

HMDC Presents... UNESCO: Opening Speech Outline

HMDC Presents... Opening Speech Outline: UNESCO: COVID-19 Education and Technology Gaps

THIS IS A MODEL TO LEARN FROM, NOT TO COPY. The sample speech below is written for the Republic of Botswana, the same delegation as our sample position paper. At Harvard, a speech lasts one minute unless the committee votes to change it, as our HMDC Procedure Guide explains. We use this sample to feel how much fits into sixty seconds. Then we write our own speech for our own country with the fill-in outline that follows.

THE FIVE PARTS OF OUR OPENING SPEECH

1. **Hook:** One sentence that makes the room picture the problem.
 2. **Our country's stake:** Why this topic matters to our own people.
 3. **One key fact with source:** A single number the chair will remember, with its publication and date.
 4. **Our two solutions:** Two clear ideas, one sentence each.
 5. **Call to allies:** Who we invite to work with us, and when.
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THE SAMPLE SPEECH (ABOUT ONE MINUTE)

Honourable Chair, distinguished delegates,

When schools closed in 2020, a basic phone was the only classroom many children had.

The Republic of Botswana knows this from experience. During our own school closures, our teachers had to reach children at home, and we refuse to let internet access decide who keeps learning.

Botswana also knows what works. In a trial with about 4,500 of our families, weekly texts plus short phone calls from teachers raised children's maths learning, at a cost of about 19 US dollars per child (Nature Human Behaviour, June 13, 2022).

So Botswana proposes two solutions. First, every country should prepare an emergency learning plan that uses phones and radio, so teachers reach every child. Second, a shared fund should speed up Giga, connecting schools while protecting children's data.

We invite every delegation that believes no child should be left offline to join us in the first unmoderated caucus. Thank you.

(About 150 words. Read at a calm pace, it takes close to one minute.)

OUR FILL-IN OUTLINE

We copy this outline onto paper and fill every blank from our own position paper and Country Report.

1. **Hook:** "Honourable Chair, distinguished delegates. _____ (one sentence that paints the problem)."
 2. **Our country's stake:** "The [Republic / Kingdom / State] of _____ cares about this topic because _____. We will not accept _____ (our national interest)."
 3. **One key fact with source:** "According to _____ (publication), _____ (Month Day, Year), _____ (one number or finding)."
 4. **Our two solutions:** "So _____ proposes two solutions. First, _____. Second, _____."
 5. **Call to allies:** "We invite _____ (a bloc or a type of country, such as 'every delegation that ...') to join us in _____ (the first unmoderated caucus / a breakout room). Thank you."
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THREE DELIVERY TIPS

1. **Timing the speech out loud:** We read our speech aloud with a timer at least three times before the conference. If it runs past fifty-five seconds, we cut words from the hook or the stake, never the fact or the solutions, because those are what the chair writes down.
 2. **Slowing down for the number:** We pause for one breath just before our key fact and say the number slowly and clearly. Many listeners in the room are also English learners, and a number spoken too fast is a number nobody remembers.
 3. **Looking at the camera, not the screen:** On Zoom, we put our notes just below the camera. We look into the lens when we say our country's name and our call to allies. It looks to the chair as though we are speaking straight to them, which makes our delegation sound confident.
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