



POSITION PAPER WRITING

In preparation for the conference, delegates are responsible for doing extensive research on their topics, including their country's stance on each topic. Before the conference, each delegate is required to turn in a position paper, which is a short write up of the research that they have conducted. Delegates will still be allowed to participate at the conference if they have not turned in a position paper, but it is strongly encouraged as it is the first impression that the committee director gets for each delegate. Students though will be ineligible for awards if they do not turn in a position paper.

Content, content, content! The most important element of a good position paper is the content. First and foremost, a position paper should present a position. A position paper is designed to present a country's position on the issues on the agenda, not a background piece on the topic. Certainly, feel free to use information on the topic that supports your country's position, but the position paper should present a position. Secondly, the position should be compatible with your country's interests and foreign policy. This is the position paper from your country, not yourself. Your own personal viewpoints may be different from the foreign policy of the country you are representing, but remember that part of the learning experience of Model UN is learning and presenting a different perspective. Finally on content, the position paper is your opportunity to demonstrate to the committee staff and your fellow delegates your depth of knowledge on the issue. Stating that Belgium wishes to see a strengthening of the verification protocols of the CFE Treaty by allowing more overflights of territory shows a greater depth of knowledge and nuance than merely saying that Belgium supports a strengthening of the CFE Treaty.

Quality of writing. The second most important element of a good position paper is the quality of writing. The quality of the ideas is the most important factor, but how well they are presented is also important. Quality of writing includes how well organized the position paper is and how clearly the ideas are presented. Appropriate syntax and vocabulary are also important factors. Remember to use diplomatic and academic language and most importantly – avoid colloquialisms!

Finish and format. A poorly formatted position paper or one that has spelling or grammatical errors can distract the reader from the quality of the content and writing. Common mistakes include substituting "US" for "UN" or "Untied Nations" for "United Nations." Mistakes in the names of topics or the committee also detract from the overall quality of the position paper. Position papers should be carefully proofread to avoid these errors.



POSITION PAPER FORMAT SPECIFICATIONS

- Position Papers should be about a page on each topic, along with a short introduction.
- Position Papers should not exceed 5 pages in length, but should definitely be longer than one.
- Paper size 8½"x11"
- Font size 10, 11 or 12 point
- Times New Roman, Arial, or similar font
- Single Spaced
- 1" margins for top, bottom, left and right
- Header in the upper right hand corner:
 - Delegate's Name
 - Delegate's School
 - Country that you are representing (i.e. Kingdom of Norway)
 - Committee Name (i.e. General Assembly Plenary)
- Topics should be addressed in the position paper in the order your country would like to see them addressed in the committee.
- Place the topic title centered and in bold above each topic.

A well-written Position Paper includes all of the following information for each topic:

- 1- a brief summary/definition of topic
- 2- a brief history of topic including international efforts
- 3- description of related international acts and U.N. Resolutions
- 4- description of NGOs and other involved agencies or U.N. Bodies
- 5- the official domestic stance of the country on the topic
- 6- at least a few quotes from government officials
- 7- if applicable, domestic actions by their government related to topic
- 8- a brief description of all currently proposed resolutions, ideas
- 9- sample ideas; what you want to propose in the committee



POSITION PAPER DO'S AND DON'TS

Do's

- Present a Position
- Use historical examples that apply to your country if they support your position/claim to expertise
- Follow the correct format
- Cite sources (if appropriate) using either in text information or a footnote
- Research the issue
- Present a position on all topics
- Have someone proofread your work
- Go through multiple drafts
- Complete extensive research on your country's position
- Present a position consistent with your country's interests and foreign policy
- Use spell check
- Turn it in on-time

Don'ts

- Just rehash the 2 issues
- Just give a history lesson
- Rely solely on the Background Guide for your research
- Rely on speeches as your primary source of information
- Just rely on spell check—it misses errors such as "Untied Nations"



SAMPLE POSITION PAPER

The State of Israel
General Assembly Plenary
Delegate Name
Delegate School

KnightMUN - General Assembly Plenary

With the ever increasing troubles that face our world today, the State of Israel seeks to make the world a better, safer place and fights to insure a better future for humanity. Israel has continued to work towards a goal of eliminating human rights abuses within its own borders, including banning all forms of torture in investigations. Hundreds of suicide attacks by terrorists and militant groups against Israeli citizens have though, forced Israel to extreme measures to protect its own people. Israel would like to see more done on Palestinian abuses by the Palestinian Authority and other groups. Israel would also like for the United Nations to continue to pressure the Palestinian Authority to control their own citizens and bring them to justice. Israel would also like to see continued efforts on the proliferation of chemical and biological weapons. One effort that needs to be continued however is the research on counteragents against the chemical and biological warfare. Israel is a leader in this research and would like other nations to continue. Continued pressure to join the biological and chemical conventions and continued regional meetings about the situations are both desperately needed. Israel believes that these issues and many others are very important to the global society and can help shape the future of mankind for the better.

I. Israeli Human Rights Abuses

The State of Israel has a strict policy against human rights abuses within its borders. Having been accused of various violations of human rights and criticized for their interrogation techniques, Israel has worked passionately to improve human rights conditions. Israel, remnants of the over 6 million slaughtered men, women, and children of Nazi, Germany, would be the last nation to abuse the rights of people undeservedly. Fighting terrorism and being under siege from "violent extremists determined to destroy the State of Israel," has welcomed unique circumstances to the Israeli Defense Forces (I.D.F.). The existence of continued terrorist actions against citizens of Israel, has demanded full out force to investigate and detain these perpetrators against Israeli rights and freedoms. While suicide attacks that deliberately target innocent civilians are deemed unacceptable by the Israeli government and the world, the Palestinian Authority (P.A.) has not met its expressed commitment to ensure that those responsible are brought to justice even though numerous UN Security Council resolutions (1515, 1435, and 1397) have called for them to do so. The State of Israel has a no tolerance policy against acts of terror and will use the means necessarily to bring extreme terrorists to justice. During only the previous three years, 137 Palestinian suicide attacks have killed over 900 and injured over 6000 innocent Israeli citizens. In response to the UN and UNCHR, along with its continued work to improve human rights conditions, the Israeli



SAMPLE POSITION PAPER (CONT.)

Supreme Court banned the use of torture in interrogations and outlawed the use of physical force in 1999. The State of Israel would like to show the global community that its efforts would relieve all criticism that it has received. Israel though, will not have its national sovereignty impeded upon by the United Nations or UNCHR, and will fight against any resolution that does so. While the State of Israel has dealt with human rights abuses accordingly, the Palestinian Authority has not. Palestinian Security Forces regularly arrest, detain, abuse, and torture innocent Israeli civilians while many remain imprisoned indefinitely without charge. Groups such as HAMAS and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad also continue to abuse both prisoners and Palestinian citizens themselves. Israel would like to see continued efforts in improving human rights conditions in the state of Palestine and for the UN to "exercise control over militant groups responsible for violence against IDF and settlers within Palestine and for suicide bombings within Israel," as was stated by the UNCHR in March 2005.

II. Biological and Chemical Warfare

The State of Israel has a clear, very distinguished policy towards the topic of biological and chemical weapons. Israel does not believe in the use of chemical or biological weapons for offensive purposes against other nations or to be used to control the population. Israel does however contend that research on chemical and biological agents need to continue in order for nations to be able to fight against chemical and biological attacks by other nations or from terrorist groups. This research can help cure this new age warfare, such as coming for cures in order to save the population. Israel values its own citizens and will continue its efforts to potentially save their lives if it became necessary. The State of Israel has signed the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction (C.W.C.) in order to show their dedication to the proliferation of chemical weapons aimed for warfare. Israel is also a member of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (O.P.C.W.) Asian Group. In 1992, Israel established the Special Means Bureau at the Ministry of Defense. One of its purposes was to fight against potential biological and chemical weapon attacks. The Israel Institute of Biological Research (I.I.B.R.) continues to work towards cures of potential chemical and biological attacks, along with doing research on many other potential life-saving medicinal chemistry disorder cures. In 2001, senior Israeli Health Ministry official Yehuda Barukh stated that Israel is "better prepared than any other country regarding the possibility of a biological attack, and that Israel has sufficient medication to counter anthrax". Israel aims towards the eventual proliferation of all biological and chemical weapons, though the immediate need is to concentrate on the research on counter-warfare and cures. Israel would like a resolution that would create continued annual meetings to be held worldwide on this topic and the continued effort of groups such as the CWC and BTWC. More regional efforts are also needed by the United Nations and for more countries to sign or ratify the conventions.