

# Parliamentary Procedure

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When you attempt to have a meaningful discussion among up to 192 countries, it is obvious that you need a set of rules in order to navigate through a session without chaos. The dais of your committee, led by a chairperson, will direct the committee using a set of proper rules and format. Those rules, usually referred to as Parliamentary Procedure, are an important part of the proceedings in the United Nations. Normally these rules assure that the committee remains in order and that all delegates are treated fairly and given an equal opportunity to participate. However, parliamentary procedure can be used with great creativity in order to achieve some of your country's objectives. Because this is the most technical MUN skill to learn, it requires that you memorize the rules and know when to use them.

## Parliamentary Procedure Guide

### I. Calling Roll

When country name is called, respond "Present and voting." If you are late or forget to acknowledge your presence, forward a note to the chair to be counted as present and voting.

### II. Adopting the Agenda (requires a simple majority vote)

A. Move to OPEN THE SPEAKERS' LIST: Chair will select countries and create a formal speaking order. Delegates then discuss agenda possibilities.

B. Move to SET THE SPEAKERS' TIME AT \_\_\_ MIN/SEC: Allows you to set the time the speaker is allowed to have the floor while discussing agenda possibilities.

C. Move to SET THE AGENDA: During the course of the debate, delegate, after being recognized by the chair, says AI move to set the agenda at...@ and dictates their desired agenda order.

D. Move to ADOPT AN AGENDA: After several agendas have been proposed, this motion allows the committee to vote on which agenda to follow for the remainder of the conference.

### III. Post-Agenda Adoption

A. Move to OPEN THE SPEAKERS' LIST: The speakers' list mentioned above is erased and a new one is started. Debate will now center on first selected agenda topic (V=M).

B. Move to SET THE SPEAKERS' TIME: The speakers' time set from adopting the agenda remains the same. Changing the speakers' time can be done throughout the session (D=2F, 2A; V=M).

C. Move to SUSPEND THE MEETING FOR THE PURPOSE OF A \_\_\_ MIN CAUCUS\*: Caucus time can be used to lobby for ideas, form coalitions, and write resolutions. Most of the real work takes during place during caucus time. \*Can also be used to break for meals (D=none; V=M)

Other important motions and requests that can be made throughout the session:

- POINT OF ORDER: Can interrupt any part of the meeting, but used only when improper procedure has been used. Points of information to not exist! Questions to the chair must be sent by note.
- ADJOURN DEBATE: A motion that tables the topic without further discussion or substantive vote (D=2F, 2A; V=M).
- RECONSIDER A TOPIC/RESOLUTION/PROPOSAL: A motion used to go back to a suspended topic. Also, during voting procedure, reconsideration of a failed resolution is granted. This motion must originate on the winning side and have a good explanation (D=2A; V=2/3).
- RIGHT OF REPLY: Special request when a country's integrity has been slandered, not for remarks made about a delegate. To obtain permission, a note should be sent to the chair.

- **APPEAL THE DECISION OF THE CHAIR:** A motion made to challenge a decision of the chair. Delegate has time to speak in front of the body. Chair will respond accordingly (V=M).

#### **IV. Voting Procedure**

##### A. How to move into voting procedure:

1. **Motion to CLOSE DEBATE:** This motion ends all discussion. Once this passes, the body moves directly into voting procedures. All doors are shut and caucusing/passing of notes is not allowed. Violation of rules results in expulsion from committee room (D=2A; V=2/3).

2. **Expiration of speakers' list:** First, the motion to CLOSE THE SPEAKERS= LIST must pass (V=M). No more names can then be added. When the last speaker is finished, the body automatically enters into voting procedure.

##### B. During voting procedure:

- **DIVIDE THE QUESTION:** This motion calls for certain operative clauses to be voted on separately from the resolution. The delegate proposing this motion must name the clause to be questioned. The chair calls speakers (2F, 2A). The body then votes whether the clause should be divided (V=M). If this passes, then the body votes whether this clause should be included in the final resolution (V=M). Thus, 2 votes actually take place: the first is procedural, the second is substantive.
- **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Each country is called out loud. Delegate answers yes, no, or abstain. Roll call vote is granted at the discretion of the chair (V=none).
- **RIGHT TO EXPLAIN VOTE:** Delegate can explain vote on a specific resolution, used to clarify a vote against normal policy. Requests must be submitted in writing to the chair prior to voting procedures.
- **QUESTION THE COMPETENCE:** This motion is used when resolutions are not within the scope of the committee or authorizes things the committee cannot authorize (V=M).
- **ADJOURN THE MEETING:** After voting has taken place on all resolutions, this motion ends the conference until the next time it convenes (V=M).

#### **V. Things to Remember**

- A. All motions begin with "I move to..."
  - B. A point of order is the only time you may raise your placard during a speech
  - C. Everyone must vote on procedural matters (no abstentions allowed)
  - D. Country can only appear on the speakers= list once at a time. After speech, name can be put on again
  - E. Resolutions are referred to as working papers until approved by the chair, given a number, and read aloud to the body
  - F. Friendly amendments are when all sponsors agree to the change (no vote is required)
  - G. Unfriendly amendments are when the sponsors do not agree to the change. The amendment is submitted with different sponsors and signatories (vote is required)
  - H. Voting options are YES, NO, ABSTAIN, and PASS (can pass once, but must vote the second time around)
- KEY: D-discussion; V-vote; F-for; M-majority; A-against