

MONTANA MODEL UNITED NATIONS

Delegate Preparation Handbook

Research, speaking, negotiation, and conference participation.

Your job as a delegate: Represent the interests and likely policies of your assigned country—not your personal views—and work diplomatically toward solutions the committee can support.

The Delegate's Preparation Path

1. Learn the basic political, economic, social, and foreign-policy characteristics of your assigned country.
2. Study your committee's mandate and both agenda topics. ICJ participants should instead follow the court-specific case materials.
3. Identify your country's interests, previous UN actions, allies, negotiating groups, constraints, and realistic policy options.
4. Complete the Country Research Worksheet and write the required position paper.
5. Prepare and practice an opening speech for each topic and a short speech supporting your preferred agenda order.
6. Review the Rules of Procedure and practice the most common points and motions.
7. Arrive ready to listen, negotiate, draft, amend, speak, and vote throughout both conference days.

Research Your Country

Build a working model of how the government sees the world. Facts matter, but your goal is to turn facts into predictions about what the country would support, oppose, fund, or negotiate.

- Government and leadership: political system, current leaders, domestic priorities, elections, stability, and major political constraints.
- Economy and development: income level, major industries and trade relationships, debt, aid, energy needs, development goals, and vulnerabilities.
- Foreign policy: allies, competitors, regional organizations, treaty commitments, security concerns, and relationships with major powers.
- United Nations behavior: recent General Debate statements, voting patterns, sponsored resolutions, treaty status, peacekeeping participation, and negotiating-group memberships.
- Topic-specific interests: prior national action, official statements, affected communities or industries, preferred international partners, and red lines.

Use Strong Sources

- Your country's foreign ministry, head-of-government, parliament, national statistics office, and permanent mission to the United Nations.
- Official UN committee pages, the UN Digital Library, UN News, treaty databases, and reports from relevant UN agencies.
- World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and reputable regional organizations when relevant.
- Credible international and national news organizations for recent developments. Compare coverage and distinguish reporting from opinion.
- The MMUN background guide as a starting point. Follow its citations and conduct additional research.

Source check Ask who produced the source, why it was produced, when it was updated, what evidence it provides, and whether another reliable source confirms the claim. Do not rely on generative AI as a factual source or submit AI-generated writing as your own work.

Understand the Committee and Topics

- Read the committee mandate before proposing action. A resolution should not give the committee powers it does not possess.
- Identify past resolutions, treaties, programs, and institutions. Strong proposals build on existing work rather than inventing a new agency for every problem.
- Prepare for both topics. The committee sets the agenda through speeches and a vote during the first session.
- Develop two or three concrete proposals for each topic, including who would act, how action would be implemented, how it could be funded, and how progress would be assessed.

Prepare to Speak

Agenda speech

Explain which topic the committee should address first and why. Connect urgency to your country's interests and identify a practical reason the committee can make progress. Do not merely say that both topics are important.

Opening speech

- State the problem from your country's perspective.
- Identify one relevant national or international action.

- Present one or two specific priorities or proposals.
- Invite countries with shared interests to collaborate.

Later speeches

As documents develop, move from general positions to specific clauses, tradeoffs, amendments, implementation questions, and reasons to support or oppose a proposal. Listen closely so your speech advances the debate rather than repeating it.

Negotiate Productively

- Begin with interests, not wording. Ask what another delegation needs and what problem it is trying to solve.
- Find overlapping interests even when motivations differ. Coalition partners do not need to agree on everything.
- Make concrete proposals: identify the actor, action, resources, timeline, reporting process, and limits.
- Know your red lines, but distinguish core interests from language you can trade.
- Share drafting work. Invite quieter delegates into the conversation and give credit for useful ideas.
- Test support before submitting a working paper. A document is stronger when delegates understand and helped shape it.
- Disagree with proposals rather than attacking people or countries. Diplomatic criticism should be precise and solution-oriented.

From Ideas to Resolutions

8. Delegates exchange ideas during formal debate and caucuses.
9. Coalitions draft working papers using the MMUN resolution template.
10. Sponsors and signatories are collected according to the Rules of Procedure.
11. The dais reviews the working paper for format, relevance, mandate, clarity, and originality.
12. An accepted working paper becomes a numbered draft resolution.
13. Delegates debate the draft, negotiate amendments, close debate, and vote.
14. A draft resolution that passes becomes a resolution of the committee.

Conference Readiness Checklist

- Country Research Worksheet completed and available for reference.
- Position paper submitted by the posted deadline.

- Background guide and notes for both topics reviewed.
- Agenda and opening speeches drafted and practiced.
- Rules Quick Reference printed or downloaded.
- Country placard prepared according to conference instructions.
- Business attire selected for both days.
- Charged device and charger available if permitted by the advisor and dais.
- Notebook, pens, and any required accessibility or personal items packed.

What Strong Participation Looks Like

Strong delegates are prepared, accurate, diplomatic, active, and collaborative. They speak when they have something useful to add; listen and adapt; represent their country consistently; contribute to drafting; help the committee function; and pursue workable agreements without abandoning core national interests.