*Position Paper: Research & Writing Guide*

***Research***

The first step in writing a positon paper is research. It is also the most important step because, through research, you will formulate an understanding of your country’s position(s) in respect to a specific issue.

To begin ascertaining your country’s position, start by asking questions. Specifically, guiding questions like the following:

* What is the background history concerning the issue and committee?
* How does the issue affect my country?
* What are my country’s policies, with respect to the issue?
* Why does my country follow those policies? What are their justifications for doing so?
* What do my country’s leaders have to say about the issue?
* Has my country taken any action on the issue? If so, when?
* Why has my country taken (or not taken) action?
* What kinds of action did my country take: Singing treaties and/or resolutions?
* Who are my country’s allies and opponents?

These are only a handful of questions that can guide your research. Feel free to modify and use these and/or add your own.

Once you have established a workable framework of research questions, it is time to explore research sources. A well-written paper requires delegates to delve deep and access United Nations documents, scholarly sources, and credible news outlets, among others. Sources like Encyclopædia Britannica and Wikipedia can prove useful starting places, helping you gain a working understanding of your country and issue, but they should not be the ending place of research.

***Writing***

A well-written position paper will provide the essential details of a country’s position on a given issue and be structured around three sections: background, positions, and proposals. Most position papers are three to five paragraphs in length.

First, explain how the issue specifically affects your country. There is no need to give a broad issue overview—this information is provided by the background guide. Here you should mention what actions your country has taken in respect to the issue, and why it took such action. This means, for example, key UN resolutions signed, sponsored, or opposed that deal with the issue; potential military action; and regional treaties and conventions. Also, identification of allies, opponents, and NGOs will be beneficial.   
 Second, once you have established how your country is affected and what your country has done, clearly state your country’s position(s) on the issue. While researching, you may not encounter a specific articulation of your country’s position(s). If this is the case, make an educated inference by examining your country’s actions and statements as well as the actions and statements of those you have identified as allies, opponents, and NGOs. Take a position that you think best reflects these actions, statements, facts, and figures your research revealed.

Third, offer solution proposals for consideration. This section answers the question: what does your country believe should be done by the international community to address the issue? Like your country’s position, you may not find specific proposals and my need to draw upon your research to make educated inferences.

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*Appendix*

*Position Paper Example*

\*This sample position paper was submitted by the delegation of Romania at the 2007 UNA-USA Model UN Conference in New York City.

Committee: International Labor Organization  
Topic: Globalization and Development  
Country: Romania  
  
In the past two decades the rapidly growing world trend has been toward globalization. With the emergence of the internet as a means of communication and the increasing accessibility of international trade physical barriers are not the only barriers withering away. Protective tariffs are plummeting and free trade agreements are becoming more prevalent. Romania appreciates that globalization creates favorable situations for expansion of commercial as well as economic assets. In the past year Romania has seen a foreign direct investment (FDI) increase of 199%. Inward FDI increased from EURO 234 million in 2005 to EURO 699 million in 2006**.** However, Romania realizes that increased globalization does not automatically produce more equality.  
  
Globalization and Development can contribute to the advancement of the overall international human condition; however, the delegation of Romania recognizes that without proper regulation the potential for advancement will remain limited to an elite few individuals, businesses, and nations. Unless checked and aimed toward the common good, globalization cannot effectively serve the global community. Crucial in dealing with the complexities of globalization, good governance must act with solidarity and responsibility. Romania believes that in involving people in globalization we must promote moral values, democratic principles, inclusive global political culture, institutions that safeguard both individual civil rights and inherent freedoms, and the common good. In addition, coping with the influx of information from globalization governments must act with solidarity and insight. Access to digital education will undoubtedly result in the confidence of citizens in their respective administrations and allow for a greater degree of transparency, and therefore a lesser degree of corruption.   
  
Romania believes the multinational business community has the ability and the obligation to support pertinent values in human rights, labor standards, and environmental preservation. As stated by the president, Mr. Traion Basescu, Romania feels a "heartfelt attachment to multilateralism, as an effective instrument designed to identify the adequate answers to the challenges brought by globalization."  
  
Romania is party to the majority of multilateral treaties and conventions identified as such by the Secretary General in the context of the Millennium Summit in 2001. Romania has always supported innovative and effective ways of establishing cooperation within and between regional organizations. As one of the newest members of the European Union, Romania is an active member of the World Trade Organization, and looks forward to offering its support to the *redirection* of globalization to best benefit the global community.