

Yeshiva University National Model United Nations

Guide and Resource Sheet

Jared Kinches - Secretary General, YUNMUN XXXVII

Introduction to this Document

Dear Reader,

I'm delighted that you're embarking on this journey with us that will conclude with the incredible conference in February. Those three days will be the culmination of all your hard work and dedication, and I hope the countless hours you invest in preparation for YUNMUN will transform the way you analyze geopolitical issues and how you view your role as a young Jewish leader. YUNMUN has played a significant role in shaping who I am today, and I hope it will be meaningful for you as well.

Your participation in a project such as YUNMUN signifies your recognition that our community is relying on you to become a leader. The skills you develop in preparation and during the conference will pay dividends not only for you personally, but for *Klal Yisrael* as a whole. It is through your preparation that you learn to debate and persuade, negotiate and speak up, and challenge yourself to research important issues around the globe. The effort you invest prepares you to speak to an audience and make a meaningful difference for the Jewish people. However, many of you attend the conference with added motivation: to win an award in your committee.

With so many outstanding delegates and elevated performance year after year, it becomes increasingly difficult to pick winners. Thus, many delegates often ask what they can do to impress the chairs and staff while preparing for the conference.

This document is a reimagination of a similar document published two years ago by one of my esteemed predecessors, Sam Weinberg. It is designed as a guide for delegates and advisors on what YUNMUN is all about and how to put yourself in position to win an award. Please note this is **supplemental** to the extensive Delegate Handbook which gives insight to committee procedure, conference proceedings and documents, and other important information. Lastly, as you begin to assign delegates to committees, please make sure to **follow the recommendations found on page 5** for important information pertinent to this year's conference.

On behalf of the Secretariat, we hope this helps as you prepare for the conference, and we look forward to seeing all you accomplish in February!

Sincerely,

Jared Kinches

Secretary General, YUNMUN XXXVII

Structure

Structure of the United Nations

The United Nations, headquartered in New York City, consists of six main bodies[1]:

1. *General Assembly (GA)*

The General Assembly is the largest organ of the UN, of which all 193 Member States are represented. Each year, in September, all Member States are invited to the annual General Assembly session and general debate. It is here where world leaders deliberate important questions, such as those on "peace and security, admission of new members and budgetary matters."[2] Matters labeled as important questions require a two-thirds majority of the General Assembly, while decisions on other questions require a simple majority.[3] A General Assembly President is elected each year by the GA for a single-year term.

2. *Security Council (SC)*

The Security Council has the primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. It has 15 members, 5 permanent members (being the United States, China, France, Russia, and the United Kingdom) and 10 non-permanent members. According to the UN charter, Member States are obligated to comply with Security Council decisions. Although the SC recommends settling conflicts through diplomatic and peaceful means, in some cases, the Council can resort to imposing sanctions or even authorize the use of force to maintain or restore international peace and security. The Security Council has a Presidency, which rotates, and changes, every month.

3. *Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)*

ECOSOC is responsible for coordination, policy review, policy dialogue, and recommendations on numerous issues, generally divided into economic, social, and environmental. It is the central mechanism for activities of the UN system in these fields. It has 54 members, elected by the GA to three-year terms.

[1] Main Bodies | United Nations
[2] Ibid
[3] For example, see this video: UN votes to suspend Russia from Human Rights Council

4. *Trusteeship Council*

This group was established by the UN Charter to provide supervision for 11 Trust Territories which were under the administration of seven Member States. Since all of the Territories had achieved independence by 1994, the Council suspended traditional operation. It now meets on occasion by the decision of its President or a majority of its members, the GA, or the SC.

5. *International Court of Justice*

The ICJ is the main judicial organ of the United Nations. It is the only one to not be based in New York, rather located in Hague, Netherlands. The role of the ICJ is to: "settle, in accordance with international law, legal disputes submitted to it by States and to give advisory opinions on legal questions referred to it by authorized United Nations organs and specialized agencies."[4]

6. *Secretariat*

This group, which is composed of the Secretary-General and the thousands of UN staff members, is responsible for the day-to-day work of the UN as the other groups demand it. The Secretary-General is appointed by the GA, on recommendation of the SC, for five-year renewable terms.

How the 16 YUNMUN Committees Fit Within United Nations Framework

- AS: Does not exist as is in the real United Nations. The African Union[5] is a regional organization independent of the UN, though the two cooperate closely, including through the UN Office to the African Union (UNOAU), which is part of the Secretariat.
- CSTD: Functional Commission of the Economic and Social Council
- CSW: Functional Commission of the Economic and Social Council
- CTC: Subsidiary Organ of the Security Council
- DISEC: Name given to the first committee of the General Assembly*
- ICC: Related organization of both the General Assembly and Security Council*
- MES: Does not exist as is in the real United Nations. UNSCO, the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, is part of UNDPPA, itself an office of the Secretariat, while the UN Human Rights Regional Office for the Middle East

[4] Main Bodies | United Nations
[5] Home | African Union

and North Africa (ROMENA) is part of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), itself an office within the Secretariat as well.

- SC: One of the aforementioned six principal organs of the United Nations*
- UNEP: Programme within the General Assembly
- UNESCO: Specialized agency of the Economic and Social Council
- UNHRC: A body within OHCHR, which itself is within the Secretariat
- UNICEF: Fund within the General Assembly
- UNODC: Office within the Secretariat
- UNOOSA (formerly COPUOS): Office within the Secretariat
- WFP: Programme within the General Assembly
- WHO: Specialized Agency for the Economic and Social Council

Assigning Delegates to Committees

As will be discussed later in this document, every YUNMUN committee succeeds by blending together a high level of passionate debate with a lot of fun that makes the conference truly unforgettable. That is true of all 16 committees, and it is the standard that has made YUNMUN so successful for the past 37 years.

This year, based on feedback from chairs, advisors and delegates, we are establishing the following guidelines to help delegations assign delegates to the committees. The 3 committees above with asterisks, **Security Council (SC), International Criminal Court (ICC) and Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC)**, are best suited for delegates who are looking for an especially demanding conference. Thus, we strongly request delegations to select juniors, seniors, and/or those with prior experiences at YUNMUN or similar extracurriculars for these three committees. We recognize that these committees will require greater preparation and may foster deeper procedural and substantive engagement, so awards won in them will be weighted slightly more in the final delegation score calculations.

However, this is not a statement about the quality of debate in any of the other committees. Every other committee at YUNMUN features the same high level of passionate debate, and

delegates in those rooms are challenged, engaged, and equally recognised. All 16 committees will have fun crises (discussed below), valuable discussions about their topics, and are equally vital to the conference.

Outside of those three committees, delegations are encouraged to research the different committees and place delegates in committees most interesting to them, and where they feel their talents can shine.

Who Is Running the Committee?

Every committee, with the exception of ICC (which has co-chairs), has a uniform staff layout, consisting of the chair, the assistant chair and the administrative assistant.

1. Chair

The chair is the head of the committee. Since August, she or he has spent a great deal of time preparing for the conference, researching the committee, its history, and its proceedings, and deciding on the particular topics the committee will be discussing. She or he will be the one guiding and leading the committee sessions, and makes the final decisions on matters as they emerge. Our chairs are appointed by the Secretary General based on their excellence in junior staff roles and their representation of the values of Yeshiva University. They are available to you throughout the preparation process, as well as during the conference. Please note that substantive feedback from chairs on delegate performance is held until after the conclusion of the final committee session, while the committee's junior staff (discussed below in 2 and 3) are there to provide ongoing feedback to delegates as the committee progresses.

2. Assistant Chair

The assistant chair is tasked with monitoring the delegates during committee, noting how well they speak and work with one another in caucus. She or he will aid the chair in various decisions throughout the sessions, will control the Speaker's List, and will take the place of the chair to run committee at certain points. As discussed above, the assistant chair has the responsibility to speak with delegates about their performance, both the strengths and how they can improve.

3. Administrative Assistant

The administrative assistant monitors the amount and length of delegate speeches, noting sophistication, confidence, and preparation. The administrative assistant will also work with

delegates to type working papers and resolutions, along with any other necessary document. Similarly to the assistant chair, the administrative assistant also has the responsibility to speak with delegates about their performance, both the strengths and how they can improve.

In addition to the committee staff, there are two other categories of staff members at YUNMUN. First is the Media Center team. For the second year in a row Lexi Eichel will serve as the head of Media Center. Lexi and her team take on numerous roles throughout the conference. They work with the chairs and junior staff on crisis, a section I'll give more details for later on, as well as all the fun parts of YUNMUN that make it the can't miss party of the year. They also handle public relations and social media, along with questions of specific material distribution. Running the different social pages, taking pictures all over the hotel, and enhancing the overall comradery of the conference is a sign of a successful Media Center!

The other staff members are the Secretariat, composed of a Secretary General (myself) and three incredible Undersecretaries, this year's being Elizabeth Chill, Judah Frohlich, and Keira Kahn. The 3 of them are the greatest ambassadors of Yeshiva University, exemplifying the 5 *Torot* and living a *Torah U'Mada* life. Together, we've each spent countless hours discussing the broader organizational and structural questions of the conference, and so, in the past, students often interact with us primarily through indirect channels, in brief appearances in committee, or in our speeches to the whole conference. We hope this year to greatly increase our involvement leading up to the conference and during the conference so that students not only gain from additional assistance but have more Yeshiva University students to build a connection with, which is one of the main hopes of the conference as a whole.

Preparation and Research

How to Research

Every country has positions on every topic, whether they are clearly articulated or require some digging. Many students struggle with finding the relevant information for their country, especially if their country is relatively small or underdeveloped. Here is how Sam recommended conducting research for those looking for assistance:

1. *Find the political situation in your country*

Who is the head of government? What is the parliamentary structure? What are the values and political interests being highlighted in the current political discourse that can be related to your own committee work?

2. *Current developments, events, and trends relating to your committee and topic in the UN*

Your committees are all constantly working on different issues related to your research. Go through their websites and other sources and see the terms, focuses, and proposed solutions that have been offered in recent years that can help you with your particular topic. Equally important is seeing which resolutions have been passed and the voting history on them. Resolutions, certainly within the General Assembly, are mostly adopted without a vote; this means that no one disagreed on the text's language[6] and can therefore be understood to be your country's international stance. The resolutions are wide-ranging; take advantage of what has already been agreed upon!

3. *Your country at the UN*

Every nation has taken part in different United Nations mechanisms and organs that can give you insight on their views on international issues. This can include reports, either put out from the UN or the country itself, that gives updates on political happenings in the country. Information in these documents, as well as in speeches and documents produced by your nation in any other United Nations organ, can be even more insightful than what your country discusses on more domestic levels.

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[6] https://www.un.org/en/model-united-nations/how-decisions-are-made-un#:~:text=When%20consensus%20on%20the%20text,definition%20of%20what%20consensus%20means

Non-Exhaustive List of Resources

- Reports of the Secretary-General | Security Council
  - (https://main.un.org/securitycouncil/en/content/reports-secretary-general)
  - In the Security Council, often there will be publications from the Secretary-General relating to particularly hotbed topics related to global safety and security. This link provides an overview of reports, divided by year, some of which are extensive.
- UN General Assembly Resolutions
  - (https://research.un.org/en/docs/ga/quick/regular/)
  - Every year, the General Assembly passes many resolutions, often upwards of 300. This link lists all of the resolutions passed within a given session, divided by number (# Session of GA/# Resolution), title, and then action. A majority of resolutions are adopted without a vote, as explained above.
- Voluntary National Reviews
  - (https://hlpf.un.org/countries)
  - Most (but not all) countries have submitted VNRs, which are (very) long major reports that go through a nation's approach to and current status regarding sustainable development. While they are often explicitly in reference to the 2030 Agenda, which in 2015 provided 17 wide-ranging goals for the globe to stride for, a lot of the information is extremely relevant toward more specialized conversations.
- United Nations - 2024 Calendar of Conferences and Meetings
  - (https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n24/036/00/pdf/n2403600.pdf?token=XJBCdSWdsLiSLdZpG2&fe=true)
  - This provides an extensive list of the different events that the United Nations hosted/will host in 2024. I'd suggest going through the list of organs (left column) to see if any of them are relevant to your research in your committee, and if so, to see if any documents or statements are particularly helpful for your time in committee.
- Publications | United Nations
  - (https://www.un.org/en/publications)

    - This is a collection of reports put together by UN and UN-adjacent bodies. They don't often have to do with specific nations, but are great gateways to better understanding many different issues on a wide scale. Also, many committees themselves have similar publication hubs on their website. It's definitely worthwhile to find the documents put out by your own committee and see how it can relate to your specific topic.
- United Nations Digital Library
    - (https://digitallibrary.un.org/?ln=en)
    - Perhaps most overwhelming, the Digital Library is a collection of… everything in the United Nations! There are literally millions of different resources here, so I'm sure *something* is helpful.

Position Papers

Before the conference itself, all delegates are required to submit position papers, detailing their nations' position on a given topic. While these papers are meant to be moderately brief (one or two pages is sufficient), it is worthwhile to take them seriously. Besides for the fact that each position paper is read and calculated into the awards race (often, if close, the difference between third and fourth place may be a stronger position paper), the position paper ensures you are conducting adequate research into your country's position on your allotted topic. Being unable to formulate a page's worth of words based on your research is a telltale sign that there is still more work to be done!

It is, however, also important to not put *everything* you have into your paper. These papers will be made available to every delegate in advance of the conference. Some schools advise their delegates to read the position papers of every other delegate in the committee to see where they appear to line up in the forthcoming debate. Overwriting in the position paper is revealing your entire hand; you want to let it be broad enough that people can't determine every single thing you're going to say during the conference itself.

Please note that when you submit your position papers they should have the following document name:

Last Name_Name of School_Committee Acronym_ Title of Topic Written out Fully

The header for the paper should be:

First and Last Name

Delegate of _____

Committee Name Fully Typed

Title of Topic Written out Fully

Title

Public Speaking

Now that we covered Sam's suggestions on research and position papers, let's discuss public speaking. In my opinion, this is the most important skill you will need at the conference, which makes it well worth practicing in advance. Public speaking is a subjective art form, but just like the greatest paintings, films, or works of literature, you can tell the good from the great. Today, particularly because of the impact of social media, how you express your message is just as important as, and perhaps more important than, what you are actually speaking about (see later in *What Chairs Are Looking For*).

For many delegates, this is the most stressful part of the YUNMUN experience. Whether it's your first or last conference, public speaking can be a daunting task. I still remember my first conference, and how nervous I was the first time I got up to speak. However, with practice, it is a skill that you can improve.

It's important to note that you are not alone when it comes to your nerves and fears . When you get in the room with two dozen strangers, and you start to feel a sense of intimidation, know that most of them have that exact same fear. That universal experience should remind you that you are not alone in this.

In Sam's previous iteration of this document he listed the following traits as signs of a good public speaker:

1. Understanding and connecting to your audience
    a. There are many different tones your audience can embody. Sometimes a committee will be particularly intense and serious, and sometimes there'll be a little bit of silliness or informality (the latter is especially plausible during your crisis). Try your best to reflect what that tone is. If you're too silly when the tone is serious, that can come off as inappropriate to your audience; if you're too serious when the tone is silly, that can come off as pretentious.
2. Don't rush
    a. Naturally, when we're in a nerve-wracking circumstance, we try to get ourselves out of it. This applies to public speaking as well: if you're not comfortable up there, you'll likely try to get yourself down quicker. This can manifest itself into rushing your speech. It's important to give proper weight and time to your ideas; flying through them not only conveys a degree of nervousness but it also indicates to the audience that your ideas aren't necessarily worthy of greater time. Do your best to spend the proper amount of time speaking!
3. Stay calm in adaptation
    a. There'll undoubtedly be moments during YUNMUN when a speech doesn't go entirely as planned. Maybe you had a bullet point you completely forgot to mention, or maybe you misspoke and an idea came out in an unintended way. One of the more important things for the conference in general is thinking on your feet, and that applies to your short speeches as well. Work on the ability to land the plane, so to speak, when it hits some turbulence. Unless you've pre-written every single word and are reading directly off of the paper (which, broadly speaking, is not a good idea), you'll likely encounter a need to adapt your speech on the fly.
4. Speak loudly and clearly
    a. I'd remember that, not infrequently, after a delegate would prepare and present remarks, I'd find myself less confused about the ideas as to the literal words that were said. In my real life, people call me out for mumbling pretty often; sometimes we forget that the words we think sound clear often do not. It's

important to be self-aware that people can listen to the words that you say so that they can understand the messages you're trying to convey.

5. Eye contact
    a. Most of us will prepare, one way or another, some sort of notes before we speak. This is a good thing, but you should remember that you're not speaking to the notes themselves; you're speaking to the audience. One of the toughest things to get used to is to make eye contact with the people you're directing your words toward, but it's one of the most important; it'll completely transform the way your audience responds to your ideas.
6. Use familiar terms
    a. This one isn't as intuitive, so it's worth stressing. When I was a delegate, in my senior year, we were debating electronic cigarettes in UNODC. I thought I was ahead of the curve by looking into the production of and chemicals within them. When the conference started, I tried using as many fancy terms as possible in my speeches about those products: aldehydes, glycerin, acetylpropionyl[7], for example. Needless to say, when I went up and tried using these terms in an intelligent way, I literally couldn't pronounce them. The rest of the room didn't know what I was talking about, either, so I shifted away from mentioning them. Avoid that experience: make sure that every word you say out loud are words you can literally say out loud, and make sure that their usage can contribute to the conversation in a meaningful way.

[7] Kwan, Leslie Y. *Public Health Consequences of E-Cigarettes*. Edited by Kathleen R. Stratton and David L. Eaton, National Academies Press, 2018, *National Library of Medicine*, https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK507184/.

Experience of Committee

What Chairs are Looking For

Now we've arrived at what you may really be looking for: what to do at the conference to win an award. The real answer is that it's not an exact science. Awards at YUNMUN (with some rare exceptions like ICC each year, for example) are given to the best delegate and two runner ups. They are chosen by the chair with the input and advice from his or her junior staff. While chairs are given a general rubric, each chair has the liberty to craft his or her own grading rubric. The list of what you may be graded on includes, but is not limited to:

1. *The content of the speeches you deliver*
2. *How you deliver those speeches (public speaking skills, confidence, etc*)
3. *Caucus*
    a. This requires explanation, as it is often overlooked. Caucus is when sessions break out into unmoderated groups to discuss issues, ultimately crafting resolutions. YUNMUN is all about coming together to solve important issues around the world. If a delegate delivers excellent speeches but doesn't collaborate with others effectively, he or she is unlikely to win an award. Chairs and junior staff notice how delegates interact with one another and who is more vocal within these informal caucuses.
4. *Everything else. A non-exhaustive list of other factors included may be:*
    a. Knowledge of procedure
    b. Participation in crisis
    c. Creating large coalitions
    d. Going out of one's comfort zone
    e. Asking for pointers in between sessions

I hope I've demonstrated that there are many factors to winning an award. Sadly, I've never had the opportunity to serve as a committee chair. If I was a chair my rubric would be:

1. How effectively you delivered your remarks—35%
2. The content of your remarks—30%

3. Caucus and collaboration—20%
4. Miscellaneous—15%

What is Crisis?

In the middle of the conference **crisis** happens. Crisis is when the traditional committee session pauses with some wild new turn: maybe your chair gets kidnapped, maybe aliens invade the planet, or all of earth's water was poisoned. Your job is still the same: represent your country, work with fellow delegates, prepare public speeches, etc..

Here's the catch that makes Crisis fun, and can even the playing field: no delegates are given specifics of the crisis in advance, and delegates who aren't as strong in the regular debate sessions can shine in a more informal way.

Here is an example of a crisis in UNEP a few years ago:

The sun got too hot, causing an ice cap to melt in Antarctica, releasing prehistoric goldfish that began to cause mayhem. Delegates were tasked with crafting an international response to this pressing issue: what should countries do about these little monsters?

Yeshiva University Q+A

Similarly, in the back half of the conference, there's a set time for a YU question and answer session. YUNMUN is ultimately a YU Admissions event, and it means a tremendous amount to us to provide prospective students the chance to meet with proud YU students. The Q+A is an open space to ask questions that can impact college decisions, "year in Israel" decisions, or anything else. While hopefully delegates have taken the time to meet with the committee staff before the Q+A session begins, this is the best time to speak with the staff about YU specifically.

AI Policy

The brief explanation of the AI policy is included in your Welcome Letter and Topic Papers. We still feel it necessary to clarify it here as well.

Last year, Yeshiva University spent a great deal of time crafting its policy on artificial intelligence, with the goal of keeping it conducive to a professional and academic environment while recognizing that, in 2026, AI is a key part of how ideas are created and shared. YUNMUN is committed to that same balance.

For this reason, the conference follows the University's **UG1** level of AI use, which allows you to "[p]olish, with disclosure. You may use AI to check and correct the grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and mechanics of text you have already written. AI may not generate, rewrite, or restructure your content."

The full Yeshiva University Artificial Intelligence Policy can be found here:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xznCDfZrE8Ym1SphDqooCfuCHT-clIjy/view?usp=sharing

Conclusion

YUNMUN is one of the most uniquely exciting extracurricular experiences many high schools provide. Whether it be the sense of reward you feel from your hard work manifesting into practice or the sense of joy and fun that defines the conference, YUNMUN is an incredible event to be involved in. I hope that this document helps you prepare more for the conference and how you can best set yourself up for success when you arrive. We look forward to seeing you at the conference in February!

Sincerely,

Jared Kinches

Secretary General, YUNMUN XXXVII