

HMDC Presents... Researching Our Country and Writing the Country Report

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In Model United Nations, we never speak for ourselves. We speak for a government, which means every speech, every clause and every vote has to sound like our assigned country. This guide shows how we learn our country quickly and how we put what we learn on one page, the Country Report, which becomes the foundation of our position paper.

WHY THE COUNTRY REPORT MATTERS

The topic research on our committee panel tells us about the problem, the United Nations and the international efforts. That research is the same for every delegate in the room. What makes our voice different is our country: its people, its interests, its friends and what it has already done. A delegate who knows the topic but not the country sounds like a reporter. A delegate who knows both sounds like a diplomat.

STEP 1: LEARNING THE BASIC FACTS

We begin with the facts that every diplomat from our country would know without looking. We write each fact in a short phrase, and we write down where we found it and the date.

1. **Finding the basics:** We open our country's page in the CIA World Factbook and record the population, the capital, the type of government, the head of state and the head of government, the main languages and the main religions.
 - <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/>
2. **Finding the economy:** We open our country's page at the World Bank and record the size of the economy (GDP), the income per person, and whether the country gives foreign aid or receives it.
 - <https://data.worldbank.org/country>
3. **Finding the region:** We write down our neighbours and the regional groups our country belongs to, such as the African Union, the European Union, ASEAN, the Organization of American States or the Arab League, because countries often vote together with their region.

STEP 2: LEARNING OUR COUNTRY'S FRIENDS AND PARTNERS

Countries rarely act alone at the United Nations. They work in blocs, which are groups of countries that share interests. Knowing our bloc tells us who will sign our working paper first.

1. **Listing the blocs:** We check whether our country belongs to the Group of 77 and China (developing countries), the Non-Aligned Movement, NATO, the G7, the G20, BRICS, the Commonwealth or OPEC.
2. **Listing the close partners:** We name three countries that usually agree with ours and one or two that usually disagree, because that tells us where we will find allies and where we must be careful.
3. **Checking the Security Council:** We check whether our country is one of the five permanent members (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, the United States) or an elected member this year, because that changes how much power it has on security topics.
 - <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/member-states>

STEP 3: FINDING OUR COUNTRY'S POSITION ON THE TOPIC

This is the most important step, because the chair rewards delegates who stay in policy. We look for what our government has actually said and done about our committee's topic.

1. **Reading the United Nations record:** We search UN Press for our country's name together with a key word from our topic. UN Press publishes summaries of meetings, and these summaries show what each country said.
 - <https://press.un.org/en>
2. **Checking the votes:** We search the UN Digital Library for the resolutions listed in Part 2 of our committee report and look at the voting record. A "yes", a "no" or an abstention by our country is the clearest evidence of its position.
 - <https://digitallibrary.un.org/>
3. **Reading our government's own words:** We search for our country's Permanent Mission to the United Nations and for its foreign ministry. Speeches and press releases there tell us how our government explains its position.
4. **Reading the news:** We search reliable news (for example BBC World News) for our country and our topic from the last two years, because positions change and the chair will expect current facts.
 - <https://www.bbc.com/news/world>
5. **Reasoning when nothing is found:** If our country has never spoken on the topic, we reason from its interests. We ask: does this problem hurt our people? Does a solution cost our country money or help our economy? What did our bloc and our closest partners say? Then we choose the position that our country would most likely take, and we can explain why.

STEP 4: FINDING WHAT OUR COUNTRY HAS ALREADY DONE

The chair and other delegates respect a country that leads by example. We look for laws, programmes and projects at home, and for aid or partnerships abroad, that connect to our topic. We write down two or three, each with its source and date. These become the proudest sentences in our position paper.

STEP 5: WRITING THE ONE-PAGE COUNTRY REPORT

We put everything on one page so that we can see our country at a glance during the conference. We use short phrases, not long paragraphs, and every fact keeps its source and date.

1. **Country basics:** Name, capital, government type, leaders, population, region, income level.
2. **Blocs and partners:** Our blocs, three likely allies, one or two likely opponents, our Security Council status.
3. **Position on the topic:** Two or three sentences that our ambassador could say out loud.
4. **Evidence of the position:** Our votes on the key resolutions and one quotation or summary from our government, each with its source and date.
5. **What we have already done:** Two or three actions at home or abroad, each with its source and date.
6. **What we want the committee to do:** Two or three solutions from our committee report that fit our country's interests, and one solution our country would not accept.
7. **Red lines and compromises:** One thing our country will never agree to, and one thing it can trade to win support.

STEP 6: CHECKING OUR WORK

Before we move to the position paper, we read our Country Report aloud and ask three questions. Does every fact have a source and a date? Would our country's real ambassador agree with every sentence? Can we explain each position in one simple sentence? When the answer to all three is yes, our Country Report is ready, and our position paper will be much easier to write.

HMDC reminder: we do our own research and write our own notes and position paper, as the conference rules require.

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