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## How to Write a Good Position Paper

A Position Paper is a formal document where a delegate explains the stance of the country being represented, according to the topic and the committee assigned. Thus, it is crucial that the information and data included are accurate and that no inconsistencies can be found. You should show the chairs that you fully understand the topic and that the measures you propose are coherent and realistic. You need to know that a good position paper will help you navigate the conference smoothly, laying the ground for successful negotiations as well as informed and quick decision-making.

For a well-written position paper, it is key that delegates search for trustworthy and credible information. **Reliable sources are important** as they back up a delegate's argument, and it is important to give statistics and mention legal documents relevant to your case.

The sources that you can use range from past UN resolutions of your committee to official databases and governmental press releases. They must be properly cited, and a delegate must never plagiarize. However, a delegate's view on the issue must stand out, because if not, the document will simply read as a list of facts.

The document is structured in five **sections/paragraphs**:

1. Introduction
2. Historical background of the topic
3. Position of the country
4. Proposals or measures
5. Conclusions

The **introduction** is a short paragraph where the topic is briefly announced and explained. It is advised that the nation being represented is not mentioned, as it is not relevant in this part of the document. Despite the briefness that is required for this section, it is still a very important one. It contains the first lines that the Chairs will read of your work, so it should be engaging and easily capture their attention. Therefore, we recommend you use a **hook**, which will make your PP stick out and prove to be interesting from the very beginning. The hook can consist of a statistic, a quote or a question, among others.

In the **historical background** paragraph, you should explain how the conflict or problem began, the block positions that exist (if any), and the most important events that have happened since the issue arose. This section is useful to better understand the situation in general; meaning that you shouldn't mention the country you represent. You should also add broad legal background.



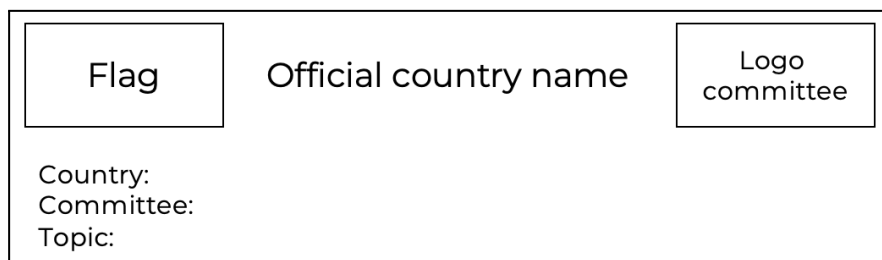
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The third paragraph, known as “**position of the country**”, is the one in which you must introduce the reader to the most important measures your state has made with regard to the matter. You should include some resolutions that the country has signed, plans for the future, **legal background**, etc. It is essential to always side with the country you are representing since the reader needs to be able to grasp the country’s real stance on the geopolitical chessboard. Nevertheless, a delegate can acknowledge faults and have hopes for improvement. This must all be done following the actual line of thought of the country's high representatives and the government.

Then, the delegate should present some **measures** that target the goals that must be achieved to deal with the topic at hand. The delegate must prioritize what is in the best interest of the country they are representing, and tackle the main issues. These measures can be: continuing previous commitments, getting inspired by past initiatives to solve a similar subject, etc. Look for attainable and feasible solutions, but do not be afraid to be creative! Actually, being original and ingenious in your approach to resolving the issue will surely make your PP stand out. These proposals are usually presented in bullet points and in a brief, direct and concise manner. Make sure that each measure answers the questions “What?” and “How?”. They shouldn’t be longer than a two to three-line sentence.

In the end, a **conclusion** can be used to remark on your priorities and serve as a final statement that summarizes the main points of the document. You can add a quote from a renowned personality of the country, restate the objectives of the discussion or simply “*ignite the flame of change*” to solve the topic; as MUNSA’s motto well states!

It is important for you to know that, since it is a formal document, it must have a specific **format**. In the header of the paper, you should first include the flag of the country (on the left), the official name of the nation (in the centre) and the logo of the committee (on the right). Beneath this, you should again write the name of the country, the full name of the committee and, finally, the topic.



The Position Paper should not be longer than a page long (including the header and footnotes, if any). We recommend you use Times New Roman at 10 or 11 pp and leave the standard margins. Remember that no bibliography is required. Lastly, a watermark of the country's flag or official symbol is highly recommended.



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Here you have an **example** of a position paper that can guide you in structuring it.



United Kingdom of Great Britain  
and Northern Ireland



Country: United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland  
Committee: United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHCR)  
Topic: Situation of Human Rights in Yemen  
University: Pompeu Fabra

The Republic of Yemen is once again immersed in what has become the world's worst humanitarian crisis. The year 2020 has been a challenge for a very weakened country that has faced an escalation of violence in the context of the civil war and uncountable violations of human rights. 70% of the population suffers from food insecurity or malnutrition. According to the UN, every 10 minutes, a Yemeni child dies from preventable causes such as malnutrition or diarrhoea. Of the 30.5 million Yemenis, more than a third need humanitarian aid to survive. The Republic is sentenced to a 90% dependence on foreign resources, and it is on all nations' hands to solve it.

Yemen is going through an apparently indefinite war that started decades ago but became especially important in March 2015. Over the years, most of the world has ignored a conflict that adds more than 10,000 deaths, 3,000,000 refugees and a famine crisis that the UN classified as the worst up until today. Yemen was one of the few Arab countries where the revolutionary process took hold. The Yemenis wanted change and its president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, was forced to abandon the position to his second, Mansur Hadi in November 2011. The transition of power was marked by hunger, massive unemployment and a separatist movement in the south of the country. The consequence was war. On one side, the Houthis followers of a branch of Shiite Islam. These rebel militias receive financial support and weapon supplies from Iran and also from armed groups loyal to the former president. The other side is constituted by the military ranks led by Saudi Arabia supported by forces loyal to the legitimate president Mansur Hadi.

The United Kingdom is deeply concerned about the situation in Yemen and is fully committed to tackling the humanitarian crisis and the violation of human rights as soon as possible. Our nation has provided significant intelligence and logistical support to the coalition of Saudi Arabia with no other purpose other than to administer all basic needs for a population that has suffered unimaginable despondency and starvation. We have also cooperated with both the United States of America and the Republic of France to provide fuels for the transportation of aid. As stated in the resolution (A/HRC/45/L.51) of the forty-fifth session of the HRC, we are aware of the distressing situation regarding the terrorist menace and we emphasise our duty to end this unacceptable behaviour. Thousands of innocent people suffer the consequences of terrorist attacks daily, and our nation is alarmed at the damage they cause. Bearing this in mind, the UK has so far committed over £970 million in medical, infrastructure and food aid to support the well-being of thousands of Yemenis. Besides, we have implemented border controls to prevent the entry of weapons that could cause further destruction. Even with the difficult situation our nation is facing right now, we won't back off the measures ratified in all previous resolutions (e.g. (A/HRC/RES/45/26), (A/HRC/45/L.51), (A/HRC/42/17)), nor the ones signed in the Stockholm Agreement in 2018.

Taking all these measures into account, we strongly believe that much more could be done to alleviate both the human rights violations and the crisis:

- Take all precautions to avoid and to minimise harm to civilians and infrastructure such as markets, schools and medical facilities by increasing security personnel.
- Tackle the spread of COVID-19 (and other diseases) by providing over 700,000 medical consultations, training 12,000 healthcare workers and building 4,000 health centres to continue fighting against the outbreaks.
- Fund charities and NGOs with a minimum of £10 million to give education to as many children as possible, by constructing schools and by bringing voluntary teachers.
- We are fully aware of the potential danger of a massive leak of crude from the SAFER oil tanker, and we are committed to avoiding this from happening by transferring it to a sealed tanker.
- Collaborate with all nations to achieve a feasible peace agreement not only to stop the war but also to make sure all Yemenis stop suffering its consequences and the multiple violations of human rights<sup>1</sup>.
- Funding NGOs or other organizations to inform civilians through mass media means such as pamphlets, talks or lectures and posters about the possible dangers associated with staying in areas where the combat is present. They will be used for areas that are likely to develop into combat zones and they will indicate and map out the medical centres and the food providing facilities.

The UN thrives on its very first and primal promise to promote human rights through the ever-so valuable international cooperation its members aimed to create. Yemen shall be no exception. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland very much looks forward to opening the debate and to cooperating with all the nations present, to make sure this crisis ends up as soon as possible. No human should suffer as much as Yemen civilians do and we cannot give up because as Ayman Gharaibeh<sup>2</sup> once said: *"The world cannot let Yemen fall into an abyss."*

<sup>1</sup> Articles 1, 2, 3, 5, etc.

<sup>2</sup> UNHCR Representative in Yemen