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WRITING A RESOLUTION

What is a “resolution”? A resolution is a formal expression of an opinion or intention, expressed by a committee or assembly. This resolution is often the solution to a posed question. It is submitted and voted by the delegates.

PREPARING YOUR RESOLUTION

1 – Show the reality of the issue and the need to act

After having first defined the issue, do your research. Make a list of actions already taken and existing laws and resolutions; inform yourselves on the position of different countries and political parties, and particularly on your position, concerning the issue.

2 – Propose your solution

It is important to develop an action plan, consistent with the policies of the party you represent and the interests of your country. Ideally, it must be acceptable by the majority of UN delegations. While preparing it, consider it from different perspectives: economic, political, military, social or environmental.

3 – Justify your action plan

Be prepared to defend your action plan point by point through figures and arguments. To do this well, you must anticipate criticism and prepare your counter-arguments.

Format of the resolution: pay special attention to the format and layout: underline verbs, check punctuation, giving numbers to the operative but not preambulatory clauses, etc. The resolution must be concise and specific and reflect the represented country’s point of view.

WRITING YOUR RESOLUTION

Most resolutions are formal recommendations of UN bodies and are the focal point of committee and General Assembly debates. The resolutions may state an opinion or recommend that actions be taken by a UN body or an affiliated organisation. The resolutions may have several areas of focus. In preparing resolutions you must think of the following points.

Once a UN body passes a resolution, that resolution determines its policy.

Although most resolutions are not political declarations, it is possible that a resolution includes a treaty, declaration or convention in its entirety. Resolutions can be general declarations or specific directives towards a UN or country's body or organism.



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Resolutions may condemn actions taken by states, may call for collective action or, in when adopted by the Security Council, can impose economic or military sanctions.

Signing a resolution implies that the delegate wants to discuss it with other members. This does not indicate that the co-signer supports the resolution or its sponsor(s). In fact the co-signer carries no obligations towards this resolution. Sponsors are normally the country or countries that wrote the resolution. Not only do they agree to submit the resolution to voting, but they commit to support it during voting. Co-signers, however, are looking for discussion around the resolution and do not necessarily commit to support it during voting. A co-signer may actually be against the elements of the resolution as proposed but want the resolution to be debated in order to convince other countries to find another compromise.

When writing a resolution, delegates must keep in mind that the wording of a resolution will influence the assembly's understanding of it. For this reason, the resolution must be clear, precise, and brief.

Vague resolutions that do not propose any specific plans of action will be severely criticized during the debate. The content of a resolution must therefore reflect thorough research beforehand, as well as the foreign policy of the delegation(s) submitting it.

A resolution is a very long sentence, punctuated by commas and semicolons to separate ideas, and a full stop at the end of the document. A resolution comprises three parts:

1 – Heading

The heading provides precise information on the resolution, including its title, the committee it is presented to, and the delegations sponsoring it.

2 – Preambulatory clauses

The preamble of the resolution briefly presents the resolution's reasons, that it properly falls within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned, and the main justification for the propositions that follow. The focus and expression of the preambulatory clauses should center upon the problem at hand in its current context.

The preambulatory clauses should refer to relevant UN resolutions, precedents in international law, and points of the UN Charter or other pertinent documents. The preamble may also include altruistic appeals to common sense or to humanitarian motivations of the parties, referring to the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, or even specific situations.

Every preambulatory clause starts with a participle in italics, and ends with a comma.

Unlike the operative clauses of a resolution (below), preambulatory clauses are not debated directly by delegates or subject to amendment. Depending on the particular issue,



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preambulatory clauses may even seem unnecessary—and at times indeed, little more than a formality. But it is up to the delegates to use them wisely, in order to situate the problem they want to discuss and to express their perspective on the issue in a more general way.

3 – Operative clauses

Unlike preambulatory clauses, operative clauses list recommendations for action, or express a favorable or unfavorable perspective on particular aspects of the issue. These clauses may call for Member States, the Secretariat or a UN agency or body to take action, which may be either of a broad nature, like denouncing a situation or a calling for negotiation, or more precise, like calling for a ceasefire or a financial commitment to a specific project.

Remember that only resolutions of the Security Council are binding on Member States. The General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council can only make recommendations.

Operative clauses form the core of the resolution. They present the solutions proposed by the sponsors of the resolution to the problems raised in the preambulatory clauses. Operative clauses begin with an active verb in the present and are ended by a semicolon. The first word of each operative clause should be underlined (see table below). Each clause is numbered and can be divided into several sub-ideas (a, b, c, d, etc.).

Each operative clause presents an action, which may be more or less precise, may call the UN Member States to concrete actions, or simply express an opinion or a will without incorporating practical solutions. However, it is important to stress that, even when adopted by the various committees, these clauses or actions serve only as recommendations and may or may not be applied by the different States concerned.

It is important to not try to present comprehensive solutions to all problems in your resolutions. It is likely that you will have discovered in your research solutions that have failed, but with a little imagination and research, your fellow delegates and you will be able to develop new solutions to problems that sometimes seem hopeless. The key to diplomatic relations is compromise, but do not lose sight of your country's position on the subject.

Before adhering to a resolution, each delegate should ensure that he is acting in accordance with his country's political will. Indeed, although a Cuban delegate could theoretically become the sponsor of a resolution aimed at strengthening the Cuban embargo, doing so would be acting against the interests of his or her country. So such an act would be contrary to the role that he or she had taken on through representing Cuba in the United Nations.

Formatting rules for resolutions

Page number and number of pages at the top right, eg: Page 1 of 2

Committee name top left

The issue at the top left



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The name of the sponsor(s) of the resolution at the top left

The co-signers at the top left

The UN organism (in italics and indented) e.g: *The General Assembly*

Then the **preambulatory clauses**, which present the issue or recalls past efforts, each starting with the words cited below, in italics. These clauses are indented and separated by commas.

Then the **operative clauses**, which propose solutions, each starting with words like those cited below and underlined. These clauses must specify who does what, within what timeframe, and indicate who will fund the project. These clauses are offset, numbered and separated by semicolons. The last one ends with a full stop.

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FIRST WORDS OF CLAUSES

PREAMBULATORY CLAUSES		OPERATIVE CLAUSES	
Affirming	Noting (with regret/satisfaction)	Accepts	Hopes
Alarmed by	Observing	Appeals	Insists*
Approving	Persuaded	Appreciates	Invites
Aware	Reaffirming	Approves	Praises
Bearing in mind	Realizing	Authorises	Presses
Concerned	Recalling	Calls	Proclaims
Confident	Recognizing	Commits	Proposes
Congratulating	Regretting	Condemns*	Reaffirms
Considering	Taking account of	Decides*	Recommends
Convinced	Taking into account	Declares	Regrets
Desiring	Troubled	Demands*	Seeks
Encouraged by	Underlining	Deplores	Stands ready
Expressing	Wishing	Encourages	Supports
Gravely concerned	Welcoming	Entreats	Transmits
Having examined		Exhorts	Welcomes
Judging			

*terms only to be used by the Security Council

EXAMPLE OF A RESOLUTION

FORUM: GA4



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ISSUE : What model reaction plan should put in place to face epidemics?

MAIN SUBMITTER: ICRC

CO-SUBMITTERS: Brazil, Saudi Arabia, United States of America, Burkina Faso, China, Madagascar.

The General Assembly, regarding Health,

Aware that, according to data from the World Health Organization in 2015, around 80 million people in the world are in need of humanitarian aid,

Noting that such aid would have an estimated cost of 17.6 billion dollars,

Keeping in mind that between January 2013 and July 2014, the World Health Organization declared the existence of 6 states of emergency of level 3, which is the highest level ever recorded,

Fully aware that WHO's particular competence centers upon the following six essential functions concerning health in the world:

- 1) technical support and the reinforcement of capacities,
- 2) leadership,
- 3) the establishment of norms,
- 4) the elaboration of the research program,
- 5) the articulation of strategic options,
- 6) the surveillance of trends in terms of health,

Deploring that the health sector is often under-represented and often inadequately engaged cases of an emergency in a country,

1. Calls for advertising in schools, institutions frequented by children, in healthcare buildings, centers and websites, as well as via the media, including national and local televisions stations, radios and press, in order to :
 - a) Create hygiene awareness to prevent contamination and epidemics,
 - b) Inform on specific ways these are transmitted,
 - c) Detail the symptoms of known and repetitive epidemics in the targeted population,
 - d) Put forward the first healthcare and hygiene reflexes to bring to a sick individual,
 - e) Educate on unprotected sexual relations, which risk the transmission of STDs from 12 years of age;
2. Strongly recommends the preparation of healthcare infrastructure and their personnel to confront epidemics in order to:
 - a) Stock medicines and vaccinations,



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- b) Mobilize doctors not in regular practice to act in case of large epidemics, such as, but not limited to:
 - i. retired doctors,
 - ii. young doctors at the end of their studies ;
- 3. Encourages training courses for volunteers, whether residing or not in zones of potential risk, that will, with UN help, teach:
 - a) the proper attitude to adopt in case of an epidemic by:
 - i. providing volunteers with orientation to the healthcare infrastructure, before possible epidemics,
 - ii. encouraging volunteers to return to the same hospitals or other workplaces during their different missions, allowing them to be familiar with the infrastructures,
 - b) hygiene procedures named in the first clause above to protect others as well as themselves,
 - c) how to increase efficiency if and as the need becomes urgent;
- 4. Recommends ensuring constant environmental supervision of areas at-risk of epidemics, by:
 - a) supervising the resident population of this high risk by:
 - i. creating free access of the most disadvantaged to volunteer doctors in country,
 - ii. creating a website listing the number of cases for every illness,
 - b) preventing the contamination of water supplies, keeping in mind that many diseases spread through watercourses;
- 5. Encourages a disease epidemic to be declared as such depending on if the number of cases increases at a certain speed and reaching a significant segment of the population, these two criteria determined by specialists beforehand;
- 6. Supports the creation of an international monetary fund by the signatory states, to finance clauses above and more particularly for contributions, refrigeration and administration of vaccines;
- 7. Urges every delegation to stay concerned on the question.