



## SRMUN Position Paper Guidelines

This document covers the following:

- Where can I find research on Member State's position?
- Format specifications
- What are the SRMUN Staffers scoring?
- Example top-scoring Position Papers
- How to upload Position Papers?

The culmination of your hard work as a delegate is first manifested in your position paper. It brings together the information that you have learned from your background guide and your individual research on your Member State and agenda topics. Once you have collected this information, it is up to you to analyze your Member State's viewpoints and develop a statement of policy toward the specific issue as framed by the background guide. In this process, you should identify the major themes of each topic and link them to your Member State's unique identity and situation.

In addition to helping make sense of the research process, position papers also demonstrate your preparedness to the staff and your fellow delegates. Not only do they represent an integral part of the conference awards, but also position papers are an important starting point for the caucus process. After finishing your position paper, you should have a clear vision of how your Member State would like to set the agenda order and reasons to back up your decision.

In summary, position papers are designed to be a brief but clear statement of your delegation's policy on the given committee agenda topics. They are intended to help you organize your ideas and bring a focus for your work at the conference. Position papers should be well researched and true to the historical foreign policy of a delegation. When composing position papers delegates must include:

- A clear and concise position/statement of policy on each of the given agenda topics;
- Recommendations/suggestions to improve each of the situations described in the background guides.

Delegates can include:

- New information regarding the Member State's history with the issue (But make sure the information is different than that provided in the background guide!);
- Endorsed conventions and/or resolutions;
- Quotes taken from speeches by heads of government/Member State documents;
- Any other pertinent information.

Your paper should develop these three building blocks:

*Your Member State's  
position*

*Your Member State's  
history relating to the  
issue*

*Areas for  
negotiation/recommen-  
dations for change*



### **Where can I find research on Member State's position?**

1) Relevant documents:

- The UN Charter;
- The Universal Declaration on Human Rights;
- UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- Relevant treaties and declarations (Your Director/AD may have mentioned these in the background guide text or footnotes).

2) Statements by prominent UN Officials or politicians from your Member State.

3) Member states that might have a similar position as your own on the issue:

- What alliances or groups is your Member State a member of? Do those Member States agree or disagree with you on this issue? Why?
- These groups may be based upon geography, circumstance or other commonality. Some suggested examples of groups are: NATO, OPEC, G77, G7.

If delegates are unsure how to start their research, SRMUN has provided this Research Links webpage featuring sources from the United Nations and its various agencies and other organizations: <http://www.srmun.org/reference.php>.

### ***How is my Position Paper different from my papers for class?***

Position papers are intended to be persuasive, but also present a unified tone comparable to what is found in most UN-style writing. It may be helpful for you to review documents conceived by the current and former Secretaries-General, UN documents, and documents composed by your Member State. What tone does your Member State use when speaking to this issue? This should be reflected in your position paper. Remember also to use academic word choice and sentence structure.

### **Format Specifications:**

Position papers must be formatted as follows:

- Maximum length is 2 pages for all topics;
- Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF format;
- Single spaced;
- 1-inch margins;
- Text in 10-12 point Times New Roman Font;
- **Title Heading:**
  - 12pt Times New Roman Font, Centered;
  - The first line should contain *only* the full name of the representative Member State (e.g., The United States of America);
  - The second line should be skipped;
  - The third line should state "Positions for (insert your committee's name)" (e.g., Positions for the General Assembly Plenary);
  - A gap or line should separate the header from the main body text.
- **Topic Headings:**
  - 12pt Times New Roman Font, Aligned Left;
  - Number each topic with Roman Numerals;



- Each topic heading should state the exact title of the agenda topic as listed in the committee Background Guide or SRMUN website;
- Skip one line between headings and body text;
- Indent each new paragraph and do not skip lines between paragraphs.
- No images and graphics, including but not limited to flags, maps, and other national emblems.
- Do not include any identifying information such as the delegate's name or educational institution in the position paper.

### **Citations:**

- Formal citations are optional, but if used, it should be footnoted and formatted using any recognized citation style. If including citations, it must still remain within the maximum 2-page length.
- While formal citations are optional, SRMUN does encourage referencing sources. For example, if a concept is presented in the Background Guide or another published document, the position paper should reference that source by including "As noted by," "As previously presented by," "According to," etc.
- Position papers should not contain exact copies of text from other sources unless placed in quotes and accompanied by a basic citation. Reproducing exact text from the SRMUN Background Guide and other external sources constitutes as plagiarism and will not be tolerated by SRMUN.

### **Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism in all its forms is absolutely unacceptable. The SRMUN Executive Staff will fully investigate any accusations of plagiarism and take appropriate action. Plagiarism may:

- Lead to a zero score on the position paper, which will affect the overall delegation score for Outstanding Position Paper Awards,
- Notification to the faculty advisor,
- Or additional consequences, based on the severity of the incident.

### **What Are the SRMUN Staffers Scoring?**

Committee Directors and Assistant Directors will score position papers based on three sections:

- I. Format and Finish: Did the delegate(s) format their position paper as specifically stated on page one?
  - a. Is the position paper, at maximum, two pages and in the correct font type and size?
  - b. Is the Member State name and committee name listed?
  - c. Are the titles of the committee topics listed as shown in the Background Guide and SRMUN conference website?
  - d. Are the margins correct?
  - e. Is the document single spaced?
- II. Writing Style, Tone, and Research:
  - a. Does the paper address the topic in the context of the SRMUN Background Guide?
  - b. Does the position paper present research beyond the SRMUN Background Guide, such as resolutions, reports, conferences, conventions, etc.?



- c. Does the position paper utilize professional, educational, and diplomatic verbiage and tone?
  - d. Does the position paper have correct grammar?
- III. Statement of Position:
- a. Does the position paper present clear and accurate statements for Topic One and Topic Two?
  - b. Does the position paper discuss the Member State's history or involvement with the issues presented in the Background Guide? Does the position paper focus debate during the conference?
  - c. Are there statements that will affect or influence the committee's discussion?
  - d. Does the position paper include a plan of action or recommendations for change?
  - e. Is the position paper within proper character of the Member State being represented?

Faculty Advisors will receive an overall Delegation Position Paper Evaluation sheet detailing their delegation's scores in each committee. Click here to view a sample of the evaluation sheet: [http://www.srmun.org/docs/sample\\_pp\\_scoring.pdf](http://www.srmun.org/docs/sample_pp_scoring.pdf).

### **Example Position Papers:**

We have posted the top position papers from previous conferences on the SRMUN website. They are available for viewing here: <http://srmun.org/papers/historical.php>.

### **How to Upload Position Papers?**

It is usually the delegation's Faculty Advisor or Head Delegate's responsibility to upload each committee's position paper into SRMUN's Position Paper Uploads: <http://www.srmun.org/upload/>

The Position Paper Uploads website will be available a few weeks prior to each conference's position paper deadline. To watch an instructional video on how to upload position papers, click here: <http://srmun.org/videos.php#dp6>.

If you encounter issues with the upload process, please email [admin@srmun.org](mailto:admin@srmun.org).