national.

Some commonly used verbs:

affirms, endeavors, recognizes, allocates, acknowledges, encourages, believes, hopes, recommends, urges, considers, addresses, emphasizes, advocates

Key questions and structure:

1. State why the problem is important. Who should care about it? Why is it on the UN’s agenda?
2. What work has been done already to address this issue? What UN agencies deal with it? You can frame these in terms of an assessment - the agencies are “effective”, “successful”, “overburdened” etc. What conventions, conferences, meetings, etc have been held? What documents have come out of these meetings? Resolutions, treaties, conventions? Frame these in terms of our countries support (or rejection) of these efforts.

Link your country to the work that has been done. Have they contributed funds?

Sponsored/attended conferences? Signed treaties? Have they taken notable steps domestically to address this issue?

Propose some specific steps to resolve the problem. These may not be directly linked to your country’s position, but should not be contradictory to your interests. Focus can be on multilateral steps, or on regional organizations, or on pursuing domestic/national legislation that will address the problem.

### **SAMPLE:**

Country: France

Committee: Plenary Committee

Delegation: \_\_\_\_\_ High School

France believes the work of the Plenary Committee is [adjective] for addressing [issue(s)].

## Topic I

This is a serious problem that affects the world [how specifically?].

France has supported the work that has been done in the past through [ \_\_\_\_ agencies, organizations, international conferences (dates) ]. France has ratified the \_\_\_\_ [treaty, convention]. France has taken steps domestically to address this issue by [ passing specific domestic legislation].

France recommends that the following steps be taken to resolve/address this problem: First \_\_\_\_.  
Second, \_\_\_\_\_. Finally, \_\_\_\_\_. [three proposals for action are plenty].

## II. Topic II

Same as above.