Parliamentary Procedure

Parliamentary procedure, or "Parli Pro," is a set of rules that keeps order in Model UN committees. While Parli Pro may seem daunting at first, everything becomes much clearer once you are actually in committee. Remember, you can always ask your chair for help!

All of the below rules are derived from modified versions of *Robert's Rules of Order* and other Model United Nations Parliamentary Procedures.

Committee

Functions of the Committee Chairperson
A chairperson shall open and close each session, moderate debate, enforce the rules, recognize speakers, put questions to a vote, and announce rulings. All of these actions are subject to the chair's discretion with the best interests of the committee in mind.

Roll Call
Roll call is the first order of business for any session. It is crucial because a quorum (one-half of the members plus one) is required for a committee to take action on an issue. If a delegation is present, it shall answer either "present" or "present and voting" when the name of its country is called.
- Answering "present" simply means that the delegation is attending the committee session, will vote on all procedural matters, and can vote "yes," "no," or "abstain" on resolutions.
- However, a delegate who answers "present and voting" is obligated to vote on all procedural issues and to either vote "yes" or "no" on all resolutions (no abstentions allowed).
- If a delegate arrives after the opening roll call, they must send a note to the dais informing them of their presence and voting status.

Voting Rights
In General Assemblies, each member state shall have only one vote. Abstentions on a matter may only take place when voting on a resolution or an amendment. All delegations must vote on procedural matters.

Debate

Setting the Agenda
To begin debate on setting a topic, a temporary speakers' list will be created by a delegate's motion. In the event of a delegate making a motion to set the topic, one speaker in favor and one against will address the committee for 30 seconds each. A simple majority sets the topic, and if the motion fails, the speakers' list continues until a topic is selected.

Speakers' List
After a topic is selected, a speakers' list will be created with a set speaking time by a delegate motion. Speakers may comment on the topic, as well as any resolution or amendment pertaining to the topic.

Once a speakers' list is exhausted of all names, debate on the topic will cease, and the committee will move into voting procedures.

Closing and Re-Opening the Speakers' List
A delegate may make a motion at any time either to close or to re-open the speakers' list. When it is closed, debate continues, but no more nations can be added to the list. The list can be reopened at a later time. To do either action, a simple majority vote is required.

Time Limit
A strict time limit shall be placed on all speakers in order to promote the flow of debate. To change the speaking time, a motion may be made on the floor. One speaker for and one against are required, as well as a simple majority vote.

Yielding
A speaker who is discussing a substantive issue may yield their time to the following: points of information from the body, the Chair, or another delegation, who cannot yield that time to another delegation in the room. A yield must be specified by the speaker, and if time is yielded to the Chair, no comments are allowed. Sitting down without yielding is considered a yield to the chair.

Right of Reply
If a delegate feels a remark made was unjustly injurious to them or their delegation, a right of reply may be granted at the Chair's discretion. In order to request this, the delegate must immediately raise their placard explaining how they were insulted. The Chair's ruling may not be appealed.

Points and Motions

Points in Committee
- **Point of Order:** This is made when a member wishes to draw attention to a possible procedural error by the Chair. The point of order and the Chair's ruling must be immediate.
- **Point of Parliamentary Inquiry:** This is made when a question exists regarding these rules and is used for clarification.
- **Point of Information:** This is a question to a speaker made when the speaker yields to points of information. Once recognized by the Chair, a delegate may ask a concise question; only the answer shall count against the speaker's time limit. If any clarification of the question is needed, it will be made by the Chair, who will ask the questioner.
- **Point of Personal Privilege:** This point may be made if at any time a delegate experiences a personal discomfort that impairs their ability to participate in the proceedings. The Chair will attempt to relieve the cause of discomfort if possible. This is the only point that may interrupt a speaker.

Motions
- **Motion to Open Debate:** If a member wishes to open debate, this motion may be made.
- **Motion to Postpone Debate:** If it becomes necessary to postpone debate on a topic, this motion should be made. To re-open debate, rules regarding the speakers' list will be followed, and the old speakers' list will be used.

- **Motion to Suspend Debate:** This motion can be made at any time at the Chair's unappealing discretion. It is also used to pause debate at the end of committee sessions. It requires a simple majority to pass.
- **Motion to Close Debate:** If a member wishes to close debate and move into voting procedure, this motion may be made. A two-thirds majority is required.
- **Motion for a Moderated Caucus:** The committee may digress from the speakers' list with the Chair moderating. The delegate raising the motion must recommend a total time for the caucus as well as a speaker's time and the subject of debate.
- **Motion for an Unmoderated Caucus:** During debate, this motion may be made at any time. The time limit is set at the discretion of the Chair and will not exceed 30 minutes. The motion will be put to an immediate vote and will require a simple majority to pass. No rules of formal debate will exist at this time, and delegates are free to discuss committee matters with others.
- **Motion for a Round Robin:** Once debate has been opened, some Specialized Agencies and Crisis Simulations start a round robin, which gives every member of the committee time to speak for a time period between 30–90 seconds.

Resolutions and Amendments

Resolutions

All business at the conference is passed in resolution form, which is introduced by one or more members of the committee who wish to sponsor it. For it to be introduced and considered, one-fifth of the members present must place their country's signatures on the resolution. These signatories do not necessarily have to support the resolution, but they do wish to see it considered. More than one resolution may be signed by a delegation. A resolution is called a "working paper" until it has gone through the above steps and has been formally read to the committee. After the paper has been introduced, it is henceforth referred to as a "draft resolution." At the discretion of the Chair, a moderated caucus may be given to the sponsors in order to discuss the resolution and answer questions.

Amendments

An amendment changes a working paper, draft resolution, or resolution by adding, striking out, or substituting a word or phrase in an operative clause.
- A friendly amendment is one agreed on by all sponsors and must be submitted to the Chair with the signatures of all sponsors. After being reviewed by the Chair, the amendment becomes part of the original document.
- An unfriendly amendment is one that is not supported by all of the sponsors. Therefore, it requires the signatures of one-fifth of the members present to be considered. Unfriendly amendments are voted on before the draft resolution to which they correspond and in the order in which they were submitted. An unfriendly amendment requires a two-thirds vote to pass.

Withdrawal of Resolution or Amendment

If all sponsors agree on the withdrawal of an amendment or draft resolution, it will be formally removed from debate and all discussion on the former resolution will immediately cease.

<u>Voting</u>

Voting on Procedure
Members present must vote on all procedural matters, meaning no abstentions.

Voting on Resolutions
Resolutions require a simple majority to pass. A member who answers "present and voting" during roll call may not abstain.

Conduct
When voting begins, the chamber will be sealed and silent, and no entry or exit is permitted. All points or motions not pertaining to the vote are out of order.

Resolution Reordering
If multiple draft resolutions exist, they are considered in order of submission. However, a motion for reordering may be made before voting. When it is made, the new order of voting must be stipulated by the member who requests the adjustment. There shall be one speaker for this motion and one against it, and it requires a simple majority to pass.

Dividing the Question
Immediately after debate is closed and before unfriendly amendments are considered, a motion for division may be made. This means that a member wants two or more parts of a draft resolution to be considered separately; these parts shall be specified by the speaker. Two speakers both for and against are required. Once the speakers are finished, a vote on the division shall be made. The motion requires a simple majority to pass. Should it pass, the sections that were divided shall be voted on separately. If there is more than one motion for division, the Chair shall decide their order of consideration.

Parliamentary Procedure for Crisis Simulations

See the standard Parliamentary Procedure guide for general rules.

Crisis Simulations function in a moderated caucus as the default (no vote required) for the purpose of moving debate along quickly. Chairs determine the speakers and speaking time and will not ask for points and motions between speakers. Therefore, delegates must make a point or motion before the Chair calls on the next speaker by raising their placards.

After the Crisis Simulation sets the agenda for the first topic, delegates continuously move between both topics, in accordance with crises. Thus, there is no need to close or postpone debate.

Since resolutions are not used in most Crisis Simulations, the Chair will allow unmoderated caucuses only if absolutely necessary.

Memoranda

A memorandum is a message that is used to communicate with an individual or groups of individuals in a Crisis Simulation and exists in several different forms. Each memorandum should follow the example provided. Although there are no specific clauses for memoranda, the wording of the writing should be diplomatic since other countries' leaders will be reading communiqués and press releases.

Communiqués, directives, and press releases are introduced by the writer after submitting the memorandum to the chair. The chair will ask the writer to give a brief introduction to the memorandum before reading the memorandum to the committee. All memoranda requiring approval by the entire committee can be passed by a simple majority vote.

Information requests are directly sent to the Chair who will forward the message to the appropriate department.

Memorandum	Comments
Communiqués	Sent out to correspond with cabinets of other countries (Example: *see below*)
Press Releases	Can be used to send condolences to the public after failed missions or inform the public of any news Example: *The Pakistani Government would like to offer its condolences to the families impacted by the attack last night in Karachi and inform the public of the undergoing investigation on suspect groups behind the attacks.*

Directives	Used to instruct any groups under the jurisdiction of the agency Example: *Move the troops to the border of Pakistanand be ready for any action in case of emergency.*
Information Requests	Sent to respective departments under the jurisdiction of the agency ("home government") for information on current crises or debate topics Example: *Has the CIA gathered any new information regarding the mobilization of troops on the Pakistani border?*

Sample Memorandum

Example of a communiqué from Chechnya to the Russian Cabinet:

To: Russian Cabinet
From: Chechnya

Chechnya would like to remind the Russian Cabinet of the demands sent regarding the negotiations. If the demands are not met within an hour, Chechnya will declare its independence from Russia and establish itself as an independent nation.

Resolution Writing Guide

<u>Resolution Introductory Phrases</u>

Preambulatory Phrases

Affirming	Emphasizing	Having examined
Alarmed by	Expecting	Having heard
Approving	Expressing its appreciation for	Having received
Aware of	Expressing its satisfaction of	Having studied
Believing	Fulfilling	Keeping in mind
Bearing in mind	Fully aware of	Noting further
Cognizant of	Fully alarmed by	Noting with regret
Confident	Fully believing	Noting with satisfaction
Declaring	Further deploring	Noting with deep concern
Deeply concerned about	Further recalling	Noting further that
Deeply conscious about	Guided by	Noting with approval
Deeply convinced by	Having adopted	Observing
Deeply disturbed by	Having considered	Realizing
Deeply regretting	Having considered further	
Desiring	Having devoted attention to	

Operative Clauses

Accepts	Emphasizes	Proclaims
Affirms	Encourages	Reaffirms
Approves	Endorses	Recommends
Authorizes	Expresses its appreciation for	Reminds
Calls for	Expresses its hope for	Regrets
Calls upon	Further invites	Resolves
Congratulates	Further proclaims	Solemnly affirms
Confirms	Further reminds	Supports
Considers	Further recommends	Takes note of
Declares accordingly	Further requires	Trusts
Deplores	Further resolves	Urges
Draws attention to	Has resolved	
Designates	Notes	

<u>**Sample Resolution**</u>

Disarmament and International Security Committee
Sponsors: Afghanistan, Bolivia, China, Guinea-Bissau, Malaysia, Philippines
Signatories: Yugoslavia, Canada, USA, Luxembourg, Peru, South Africa, Zambia, UK, Germany, Italy, Finland, Mexico
Topic: Disarmament

RESOLUTION 1.2: DISARMAMENT AND TRANSPARENCY

The General Assembly,

Recognizing the need for international compliance and trust while moving toward the eventual goal of disarmament,

Recalling the original goal of the UN to promote a healthy global environment through cooperation,

Believing that participation in the Conventional Arms Register, although voluntary, would benefit the global community,

Noting with concern the lack of a diverse population in the current Conventional Arms Register,

1. <u>Defines</u> conventional arms transfer as a movement of conventional arms from Nation "A" to Nation "B" by sale, trade, or barter;

2. <u>Further defines</u> transparency as the act of making known to the global community clear, concise, and easily understandable information concerning arms;

3. <u>Designates</u> a participatory nation as one that yearly submits to a register by April 30th, declaring what conventional arms it may have traded;

4. <u>Calls</u> for the establishment of incentives for participatory nations in the form of non-military technology; and

5. Refers the designation of incentives to:

    a. Regional bodies,

    b. The Committee on Sustainable Development, and

    c. The Committee on Science and Technology.

Directive Writing Guide

There are two types of directives: public/committee directives and private/personal directives. Public/committee directives are used to take action in committee. They are designed for a faster response to an issue, as opposed to resolutions, which are generally longer and take much more time to write. Private directives are an individual approach to solving issues in committee.

Public Directives

Your goal in a public directive is to *positively* impact the committee by presenting a new idea that addresses the issues at hand. This takes form in **specific** and **measurable** actions and what you expect the result of these actions to be. Sponsors and signatories are required for all public directives, and the number of each is determined at the start of each committee session. Make sure each directive has its own focus and that you are not trying to accomplish all issues with one directive.

Sample Public Directive

Operation Shut Down Tasmania

Sponsors: Minister Hart, Princess Ghan Secretary Gant

Signatories: General Than, Lt. Woomer, Madam Meligone, Secretary Hashni, Cap. Vanty, Sgt. Peppere, Dr. Tam, VP Mebre

1. Relocate 1,000 troops and 27 ships to the Bass Strait cutting off the trade routes with Tasmania.

2. Set up camps across the island to house internally displaced persons from the resulting conflict and route all sanitation, medicine, and food aid provision through our offices.

3. Reach out to the British State Department requesting supplies and medical professionals to combat the Tasmanian Rebels before it becomes a major international health crisis and destabilizes the region.

4. Cooperate with the Australian Government to secure a Hospital in Melbourne to provide emergency care for wounded soldiers and displaced persons of the conflict.

Private Directives

Private directives, also referred to as crisis notes, are the medium in which an individual takes actions that impact committee through their portfolio powers. Portfolio powers are certain powers an individual has that allow them to control certain aspects of committee, such as the Secretary of the Navy having full reign of a nation's military or a Professor of Medicine being able to commission a research team to investigate a new virus.

A crisis note should be addressed to someone—a subordinate, a secretary, a friend, etc.—and you are asking the recipient to carry out your ideas. This note, like a public directive, will have specific and measurable actions that you wish to undertake and what you expect from those actions. Make sure you are **explicit** in your wishes. If your writing is vague, then the Crisis Backroom will interpret it in its own way, which may not align with your visions.

Sample Private Directive

Commission of Research

Dear Dr. Richard Greene,

In light of the recent development of the new virus in Tasmania, I immediately commission a team of 17 researchers from the University of Cambridge to investigate this virus and research possible treatments. The goal of this team is to find a preventive measure that can be administered to all inhabitants and soldiers. This will be funded by the British Army's Medical Offices. Make sure that this is kept top secret and provide personal security to all members of the research team.

Kindly,

Hart Edwards
Minister of the Sciences

Parliamentary Procedure (Shortened)

Procedural Motions (No Abtentations)

Motion	Vote to Pass	Comments
Setting the Agenda	Majority	
Postpone Debate	Majority	
Suspend Debate	2/3	
Close Debate	Majority	
Moderated Caucus	Majority	Subject to Chair's approval
Unmoderated Caucus	Majority	Subject to Chair's approval
Recess	Majority	
Closing Speakers' List	Majority	
Time Limit on Speech	Majority	
Division of Resolution	Majority	
Roll Call Vote		Subject to Chair's approval

Points

Point	Comments
Order	Calls attention to a possible procedural error
Parliamentary Inquiry	An inquiry to the Chair regarding the rules
Information	A question for a speaker
Personal Privilege	Personal discomfort

Resolutions and Amendments (Abstentions Allowed)

Rule	Comments
Resolution	Require signatures from 1/5 of the body
Friendly Amendment	Automatically included with signatures from all sponsors
Unfriendly Amendment	Requires signatures from 1/5 of the body and a 2/3 vote to pass

Comments and Yields

Rule	Comments
Chair	No comments/questions allowed
Points of Information	Yields to questions from the other delegates
Another Delegate	The other delegate may not re-yield the time