

# THAIMUN

## Streamlined Rules of Procedure

With grateful acknowledgement to Nicholas Wolf Ackert, Secretary General IASAS MUN 2012, Taipei American School (TAS)

### Introduction

This booklet contains a streamlined version of the official THAIMUN Model UN rulebook. This handy guide has shortened the original rulebook without changing the meaning or integrity of the rules while adding color and helpful graphics so that delegates can more easily read and understand the debate procedure.

Specifically, these rules include the rules for both amendments and follow-ups to the second degree, and for motions to divide the house when voting. **(Highlighted in yellow.)**

It must be emphasized that if this guide in any way contradicts the original THAIMUN rules due to translation errors, the THAIMUN **Rules of Procedure and the ruling of either Committee Chair takes supreme precedence.**

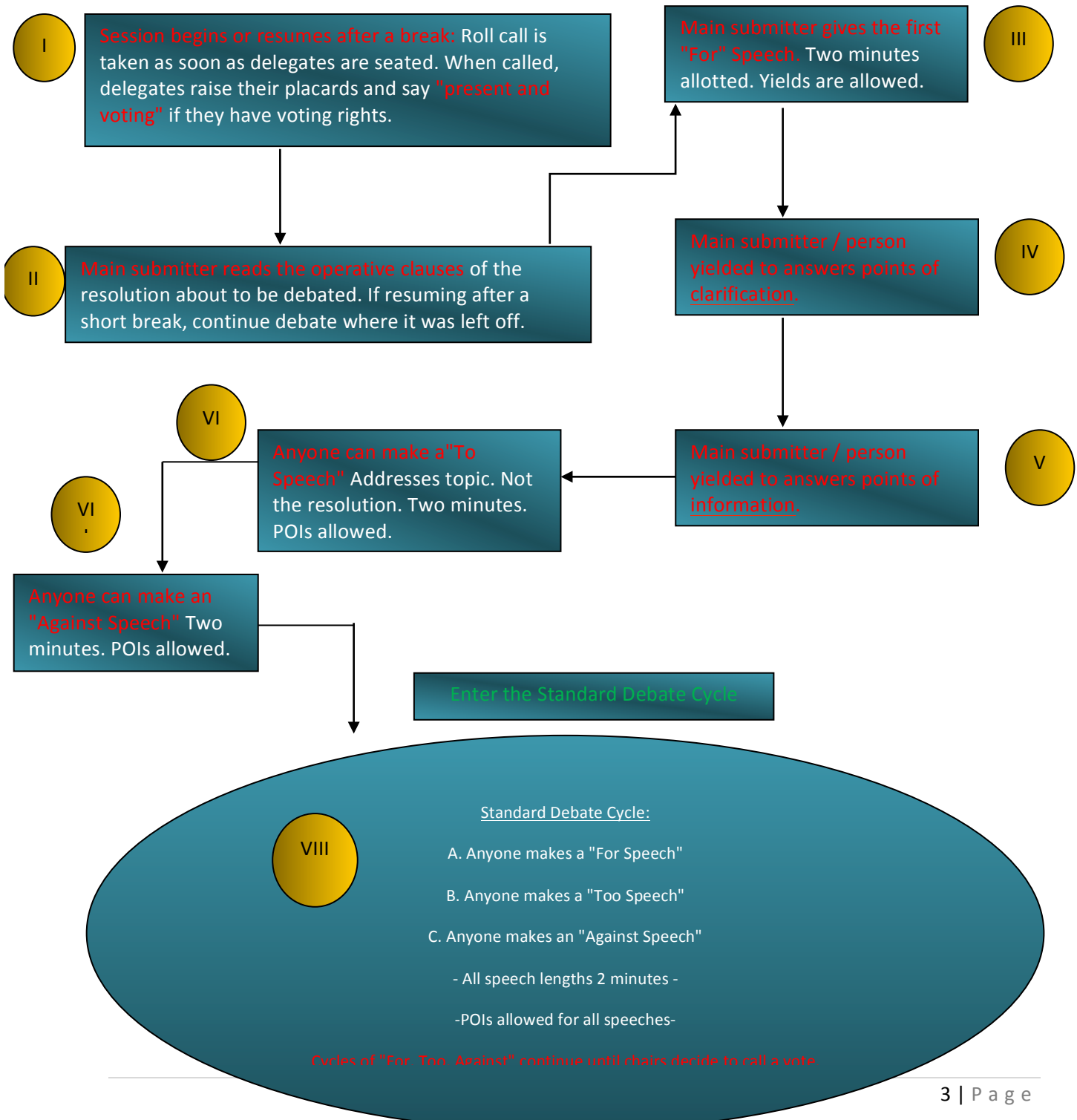


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# Overview of Debate Procedure

Before diving into the actual rules, we encourage all delegates to look at the graphic below which illustrates the format of debate in the standard committee and GA debates. This page may be printed out and used as a reference card for newer delegates. Follow the arrows. They indicate debate order. **Phase labels are in red.** Descriptions are in white.



# General Conference Rules

## 1. Scope

These rules represent the THAIMUN Rules of Procedure in pamphlet form. The actual THAIMUN Rules of Procedure takes precedence in the case of rules conflicts between the two documents.

## 2. Language

English shall be the official and working language of the session.

## 3. Statements by the Secretariat

The Secretary-General, or a member of the Secretariat designated by him other as their representative, may at any time address any committee.

## 4. Delegations

Each member nation shall be represented by one voting delegate per committee. There may be multiple delegates of the same nation in the GA.

## 5. Courtesy

All representatives will be expected to show courtesy and respect to those speaking. Those who refuse will be dealt with at the Chair's discretion.

## 6. Responsibilities of Delegates

Each delegate has the responsibility of conducting him/herself in a diplomatic manner. Undiplomatic conduct will be looked upon with extreme disfavor by the Secretariat. Violation of this rule may lead to immediate expulsion from the current function and additional consequences at the offending delegate's advisor's discretion.

## 7. Phraseology

The phraseology of the Model United Nations shall be formal so as to accurately simulate diplomatic interaction. Thus, a delegate should say: "The delegate of \_\_\_ moves that..." and not "motion to..." A delegate should also say: "The delegate of \_\_\_ rises to a point of..." instead of "point of ...".

## 8. Credentials

The credentials of all delegates have been accepted prior to the opening session. Any representative to whose admission a member objects shall be seated provisionally with the same rights as other representatives. Each delegate must, at all times, have his placard in full view.

## 9. GA Assembly Agenda

The agenda for each session of the General Assembly shall be determined by the Secretary General prior to the session. Each resolution will be given a number in order of submission to the General Assembly. This number will not be changed unless the main submitter is absent at the time of debate. Then it will be put at the end of the agenda. If in Committee debate preceding General Assembly no resolutions passed, the Committee Chairs will inform the Secretary General of the votes for each resolution in order to determine which had the highest votes “for”. The second determining factor in this situation is a resolution’s written quality and inspiration for healthy debate.

## 10. The Favorite "Finance" Question

Questions pertaining to exact financial costs should not appear in Resolutions, or be raised in Points of Information. Questions about how to acquire funding are in order.

# Changes in Committee Agenda and Points Extension

## 1. Changes in the Agenda

Should a delegate wish to discuss an alternative resolution or topic than the one that is being debated, the delegate may motion to ‘Change the Agenda.’ **This may not be done in the middle of debating a resolution.** It will require a 2/3 vote in General Assembly and in committee. After one speaker For and one speaker Against the Motion, the Motion shall be put to a vote. Chairs may at any time make such a motion void.

## 2. Motions to Extend

Delegates may make Motions such as: (1) “The delegate of \_\_\_ rises to a Motion to Extend Points of Information,” and (2) “The delegate of \_\_\_ rises to a Motion to Extend the Speaker’s List.” These Motions are made after either Points of Information or the Speaker’s List has been exhausted but further questions and information are needed. There is no vote on this Motion. The Motion is decided at the discretion of the Chair or the Secretary General. The decision is not subject to Appeal.

## 3. Withdrawal of Motions, Changes in Agenda, and Points

A motion may be withdrawn by its Sponsor at any time before voting on the motion has commenced. A motion thus withdrawn may be re-introduced by any member.

If a motion has more than one Sponsor, all must agree on the decision to withdraw.

Points of information may be withdrawn by the questioner at any time.

# Powers of the Chair

## 1. Quorum

The Chair may declare a session open and permit debate when at least one quarter of the members are present. The presence of a majority shall be required for any substantive decision to be taken. A quorum shall be assumed present unless specifically challenged and shown to be absent.

## 2. General Powers of the Chair

In addition to exercising the powers conferred upon the Chair elsewhere in these rules, the Chair shall declare the opening and closing of each meeting, direct discussions, accord the right to speak, put all questions to a vote, and announce decisions. He or she may also recess or adjourn the session. The chair shall ensure and enforce observance of these rules, and subject to them, he shall rule on Points of Order. He or she shall have complete control of the proceedings, at all sessions. In the exercise of these functions, the Chair is at all times subject to these rules and to the discretion of the Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General, and Parliamentarian.

## 3. Special Rights and Privileges of the Secretary General and Chairs

The Secretary General AND CHAIRS may at any time suspend or otherwise change any part of the Rules of Procedure in order to ensure smooth functioning of the Model United Nations.

## 4. Powers of the Secretariat

The Secretariat shall interpret these rules and their ramifications according to the session. They may also advise the delegates on the possible course of the debate.

## 5. Warning System

The Chairman of the session may at any time at his or her discretion place warnings on countries for acts considered undiplomatic. The Chairs should be as consistent as possible in enforcing these rules. These warnings may not be appealed. The penalty system follows as such:

*1<sup>st</sup> Warning - No penalty*

*2<sup>nd</sup> Warning - No speaking or voting privileges up to the completion of one resolution.*

*3<sup>rd</sup> Warning - Removal of delegate from the room*

## 6. Appealing the Decision of the Chair

Any decision of the Chair, with the exception of those matters which are herein explicitly designated un-appealable, may be appealed immediately by a delegate. The delegate may speak on behalf of the appeal, and the Chair may speak in defense of the ruling. The appeal shall be put to a vote and the Chair's decision shall stand unless overruled by 2/3 of the members present and voting. A placard vote must be used.

A Chair's ruling that an amendment is Out of Order because it drastically alters a resolution's clear intent may be appealed.

# Committee Rules

## 1. Caucusing

There are two types of Caucuses in IASAS MUN: Moderated and un-moderated.

During a moderated caucus, delegates give speeches from their seats instead of at the podium, without entertaining points of information. The regular cycle of debate is not interrupted. Chairs often employ moderated caucuses as a means of getting more silent delegates to speak.

During an un-moderated caucus, delegates are free to get up from their seats and negotiate with other delegates. Debate cycle stops. Delegates may not leave the room.

Caucusing will take place on the first day of the conference before committee begins. Additional caucus opportunities may either be provided by the chairs at their discretion or via a motion for a moderated or un-moderated caucus from a delegate.

To motion for any type of a caucus, a delegate must raise his or her placard and request a motion for such caucus time. If the motion is seconded, it will be put to a 2/3 majority placard vote. The chair may over rule any caucus motion offered by a delegate if he or she deems the caucus frivolous.

Should there be a motion for both a moderated and an un-moderated caucus at the same time from two different delegates, vote on entertaining an un-moderated caucus first as it is more destructive to the cycle of debate.

## 2. Resolutions

Delegates may propose Resolutions for Committee consideration in any of the designated topic areas. The original drafter of the resolution is the Main Submitter. Other authors of a Resolution shall be called its Co-Submitters. The names of the Co-Submitters of a Resolution shall appear in the heading of the printed Resolution; as do Co-Sponsors, who did not write but pledge support for the resolution before it is debated. Co-Sponsors may at any time strike their name (and thereby their support) for the resolution.

## 3. Procedure for Debating Resolutions in Committee (See Graphic on Page 2)

During the lobbying/caucusing session, a Resolution must obtain support before it can be forwarded to the Faculty Vetting Committee.

The Chairs will determine the number of co-sponsors, co-submitters required based on the size of the Committee, which will be communicated to the Committee Chairs on the first day of the conference.

Once a Resolution has been vetted, the Chair shall then decide in which order Resolutions will be debated in the Committee.

Once the Chair has decided the order of Resolutions, the Main Submitter of the first Resolution will be notified without delay. When debate on this Resolution opens, the Chair will invite the Main Submitter to read its Operative Clauses, then to make a two minute Opening Speech. On completion

of the Main Submitter's speech, he will first answer points of clarification, and then points of information. **The Main Submitter may yield some of his or her speaking time to another delegate, but that other delegate, and not the Main Submitter, is held responsible for answering Points of Clarification and Information, not the Main Submitter.** All delegates speaking subsequently at the podium are permitted to yield the floor and these yields operate under similar restrictions. (See the rule on Yields later in this pamphlet.)

Following the Main Submitter's time at the podium, a delegate may make a "Too Speech" which addresses the topic but NOT the resolution. After this, any delegate may make an "Against Speech" towards the resolution.

The cycle of For-Too-Against speakers will continue until the chair decides to close debate and vote on the resolution.

#### 4. Amendments

In session, a delegate may move to amend any Resolution which has been introduced. All amendments must be in writing.

\* If the Main Submitter of the resolution accepts the amendment, it is considered a friendly amendment and is immediately incorporated into the body of the Resolution. The acceptance of a friendly amendment shall be announced to the session during the course of debate on the Resolution by the chair.

\* If the Main Submitter of a Resolution does not approve of a proposed amendment, it is considered non-friendly. Before being considered on the floor, non-friendly amendments must receive eight (8) signatures.

A non-friendly amendment to any Resolution may be introduced between speakers at the Chair's discretion. Amendments dealing with other Resolutions introduced or Resolutions not relevant to the topic area are out of order.

When an Unfriendly Amendment is made (to a Resolution presently under debate), debate on the Resolution temporarily halts, while debate on the Unfriendly Amendment takes place. The Chair calls for a Speakers List, consisting of one speaker "For" and one speaker "Against" the Unfriendly Amendment. After these two speeches, the Chair will call for a vote on the Unfriendly Amendment. A simple majority is required for the Unfriendly Amendment to pass (abstentions are not counted in determining a majority).

\* The Chair may rule any amendment Out of Order if, in his or her opinion, it drastically alters the clear intent of the Resolution. This decision is appealable.

\* Should a delegate believe that an Amendment drastically alters the Resolution's clear intent, he/she may appeal to the Chair with a **30 second speech**, claiming that the Amendment is Out of Order

#### 5. Amendments to the Second Degree



Amendments to the Second Degree (or amendments to an amendment) are permissible if an amendment is lengthy (for example, it adds to or modifies several clauses of a resolution) and it changes the nature of a resolution (but not enough for the amendment to be declared out of order by the chair).

Both Friendly and Unfriendly Amendments may be amended to the second degree. If a friendly amendment is changed to the Main Submitter's dissatisfaction that amendment is no longer treated as friendly.

Amendments to the Third Degree and beyond are not permitted.

## **6. Tabling for Incompetence**

If a delegate believes that a Resolution being presently debated is incoherent, or in some other way quite inappropriate for debate, that delegate may raise a motion entitled "Tabling for Incompetence". A delegate should be cautious before taking this step, as the inference is that the Main submitter and Co-Submitters have been incompetent in drafting the Resolution, and that all the co-sponsors have wrongly supported the resolution. This is naturally a serious slur to make on other delegates.

Once such a motion has been made to the Chair, the motion is debatable to the extent of one speaker "For" and one speaker "Against". Passage of the motion requires a simple majority of delegates present and voting (abstentions are not counted when determining a majority). Tabling for Incompetence is permissible within Committee, but not permissible in the General Assembly (as any Resolution reaching the GA has already met with the prior approval of the Committee).

# **Further Information about Speeches and Yielding**

## **1. Means of Determining Speakers**

Chairs will call on speakers who have their placards raised when the floor is open to them. If debate enters a moderated caucus with delegates speaking from their seats, the chair may decide to draft a speaker's list. Speaker's lists are not a necessary component of regular debate and will be drafted at the chair's discretion.

## **2. Speeches**

There are three types of speeches at IASAS MUN:

A. For Speech - Speaks in favor of the resolution.

B. To Speech - Speaks to the topic. It may NOT address the resolution, but may encourage or chastise the committee or the flow of debate as necessary. Good to speeches can motivate the committee to stop fighting and focus on the issue at hand.

C. Against Speech - Speaks against the resolution.

No representative may address the Committee or the General Assembly without having previously obtained the permission of the Chair. The Chair may call a speaker to order if his or her remarks are not relevant to the subject under discussion.

### 3. Time Limit on Speeches

\* Speeches in both Committee and General Assembly are set at two minutes. Should chairs feel that time constraints are pressing, they have the complete liberty to change the length of speeches as long as the speaking length is **consistent between delegates** to ensure that everyone has the same opportunity to address the committee or GA.

\* The Chair/ Secretary General will reduce speeches to one minute duration if the assembly has moved into Moderated Caucus. Speech time limits should be adhered to strictly by the Chair. Should a speaker exceed the time allotted, the Chair shall call the speaker to order without delay.

### 4. Yields

In committee, any delegate who has been granted the right to speak on a substantive issue may yield that right to any other delegate. **There cannot be more than one consecutive yield (i.e. if one delegate has yielded to another delegate, the second delegate may not yield to another delegate).** For example, a delegate giving a two minute speech may yield one minute of that speech to another delegate. The procedure is that delegate 'A' informs the Chair prior to beginning his/her speech that he or she will yield the floor after one minute to delegate 'B'. Delegate 'B' will be at the podium, waiting to speak, in order to save time. Therefore, delegates 'A' and 'B' will speak for a combined total of two minutes. In the General Assembly, only the chief co-submitter of a resolution, and thus the first person to speak, has the right to yield. All Points of Clarification or Information are responded to by the person yielded to.

## Rights to Dialogue and Types of Points

### 1. Right to Reply

Any delegate whose country was directly targeted and disparaged by a political attack in a speech may make a Right to Reply. **Delegates may NOT make Rights to Reply if their countries were not directly referenced.** All requests for Right to Reply will be dealt with in the following manner:

*A. Any delegate whose personal or national integrity has been insulted should immediately stand as soon as the offensive statement has been made.*

*B. The delegate should not speak.*

*C. Upon completion of the speech in which the perceived insult occurred, the Secretary General or Chair will then recognize the delegate to speak at his/her discretion and set a time limit for the statement. The delegate will speak from his or her desk.*

*D. In General Assembly the right to reply is limited to 30 seconds*

### 2. Right to Statement

**Delegates, immediately following the Roll Call, or at a time no Resolution is on the floor, will have the Right to Statement.** This Statement may be on any topic, not related to those under debate. It must be under one minute. All requests for Right to Statement must be in writing with the topic indicated. The Chair will grant four (4) prior to opening debate on a new Resolution. There will be no Points of Information granted. Chairs must review these speeches before they are given to ensure appropriate content.

If a student uses inappropriate language or innuendo, the Chairs reserve the right to a) stop the speaker, b) issue warnings and/or c) remove speaking privileges.

### 3. Point of Personal Privilege

In Committee, whenever a delegate experiences personal discomfort which impairs his or her ability to follow the proceedings, that delegate may rise to a Point of Personal privilege in the hope that the source of discomfort will be corrected or removed. Such discomforts include the inability for a delegate to hear another delegate speaking. While a Point of Personal Privilege may interrupt a speaker, delegates should use this prerogative with the utmost discretion.

### 4. Points of Clarification

This process occurs immediately after the chief Co-Submitter of the Resolution has read aloud the Operative Clauses. Points of Clarification are questions from delegates seeking clearer explanation of the meaning of words or phrases in the Operative Clauses. **Points of Clarification are akin to seeking dictionary definitions, and are not to be confused with Points of Information** (which seek further information about a delegates viewpoints or information pertaining to the Resolution). **These points are not intended to be argumentative.**

#### 5a. Point of Information

A Point of Information is a request for information from a delegate to the speaker. A delegate may rise to a Point of Information after a speaker has finished but still has the floor.

The Chair will ask the speaker if he or she is open to Points of Information, and if the reply is affirmative, the Chair will then ask the assembly if there are any Points of Information on the floor. **The aforementioned speaker at the podium may be open to any questions or may restrict the points only to the speech or the resolution. The speaker may also limit the number of points he or she is willing to entertain from the committee.**

Delegates respond to this question by raising their placards. The Chair then asks: "To what point do you rise?" to which the delegate replies: "The delegate of \_\_\_ rises to a Point of Information". The Chair then informs the delegate to proceed with the question. A question should be worded diplomatically, such as: "Can the honorable delegate please explain ...".

Good questions are brief and clear and should not summarize research; rather, they should ask a specific concise question. They may also not be **statements which directly express an opinion.** The Chair has the right to limit the number of Points of Information, and delegates may motion to extend that number if they feel a need (see the section on extending points above). Final word on the number of Points entertained rests with the Chair.

If the questioner believes that the question has not been answered adequately, the questioner may appeal to the Chair by asking: "The delegate of \_\_\_ believes the delegate has not answered his/her question." An alert Chair will then determine whether the question has indeed been answered or not, and will request the speaker to answer again if the Chair was dissatisfied with the original answer.

### 5b. A Leading Question

A Leading Question is a rhetorical yes or no question that explicitly expresses an argument which affirms the points just made by a the speaker being asked, (for example, "Does the delegate of x believe that the funding for program y could be better used elsewhere?" keeping in mind that the delegate of x just made an Against Speech attacking this point). Leading Questions are encouraged if they enhance the discussion under debate. Leading questions can be tedious if asked en masse, and therefore a chair may place a moratorium on them.

### 5c. Follow-Up Questions

A delegate may request from the Chair a Follow-Up Question after having asked a Point of Information. A Follow-Up Question is designed to illicit further information on the same point. It should not be a completely different question. One tactic is for a delegate to ask a Leading Question, requiring a brief answer, and then request a Follow-Up to seek expansion on the answer just provided.

It is up to the discretion of the Chair as to whether or not a Follow-Up Question is granted. A skilful Chair will likely grant a Follow-Up if s/he believes that the dialogue will lead to greater understanding of the issue.

**Follow-Up Questions to Follow-Up Questions (Follow-Ups to the second degree) are permitted, but are uncommon. Chairs will grant Follow-Up Questions to the second degree at their own discretion. Further follow ups are not allowed.**

Follow-Up Questions are not in order for Points of Clarification.

## 6. Point of Order (Accusations and Complaints)

After the discussion of any matter, a delegate may rise to a Point of Order to complain **of improper parliamentary procedure by the Chair or other delegates**. The Point of Order shall be immediately decided by the Chair in accordance with these rules.

A representative rising to a Point of Order may not speak on the substance of the matter under consideration. The Chair may, without subject to appeal, rule Out of Order those points which in his or her judgment are dilatory or improper.

Points of Information and Points of Parliamentary Procedure may be raised in the General Assembly.

## 7. Point of Parliamentary Inquiry

In Committee, during the discussion of any matter, a delegate may rise to a direct Point of Inquiry to the Chair concerning parliamentary procedure so long as the point does not interrupt a speaker. The Chair shall answer the Inquiry in accordance with the rules of procedure.

## **Note Passing and Communication**

### **8. Note Passing**

Delegates will be permitted to pass notes during session, but only through one of the pages. Notes must be signed on the inside by the country sending the note and properly addressed to the country which is to receive it on the outside.

There will be no note passing during voting or speeches. If sent to the Chair, any notes ruled Dilatory, Absurd or Frivolous will be sent to the adult room supervisor and the sender may lose his/her note-passing privileges. Notes will be censored. No note passing is permitted during formal speaking.

## **The Chair Calling Delegates Out of Order**

### **1. Dilatory, Absurd, or Frivolous Acts**

The Chair may rule a member Out of Order as Dilatory, Absurd, or Frivolous. That member alone may appeal the ruling of the Chair. If this appeal is not able to receive the support of 2/3 of the members, that member will be Out of Order and shall be denied all privileges to address the body or move any motion while that item of the agenda under consideration remains before the body. That member shall be accorded the right to vote on motions under consideration.

## **Voting Procedure and Closure of Debate**

### **1. Voting Rights for NGOs**

Voting rights for NGOs will be determined before each committee session. Before actual debate, delegates representing NGOs must give a two minute speech expressing why should have the right to vote. These speeches may be subject to points of information. The decision to give voting rights to NGOs will be determined by a simple majority placard vote (as described below). Abstentions are not in order in the voting process.

### **2. Voting**

Each member nation shall have one vote. "Members present and voting" shall be defined as those members casting an affirmative or negative vote.

A simple majority is needed to pass Resolutions in Committee and General Assembly. Members who abstain from voting shall not be considered in reckoning the totals needed to determine the results of the vote.

Procedural matters and amendments shall be determined by a placard vote. Abstentions for procedural matters are not permitted.

Placard votes shall be taken on substantive matters unless a motion from the floor calling for a Roll Call vote (see below) is seconded by twelve (12) members.

If the placard vote is inconclusive, the Chair may move to a Roll Call Vote.

### **3. Motion to Divide the House**

A Motion to Divide the House may be directly requested by a delegate if the vote for a resolution (placard or roll call) is very close (within a margin of 3-5 votes). If the motion is seconded, the chair will proceed and issue a placard revote during which abstentions are prohibited.

### **4. Roll Call Votes**

During a Roll Call vote, delegates will answer a Roll Call with “For”, “Against”, or “Abstain” when their country calls. If the Chair declares that delegates cannot abstain from Roll Call votes, all abstentions are nullified and considered out of order.

### **5. Division of the Question**

After the debate on any Resolution or amendment has been closed, a delegate may move, in written form **with eight (8) signatures**, that operative clauses of the proposal be voted upon individually or grouped in any manner. If objection is made to the request for division, the Motion for Division of the Question shall be voted on. It is debated by one speaker For and one speaker Against. Division requires a majority of the members present and voting. If the Motion passes, those parts of the substantive proposals which are subsequently passed shall be put to a vote as a whole.

### **6. Explanation of Vote**

Should a Delegate feel that another Delegate has seriously misrepresented their foreign policy, they may ask the Chair for an Explanation of Vote. This is formally begun in this fashion: Immediately after the vote, there must be a verbal communication to the Chair or the Secretary General (through a Point of Order) announcing the intent. Should the Chair or the Secretary General deem the request reasonable, they may ask the particular Delegate if they wish to reconsider or change their vote. This decision by the Chair or Secretary General is not subject to Appeal.

### **7. Closure of Debate**

The chair may adjourn or close the committee at any time at their discretion or in an attempt to abide by the conference schedule.