Delegate Research Guide

Dear Delegate,

Congratulations! We at the Governor’s School Model United Nations Club are sure that you are excited to embark on a new journey: one of learning and discovery. In our increasingly borderless world, the understanding of international policy and global leaders is crucial to being an informed citizen. Foremost among these global policymakers are organizations such as the United Nations. You, the delegate, are now about to take on the role of a participant in this organization as you begin to make these critical choices for yourself.

Your excitement about researching your committee's topics and country's policies may likely be combined with feelings of apprehension about the workings of committee. In order to ease these fears, we have prepared the Delegate Research Guide, which follows.

Like last year, the Governor's School Model UN Club teamed up with the school's Media Center Specialist to put together a "Model UN Research Guide." The Research Guide is designed to help focus research and thus make conference preparation more meaningful. The document walks delegates through the research and position paper process from start to finish, includes position paper guidelines and a sample to use as a template. In order to streamline research and give delegates a solid starting point, the guide provides links to helpful sources as well. It is highly recommended that delegates utilize this resource in preparing for the conference. You can access the Model UN Research Guide by following this link: <http://mwlibrary.wetpaint.com/page/Model+UN?t=anon>.

Delegate Research

Once you have received your country and committee assignments, the guide will help you with your research while writing your position paper. You should email the paper to your chair(s) prior to the conference; if this is done far enough in advance, chairs will be able to provide you with feedback. The position paper is very important and serves several purposes:

- To familiarize you with the foreign policy of your nation, or the views of your particular person (for specialized committees)
- To familiarize you with the topics you will be discussing in committee
- To help you find appropriate resources for further information

To prepare yourself for the conference and the position paper it will be helpful to follow the process outlined below. Good luck, and enjoy!

1. Start by carefully reading the background guide for your committee. Highlight, question, and make note of its key points. Pay attention to the instructions from your committee chairperson. They may include the chair's philosophy and expectations for your paper.
2. Determine what kind of materials the author used. Read these for further depth and insight.
3. Contact your chair if you have any questions at all about the committee or the topics.
4. Once you are familiar with the topics, it is time to find your nation’s views on the issues. Start by researching the general policies of your country:
a. With whom does your nation usually work? Who are your allies?
b. Is your nation involved in any significant regional organizations?
c. With which countries do you not get along?
d. What are your major foreign policy concerns?
e. What are your most important domestic issues?
f. How does your country view the role of the UN?
g. Use the “Nation Guide: Basic Research” to guide you and to help you organize your research.

5. Follow this with research on the specific topics for your committee:
   a. Do the issues relate to your nation in any specific way?
   b. Has your country printed any material on your topic, or does it belong to a group that has?
   c. What solutions to the problems have been attempted by your country?
   d. What kinds of solutions is your nation likely to support?

Answering these questions will require substantial research. Fortunately, the Internet has made this process manageable. The following websites will be especially useful:

1. http://www.un.org - This site will tell you everything you need to know about the structure of your committee, past actions that have been taken, and items on the upcoming UN agenda. You can discover which nations voted in favor of and against UN resolutions. Spend a significant amount of time here!

2. http://www.un.int/index-en/webs.html - This will take you directly to the home pages of the UN missions for your nation. Most pages are in English or have English versions. If you invest some time looking through this website, you may find actual speeches and press releases by your country on your topics.

3. http://ciaonet.org/ - Columbia International Affairs Online is an excellent site that has compiled resolutions, working papers, policy briefs and other relevant information. It does require a subscription, but you can sign up for a free trial - highly recommended!

4. http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/ - The CIA World Factbook will give you basic demographic and map information about all UN nations. A good basic resource to help you learn about your nation.

5. http://www.nationmaster.com/ - This website has all the statistics you could possibly want! Create your own graphs comparing developed and developing nations in terms of rates of female literacy, or rank African countries based on the number of refugees in each. This is a lot of fun, and it has interesting, unusual statistics that other delegates might not find.

6. http://www.state.gov/p/io/mlun/ - The US Department of State received so many questions about Model UN that they created their own Model UN website. This is great if you are interested in US policies, and it also has links to other student resources.
7. http://www.library.yale.edu/un/index.html - Yale University has a UN studies program. The website states “The United Nations Scholars' Workstation, developed by the Yale University Library and the Social Science Statistical Laboratory, is a collection of texts, finding aids, data sets, maps, and pointers to print and electronic information. Subject coverage includes disarmament, economic and social development, environment, human rights, international relations, international trade, peacekeeping, and population and demography.”

8. http://www.onlinenewspapers.com/ - Links to online newspapers from nations around the world.


Tips for Students in Specialized Committees

❖ Read your background guide carefully- you may or may not be required to write a paper. Email your committee chair if you are unsure.

❖ It is important for you to understand the overall role of your country or your specific person within your committee. If you are representing a specific nation, you can conduct research much as you would for any other committee. Try to discover the dynamics of your committee- who are your allies and adversaries?

❖ If you are representing a specific person, you must learn their role in the body you are simulating, in addition to your nation’s overall policies. For example, the Prime Minister might come from a different political party than the Minister of Defense, and they might therefore disagree on policy issues. Try to also discern your person’s responsibilities- do you lead or tend to follow another member of the committee?

❖ Be ready to think on your feet and to be flexible. These committees are often more informal in terms of procedure, but they will require you to think and act as a group to deal with specific events and to grapple with the consequences of your own actions.

❖ Look over the Parliamentary Rules of Procedure for Specialized Agencies and acquaint yourself with the standard operating procedures unique to smaller, crisis-focused committees.

❖ HAVE FUN!
Nation Guide: Basic Research

Official Country Name:

Governmental System:

Head of State:

Official Language(s):

Major Political Parties:

Allies/Blocs:

Major Religions:

Population:

Environmental Stance:

Standard of Living:

Developmental Status:

Has the UN ever had to intervene in any conflict involving this nation?

Has the UN ever cited this country for human rights violations?

Ethnic/Cultural Issues?

Trade blocs/associations?

Military power and weapons capabilities?

Economic system?

Major trade partners?

Industries and Natural Resources?
Sample Position Paper

Committee: Ad-Hoc Committee on Peacekeeping
Country: Portugal
Delegates: John Smith and Jane Doe
School: Maggie Walker Governor’s School

Country Introduction:

The Portuguese Republic is in southwestern Europe, and it has been a part of the United Nations since 1955. A founding member of the North Atlantic Trade Organization (NATO), Portugal has strong ties to the United States of America. As part of the North Atlantic Treaty that resulted in the establishment of NATO, “the parties of NATO agreed that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all.” Furthermore, Portugal was the first neutral country to recognize the US after the Revolutionary War. Additionally, the Portuguese Republic has been a key ally in US-led efforts in Iraq.

The Portuguese Republic is also an integral part of the European Union, moving toward greater political and economic integration ever since it became a member in 1986. It has also been a significant beneficiary of the EU and is one of the strongest proponents of European integration. Portugal held the presidency of the EU Council in late 2007, and during that time, it oversaw the signing of the new EU reform treaty, staged EU summits with many large countries, and held a second EU-Africa summit.

The Anglo-Portuguese Alliance between Portugal and the UK is the oldest alliance in the world still in force today. Signed in 1373, it has played a major part in foreign policy in Portugal’s past. Portugal remained neutral in WWII, but this treaty was invoked by the Allies to establish bases on the Azores. The Portuguese Republic has strong ties with the biggest superpowers in the world – the United States of America and the United Kingdom. Portugal’s alliances with these two countries guide the large majority of the nation’s foreign policy.

Topic #1: The Peacekeeping Mission in Kashmir:

For the majority of the 20th century and all of the 21st century, India and Pakistan (and even China) have been fighting over Kashmir. The United Nations has tried to help the situation by sending in peacekeeping forces since the late 1940s. The United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) has played an important role in maintaining this peace, but the current Indian government does not legitimize UNMOGIP activity, since it believes that the mandate of UNMOGIP has lapsed.

The Portuguese Republic believes that, like its allies the United States and the United Kingdom, restraint should be exercised on both sides of the conflict, the Line of Control (LoC) should be respected, violence should be denounced, and dialogue should be fostered between India and Pakistan to resemble the atmosphere when their relationship was more favorable.

The Portuguese Republic suggests many reforms to help achieve the aforementioned goals. First, Portugal strongly believes, as does the EU, that the UNMOGIP be recognized and accepted by India because the group is best suited for monitoring the infiltration across the LoC. India exaggerates its numbers, and does not trust Pakistan’s numbers, just as Pakistan does not trust India’s numbers; the UNMOGIP is a neutral and unbiased source to observe the LoC violations. The Portuguese Republic urges the Indian government to reconsider its position on UNMOGIP involvement so that the group can be free to carry out its mandate.
Furthermore, the Portuguese Republic is in favor of Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs), which are actions taken to reduce the fear of attack by both parties in a situation without physical conflict, in this case Pakistan and India. Portugal feels that CBMs can be used to facilitate dialogue between India and Pakistan, and the tangible outcomes of various meetings would lead to a speedy agreement and sustain the peace process.

Finally, the Portuguese Republic is in favor of reaching an end to violence and terrorism as soon as possible. Currently, the violence is mainly due to three sources – the Indian security forces, the efforts of the Kashmir freedom fighters, and cross-border terrorism. If these can be driven back, Portugal believes that peace can be attained. Portugal suggests ending these acts of violence and terrorism through stronger enforcement of the mandate issued by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, which states that “the Department’s mission is to plan, prepare, manage, and direct UN peacekeeping operations, so that they can effectively fulfill their mandates under the overall authority of the Security Council and General Assembly.” The Portuguese Republic also recommends that detainees be better monitored; currently, over 700,000 security forces are indicative of the intense repression to which the Kashmiris are regularly subjected. Kashmir has even been called “the world’s most beautiful prison.” By monitoring the detainees, the Portuguese Republic feels that peace could be fostered more quickly, and fewer human rights violations would occur.

Portugal is very willing to help expedite this process. Just last month, in January 2008, Portugal was one of the top contributors of military and police to UN operations, with 348 men and women, which is just 18 fewer than the UK and more than the USA.

**Topic #2: The Creation of a Permanent United Nations Peacekeeping Force:**

Many members of the United Nations have been calling for more efficient ways to sustain peace and security in the international community, especially after the Rwandan Genocide. Portugal was one of the first countries to send troops in an attempt to quell the violence of the East Timorese crisis in 2006. In addition, Portugal participated in the peacekeeping UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), sending 140 troops. Portugal also participated in peacekeeping missions in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq.

An active and long-time member of the European Union, Portugal believes that regional and sub-regional organizations play an important role in ensuring peace and security because they can better understand the situation in the region at the time of crisis. For over 20 years, Portugal has been advocating the cooperation of the EU and the UN in order to attain world peace.

The EU has consistently supported UN Peacekeeping Operations, responsible for over 40 percent of the UN peacekeeping budget. Furthermore, Portugal played a major role in funding the peacekeeping force of the African Union (AU) in Darfur. The EU contributed more than €385 million to support the operations of the AU for the purpose of enhancing the institutional capacity of the AU. Clearly, the EU and Portugal are ready to donate financially when it comes to keeping the peace in the world, something the Portuguese Republic strongly suggests other countries do as well. With that said, Portugal will be willing to cooperate with any program that seeks to keep and maintain world peace, even if it means the creation of a permanent UN peacekeeping force.

One of the main issues about creating and maintaining peacekeeping missions is the casualties. Portugal believes that the training of peacekeepers is very important to the success of peacekeeping troops, since it would reduce casualties significantly, making it easier for other nations to become actively involved in various peacekeeping missions. If a permanent UN peacekeeping force is created, Portugal believes that a training facility should be created, regardless of whether the troops of member-states have been trained before. Portugal views credibility of the UN as a very important factor when considering peacekeeping troops. Portugal also believes that the UN should
create some recreational activities for the peacekeepers in order to minimize the chance of misconduct, as this would harm the credibility of the UN and make it extremely hard for other member-states to send troops.

In summary, Portugal supports the idea of cooperating with regional organizations in peacekeeping operations. However, Portugal will aid the UN if it resolves to create a permanent peacekeeping force and will support any program that would keep the peace and security of the international community.