

# MUNA 2021 PROCEDURES

## Principles

1. The Model United Nations Assembly involves senior secondary students in a hands-on experience of an UN-style conference, with the aim of increasing international understanding and goodwill, which is one of the key objectives of Rotary. The format is modelled on a session of the main deliberative organ of the United Nations, the General Assembly.
2. The need to provide a satisfying experience for participants within the time available demands significant simplification and adaptation of the procedures and scope of the General Assembly. Likewise, the specific considerations applying to a virtual MUNA run over 1.5 days in response to the COVID restrictions, whilst maximising participation amongst 15-20 teams, make it necessary that procedures differ from those that may have applied in preliminary events in the run-up to MUNA or in past in person MUNA.
3. The principles that are applied in adapting this Model UN Assembly are:
  - a) That the Assembly should address only a limited number of the charter functions of the General Assembly<sup>1</sup>, viz.,
    - to consider and make recommendations on the principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security, including the principles governing disarmament and arms regulation;
    - to discuss any question relating to international peace and security and to make recommendations on it;<sup>2</sup>
    - to initiate studies and make recommendations to promote international political cooperation, the development and codification of international law, the realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, and international collaboration in economic, social, cultural, educational and health fields; and
    - to make recommendations for the peaceful settlement of any situation, regardless of origin, which might impair friendly relations among nations.

Topics and scope of debate will be limited accordingly.

- b) That all delegates to the Assembly should faithfully represent the views and interests of their chosen country, rather than their own opinions;
- c) That the rules of debate should, to the extent possible, ensure the maximum number of delegates participate;
- d) That, in the interests of ensuring the maximum possible time for substantive debate, opportunities to influence the debate by procedural motions should be strictly limited;

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<sup>1</sup> As detailed on <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/chapter-4>

<sup>2</sup> It is assumed that no debate is already the subject of a Security Council discussion, and may therefore properly be debated by the Assembly.

- e) That, in an attempt to simulate the importance of real-world alliances, the rules of procedure should specifically promote the active involvement of blocs in the business of the Assembly.

## **Rules**

The following rules will be applied to the debating sessions of MUNA 2021:

1. The Assembly shall consist of five debating sessions, each lasting for the period shown below.
2. In principle, one resolution is to be debated in each session. Draft resolutions are made available on the MUNA website.
3. Resolutions for debate, and the order in which they are to be debated, will be determined by a Special Administrative Session of the Assembly, to be held on the Friday night.
4. It is not possible to amend resolutions. Delegations are encouraged to negotiate with each other to identify measures that could be adopted in the implementation of a resolution, or other inducements relevant to the resolution, that might encourage the support of other delegations for a particular position.
5. Each bloc must sponsor at least one resolution. Blocs may sponsor the affirmative or the negative case for a resolution. A sponsoring bloc will be responsible for:
  - Determining which of its member delegations speak first and second to the resolution;
  - Ensuring that each member of their bloc is scheduled to speak to the resolution during the debating session;
  - Negotiating with members of other blocs to build support for their case. This may involve exchanging designated speaking slots with other blocs. Where this occurs, the Assistant Secretary General (ASG) is to be informed by diplomatic note<sup>3</sup> so that they are able to correctly determine priority in the speaking order.
6. Although one would normally expect members of a sponsoring Bloc to support their Bloc position, any delegation retains the right to speak for or against any resolution, regardless of the case that their Bloc may have agreed to sponsor.<sup>4</sup>

### **The Debating Sessions**

7. Blocs may meet during breaks or communicate by diplomatic means<sup>5</sup> in order to coordinate their approach to the Assembly. Blocs may request a suspension of proceedings by diplomatic note to the ASG prior to the start of debate in order to hold a maximum 5-minute Bloc meeting. The Secretary-General will determine

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<sup>3</sup> For definition of 'diplomatic note' refer to Procedures Annex A.

<sup>4</sup> Of course, the SG will assume in such cases that due consideration has been given to the broader effects of such a move on the peaceful conduct of world affairs and the coherence and stability of the Bloc of which they are a member.

<sup>5</sup> For definition of 'diplomatic means' refer to Procedures Annex A.

whether to accede to such requests based on the time available, and their decision will be final.

8. Warnings are to be given by the SG via global zoom chat to the whole assembly 30 seconds before expiry of speaking time for a two- or three-minute speech, and 15 seconds for a one-minute speech.

9. Speakers are to address their remarks to the Secretary-General – for example “Secretary- General, the United States wishes etc.”

### **Designated Speakers**

10. At the commencement of each debating session, the Secretary General will remind the Assembly of the substance of the resolution for debate. They will then open the debating session by calling for maximum three-minute speeches from the speakers designated for that resolution, with speaking order passing from proposer to first against, seconder, then second against.

### **General Debate**

11. The floor is then opened for general debate. Any delegation which has not yet spoken to the resolution may request by diplomatic note to the ASG that the SG place them in the speaking order. The ASG will start to accept requests to this effect after the commencement of the debating session (that is, when the SG declares the session open and calls for the first Designated Speaker).

12. The SG has absolute discretion to determine the speaking order, and in doing so, will:

- Ensure that all members of a sponsoring bloc are called to speak to the resolution as requested;
- As far as possible, alternate the speaking order between speakers for and speakers against the resolution; and
- Where insufficient time remains to accommodate all requests to speak, determine how many speakers will be permitted to speak from both sides according to the time available and will advise the Assembly.

13. If the for or against case for a resolution is not being sponsored by a bloc, speakers will be selected in the order in which their request is received by the SG, except where the SG, in their absolute discretion, determines that a different speaking order is required in order to ensure that opportunities to participate are equitably allocated across the weekend.

14. Each speech will be limited to three minutes. In addition to their speech, each delegation participating in general debate, **as well as the seconder and second speaker against**, has the right to a single reply of maximum one minute duration, which may be exercised by raising their hand in Zoom and being recognised by the SG. **Sponsoring bloc priority does not attach to rights of reply.**

15. General debate ceases when a time limit is reached, according to the following schedule <sup>6</sup> (and always subject to the SG's absolute right to vary the limit for whatever reason).

16. General debate sessions are planned to be of approximately 45 minutes duration followed by up to 15 minutes for adjudicator and subject matter feedback. Timings for each session are:

- Saturday Morning Session 1: 09:15 - 10:15
- Saturday Morning Session 2: 10:30 - 11:30
- Saturday Afternoon Session 1: 11:30 - 12:30
- Saturday Afternoon Session 2: 13:45 - 14:45
- Saturday Afternoon Session 3: 15:00 - 16:00

### **Summation**

17. Following the end of general debate, the first speaker against and the proposer in order then have the right to a three-minute summation<sup>7</sup>. When completed, the motion is automatically put to the vote, and the SG will announce the result, which shall be determined by simple majority. It is permissible for delegations to abstain from voting.

### **Points of Information and Points of Order**

18. Points of Information are allowed in general debate, in order to ensure that relevant factual information is available to the Assembly, at any time the SG considers them appropriate, but not during either opening statements, or summation. Points of information can be requested by raising the hand in Zoom. Points of Information are to be used solely to clarify points of fact, omission or misinformation. The SG will rule strictly against any attempt to use Points of information to open points of debate and may suspend the speaking rights in a session of any delegation that does this repeatedly.

19. No Points of Order are allowed, except to bring to the attention of the SG any language, either spoken or contained in diplomatic notes, which is considered inappropriate for the assembly (specifically denigration or anything that might be considered an affront to the religion or traditions of another delegate), or any matter contrary to these procedures. The SG has the right to rule against any such language or adjudicate on any procedural issue, whether the object of a point of order or not, and to impose the loss of speaking privileges in general debate for the current resolution, or make a ruling on a procedural point, at the SG's discretion. In the

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<sup>6</sup> NB **These times are indicative only and may be changed at any time depending on the final schedule of the Assembly**

<sup>7</sup> This means any delegation may speak a maximum of two times in each Debating Session (the Proposer and the First Speaker Against through their opening speeches and summations, and other speakers in general debate through their speeches and right of reply). For this reason, **the Proposer and the First Speaker Against do not have the right to speak during the general debate**

interests of time, these rulings are absolute, and not subject to challenge. Points of Order may be conducted by the 'raise hand' function.

20. In the interests of maintaining focus on substance and avoiding situations where a debate may not extend to fill the session, we do not allow motions that the motion be put.

21. The SG will maintain a record of who has spoken and how often, across the weekend, and will attempt to give priority to teams who have done so less often. However, beyond the participation of each delegation in debating the resolution sponsored by their Bloc, it is up to the delegation to put itself forward to speak.

### **The Special Administrative Session of the Assembly**

22. The resolutions for debate will be determined through preliminary proceedings, including a Special Administrative Session of the Assembly, held on the Friday night preceding the Assembly.

23. For the 2021 MUNA, the ten draft resolutions will be voted on by participating teams to determine the five resolutions to be debated over MUNA. This poll will be conducted electronically and is expected to be completed by 6th August.

24. The procedure for this session will be as follows:

- Following a 10-minute bloc meeting, each bloc will be asked to nominate one of the selected resolutions, via Zoom chat to the ASG, for which it wishes to sponsor the affirmative case, and one for which it wishes to sponsor the negative case. If a preference is uncontested, that preference will be granted.
- In case more than one bloc is seeking to sponsor the same cases for the same resolution, those blocs will be allowed 10 minutes to select another preference from the remaining possible sponsorships. This may be determined in negotiation with other blocs. This process continues until all blocs are sponsoring a resolution.
- Blocs have five minutes from the announcement of a successful sponsorship for a bloc representative to provide a list in Zoom chat to the ASG confirming which delegations are to speak first and second (these will be Designated Speakers in the debating session).
- Following determination of five successful sponsorships, one for each bloc, the SG will request nominations for unfilled Designated Speaker slots, first from delegations that have not yet been allocated a designated speaker role, then from the other members of the Assembly. Nominations will be accepted, via Zoom chat to the ASG, in the order in which they are received. It is possible for Designated speaker slots to remain unfilled at the end of the Special Administrative Session.

25. Following the completion of these procedures, the SG will inform the Assembly of the order of debate, in the setting of which they will take into account the interest apparent in debating the resolution, as revealed in the poll to select the resolutions, and in the expression of preferences for sponsoring the resolutions. After informing the Assembly of this information, the Special Administrative Session of the Assembly will

close. The results will be made available on the MUNA Facebook page shortly thereafter.

26. **In this way, at the end of Friday evening all teams will be guaranteed to speak at least once over the debate.** Delegates will also know which resolution is to be debated in each session, and which delegations are designated speakers.

27. Teams may negotiate between themselves to swap designated speaking positions, provided that the SG is ALWAYS informed of such changes by diplomatic note prior to the opening of the debating session concerned.

### **Appropriate Conduct**

28. Coaching of students during the debate sessions or in their interaction in bloc meetings is not allowed, not only because it is not fair to those who may not be able to benefit from coaching, but also because it overemphasises the 'winning' of the competition at the expense of the learning to be gained by students from their experience of engaging independently in an event such as this.

29. We recognise, however, that increased use of mobile devices of all sorts has made this very difficult to enforce, particularly for a volunteer organisation with limited resources, and have to rely on the honesty of both students and counsellors in supporting this rule.

30. We would also point out to delegates and Trainers/Mentors that a delegation that is being coached will not be as involved in what other delegations are saying and so is not likely to be as able to show that they are capable of thinking on their feet as one that is fully engaged in the debate. This is likely to have a negative effect on their debating performance.

# Annex A: Revised Procedures

## Diplomatic Notes

Diplomatic notes are messages sent during a session of the Assembly to the SG via the ASG or from the ASG to teams. These might concern, but are not limited to:

- Informing the SG that delegates changing speaking slots
  - Requests for suspension of proceedings for bloc meetings
  - Requests to be placed in the speaking order for a resolution
  - Complaints regarding conduct of other delegates or proceedings
- All messages directed to the SG will be sent to the ASG via direct Zoom chat message. ASG will then pass any messages of relevance to the SG.
  - Responses from the ASG will go directly to the team via Zoom chat.

## Diplomatic Means

- "Diplomatic means" refers to diplomatic notes or, when the Assembly is not in session, messages can be sent through direct Facebook messages via the MUNA 2021 Facebook Group.
- Delegates wishing to message the SG or ASG outside the assembly times can do so by messaging the MUNA 2021 Facebook Group.

## Points of Information

- Points of information can be requested by raising the hand in Zoom.

## Right of Reply and Points of Order

- Delegates who have the right of reply (all delegates other than first speakers for and against) may use the 'raise hand' function in Zoom to request a right of reply. After the current delegates' speaking time, the SG may then recognise the right to reply

## Speaking procedures

- SG will invite a delegate to speak, the delegate will unmute themselves, proceed to speak, then mute themselves at the end of their time

## Inter-delegate communication

- Messages between delegates can be conducted via direct messages in Zoom or another messaging service (eg. Facebook Messenger)
- A Facebook page will be set up along with a list of people assigned to each delegation in order to streamline inter-delegate communication (eg. Direct messages between delegates, bloc group chats, etc.)

- It would be best to keep inter-delegate messages during the assembly to text only so delegates can still pay attention to proceedings. Outside of assembly times, however, delegates/blocs are allowed to call each.