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Official Chairing Guidelines

Introduction

In this document guidelines for chairing a committee session at GeMUN will be described. The rules and the articles reported below have been written in accordance to THIMUN Rules of Procedure.

Guidelines for chairing

Chairing in a conference:

The Chairman does more than ensuring that the debate is orderly proceeding and that the conference develops in the correct way. He/She is the leader of the conference and its embodiment. “Chairmanship” is the art of managing meetings. The Chairman of an International Conference is its presiding officer, the individual who has accepted the duty of managing the conference and all the situations that are related to it.

The formal and procedural roles and responsibilities of the Chair are based on ensuring that the business of the conference is conducted in an efficient manner and in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.

The Chairman must:

- Treat all delegates equally and impartially;
- Not showing to be taking sides in a contentious issue;
- Recognize delegates from all over the room, the back corners and the first few rows tend to be overseen.

Opening the conference:

The Chairman *should arrive early* before the scheduled start of each session of the conference. After the appointed starting time, whenever the Chairman considers there are enough delegates in the room, he/she calls the house to come to order, greets the delegates, introduces her/himself and declares the debate open.

Time Management:

- Have one stopwatch/normal watch always available for chairing (not provided by GeMUN) in order to keep track of the time;
- Constantly check that the timeline is met and if it is not, take remedial actions such as reducing the numbers of speeches and/or cancel/allow a shorter break.
- Being vigilant against anything that might threaten to use up time unproductively;
- The Chair has the duty to ensure that a conference completes its agenda in the scheduled time and that all delegations have had an opportunity to deliver their speech.

Atmosphere:

1. The atmosphere of the Conference is another factor to be managed by the Chair.



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As long as this remains positive and constructive, conference is willing to be achieving its objectives expeditiously. You're suggested to start with a strict and extremely serious chairing-style to set the right debating tone. If everything runs well, then start loosening up. However, stay serious at all times, you are the role-model for the delegates.

2. Admit errors! Say: "The Chair stands corrected" and proceed with further business. Do not extensively discuss decisions or errors with delegates, explain them clearly, and move on.

Co-operation with co-Chair:

- Always 2 people chairing ;
- One person chairs, other one does administrative business (amendments, notes, etc.);
- Never contradict each other in public, complement each other, and help each other when necessary;
- Divide chairing time fairly between co-chairs;
- Discuss chairing style before debate;

Administrative Staff:

1. Get to know your Admin Staff before the start of business
2. Discuss everything (voting, note-passing, especially sorting your notes out, etc.) before the debate has started
3. Cooperate with them, and make sure they feel appreciated!
4. Thank them at the end of each day, and give them a round of applause
5. If the Admin Staff is not co-operative and efficient, report them to the Heads of Admin.

1. Opening by the Chair, Roll Call, Drawing up the Agenda

Each Chair first gives a brief introductory statement, welcoming all delegates and introducing himself. After this, a roll call will be held (usually by the co-chair). The (co-)chair reads out the names of the delegations that are supposed to be present (in alphabetical order). Delegations that are indeed present respond by calling out 'present!'; remind the delegates to say so when their name is called. When the roll call is finished, the Chair informs the assembly about the forum's agenda and schedule for that day. Please note that a percentage of at least two thirds of the house has to be present in order to take any decision.

Standard Phrase:

Chair: House please come to order. Delegates we will now start roll call, when your country name is called please raise your placard high and say present.

Then, the house will enter into lobbying time if predicted. The chairs will set time and will carry out business related to forms.

2. Reading out the operative clauses of the resolution



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Standard Phrase:

Chair: *We will now discuss the resolution on the question of (TOPIC), submitted by (DELEGATION). The Chair would like to call upon the main submitter of the resolution to read out the operative clauses. (DELEGATION), the floor is yours.*

After this, the submitter reads out the operative clauses.

3. **Setting debate time**

When setting debate time, the Chairs have to consider that the maximum that can be imposed is of 1 hour.

Standard Phrase:

Chair: *Thank you, (name of delegation). The Chair sets a debate time of 40 minutes of **open** debate. All delegates have a right to request the floor at any point in time during the debate. (Name of delegation), you have the floor.*

4. **The delegate delivers a speech**

Following this, the delegate who has just read out the operative clauses delivers a speech.

He

finishes by indicating whether he is open to points of information.

You should then ask the delegate:

Standard Phrases:

Is the delegate open to points of information?

Does the delegate open himself/herself to points of information?

Some frequently used ways for a delegate to indicate he is willing to answer questions are the following:

“We are open to point of information.”

“We are open to points.”



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The Chair can respond by saying:

Standard Phrase:

Chair: *Thank you delegate. The speaker has indicated that he is open to points (of information). Are there any points in the House? If so, please delegates raise your placards high now.*

Or

“The delegate of (delegation) is open to points of information. Are there any points in house? If so, please delegates raise your placards high now.

Important here is, that delegates do not yet raise their placards before you have finished your question. Ask delegates to lower their placards until you ask them to, otherwise don't recognize those delegations.

Furthermore you may in one time call on multiple delegations to rise to a point of information

Standard Phrase:

Chair: *Delegates of (delegation, delegation, delegation) you have been recognized, please approach to the microphone **in that order.***

This has the advantage that you save time for delegates to approach a microphone, especially useful in larger commissions. However often the third delegate has the similar question as the first delegate; in that case the delegate will simply say “the question has already been answered”.

5. Answering points of information and yielding the floor

Sometimes, the delegate holding the floor is willing to answer multiple points of information.

Usually, the Chair allows the speaker to answer a maximum of three points. After that he asks the delegate to yield the floor back to the chair, or also to another delegation. The following lines can be frequently heard:

Standard Phrases:

Chair: *Thank you very much. I would like to ask you to yield the floor either back to the Chair or to another delegation.*



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*Thank you. **Due to time restraints**, I would like to ask you to yield the floor back to the Chair.*

The delegate usually complies with the Chair's request. However, he has to do so explicitly:

Standard Phrases:

" We yield the floor back to the Chair."

If he does not yield the floor explicitly, the Chair asks him to do so:

Chair: *Please yield the floor back to the Chair.*

If the delegate has yielded the floor back to the chair, it is up to the Chair to entitle a new delegate to speak:

Chair: *The floor is once again open. Are there any delegations wishing to deliver a speech in favor or against? (please raise placards now)*

The procedure described under 4 and 5 is repeated several times, allowing multiple speakers to take the floor, deliver a speech and answer to points of information.

6. Interruptions: points

Several points can be distinguished:

point of information

point of information to the Chair

point of order

point of personal privilege

point of parliamentary enquiry

Of these points, only one can interrupt a speech: the point of personal privilege (only when it

pertains to the audibility of the speech!). All other points are out of order during a speech.

If a point of personal privilege is used during a speech, the Chair can react in two different ways:

Standard Phrases:

If the Chair is not certain that the point refers to the audibility of the speech:

Chair: *(Name of delegation), does your point pertain to the audibility of the speech?*

(If the delegate denies this, the Chair replies with *"I am sorry, your point is out of order during the speech"*. If, on the other hand, the delegate confirms, the Chair responds with

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option 2 described below)

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If the Chair is certain that the point refers to the audibility of the speech:

Chair: *Your point is well taken. Could the house please come to order / could the honorable delegate speak up?*

All other points can only be used after the speaker has finished his speech. In general, delegates use a point by shouting out the name of the point; for example:

◆ Point of parliamentary enquiry!

The Chair can react in two different manners.

1. The Chair overrules the point:

Chair: *Your point is out of order.*

OR *Points are out of order at this point in time.*

OR *There will be no points or motions at this point in time.*

OR *Overruled by the chair.*

2. The Chair allows the delegate to make the point. For the sake of clarity, the Chair first repeats the name of the point:

Chair: *There is a point of parliamentary enquiry in the house. (Name of delegation), you have been recognized.*

For points that are clearly out of order or deemed so by the chair, he/she may respond:

Chair: *Thank you for your point. I am afraid, however, that the this point is out of order at this time*

If the delegate uses the wrong point, the Chair entertains it anyhow. He does, however, correct the delegate:

Chair: *Thank you for your point. However, you should actually have used the (name of point).*
/

kindly request you to use the correct point in future situations like this.

7. Interruptions: motions

Several motions can be distinguished:

Motion to (whatever comes to mind)

Motion to extend debate time

Motion to move the previous question

(= motion to move to the next phase)

Motion to go into time against



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Motion to revote (= to change the vote)
Motion to table the resolution (2)
(2) This motion needs a **two-thirds** majority to be carried.

On a general note, every motion needs at least one second from the house in order to be taken into consideration. Sometimes, delegates will do this automatically. If they do not, the Chair asks (repeating the name of the motion proposed):

Standard Phrases:

Chair: *There is a (name of motion). Are there any seconds for this motion?*
OR *The delegate of (name of delegation) has proposed a (name of motion). Does anyone second this motion?*

If there are no seconds from the house, the Chair overrules the motion:

Chair: *Since there are no seconds for your motion, the assembly will not take it into consideration.*

If there are seconds for the motion, the Chair proceeds. If the Chair consequently feels that there are no objections to the motion, he asks:

Chair: *Are there any objections to the motion proposed by (name of delegation)?*

If there are no objections, the Chair states that the motion has been adopted:

Chair: *Since there are no objections, this motion passes*

If there are both seconds and objections, the Chair can either set a short debate time for the motion or move into voting procedures on the motion. **He can make this decision himself**, but he can also leave it to the forum.

Some suggestions:

Chair *Taking into account the fact there are both seconds and objections, the Chair suggests that we have a vote on this motion.*

8. Amendments

Amendments have to be written down on official GeMUN amendment sheets. These sheets are available on the Chairs' desk and have to be sent back to them once completed by the submitter. The Chairs and co-chairs screen all incoming amendments: are they not in contradiction with the UN Charter? Do they make sense? Following this, it is up to the delegate (not the Chair!) to request the floor and indicate that he wants to propose an amendment. (At the beginning of the committee you may *remind* the delegates about this



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rule, as they usually expect the chairs to call upon them to the podium to deliver the speech on the amendment.)

If the amendment is in order, the Chair replies:

Chair: *The Chair has indeed received this amendment. The amendment is in order. The Chair will now read out the amendment*

Chair: *The Chair sets a separate **close debate** (so firstly speaker in favour and then speakers against) time for this amendment of (TIME) minutes. We will entertain (number of speakers) speakers in favor and (number of speakers, that has to be the same of the speakers in favor) speakers against.*

(Name of delegation), you have the floor.

When debate time has elapsed, the chairs will move into voting procedures (See next section)

2nd Degree Amendments are NOT in order

10. Voting procedures

Voting on a resolution

If debate time on the resolution has elapsed, the Chair usually moves the previous questions, thus moves into voting procedures. The Chair explains the voting procedures in advance when he feels this is necessary:

Standard Phrases:

Chair (**VOTING RULES**) : *Debate time on the resolution has elapsed. We will now move into the previous question on the resolution. I would like to remind all delegates of the voting rules. All UN member states have three voting options. Either they vote in favor, or they vote against, or they abstain from voting. NGOs and UNOs are always allowed to vote.*

Chair: *All those in favor of the resolution, please raise your placards high now... All those against the resolution, please raise your placards... All those wishing to abstain from voting, please raise your placards... With a vote of xx in favor, xx against and xx abstentions, this resolution has passed/failed.*

Please note that the Chair reads out the results first and only after he has done that, he comes to a conclusion. If the Chair feels that the assembly knows the voting rules, he can skip the explanation and move directly into voting procedures:



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Voting on an amendment

If debate time on an amendment has elapsed, the Chair can move to the previous question (go into voting procedures). If the Chair decides to move the previous question, he must first explain them in advance when he feels this is necessary:

Standard Phrases:

Chair (**VOTING RULES**): *Debate time on the amendment has elapsed. The Chair therefore suggests we will move into voting procedures on the amendment. I would like to remind all delegates of the voting rules. All UN member states, NGOs and UNOs have three voting options. They can either vote in favor, or vote against, or **abstain** from voting.*

Chair: *All those in favor of the amendment please raise your placards... All those against the amendment), please raise your placards...All those who wish to abstain from voting, please raise your placards... With a vote of xx in favor, xx against and xx abstentions, this amendment has passed/failed. With a vote of xx in favor and xx against, the amendment (to the amendment) has passed/failed. Clapping is in not in order. We will now resume debate time on the resolution*

If the Chair feels that the assembly knows the voting rules, he can skip the explanation and move directly into voting procedures: The above mentioned procedures also apply for votes on motions during debate sessions if required.

Counting the votes

A resolution/clause/amendment passes when the votes in favor are more that the vote against, abstentions shall **not** be taken into account.