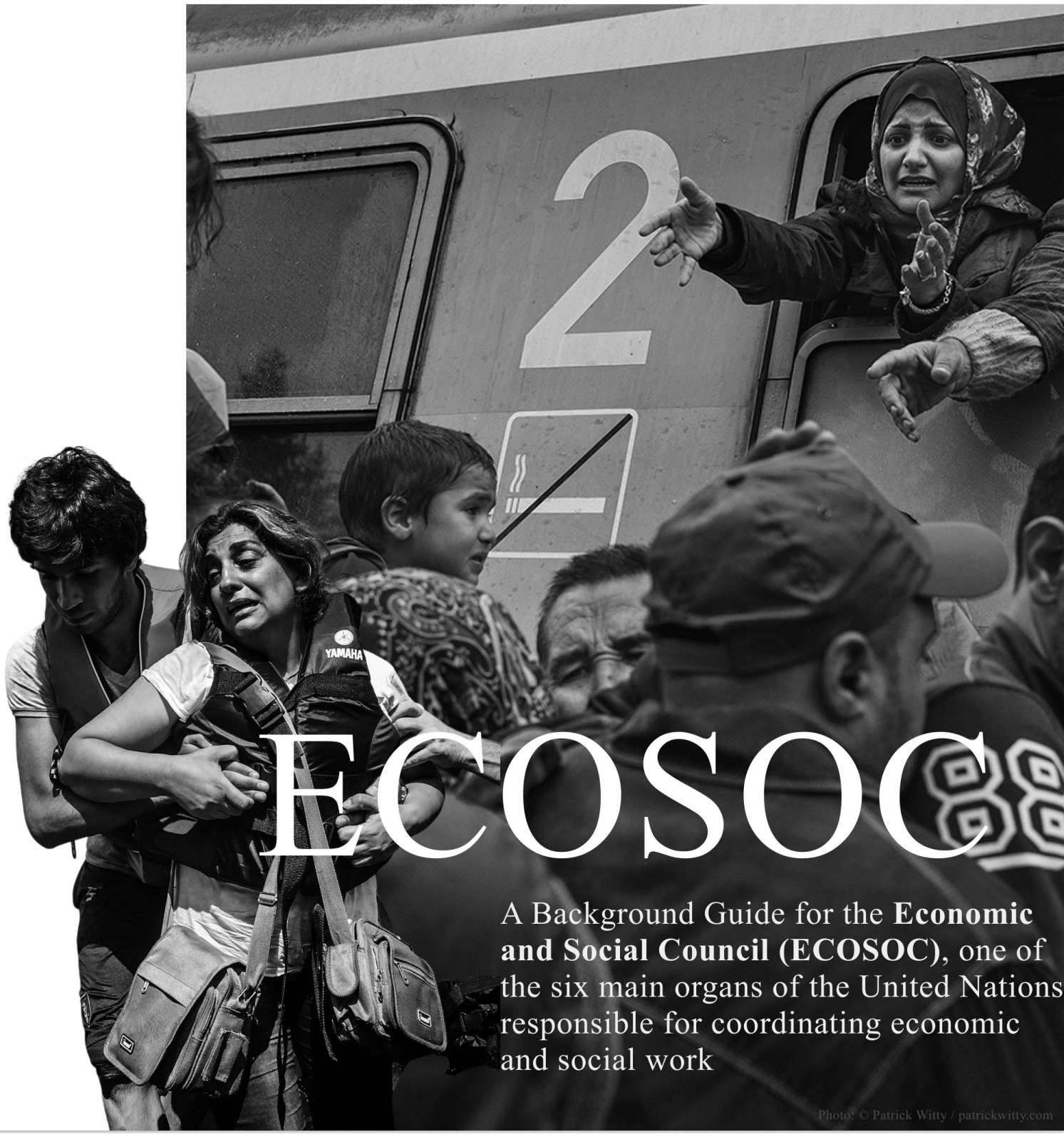
AKAMUN OFFICIAL BACKGROUND GUIDE

ECOSOC is asked to consider how the international community can share responsibility more equitably, address root causes rather than symptoms, and uphold dignity for displaced persons whether they return, integrate, or resettle.



ECOSOC

A Background Guide for the **Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)**, one of the six main organs of the United Nations responsible for coordinating economic and social work

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Akademiet Model United Nations 2026

A Letter from the Secretary-General

Dear Delegates and Faculty Advisors,

It is my absolute honour to invite you to the first iteration of Akademiet Model United Nations (AMUN) set to take place in Sandvika 10–11 October 2026.

My name is Shubhi Maheshwari, and I am a second-year high school student at Akademiet Realfagsgymnas Sandvika. I was first introduced to Model United Nations during my first year of the IBDP, and ever since then, I have developed a strong passion for MUN and the personal growth it provides.

There are very few MUN communities in Norway, and most of them are based in IB schools. After my amazing experience with MUN, I hoped that more students would have the chance to experience the same exposure, personal growth, and international perspective that MUN offers.

When starting at Akademiet, I took initiative to establish an MUN club only a week after joining the school. At the time, Model United Nations was a completely unfamiliar concept to most students. Many were unsure about debating in a language that they seldom used in their everyday life, and hesitant to participate. Nevertheless, we worked together to build a welcoming and supportive environment.

Since then, we have established a wonderful and dedicated group. In just one year, we have attended conferences in Stavanger, Oslo, Dubai, and the Netherlands. These experiences have strengthened our passion for MUN and expanded our understanding of international diplomacy and debate.

Now, we hope to host our own conference and create a space where everyone can participate and grow. Being a club which has gone from not knowing anything about the concept to participating in conferences worldwide, we know the essentials for a good MUN experience. Drawing on our experiences from some of the largest and most prestigious conferences, we aim to design an event that offers a unique and memorable experience. Through this conference, we hope to share our enthusiasm for MUN and inspire more students to become part of this incredible community.

Very excited to see everyone soon!
Shubhi Maheshwari
Secretary-General

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Section I: Topic Introduction

Statement of the Problem

By the end of 2025, an estimated 117.8 million people worldwide were living in forced displacement, whether as refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons, or stateless persons[1]. This marks a rare decline from the record 123.2 million at the end of 2024, driven largely by returns to Afghanistan, Syria, and Sudan. Yet the forces that generate mass displacement have not eased[2]. Conflict remains the principal driver, most notably the wars in Sudan and Ukraine, Syria's fragile political transition, the Rohingya crisis rooted in Myanmar, and interlocking conflicts across the Sahel. Climate-driven displacement is accelerating as well: the World Bank projects that up to 216 million people could be displaced within their own countries by 2050 if current trends continue[3].

The cornerstone of the international response to displacement remains the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, yet the framework shows its age. It does not recognise people fleeing climate change or disaster, it places no binding obligation on any state to offer resettlement, and it offers little guidance on protracted displacement, where refugees remain in a host country for years or decades[4]. These legal gaps are compounded by a funding crisis: UNHCR faces one of the most severe shortfalls in its history, forcing cuts to staff, rations, and protection services in major operations worldwide[5]. This committee will not debate the economics of that shortfall, but delegates should treat it as a real constraint on every solution they propose.

ECOSOC has no authority to adjudicate individual asylum claims or to rewrite binding refugee law. Its strength lies elsewhere: as the United Nations' principal platform for coordinating economic and social policy, it can convene the actors whose cooperation decides whether the international response to displacement is equitable and sustainable. Delegates are therefore asked to consider three questions. How can responsibility for a global crisis be shared more fairly? How can root causes be addressed, and not merely their symptoms? And how can the dignity of displaced people be upheld, whether their futures lie in return, local integration, or resettlement abroad?

Section II: Topic Overview

Statement of the Current Situation

Conflict-Driven Displacement: Sudan, Ukraine, Syria, and Myanmar

Sudan is currently the world's largest and fastest-growing displacement crisis. More than eleven million people have been forced from their homes since the war began in April 2023, and several million of them have crossed borders into Chad and other neighbouring states[6]. In Europe, the war in Ukraine has caused the continent's largest displacement crisis since the Second World War. The European Union's Temporary Protection Directive, extended through March 2027, stands as a rare example of large-scale, rights-based protection extended quickly to a displaced population[7]. Syria illustrates both the promise and the fragility of return. Voluntary repatriation began after the change of government in December 2024, yet Syrians still top UNHCR's global resettlement list, a sign of how much instability persists[8]. In Myanmar, renewed fighting has pushed still more Rohingya into Bangladesh, where over a million refugees now live in the camps around Cox's Bazar with no resolution in sight[9].

Climate Displacement and the Protection Gap

Climate-related displacement is no longer a future scenario. Sudden floods, storms, and wildfires already force large-scale movement every year, and slow-onset change such as drought and sea-level rise is projected to accelerate this considerably by 2050[10]. No binding international instrument governs this movement. The closest the international community has come is the Nansen Initiative, whose Protection Agenda for cross-border disaster displacement was

endorsed by more than 100 states and is now carried forward by the voluntary Platform on Disaster Displacement[11]. Because the 1951 Convention's definition of a refugee does not extend to environmental drivers, people displaced by climate change often have no clear legal status under international law.

Protracted Displacement and the Strain on Host Countries

Displacement today is overwhelmingly long-term, and the burden falls disproportionately on countries with the fewest resources to absorb it. The large majority of the world's refugees are hosted in low- and middle-income countries, often for years or even successive generations. Türkiye, Iran, Uganda, Colombia, Chad, Lebanon, and Bangladesh are among the states carrying the heaviest loads relative to their own size[12,13]. Uganda alone hosts close to 1.9 million refugees, mostly from South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. It is often held up as a model host state for allowing refugees the right to work and move freely. Colombia, meanwhile, has extended protected status to millions of Venezuelans[14].

Resettlement and Return: Durable Solutions Falling Short

The international community recognizes three durable solutions: voluntary return, local integration, and third-country resettlement. Of these, resettlement is the most severely underused relative to need. UNHCR estimated that millions of refugees required resettlement in 2025, yet actual departures fell sharply short of both that need and the target the international community set for 2027[15]. Voluntary return has increased over the same period, but humanitarian agencies caution that many returns are occurring amid continued insecurity and with minimal reintegration support. This raises serious questions about whether they meet the international standard of return in safety and dignity[16].

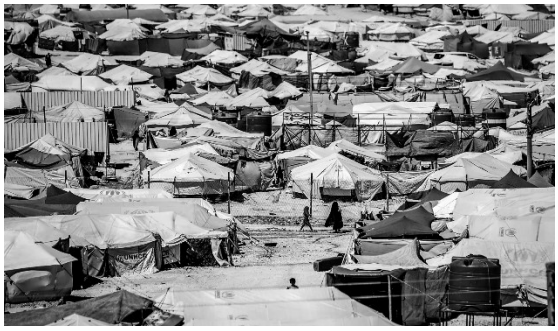


Figure 1: Al-Hol refugee camp in Syria. Source: NBC News (2022).

Section III: Bloc Positions

Important Actors

Major Donor States: United States, European Union, Japan, Norway, Canada

This bloc holds the financial resources that keep the international protection system running, yet its members are simultaneously tightening domestic asylum policy. The European Union's response to Ukraine shows that large-scale protection is achievable when political will exists, even as several of the same governments impose more restrictive policies on asylum-seekers arriving from elsewhere[17]. Traditional donors such as Norway, Denmark, and Germany have been among the strongest advocates for flexible, predictable support to UNHCR, while Canada operates one of the world's largest resettlement programmes. Even so, none of these efforts matches the scale of global need. Donor delegations should be prepared to explain how their countries can increase financial and political support for the global refugee response despite domestic pressure to reduce spending or adopt more restrictive asylum policies.

Major Host States: Türkiye, Pakistan, Iran, Uganda, Colombia, Lebanon, Bangladesh

These states host the overwhelming majority of the world's refugees and have consistently demanded that donor commitments under the Global Compact on Refugees translate into tangible support rather than rhetoric. Türkiye and Iran are among the largest refugee-hosting countries in the world, while Uganda and Colombia are widely cited

for inclusive policies: Uganda grants refugees the right to work and move freely, and Colombia has extended protected status to millions of Venezuelans[18]. Lebanon and Bangladesh illustrate the most acute strain, hosting large, protracted refugee populations amid serious internal pressures while international support dwindles. Host delegations will likely push for burden-sharing that is measured in action, not pledges[19].

Small Island and Climate-Exposed States

Pacific island states, Bangladesh, and Central American and Caribbean nations are among the most vocal advocates for a dedicated legal framework recognizing climate-driven displacement. They argue, with considerable force, that a protection regime silent on environmental drivers leaves entire populations without international legal recourse, and in some cases entire nations facing loss of territory to sea-level rise. These states were a driving force behind the Nansen Initiative and continue to press for displacement to be treated as an urgent priority in its own right[20].

UNHCR and the Multilateral System

UNHCR is the lead agency for refugee protection, but it operates within a mandate that member states themselves control, and recent funding shortfalls have significantly reduced its operational capacity[21]. The Global Compact on Refugees, affirmed by the UN General Assembly in December 2018, gives UNHCR a normative framework built on four aims: easing pressure on host countries, building refugee self-reliance, expanding access to third-country solutions, and supporting conditions for safe return. However, the Compact is explicitly non-binding and depends entirely on voluntary state action[22]. ECOSOC, alongside the General Assembly and the annual Global Refugee Forum, is one of the principal venues where member states are expected to turn that framework into concrete commitments.

Section IV: What to Research

The 1951 Refugee Convention and Its 1967 Protocol

Much of this committee's debate will turn on the limits of existing law, so delegates should begin their research with the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol. Together, these texts define who qualifies as a refugee, establish the principle of non-refoulement, and set out the baseline rights that host states owe refugees[23]. Delegates should then investigate the following, but not limited to:

- The most recent UNHCR Global Trends report and the text of the Global Compact on Refugees, which together show the current scale of displacement and the framework the international community has already agreed for sharing responsibility[24].

- The Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework and the outcomes of its rollout in several countries, which served as a testing ground for many ideas later incorporated into the Global Compact on Refugees[25].

- The Nansen Initiative's Protection Agenda and the work of the Platform on Disaster Displacement, which together form the closest thing the international system has to a framework for cross-border climate displacement[26].

Finally, delegates must establish the position of their assigned delegation. Is it a major donor, a major host state, a state that has itself generated large refugee outflows, or a small island or climate-exposed state pressing for new legal recognition? Each carries distinct interests, and these should shape the policy your delegation advocates in committee.

Section V: Possible Solutions

Directions for Committee Action

The ideas below are starting points, not a checklist. Delegates are encouraged to combine, adapt, and go beyond them in ways that reflect their delegation's interests.

Stabilizing UNHCR's Capacity

Delegates could explore more predictable, longer-term support to UNHCR so that its operations are less exposed to sudden, single-year financial shortfalls, without focusing too much on specific budget details and figures (specific budget figures and other detailed economic considerations will not be discussed during debate). The Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework pilots showed that early, coordinated support from host governments, UNHCR, and other partners can meaningfully improve outcomes for both refugees and host communities[27].

New Instruments for Climate Displacement

Delegates could propose a dedicated protection status for people displaced across borders by disaster or slow-onset climate change, building on the recommendations already developed through the Nansen Initiative[28]. The European Union's Temporary Protection Directive shows that governments can rapidly extend group-based protection to large, displaced populations when political will exists. Delegates might consider how similar tools could be agreed in advance for future climate emergencies, rather than negotiated from scratch each time[29]. In easier words, could countries create a pre-agreed system that gives temporary protection to people who cross borders because of climate-related disasters, so that countries can respond quickly instead of negotiating a new solution after every disaster?

Matching Host-Country Burden with Resettlement and Legal Pathways

Because resettlement departures fall far short of need, increasing resettlement opportunities could help reduce pressure on major host countries[30]. Delegates could propose stronger commitments to resettlement, greater use of complementary pathways such as labour mobility and education visas, and encouraging third countries offering resettlement to consider the number of refugees hosted by each country relative to its available resources and the burden placed on host communities.

Conditions for Safe and Durable Return

Large numbers of people have returned to areas still marked by insecurity or destroyed infrastructure. Delegates should therefore consider what minimum conditions must be in place before return is treated as a durable solution rather than a premature withdrawal of protection[31]. Possible elements include independent monitoring of conditions in areas of return, sustained reintegration support, and explicit non-refoulement guarantees. The Syrian case is currently the clearest live test of whether large-scale return can be managed safely[32].

Section V: Rules of Procedure

The Rules at AKAMUN

This section provides a brief overview of the rules and procedures used at AKAMUN. It does not cover every rule or situation that may arise during the conference, but the Chairs will explain additional procedures when necessary. The Chairs are there to help you understand how the rules work and will guide you throughout the conference. You do not need to memorize every rule or understand everything before the conference begins. Think of MUN as a board game: you learn the rules as you play. We understand that the rules may seem overwhelming at first, but they become much easier once you get the hang of them.

Roll Call

At the beginning of each session, the Chair will conduct a roll call. Delegates should answer either “present” or “present and voting.” Delegates who answer “present and voting” waive their right to abstain during substantive voting. See Voting Procedure below.

Formal Debate and the Speakers' List
Formal debate begins when the Chair opens the Speakers' List. The Speakers' List is a list of delegates who wish to speak on the topic under discussion. Delegates should raise their placards when the Chair asks for speakers to be added to the list. Each speech will have a time limit, usually between 60 and 90 seconds. When a delegate's speaking time expires, the floor will pass to the next speaker. When a delegate finishes their speech, they may yield the floor to the following:

• Another delegate, who may hold a speech

• Questions, allowing other delegates to ask Points of Information (questions), if permitted by the Chair.

• The Chair, in which case the delegate has concluded their speech and may take their seat.

Delegates are expected to remain in the committee room and in their seats during formal debate. Delegates must request the Chair's permission before leaving their seat or the room. This may be done through a Point of Personal Privilege.

Points
Points allow delegates to address the Chair directly regarding procedural matters, personal needs, or questions concerning a speech. Points do not require a vote. A delegate may raise the following:

• Point of Order. Used when a delegate believes that the rules of procedure have not been followed correctly. A Point of Order may interrupt a speaker only when the matter is sufficiently serious to require immediate clarification. The Chair's ruling on the matter is final.

• Point of Personal Privilege. Used when a delegate is experiencing a personal difficulty that affects their ability to participate in debate. This may include being unable to hear or see, excessive noise, room temperature, or another physical or practical concern. A Point of Personal Privilege may interrupt a speaker when necessary. It may also be used to request permission to leave the delegate's seat or the committee room, including for bathroom visits.

• Point of Parliamentary Inquiry. Used to ask the Chair a question regarding parliamentary procedure. Delegates may use this point to ask what motion is currently on the floor, how much speaking time remains, what a particular motion means, or what procedure will follow. A Point of Parliamentary Inquiry may not interrupt a speaker.

• Point of Information. Used to ask a question regarding the content of a delegate's speech. A Point of Information may only be raised when the speaker has yielded their remaining time to questions and the Chair has recognized the delegate. Questions should be relevant to the speech and should be phrased as questions rather than statements or arguments. The speaker may choose whether to answer the question.

Motions
Motions are simply proposals for what the committee should do next. Motions change the way the committee is proceeding and therefore require a vote. When the Chair asks if there are any motions on the floor, delegates may raise their placards to propose a motion. The Chair must recognize the delegate before they may state their motion, after which the Chair will determine whether the motion is in order. Delegates may call out "seconded" to indicate that they support the motion and wish for it to be considered. In simple terms, a motion is a suggestion for what the committee should

do next. For example, a motion may suggest discussing a specific topic, giving speeches on a particular issue, entering an unmoderated caucus (see Caucuses below), or taking a break.

Caucusing and Lobbying
An unmoderated caucus pauses formal debate. During this time, delegates may move around the room and speak directly with one another. Delegates are not required to follow the usual rules of formal debate. However, delegates are not allowed to leave the committee without permission. Delegates are expected to use an unmoderated caucus to negotiate with other delegates, form blocs, and develop ideas for possible solutions. This is also when most working papers (see Working Papers versus Resolution Papers below) are written. Unmoderated caucuses are also the main opportunity for lobbying. Lobbying means building support for your ideas. For example, delegates may look for "allies" or combine similar proposals with other delegates.

Draft resolutions and Resolutions
A draft resolution is a document where delegates write down and organize their proposed solutions to the topic being discussed. Draft resolutions are developed through debate and caucusing, usually by groups of delegates working together. They follow a specific format and are divided into preambulatory clauses, which explain the issue and provide context, and operative clauses, which outline the actions the committee proposes to take. Once a draft resolution has been submitted and approved by the Chair, it can be discussed in committee, amended, and eventually put to a vote.

A resolution paper is the final version of a draft resolution after all amendments have been considered and the committee has voted on it. If it receives the required majority of votes, it is adopted as a resolution of the committee.

Voting Procedure
When the committee has finished debating a draft resolution, a delegate may make a motion to enter voting procedure. If the Chair rules the motion in order, the committee will enter voting procedure. Once voting procedure begins, the room will be closed by an administrator, and delegates are not permitted to leave the committee room. Delegates may still raise a Point of Order if they believe that the rules of procedure are not being followed. See Points above. Most procedural votes require a simple majority. The adoption of a draft resolution generally requires a two-thirds majority. Delegates may vote in favour, against, or abstain. However, delegates who answered "present and voting" during roll call may not abstain.

Respect, courtesy and Formality
Delegates are expected to always conduct themselves with respect and courtesy. During formal debates, delegates must refer to themselves and other delegates in third person. For example, instead of saying "I believe this is a good solution," a delegate should say, "This delegate believes this is a good solution." Additionally, instead of saying "I do not support this proposal," a delegate may also say, "The delegation/delegate of [country] does not support this proposal," replacing [country] with the country that you represent. Delegates should refer to other delegates as "the delegate," "the delegate of [country]," or another appropriate reference to the country they represent. The pronoun "you" should also be avoided when addressing an individual delegate, although it may be used when addressing delegates collectively.

Personal comments, phone use during formal debate, and other disruptive behaviour may be addressed or penalized at the Chair's discretion. Delegates are allowed to use laptops during committee sessions, but only for purposes directly related to the debate.

This includes writing notes, preparing speeches, developing ideas, preparing questions and arguments, or conducting other work relevant to the committee’s proceedings. Delegates are allowed to use generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT or Claude, in accordance with the Chair’s instructions. This may include assistance with understanding unfamiliar words or concepts, clarifying information, translating phrases, or improving the wording of a delegate’s own ideas. Delegates may also ask the Chairs for assistance when needed. Generative AI should not be used to generate complete speeches, arguments, or other substantive content on behalf of a delegate. Delegates are expected to develop, defend, and present their own ideas during committee sessions and argue for them.

ENDNOTES

Images used throughout this background guide

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