



**COSTEAS-GEITONAS SCHOOL  
MODEL UNITED NATIONS**

**Security Council Manual**



## Jurisdiction

The Security Council (SC or UNSC) is one of the 5 main organs of the United Nations. It aims at resolving issues threatening international peace and security at different levels. Therefore, it deals not only with matters of security importance, but also with socioeconomic ones ruining international equality and stability. Its decisions are mandatory and all UN Member States are obligated to abide by them. In an aim of preserving these values the UNSC Members have the right to decide on the deployment of peacekeeping operations and interventions as well as the imposition of sanctions on States and parties violating international law.

## Membership

The Security Council consists of 15 members, which are UN Member States, 5 permanent with veto power, also referred to as “the P5” (Permanent 5) –namely People’s Republic of China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States of America– and 10 non-permanent Member States. The latter are elected by the General Assembly for two year-terms based on geographical criteria, in order to ensure that views of all geographical regions are involved in decision making. The 10 non-permanent members of the UNSC for 2015 are: Angola, Chad, Chile, Jordan, Lithuania, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Spain and Venezuela.

## Guests

Apart from the 15 members, UN Member States that are not UNSC members are allowed to attend the meetings of the Council as guests. They can participate in the discussion, express their country’s view, but possess no voting rights. Furthermore, only countries directly involved or affected by the issue under discussion may attain the “guest” status. The decision for invitation to the UNSC is made by the Presidents of the Council and may be proposed by its members.

## Preparation

Before the conference delegates must research a variety of things: Firstly, they are advised to study the Delegates Manual, as it contains crucial information, necessary for an adequate



preparation. In addition, they need to study all three issues on the Agenda and examine what the United Nations have done so far, what resolutions have been passed and what UN and SG reports have been published in regard to these issues. Delegates also need to read the Study Guides that were prepared by the Presidents. Before and during the conference delegates must watch/read the news because of the immediacy of the issues. Lastly, it is highly recommended that all delegates prepare a policy statement, which is a short (max. 1') statement of their country's policy (involvement, position, past and current action, etc.) on the topics at hand. A policy statement might refer to all topics or focus on only one of the topics. Whatever the case, it is necessary that delegates have prepared their policies on all matters, as it is very probable that the Presidents might ask for policy statements before moving to lobbying.

## Lobbying

On each day of the conference, the Council will focus on a different topic of the Agenda, which means that lobbying will take place three times, once in the beginning of each daily session. At first, the Chairs will allocate time to lobbying. For the sake of the debate the lobbying procedure should be kept short and, if possible, not exceed one hour. During lobbying the delegates will have the chance to discuss their policies, align their operative clauses and potential veto threats can be prevented. Delegates are expected to merge their pre-written clauses or create new ones during this procedure and submit the strongest ones to the Presidents so that they can be debated. Co-submitters are not needed, only a main submitter, although it is recommended that draft clauses have the support of more than one or two delegates. The Chairs should then check the grammar, spelling and phrasing of the clauses (note that the Security Council has the right to use all operative phrases) and the expert Chair shall ensure that the main aspects of the issue are addressed and, if necessary, ask the delegates to merge similar clauses. After a satisfactory number of clauses has been submitted the expert Chair has to prioritize them, in order to achieve a rational flow of the debate. As far as the pre-ambulatory clauses are concerned, they are not needed at the beginning of the debate and the Chairs are to ask for them when reaching the end of the debate time of each topic. During lobbying time delegates ought to be assisted by the expert Chair on each issue as a resource on the topic, the rules of procedure and resolution writing.



## Debate

The debate in the Security Council is a clause-by-clause debate. For this reason there is a “Motion to divide the question” needed at the beginning of the debate of each issue. More specifically, clauses are submitted, debated and voted separately, so that a common resolution of the Council including all the passed clauses will have been formed by the end of the session. It is advisable that clauses have to be clear and effective enough, while they are supposed to include a certain measure that is to be explained thoroughly, but is not to be accompanied by any kind of explanation of the motives for each clause. The clauses are introduced by the submitting State through a short introductory speech. The debate time on each clause varies between 5 and 20 minutes based on the length, the importance and controversy of the clause.

In general, the typical Rules of Procedure concerning the debate mode apply to the Security Council as well. For instance, the debate mode for discussing clauses is an open debate; however, when debating amendments the debate mode is a closed debate. Amendments of the first and second degree to a clause can only be entertained during the debate time on the relevant clause. Only amendments seeking to insert new clauses are debated after all clauses have been debated upon, and only as long as time constraints allow it. After all operative clauses and amendments have been debated and voted upon, it is time for the pre-ambulatory clauses to be debated. They are to be debated and voted en-bloc. They are essential to the resolutions as they set the context of the issue.

## Crisis

The delegates of the Security Council might be requested to deal with a crisis, which is a “breaking news” story that refers to a crucial matter and is based on true incidents or conflicts. The topic may or may not be based on Agenda items, i.e. it might be a development on an issue the delegates already dealt with in previous sessions of the Council, and thus be familiar with it, or it might be totally unrelated to their topics. Therefore, UNSC delegates are instructed to be aware of the ongoing conflicts and crises around the world. After the crisis is introduced by the conference’s Secretary General,



delegates are called upon to have an ad-hoc session, create draft clauses and debate on them. However, this debate session is still of equal value as the debate on the issues of the Agenda, or even more, as it is usually a direct threat to international peace and stability. The Rules of Procedure are to be clarified on the first day by the SC Presidency once more.

## Points and Motions

Points and Motions are special tools that the delegates have while debating on an issue of the Agenda. As stated before, the same rules that apply in other Committees apply to the UNSC as well, i.e. the same points and motion are used in the SC (delegates are advised to study the Delegates Manual for further information and clarifications). The only exception to the above is the Motion to divide the house (which calls for a “yes”-“no” vote), as it was removed from this year’s conference, in order to allow countries to abstain and prevent potential abuse of the veto power.

Along with the other points and motions, the following are entertained *exclusively* in the Security Council:

### Motion to divide the question

It is the first motion needed at the beginning of the debate session of each topic. This is why the whole resolution with all the submitted clauses needs to be divided so that the clause-by-clause debate may start.

### Motion to reconsider a clause

This motion is the equivalent of the “motion to reconsider a resolution”. It calls for the re-voting and the re-debating of a clause that has already been discussed and voted upon. It may only be entertained at the end of the day. It needs a 2/3 majority to pass and it is not debatable.

### Motion to table a clause

The equivalent of the “motion to table the resolution”, this motion calls for the temporary closure of debate on a clause. It is debatable and requires simple majority to pass.



### Motion to follow up

This motion is entertained after a response to a point of information to a delegate. It can only be raised by the person who asked the first point of information. With this motion, the delegate can pose a follow-up question to the speaker, which he then will respond. A delegate cannot raise two consecutive motions to follow up. Although this is a great motion to encourage dialogue in a committee like the Security Council, entertaining too much of this motion in a short period may cause issues with time management. Controlling the use of this motion is advised.

## **Amendments**

Amendments are alterations in the clauses debated. They MUST be submitted to the Chairs on an amendment sheet. One change can be discussed at a time. If the amendment is to be introduced, delegates firstly obtain the floor and then introduce the amendment on their own and accompany it with a short speech. As stated previously, debate mode during amendment discussion is closed debate (set time in favor and set time against the amendment). There are also amendments of the second degree, which are changes on the amendment and are to be submitted only when in time against the amendment of the first degree. During voting procedure delegates might vote in favor or against or they can even abstain. Should a clause be totally opposed to a P5 countries' policy, this country MUST warn the Presidents verbally or by sending a note of a potential veto-threat (see next section).

## **Voting and veto power**

For a decision to be made, a minimum number of 9 votes in favor (or 2/3 majority if the delegates are less than 15) is needed. One of the special characteristics of the SC is the "veto power" of the P5-Members. When a P5 State votes against, this constitutes a veto and leads to the automatic rejection of the clause/amendment. When a delegate is to veto, he or she needs to inform the house or the Chairs beforehand. However, veto is almost NEVER used. Thus, delegates must respect it. The following statistic ([www.un.org](http://www.un.org)) show how rare a veto in recent times arises:

In 2013: 47 resolutions passed, 43 unanimously, 0 vetoes

In 2012: 53 resolutions passed, 49 unanimously, 2 vetoes



In 2011: 66 resolutions passed, 63 unanimously, 2 vetoes

In 2010: 59 resolutions passed, 53 unanimously, 0 vetoes

Abuse of the veto power is a threat to the well-functioning of the council and as a result a warning can be issued. A report to the MUN Advisor of this delegate on this abuse can be expected. Vetoes need to be avoided as much as possible; therefore delegates are requested to try to amend anything that they do not agree to. In addition, in a case of a veto threat, there is the so-called “P5 caucus” between the P5 and one of the Presidents of the Council, which is a private talk that aims at finding a solution and prevents a veto. So delegates are encouraged to avoid vetoing frequently and do so only if the policy of their country is strongly offended. This, however, does not mean that P5 nations are “forced” to agree with everything. Should a P5 member want to vote against or at least not support a clause or amendment, then they are encouraged to abstain. Obviously, an abstention does not count as a veto, rather as non-participation in the voting procedure, and thus should be preferred. As stated numerous times, a veto is used only and if a country’s national benefits are critically threatened.

After the operative clauses the pre-ambulatory clauses are to be voted en-bloc. Finally, a vote on the resolution as a whole will take place.

### **Additional Guidelines for President/Deputy Presidents**

Student Officers should assist the delegates during all three days of the conference and work with the aim of getting a unanimous vote for the resolution. They must also possess outstanding knowledge and understanding over the Rules of Procedure as well as the issues of the Agenda. On the first day in the introductory comments, Student Officers are also called to explain the Rules of Procedure to the delegates and entertain and answer all delegates’ question that may arise. They also need to stress out the essential character of the veto power to the delegates, prevent the abuse of this power and misrepresent the policies of the different countries. In an aim to avoid the use of veto they can resort to lobbying, note-passing or a P5 caucus as possible solutions. As far as the clauses are concerned, Chairs must check for grammatical or phrasing errors and ensure that all clauses will be debated sufficiently and effectively.