

United Nations Security Council



Background Guide

Agenda Situation in Syria



TGES MUN 2026



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Message from the Presidency of the Council

Greetings, dear delegates. This is a concise guide designed with the purpose of providing you a basic understanding of the agenda and the conduct of the simulation. Note that the perusal of this guide's content will be insufficient if you wish to enjoy a healthy and competitive debate. Use the information you find between these pages as just an accompaniment to your research efforts.

We shall be available to clarify any and all of your doubts before the conference. However, we would suggest you consider querying us as an option to be exercised as last resort, not first move.

Regards,

Presidency, United Nations Security Council,

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Basic Tips For Beginners

Debate and research

One of the first questions all first time delegates have with regards to MUNs is - how do we prepare for the debate?

Fun fact: In MUNs, the process of preparing for the debate is termed 'research'.

Contrary to popular belief, one does not have to know everything about one's own allotted country nor does one need to know about the country's specific capacities in terms of territory, finance, ranking in major indices relating to various issues and aspects etcetera. What one does have to know is about their country's current government's stance on the given issue and the history and context within which such stance has been developed - or in fancier terms, the foreign policy of one's country. A detailed explanation of what foreign policy is and how it can be identified can be found in the section relating to foreign policy in this guide.

Once you know and understand your country's foreign policy, you can then try to find literature, legal, and scholarly material that helps justify and advance the country's foreign policy stance.

For example, if you are allotted India and the agenda of the committee is India and Pakistan's border dispute, you must try to find material that will justify India's claim that Kashmir belongs to India - the stance that the Indian government takes on the issue.

With the same aforementioned example, let us look at what the ideal search terms for finding such research material will be in your preferred search engine: 'India Pakistan border Indian legal claims pdf'.

You can change the search query according to the relevance of the results but in 99% of the cases, you can find the results you are looking for using the search query construction technique illustrated above. The term 'pdf' was included in the query because that brings up research papers and scholarly studies in the search results which are much more comprehensive and reliable than regular news sites, blogs, and video results.

For guidance on which sources will be treated as more reliable in comparison to others, please refer to the sub-section on hierarchy of evidence in the section 'Specific contentious rules' within this guide.



Diplomacy a.k.a “lobbying”

In MUNs, you learn how to work with individuals from different backgrounds and diverse ideas in order to build consensus and find lasting solutions to real world problems. This process is called ‘diplomacy’ in the real world and ‘lobbying’ in MUNs.

As the delegate of a country in a United Nations body, you must find a way to convince the other delegates in your committee to work towards solutions that benefit both of you. In case there are differences in two countries’ foreign policies, as a diplomat, you must work to find a way past the differences and build a consensus; such a consensus might require a compromise, concession, or conciliation.

Documentation

At the end of most MUN simulations, the delegates are expected to work together and create formal documents that encapsulate the gist of proceedings over the course of past days and provide solutions to the issues discussed.

To make such a document, you must familiarise yourself with the syntax, structure, and purpose of those documents.

You shall find in the ‘About the [Name of the Committee]’ section a sub-section dedicated to explaining in brief what forms of documentation can be allowed in the committee and their purpose. Once you know that, just head over to <https://digitallibrary.un.org> and search for a sample of those documents to familiarise yourself with their syntax and structure.

General tip

We know all this may seem daunting at first but trust us - it is very simple and easy. All that you need to do is leave your fears and anxieties at home and give your best with the utmost aplomb you can muster



About the UNSC

What is UNSC?

The Security Council (SC) is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations (UN). It has been tasked with the responsibility of maintaining international peace and security - which is its primary objective. It is composed of fifteen members in total, five of whom are permanent and the other ten being non-permanent. All Member States of the UN are obligated to comply with decisions of the SC.

The SC has been tasked with the duty to:

- i. Determine the existence of threats to international peace and security;
- ii. Evaluate breaches of international peace;
- iii. Examine any and all acts of aggression;
- iv. Take appropriate action to obviate or tackle the above.

Further reading:

1. [Chapter V, UN Charter](#)
2. [Pg. 1206 - 1210, International Law \(Sixth Edition\), Malcolm N. Shaw](#)
3. [Pg. 542-545, Akehurst's Modern Introduction to International Law \(Ninth Revised Edition\), Alexander Orakhelashvili](#)
4. [The United Nations Security Council: A Primer, E.C. Luck](#)
5. [Chapter VII Powers of the United Nations Security Council, Erika De Wet](#)

For detailed research into the work of the UNSC, you can use:

- [Security Council Report](#)



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Voting in the UNSC

Each member of the SC has one vote.

All procedural voting within the Council is based on simple majority id est half the number of total States present plus one.

Any voting on substantive matters such as passing of a resolution requires nine 'yes' votes in total including a concurring vote from all the permanent members of the Council. A concurring vote can be either a 'yes' or an abstention.



Abstentions from permanent members do not have any bearing on the passage or binding nature of the resolution by itself. However, if any of the five permanent members votes 'no' on a resolution's passage (or on any other substantive matter), the resolution will be considered vetoed. Even in the case where all the members of the SC vote 'yes' on a resolution except for one permanent member who votes 'no' on that resolution, the resolution is considered vetoed.

Further reading:

1. [Article 27, UN Charter](#)
2. [Chapter 6, Pg. 295 - 372, The Procedure of the UN Security Council, Loraine Sievers and Sam Daws](#)

Types of Outcome Documents

Resolutions

Resolutions are legally binding formal documents that convey the decisions taken by the SC. Through resolutions, a wide variety of actions and decisions can be taken by the SC such as: suggestion of a peaceful method of settling disputes, establishment of a peacekeeping force, imposition of sanctions, authorisation of use of force etc.

Presidential Statements

These are statements issued by the President of the SC, on behalf of all members of the Council. They convey the position of the Council as a whole on the issue discussed at the meeting.

These documents are consensus-based id est, if any member of the Council votes 'no' on the passage of such document, it will not pass. If a member abstains from voting on the statement, their State is disassociated from it. However, abstentions do not affect the passage of the statement.



Press Statements

These are statements that are provided to the international press, produced by either individual members of the Council or by a group of members, expressing the position of the authoring members on the issues discussed at the meeting.

They are usually issued at the end of a meeting and there's no limit on the number of press statements that a country can issue to the press. These documents are not subject to voting. However, if a statement is being issued on behalf of a group of delegates, all the delegates that are a part of that group are required to confirm that they do indeed agree with the contents of the statement.

Further reading:

1. [Chapter 7, Pg. 373 - 459, The Procedure of the UN Security Council, Loraine Sievers and Sam Daws](#)

Provisional rules of procedure of UNSC

We shall be adopting the Provisional Rules of Procedure (PRoP) of UNSC in lieu of the traditional UNA-USA rules of procedure. The PRoP are very simple to explain and understand. They provide greater scope for enhancing both the quantity and the quality of the debate. They also ensure that all delegates - experienced and inexperienced alike - get to be on the same footing during all three days of the conference.

The Presidency of the Council shall explain in detail the PRoP during the first session of day one of the conference. However, for those of you who wish to know more about the PRoP before the conference, please follow the links below.

Further reading

1. [Provisional Rules of Procedure in full](#)
2. [Types of meetings](#)
3. [Repertoire of UNSC practice and working methods](#)

Foreign Policy Basics



What is Foreign Policy?

Foreign policy, in simple terms, is what your country aims to achieve with regards to the issue at hand or in general with its relations with other countries.

What role must foreign policy play in your research?

Understanding the foreign policy of your country must be a checkbox that you tick off at the very beginning of your research. Your foreign policy should dictate everything from the arguments you make, the reasoning you give for making those arguments, and the actions you take in the Council.

Where do I look to find foreign policy?

Most of the time, foreign policy is not explicitly stated. It must be inferred from the actions and statements issued by the country. Pro tip: start reading the meeting records from previous meetings of UNSC (or any other UN body where your country might have spoken on the issue). If such records are unavailable, look for statements from your country's Foreign Ministry (or equivalent like Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry for Foreign Affairs etcetera) and top leadership (PM, Pres., Secretary of State, Defense Minister).

Agenda: Situation in Syria

Introduction

The situation in Syria currently is a quagmire. The problems to note include a grave humanitarian situation which is constantly going through cycles of betterment and worsening, a persistent threat of extremist and terrorist activities targeting innocent civilians, wide-spread and systemic violations of humans rights specifically that of women and children, and a fragile transitional period between governments following a prolonged civil war that lasted over a decade. In such a backdrop the need for our Council to reassess its role and actions in the region are more pertinent than ever.

The meeting we shall have over the three days shall provide us



opportunities to address some of these issues in detail. What is of import in this regard is the necessity to prioritise and coordinate on which issues shall be addressed and in what way. That job shall be left solely to you, the delegates.



A key factor that determines how successful you are in achieving your goal is how well you prepare for the discussions. As noted earlier, the Presidency shall not spoon-feed the research material to you nor shall we try to influence the direction in which your research flows. We shall, however, provide some basic guidance, resources for rudimentary understanding of the on-ground situation, and a list of questions that will help you begin your exploration into the subject matter of the agenda.

The very first pearl of wisdom we have for you is this - do not use generative artificial intelligence for research. The reasons behind this advise are multifold. We shall not delve too deeply into the reasons here as they are unrelated to the agenda but we shall briefly list them for the sake of shared understanding, in no particular order:

- They hinder your ability to learn the process of researching by giving you results readily.
- They curtail your thought and understanding about the situation by making you offload the process of thinking and digesting the nuances, intricacies, and details that are made apparent only after a deep dive into the subject.
- Their content is unreliable and often coloured by the bias of the programmers or corporations that have developed and deployed them.

Our second advise is for you to find and read reports, resolutions, meeting records, and articles produced by international organisations such as the United Nations, governments, scholars, academics, and experts. If you are a beginner and do not know where to look for such resources, feel free to search for them in the following places:

- [IntLawGrrls blog](#)
 - [European Journal of International Law's blog](#)
 - [United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees \(UNHCR\)'s open data portal](#)
 - [Digital Library of the United Nations](#)
 - [Harvard's International Law Journal](#)
- [List of Council's meetings in 2026 and their outcomes](#)



Our final advise is the simplest of them all yet the hardest to follow: do not ever assume you have learned enough, keep reading and learning endlessly.

We have a small caveat for you before we come to the questions that may help you begin your research - do not assume that these questions are adequate substitutes for your own thinking nor are they topics that you must or should discuss. They are merely some of the questions we posed to ourselves when we began researching in our process of understanding the agenda. The questions are:

1. What are the significant actions taken by the Council in the recent past that have had a significant impact - positive or negative - on the situation in Syria?
2. What key challenges does the Council face - political, legal, economic, or logistical - that hinders its ability to resolve the issues in Syria?
3. What is the hubbub about chemical weapons and their usage in Syria?
4. What extremist, terrorist, and other non-State entities exist in Syria that are causing strife and harm?
5. What effect is the protracted dispute and conflict with Israel having on the current situation in Syria?
6. How can the dispute and conflict with Israel be addressed?
7. What are the effects of other conflicts in the region having on the situation in Syria?
8. What exactly is the transitional government in Syria?
9. How do the processes of transitional justice and governance work ideally?
10. What among the ideal practices of transitional justice and governance are being undertaken or not undertaken in Syria and why?

Answering the questions above shall give you a good overview of the current issues in Syria. A few resources that may help you answer them are provided below. Please note that none of them are mandatory to peruse or endorsed by the Presidency.

Further reading

1. [UNICEF Humanitarian Situation Report No.1, 2026](#)
2. [UNHCR's Emergency Middle East update report](#)
3. [UNHCR's Child protection, gender based violence prevention and response, and mental health & psychosocial support factsheet](#)
4. [UNHCR's Refugee protection factsheet](#)
5. [State of Justice in Syria 2026](#)
6. [UNHCR's Legal aid factsheet](#)



Specific contentious rules

This section covers the Presidency's views on some of the contentious rules that usually create confusion, conflict, and consternation when not explicitly stated in advance. The judgement and scoring during the MUN will be based on the views expressed here.

Regarding this guide and evidence

Just because a resource has been mentioned in the background guide, does not mean that it can surely be used as evidence to your argument in the Council. Why? Because: Eclectic nature of the resources: The guide has resources of wide variety. Some of the resources could be opinionbased articles, some may be from sources sympathetic to one party in the conflict, some could be outdated (we will try our best to not share such resources but we cannot control for things such as emergence of new facts post guide publication). Foreign policy commitments: To explain this point, we'll be using an example. Pakistan claims Kashmir is legally theirs. India claims, contrary to Pakistan, that Kashmir is theirs. Both sides, many-a-times, use the same evidence to argue their case but still derive completely different conclusions. In such cases, the Presidency cannot accept the claims of one country while rejecting the claims of the other when both of those claims are backed by acceptable and equivalent evidence.

Hierarchy of evidence

Evidence can be presented from a wide variety of sources but not all sources are treated as equal. Here's the hierarchy in which evidence is categorised:

Tier 1: Includes: any publication, statement, resolution, or document released by any of the United Nations' official organs or committees; any publication, statement, or document released by a UN member state in its own capacity. The evidence falling in this tier is considered most reliable during the simulation.



Tier 2: Includes: any news article published by any official media source that is owned and controlled by a UN member state. E.g.: Xinhua News (China), Prasar Bharti (India), BBC (United Kingdom) etcetera. The evidence falling in this tier is considered sufficiently reliable in case no other evidence from any Tier 1 source is available on that particular fact, event, or situation.

Tier 3: Includes: any publication from news sources of international repute such as Reuters, The New York Times, Agence-France Presse, etcetera. The evidence falling under this tier is considered the least reliable for the purposes of this simulation. Yet, if no better source is available in a certain scenario, it may be considered.

Plagiarism and machine-generated content

Any and all drafts submitted to be published as outcome documents for the Council shall be checked for plagiarism and use of Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Due to the nature of UN legal writing, a 20% plagiarism rate will be tolerated. But plagiarism of any higher rate will render the draft outcome document inadmissible.

If the draft outcome document is a draft resolution, only the operative clauses will be checked for plagiarism.

No use of AI shall be tolerated. Even if we detect rates of AI use as low as 5%, we shall reject the submitted document outright.

Outcome document

This Presidency is not necessarily expecting the delegates to produce a resolution at the end of the simulation. But this does not mean that we do not want any outcome document at all - we do expect the delegates to come up with an outcome document just not necessarily in the form of a resolution. UNSC has a wide variety of outcome documents that it produces, which include: press statements, resolutions, presidential statements, communiqués, etcetera. We expect the delegates to exercise their judgement wisely and choose the appropriate type of document for the Council's outcome.



Personal pronouns

This particular Presidency does not care very much about whether a delegate uses personal pronouns to refer to herself/himself. As long as the language employed by the delegate is diplomatic in both tone and content, we will not mind the usage of personal pronouns.





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Unleashing Global Perspectives