



# **Vancouver Youth Model United Nations**

## **Crisis Rules of Procedure Guide**



# VANCOUVER YOUTH MODEL UNITED NATIONS 2020

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### RULES AND REGULATIONS

Given that the Vancouver Youth Model United Nations is designed for younger and less experienced delegates, each committee's staff will be reviewing all Rules of Procedure prior to the first committee session. Additionally, staff will be guiding delegates over the course of the conference. These rules are provisional and are subject to change before and during the conference.

These rules apply specifically to the Historical Crisis Committee, Advanced Crisis Committee, and, at the discretion of the director, the United Nations Security Council. The main difference between Crisis Committees and other committees is the presence of directives. Delegates new to Crisis Committees should pay particular attention to the procedure on Directives, for it will greatly enhance their understanding of the crisis procedure.

### GENERAL CONFERENCE RULES

#### **Rule 1: Language**

The English language shall be the only working language of the conference. By working language, we mean the language that delegates use in committee sessions and caucuses. We allow delegates to use phrases from languages other than English in speeches, but the content of the speech must be understandable to all delegates. We strongly oppose the use of affected accents, which are found by many to be wholly unnecessary and often insulting.

#### **Rule 2: Courtesy**

Delegates shall show courtesy and respect to all staff and delegates. Delegates shall be attentive to those who hold the floor and shall maintain decorum during all sessions of the committee. The Moderator shall call to order immediately all delegates who fail to comply with this rule.

#### **Rule 3: Credentials**

Every registered delegation has had their credentials reviewed and accepted by the Secretary General. Challenges to the credentials of any member should be addressed in writing to the Secretariat. We do not allow delegates to challenge each other's credentials in committee, as it causes unnecessary disruption and is impolite. When a delegate is out of policy, they will be corrected by the Chair, Director, the Undersecretary-General of Crisis Committees, or the Director of Crisis, but never publicly in front of the entire committee. Complaints about the delegates being out of policy should be made directly to the Undersecretary-General of Crisis Committees.

#### Rule 4: Crisis Staff and Secretariat

At any point during a committee session, the Director of Crisis, a member of the Crisis Staff, the Secretary General, the Undersecretary-General of Crisis Committees or any representative of the Secretariat may address the committee. This interrupts any caucus or speech that was taking place, and supersedes all other rules of procedure. If the information delivered is consequential enough, the Chair may decide, at his or her own discretion, to end any caucus in session in order to address the matter at hand.

#### Rule 5: Duties and Powers of the Committee Staff

The committee staff takes responsibility for the duties of a Director, Chair, Moderator, and/or Assistant Chairs. The Chair shall open and close each session, decide the propriety of any procedural motion, and may limit speaking time. The Chair has the final word on all substantive matters of the committee. At VYMUN, Chairs also act as Moderators, who shall direct debate; grant the right to speak; put questions; announce decisions on points of order; and ensure & enforce observance of these rules of procedure. The Chair and Assistant Chairs may advise delegates on courses of debate. If the Chair is absent, the Assistant shall assume all duties of the Chair. If the Assistant is absent, the Director, or a designated member of the Crisis Staff as appointed by the USG of Crisis Development shall assume all functions of the Moderator. The Moderator may also temporarily transfer moderating duties to another member of the committee staff at any time. In VYMUN crisis simulations, the Chair adopts the place of the individual that would be chairing the committee in real life. For example, in a simulation about the United States in the Historical Crisis Committee, the chair would be the President of the United States.

### CRISIS RULES OF PROCEDURE

#### Voting

A number of voting styles take place in Crisis Committees:

- a. **Procedural Matters:** Involves a simple majority and no abstentions.
- b. **Directives:** Requires a simple majority, allowing abstentions unless they are ruled by the Chair to be important enough to require a two-thirds majority, or, in the case of certain actions, such as the use of Weapons of Mass Destruction, a unanimous vote.
- c. **Important Questions:** Requires a two-thirds majority for decisions, such as, admitting a new member to a committee.
- d. **Peace Treaties:** Requires a majority vote of the delegates of both countries involved.
- e. **Country Specific Directives:** Requires the signatures of two-thirds of a committee's delegates (see Rule 3: Directives). A motion which requires a "simple majority" passes only if the number of delegates voting in favour of the motion exceeds the number voting against. If equal numbers vote for and against, the motion fails. A motion which requires a "two-thirds majority" passes only if the number of delegates voting in favour of the motion equals or exceeds twice the number voting against. The number of abstentions shall not be considered in determining the results of the vote. Proxy votes are not allowed.

## Voting Procedure

Placard votes shall be taken on substantive matters unless there is a motion made for a roll call vote. Due to the small size of crisis committees, roll call votes are rarely necessary. Roll call votes are not permitted when deciding a procedural motion. In Crisis Committees at VYMUN, due to the ever-changing nature of the simulation and the extreme frequency of votes, the chamber is not barred during votes on directives or procedures. At the discretion of the Chair, the chamber may be barred during final votes on Peace Treaties during the final committee session. In certain cases, countries passing country-specific directives may not want to reveal their directives to the rest of the committee. In these cases, a directive clearly written with the signatures of two-thirds of the country's delegates is required in order for the directive to be passed.

## Directives

This is the most important rule for delegates in crisis committees. Crisis at VYMUN is unique from a normal committee because of the lack of resolutions. Instead, committees, countries and individuals use their power as influential bodies in the international community to make decisions that are implemented immediately, and may change the situation at hand. The crisis runs in a continual simulation format: all decisions influence the simulation, and all the characteristics of the simulation should be taken into account when writing directives. A directive takes the form of a simple instruction, written down, which is passed to the Chair for consideration. There are three different forms of directives:

- a. **Individual Directives:** Individuals, based on their powers within a government, personal wealth, or other factors, may issue directives privately to the Chair, who will then (at his or her sole discretion) pass them on to the Crisis Staff to influence the situation. For example, the United States Secretary of the Treasury may request to open an SEC investigation into a fellow committee member, or may request a report on how recent decisions have affected stocks or the economy. These directives may be kept secret or publicized.
- b. **Country-Specific Directives:** In certain committees which contain multiple countries which are represented by multiple delegates, delegates from the same country may issue directives privately to the Chair in the name of that country. The Chair will then (at his or her sole discretion) pass them on to the Crisis Staff to influence the situation. For example, Britain may choose to conduct a military action or recall an ambassador, whereas a country such as Saudi Arabia could choose to stall oil extraction. In cases where multiple delegates represent a country, two-thirds approval of a country-specific directive is required, in the form of signatures on the directive.
- c. **Committee-Wide Directives:** Committees also have powers. These types of directives take the place of resolutions in crisis simulations. For example, a committee of the Houthi Yemeni Government can choose to hold elections, or, to expand military operations in any part of Yemen. A committee-wide directive may be passed to the Chair at any point. In order for a directive to be considered, it needs at least the signatures of two delegates, other than its author. This prevents the wasting of the committee's time on dilatory directives. At the end of the caucus at hand, delegates may motion to present and then vote on directives, which will then be passed to the Crisis Staff. Directives should be as specific as possible. In the past, there have been delegates who have been disappointed because the crisis staff unintentionally misunderstood the intent or details of his or her directive.

## **Quorum**

The Chair may declare the committees open when a quorum (at least one quarter of its members) is present. The presence of a quorum shall be assumed unless specifically challenged. Any delegate may call for a quorum if its presence is in doubt, at which point, a placard count of delegates is taken. Roll call is not required to determine the presence of a quorum. The most common failure in achieving a quorum is immediately following the expiration of a caucus, at which time the caucus will either be extended or delegates will gather back into chambers. VYMUN will never dismiss a committee for the remainder of a session or part of a session because a quorum could not be maintained.

## **Differences in Procedure from a General Assembly Committee**

With the exception of the United Nations Security Council, no Crisis Committee will set an agenda. The procedures for doing so will be at the sole discretion of the UNSC Director, and will be explained at the beginning of the conference. The debate in a Crisis Committee takes place in the form of a continuous stream of Moderated Caucuses, whose topics change based on the situation. Delegates can also motion for unmoderated caucuses to formulate directives. There is no speakers' list and there are no yields.

## **Speeches**

With the exception of Crisis Staff or the Secretariat, no representative may address a session without having been recognized by the Moderator or Chair. The Moderator or Chair may call a speaker to order if his remarks are not relevant to the topic or the issue under discussion. Speakers not being germane to the topic at hand will be called to order, usually by the Chair, but sometimes by a delegate rising to a point of order on the floor. The Chair will reprimand delegates who persistently and unnecessarily interrupt speeches.

## **Speaking Time**

The time allowed for speeches will be set at the beginning of each moderated caucus, but may be changed by the Chair at his/her sole discretion. If a speaker speaks past their allotted time, the Chair shall immediately call the individual to order. Speaking time begins as soon as the speaker is recognized. Delegates who continue to speak past the allotted time will not be tolerated.

## **POINTS AND MOTIONS**

### **Point of Personal Privilege**

If at any time a delegate experiences personal discomfort which may impair their ability to participate in the proceedings, they may rise to a Point of Personal Privilege to request that the discomfort be corrected. A Point of Personal Privilege may interrupt a speech. However, the delegates are urged to exercise this ability with extreme discretion. The reason that a Point of Personal Privilege is highest in precedence among all other points and motions is because it can be used to notify the body of emergencies threatening the safety of the assembly, and to inform the staff if the speaker cannot be heard. Only with these two purposes in mind should a delegate use a Point of Personal Privilege to interrupt a speech.

### **Point of Order**

If at any time a delegate feels that parliamentary procedure is not being followed properly, he or she may rise to a Point of Order. The Moderator may rule out of order those points that are dilatory or improper. A Point of Order may interrupt a speaker only when the speech itself is not following proper parliamentary procedure. Delegates are urged to exercise this ability with extreme discretion.

### **Point of Inquiry**

If the floor is open and a delegate has a question regarding parliamentary procedure, he/she may rise to a Point of Parliamentary Inquiry. The question will be answered immediately by the Chair. A Point of Parliamentary Inquiry may never interrupt a speaker. Delegates uncertain of the validity of a motion should inquire using a Point of Parliamentary Inquiry prior to making the motion.

### **Right of Reply**

A delegate whose personal or national integrity has been seriously impugned by the speech of another delegate may request a Right of Reply. The Chair's decision to grant this right is at his or her sole discretion and is not appealable. The length of the reply is also at the Chair's discretion. A request for a Right of Reply cannot interrupt a substantive speech. A motion for a Right of Reply to a reply is out of order. Delegates are severely cautioned against making remarks that warrant a Right of Reply. However, we include this right since it permits impugned individuals to reassert their dignity and gain catharsis in a civilized manner.

### **Motion for a Moderated Caucus**

If the current caucus has run out, a delegate may motion for a new Moderated Caucus in order to discuss a new issue. This motion takes the form of: *"Motion for a Moderated Caucus, Duration x, Speaking time y, on the topic of z."* The Chair may or may not entertain this motion at his or her sole discretion. If found to not be dilatory, the Chair will first seek a second, then bring it to an immediate simple-majority vote. Abstentions are not permitted.

### **Motion for an Unmoderated Caucus**

If the current caucus has expired, a delegate may motion for a new unmoderated caucus in order to discuss a new issue or to work on a directive, inside or outside the committee room, without the moderation of the Chair. This motion takes the form of: *"Motion for an Unmoderated Caucus, Duration x, on the topic of y."* The Chair may or may not entertain this motion at his or her sole discretion. If found to not be dilatory, the Chair will first seek a second, then bring it to an immediate simple-majority vote. Abstentions are not permitted.

### **Motion for a Round-Table Discussion**

If the current caucus has run out, delegates may motion for a RoundTable Discussion in order to discuss a new issue or directive. A Round-Table Discussion takes the form of a moderated session where each

delegate, going in order around the room, has a certain amount of time to speak on a certain issue. It is recommended that speaking times be under 30 seconds; if the committee is large enough, the Chair may decide that Round-Table Discussions are dilatory. No duration is needed, as the discussion will end when all delegates have spoken. This motion takes the form of: *"Motion for a Round-Table Discussion, Speaking Time x, on the topic of y."* The Chair may or may not entertain this motion at his or her sole discretion. If found to not be dilatory, the Chair will first seek a second, then bring it to an immediate simple-majority vote. Abstentions are not permitted.

### **Motion to Present Directives**

At the conclusion of any caucus, if directives have been presented to the Chair, delegates can vote to have the Chair, or in the case of a more complex directive, the proposing delegate, read the directive out to the committee. The Chair will then ask if there are any amendments proposed (these are explained in Rule 25: Amendments). The Chair may or may not entertain this motion at his or her sole discretion. If found to not be dilatory, the Chair will first seek a second, then bring it to an immediate simple-majority vote. Abstentions are not permitted.

### **Motion to Vote on Presented Directives**

At the conclusion of any caucus, if the Chair has presented any number of directives, those directives may be brought to a vote. If the Chair assesses the directive to be complex or divisive enough, he may request two speakers for, and two speakers against the directive. The directive will then go to a vote, by the procedure outlined in Rule 8: Voting. Only directives which were presented by the Chair before this motion may be voted upon. The Chair may or may not entertain this motion at his or her sole discretion. If found to not be dilatory, the Chair will first seek a second, then bring it to an immediate simple-majority vote. Abstentions are not permitted.

### **Motion for Roll Call Vote**

Before voting on a Directive, any delegate may request a roll call vote. This motion must be seconded by three Members of the Committee. In a roll call vote, the Chair shall call the roll in alphabetical order starting with a randomly selected Member of the Committee. A delegate may vote *Yes, No, Abstain, or Pass*. Delegates who vote Yes or No may request rights of explanation to explain their vote to the committee. Delegates who Pass will be returned to during the second round of voting; these delegates must vote Yes, No, or Abstain during the second sequence, and may not request rights of explanation. After all votes have been cast, delegates who requested rights of explanation will be allowed to explain their votes. Finally, the Chair shall announce the outcome of the vote. Roll call votes are not permitted on procedural matters.

### **Tabling Directives**

If at any point a Directive is assessed by the Chair to no longer be relevant, too divisive, or may be better implemented at a later point, the Chair may introduce a vote to Table a directive, in which case it is returned to its author, who may pass it up again for consideration at anytime. The author of a Directive may choose to withdraw it at any time. In this case, it is returned to its author.

## **Amendments**

During the Presentation of Directives, Delegates may propose amendments. These must be written down and passed up to the Chair immediately. Amendments take two forms:

1. Friendly Amendments: These are amendments by the Directive's Authors or Signatories. These are immediately adopted.
2. Unfriendly Amendments: These are amendments by other delegates, and are only adopted with the approval of the Directive's Authors and Signatories.

## **Suspension of the Rules**

A delegate may move to suspend the rules at any time when points or motions are requested. The delegate must specify what specific rules will be modified or discarded, to what purpose, and for what period. This motion will be accepted at the discretion of the Chair. The Chair's decision is not appealable. If the Chair accepts the motion to suspend the rules, an immediate vote will be taken. This motion requires a two-thirds majority for passage. Delegates are urged to use this motion sparingly. The rules may be suspended to facilitate debate or to deal with unexpected occurrences.

## **Adjournment of the Meeting**

If the floor is open, it is the last session of the Conference, and there are less than thirty minutes remaining, a delegate may move to adjourn the meeting. This motion ends all committee functions for the duration of the conference. This motion is not debatable and, if in order, shall be put to an immediate placard vote. A simple majority is required for passage. The Chair may rule this motion out of order at his discretion; this decision is not appealable.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please feel free to contact our USGs of Crisis Development, Annushka Agarwal and Vincent Gao, at [directorcrisis@vymun.com](mailto:directorcrisis@vymun.com).