

MODEL UNPO ORGANISER'S GUIDE



**UNREPRESENTED
NATIONS & PEOPLES
ORGANIZATION**
unpo.org

SoGE | School of Geography
and the Environment



‘MODEL UNPO’ ORGANISER’S GUIDE



This role play and debating activity engages young people with issues facing some of the world’s most marginalised communities. It offers an opportunity for young people to develop the tools and confidence to become advocates for their community through practising public speaking and debating skills, and networking within and between groups.*

Associated materials:

- Briefing for UNPO Member Delegations
- Briefing for UNPO President and Secretariat
- Model UNPO Set up documents

Suggested group size: minimum of 12. Maximum of 35

Activity length: minimum of 3 hours. Can be 1 day +

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*These materials have been developed by Dr Fiona McConnell and Dr Liam Saddington (School of Geography and the Environment, University of Oxford), and the UNPO Secretariat in 2022. Funding for trialling these materials was provided by a Ray Y Gildea Jr Award from the Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers), University of Oxford Public Engagement with Research Seed Fund and Fiona McConnell’s Philip Leverhulme Prize for Geography (2019).

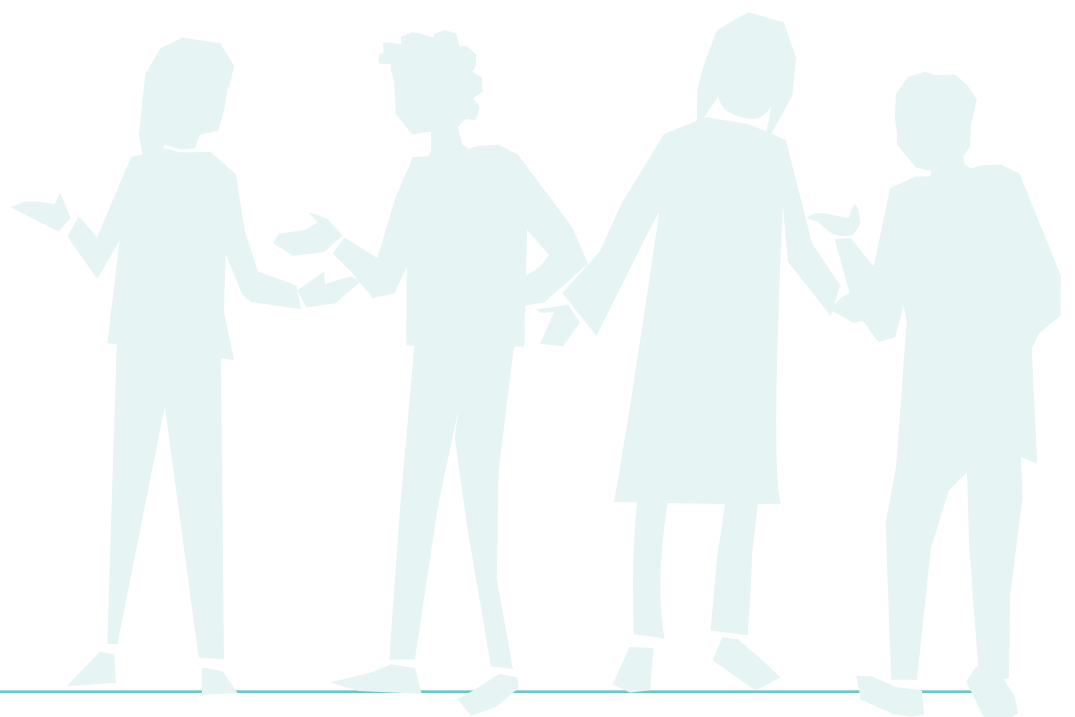
1. INTRODUCTION TO MODEL UNPO

The state has come to dominate understandings of geopolitics, and state leaders dominate international headlines. However, those who are most acutely affected by conflict, human rights abuses, and environmental injustices are often not represented by state interests. In many cases they seek to represent themselves on the international stage as stateless nations (e.g. Tibet), as indigenous communities (e.g. Crimean Tatars), as minorities (e.g. Ahwazi community in Iran), or as de facto states (e.g. Somaliland). Over 45 of these non-state actors have come together as the 'Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization' (UNPO <https://unpo.org/>), an international movement and organisation established to empower unrepresented and marginalised peoples worldwide, and to protect their fundamental rights. UNPO members might be seeking different political futures, but all claim a right to self-determination that has not been realised. All UNPO members (e.g. NGOs, grass-roots organizations, political parties, governments-in-exile, unrecognised governments) adhere to the principles of the UNPO covenant, including a commitment to non-violence, democracy, and human rights. The UNPO acts as a forum for its members to connect and to unite in solidarity.

'Model UNPO' is loosely based on 'Model United Nations' simulations, but instead of young people being assigned roles as representatives of nation-states and enacting UN meetings, they are designated roles as representatives of stateless nations, indigenous peoples, and minority communities. Young people research their assigned non-state actor and then simulate a debate of the UNPO's General Assembly based on pre-established rules of procedure.

Model UNPO enables youth groups to run role-play debating exercises on issues that directly affect their communities. These could include minority rights, human rights, conflict resolution, language rights, youth issues, gender discrimination, and environmental justice. Examples of themes could be taken from session themes of the [UN Forum on Minority Issues](#), or the [UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues](#). The chosen theme should be reflected in the resolution and/or guidance given to participants for preparing initial statements and draft operational clauses. The theme might also inform which UNPO members are chosen to be present at the debate.

The session organiser should ensure that the Model UNPO activity is a safe space where participants can speak freely and respectfully. Where possible, gender balance should be sought within delegations.



2. BEFORE THE MODEL UNPO SESSION

Equipment needed

- Tables and chairs
- Desk cards for UNPO Members and UNPO President (from 'Model UNPO Set up documents')
- Timing cards (from 'Model UNPO Set up documents')
- Pens and paper for each delegation (for note-passing)
- Name badges for all participants with delegation name
- EITHER a screen and projector for displaying the draft resolution, OR a Google Docs (or equivalent) with the resolution accessible for all delegates.

A. ARRANGING THE SPACE

In order to encourage participants to get into role and engage fully with the activity, choose as formal a setting as possible. Set up the room with tables in a semi-circle for the member delegations, and a table and chairs at the front for the President and Secretariat (see Figure 1). If available, have a second room/space for breaks and informal lobbying.

Encourage participants to dress smartly in order to set the tone for the formal debate.

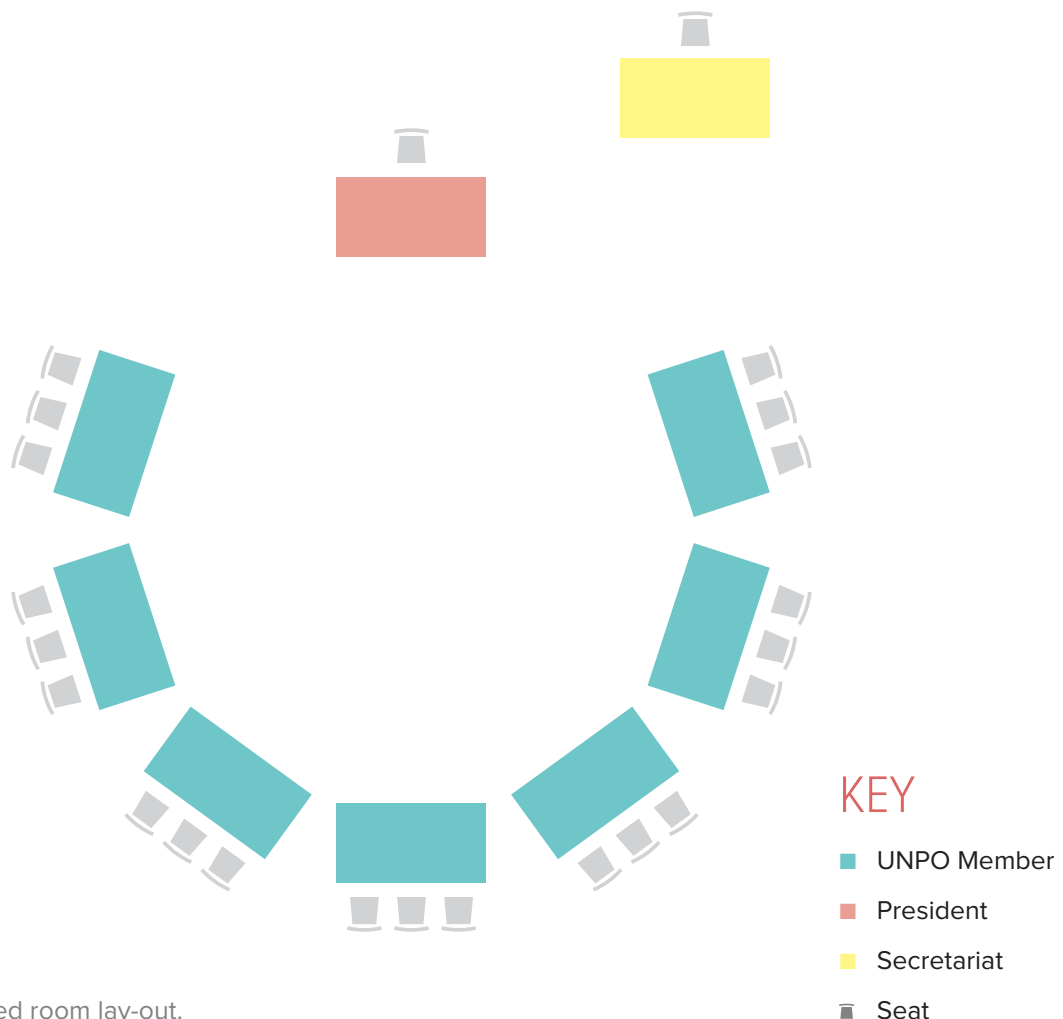


Figure 1: Suggested room lay-out.

B. ASSIGNING DELEGATIONS

Depending on the size of the group (suggested minimum of 12), allocate young people into small groups (2-5 people), and assign each group a UNPO member. There should be a minimum of 5 UNPO member delegations. Suggested UNPO members include:

ABKHAZIA	KHMER KROM
AHWAZI	OGADEN
BAROTSELAND	OGONI
CATALONIA	SOMALILAND
CRIMEAN TATARS	TAIWAN
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA (WASHINGTON DC)	TIBET
EAST TURKESTAN	WEST PAPUA
GUAM	

When assigning UNPO members consider the relevance of members to the chosen theme of the debate, geopolitical dynamics, and the geographic spread of communities. This list of members is not exhaustive: for additional UNPO members see <https://unpo.org/nations-peoples> Minority/ indigenous/ stateless communities that are not currently UNPO members can also be included in the activity.

One participant should be assigned – or elected by the group – the role of **UNPO President**, and one participant the role of a member of the **UNPO Secretariat**.

Assisted by the member of the Secretariat, the role of the President is to guide the session. They should encourage participants to engage in the debate, and can re-cap issues discussed and highlight points of connection and/or disagreement between delegations. The President will also:

- open and close the debate
- maintain order during the session
- decide which delegate can speak, and decide on the amount of time that each delegate can speak for
- call a delegate to order if their remarks are not relevant to the topic under discussion
- put a proposal or amendment to a vote, and direct the voting procedure
- announce decisions
- ensure the activity remains an inclusive and safe space

Group organisers should send the 'Briefing for UNPO Member Delegations' and 'Briefing for UNPO President and Secretariat' to participants in advance of the debate.



“ All peoples have the right of **self-determination**. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

Article 1 of International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
and Article 1 of International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

C. PREPARING TALKING POINTS AND INITIAL STATEMENTS

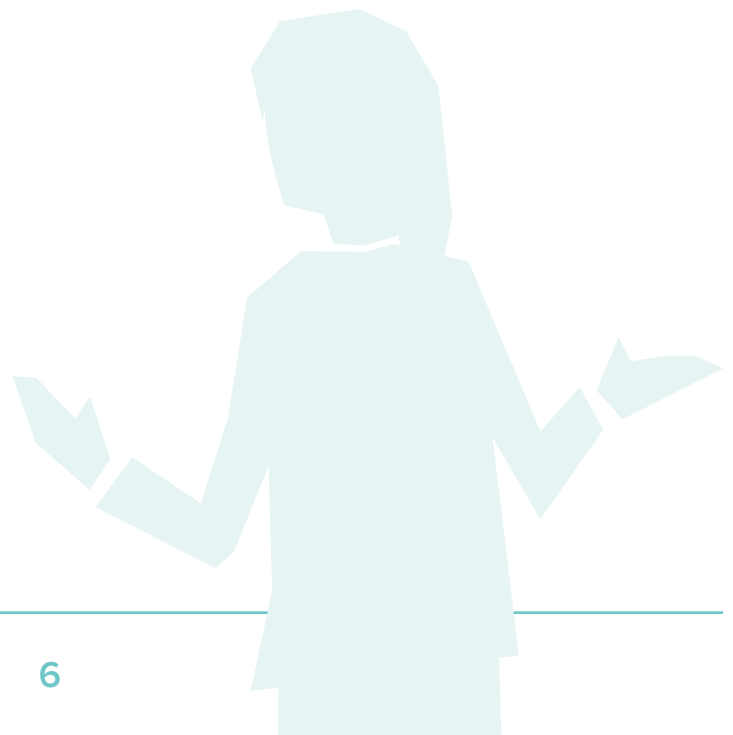
Ask each UNPO member delegation to prepare **talking points** on the UNPO member that they have been assigned. This will serve as a reference resource during the debate. Most importantly, the talking points should include issues faced by that UNPO member as they relate to the topic of the debate e.g. peace/ conflict, economic situation, environmental challenges, human/ indigenous/ minority rights, gender discrimination, youth issues. These will act as prompts for the moderated debate. The talking points could also include the following information about the UNPO member:

1. Location, territorial size and population size
2. Recent history
3. Current political environment, including political representation
4. Aspirations for self-determination e.g. independent statehood/ autonomy within another state/ greater cultural and political rights.
5. Alliances and/or tensions with states and other political actors (e.g. supportive states, host states, occupying states)

Suggested resources for selected UNPO Members are available here: <https://linktr.ee/munpo>

Based on the talking points each group should prepare a short speech (**initial statement**) of up to 5 minutes about the UNPO member they are representing. This speech should include:

- an overview of who the delegation is (their organisation and which community/ nation they represent)
- the current situation in their community/ homeland
- aspirations for self-determination
- a brief statement on their position in relation to the topic of debate



D. PREPARING THE DRAFT RESOLUTION

Before the debate the session organiser should prepare a draft resolution:

- i. Draft a preamble to the resolution (a sample preamble is included in Appendix I). The purpose of the preamble is to show that there is a problem that needs to be solved. It should set out the background to the broad theme of the debate but not propose any action.
Clauses in the preamble are not numbered, end with a comma, and start with a verb such as 'affirming', 'approving', 'believing', 'declaring', 'desiring', 'expecting', 'observing', 'recalling', 'recognising', 'welcoming'.
Clauses can include references to:
 - the UN Charter, UN resolutions, conventions or declarations
 - recognition of the efforts of regional organisations or NGOs in dealing with the issue
 - general statements on the topic, its significance and its impact. This could include official figures and/or the difficulties that have been encountered with the issue in the past.
- ii. EITHER draft a resolution with approximately 6-9 operative clauses (see Appendix I for examples of operative clauses), OR ask delegations to prepare and submit 1-3 draft clauses in advance of the debate and select 6-9 of those clauses.
Operative clauses set out what is to be done about the issue described in the preamble, and by whom (e.g. the UNPO, governments, UN bodies, NGOs). Operative clauses should be numbered (1, 2, 3), can include sub-clauses (1a, 2a, 3a), should each end with a semi-colon and start with a verb such as 'accepts', 'affirms', 'calls upon', 'condemns', 'deplores', 'endorses', 'proclaims', 'recommends', 'reminds', 'supports', 'urges'. They should be organised in a logical progression, and each clause should be brief and contain a single idea or policy proposal.
- iii. Circulate the draft resolution with preamble and operative clauses to delegates in advance, and ask delegations to think about amendments to clauses and/or additional clauses to bring to the debate.

OPTIONS FOR LARGER GROUPS AND/OR LONGER SESSIONS (1+ DAYS)

Prospective UNPO Member: the session organiser could choose one or more prospective UNPO members who will apply for membership of the UNPO during the simulation. In advance of the session the prospective member delegation should prepare a report setting out their suitability for membership of the UNPO. It could include:

- a) a brief history of the nation/ people/ community
- b) reasons for applying for UNPO membership
- c) evidence of the representativeness of the organisation of the nation/ people/ community
- d) a formal declaration of adhesion to the UNPO Covenant (<http://unpo.org/section/2/1>) and the principle of non-violence
- e) evidence of the democratic character of the organisation's leadership structure

During the simulation the prospective member presents their membership application report (5 minutes) after the UNPO Member initial statements. Allow time for brief questions or points of clarification, and then UNPO Members present vote on whether or not to admit this new member. If admitted, the delegation can be treated as a full UNPO Member in the moderated debate, including having voting rights. If not admitted, they can be observers during the debate and, at the UNPO President's discretion, can contribute to the discussion (though not vote on the clauses). Their other task might be to report back to their community about the General Assembly, and for this they could interview members of other delegations and the President and Secretariat during the breaks.

Individuals could be assigned the role of **press** during the simulation. They might represent an international press agency (e.g. Reuters, AP), or a national broadcaster (e.g. Xinhua, Russia Today, BBC, Fox News) that would have a particular line on the proceedings and/or the inclusion of certain communities. In advance of the session the press should scope the UNPO members attending and the themes of the debate, and prepare interview questions. During the simulation they should write notes in preparation for their story, and interview member delegations during breaks. A press conference could be hosted by the President and Secretariat at the end of the session, and the members of the press could prepare a blog post/ article about the simulation to be circulated afterwards.

For Model UNPO sessions that last 1+ days a **parallel informal lobbying space** could be set up. This is a space separate from the room where the debate takes place where delegates can have informal discussions and negotiations. As long as at least one member of each delegation remains engaged with the moderated debate, other delegates can informally engage in lobbying at the same time.

3. DURING THE MODEL UNPO

Begin the session with an ice-breaker activity in order for participants to get to know each other, and to encourage active discussion during the simulation. For example, in an open space ask participants to arrange themselves on an imaginary world map according to where they are from. Once positioned, each participant introduces themselves and says a greeting in their mother tongue.

STRUCTURE OF THE DEBATE

1. The UNPO President begins the session with a brief **opening speech** (approx. 5 minutes). They welcome everyone to the debate and provide an overview of the structure of the debate and rules of procedure.
2. **UNPO Member initial statements:** Each delegation representing a UNPO member is given up to 5 minutes to present their initial statement. The President should allow time for questions and points of clarification after each speech.
3. **Moderated debate.** This is the main part of the session and is chaired by the President. Every delegation member should be encouraged to speak during the moderated debate at least once. Participants are aiming to produce a resolution which should, if possible, be agreed through consensus. The draft resolution should be displayed or shared online as an editable document.
 - i. Preamble to the resolution. The President reads out the preamble to the resolution and asks if there are any suggested amendments from the delegations. Limited time should be spent on the preamble as the focus of the debate should be on the operative clauses. A vote is held to approve the preamble.
 - ii. Operative clauses (either drafted by the session organiser or compiled from clauses submitted by UNPO member delegations). Each operative clause is taken in turn. The President asks for amendments from the delegations. Amendments can change the wording of clauses – removing, changing and/or adding text (see Appendix II for an example of an amended clause).

When all amendments to a clause have been considered a vote is held on that clause. Each UNPO member has one vote. Votes on clauses of the resolution require a simple majority (greater than 50%) to pass, expressed by raising hands or desk cards.

The debate then moves onto the next operative clause. Delegations can add operative clauses during moderated debate after the existing clauses are debated and voted upon. Delegations may also ask to reorder the clauses once all clauses are included.
4. **Vote on the final resolution:** After the moderated debate has ended and each clause has been voted on, the debate moves into the final vote. For the resolution to be adopted, each delegation has one vote on the final resolution. They can vote for the resolution, against the resolution or abstain from voting. The resolution is accepted with a simple majority vote.

RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE MODERATED DEBATE

- a. No delegate may address the floor during the moderated debate without first obtaining the permission of the President (by raising their hand or desk card)
- b. The member of the UNPO Secretariat maintains a speakers' list for the clause under discussion. Delegates may ask the President (by raising their hand or desk card) to be placed on the speakers' list.
- c. Time limits for contributions from delegates may be set by the President. It is at the President's discretion to cut short these speeches to allow for other delegates to contribute.
- d. If the discussion addresses a particular subject, the President can bring to order a speaker whose remarks do not relate to that subject
- e. Attacks of a personal nature, or against a particular nation, are prohibited.
- f. At the discretion of the President, a delegate whose position is challenged may be granted an immediate Right of Reply.

Breaks should be scheduled throughout the debate, with young people encouraged to stay 'in role' and interact with other delegations in the room. This is a key part of the activity. Participants should use this time to forge alliances, engage in informal negotiations, ask how other delegations are going to vote, and discuss strategy. Note passing between delegations should be encouraged during the moderated debate in order to facilitate informal negotiations.

4. AFTER THE MODEL UNPO

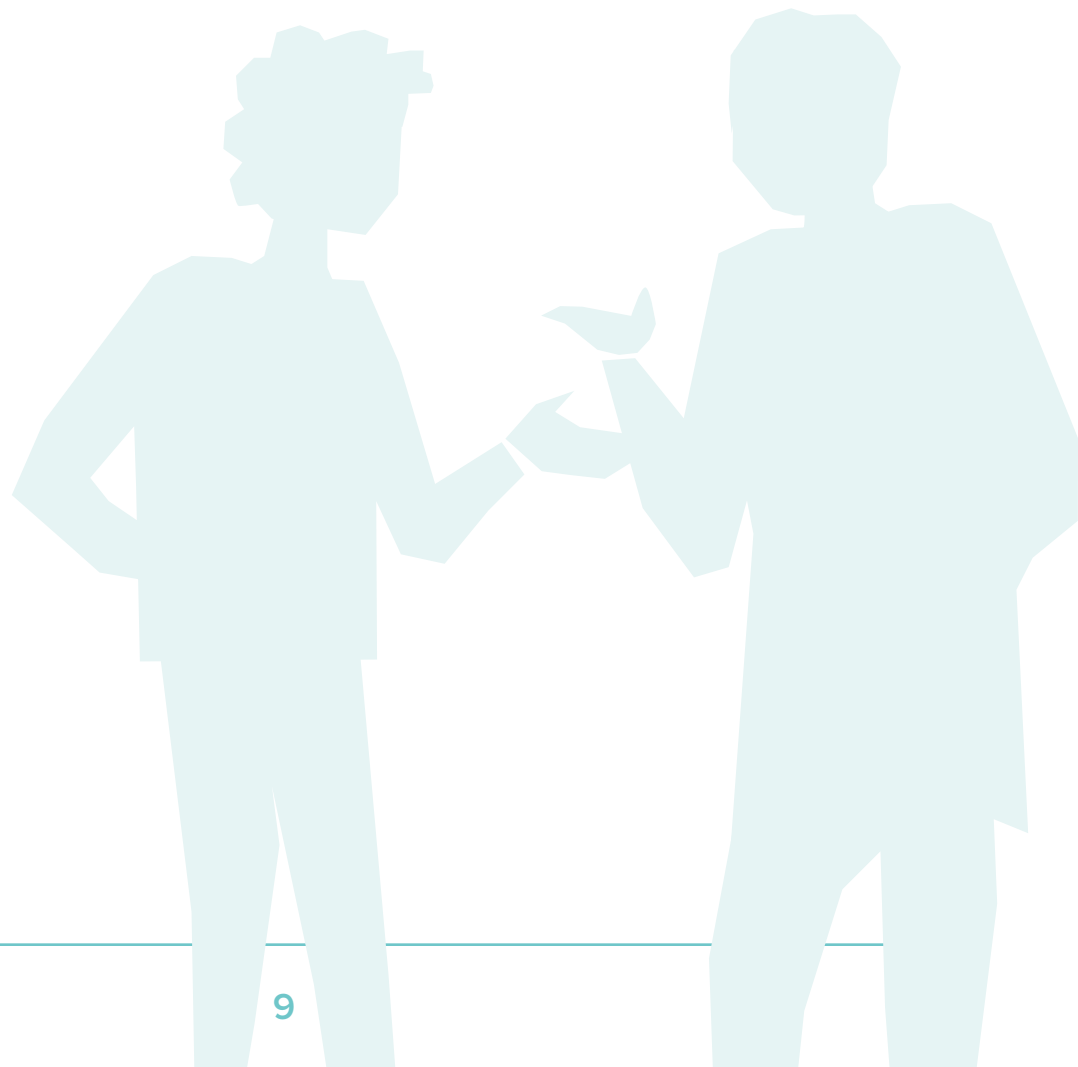
It is useful to schedule time to evaluate the simulation with the group directly after the debate. Examples of evaluation tools/methods are available here: www.coe.int/en/web/compass/activities-for-reviewing

Questions to discuss may include:

- Were you able to put your communities' case across convincingly?
- What did you find challenging or frustrating in the debate?
- Was your delegation satisfied by the final resolution? Were there issues you were not able to have included in the final resolution?
- Do you think there could have been other points of connection or solidarity made between delegations?
- Did the debate make you think differently about issues facing your community?

Broader issues that you might want to encourage participants to reflect on after the activity could include:

- Why have certain groups and communities been marginalised from global politics?
- What challenges do unrepresented nations and peoples face because they are denied the right to self-determination?
- What are the similarities and differences in the experiences of UNPO members e.g. around human rights, economic and cultural rights, environmental justice?



APPENDIX I: EXAMPLE RESOLUTION

GENERAL RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE MODEL UNPO GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON [TOPIC OF RESOLUTION]:

[DATE AND LOCATION]:

Signatories: [LIST UNPO MEMBERS ATTENDING]

PREAMBLE

The Model UNPO General Assembly

The purpose of the preamble is to show that there is a problem that needs to be solved. It should set out the background to the broad theme of the debate but not propose any action.

Clauses in the preamble are not numbered, end with a comma, and start with a verb such as 'affirming', 'approving', 'believing', 'declaring', 'desiring', 'expecting', 'observing', 're-calling', 'recognising', 'welcoming'.

Clauses can include references to:

- the UN Charter, UN resolutions, conventions or declarations
- recognition of the efforts of regional organisations or NGOs in dealing with the issue
- general statements on the topic, its significance and its impact. This could include official figures and/or the difficulties that have been encountered with the issue in the past.

Expressing its solidarity with UNPO Members and other communities subjected to any form of oppression, violence, and discrimination,

Reiterating all UNPO members' commitment to the Organization's fundamental principles: democracy, non-violence, human rights, self-determination, tolerance, and environmental protection as expressed in the Covenant,

Affirming the importance of ensuring that all nations and peoples have the opportunity to have a say in the decisions that concern their territory, culture, language, heritage, and environment,

THE MODEL UNPO GENERAL ASSEMBLY:

Operative clauses set out what is to be done about the issue described in the preamble, and by whom (e.g. the UNPO, governments, UN bodies, NGOs).

Operative clauses should be numbered (1, 2, 3), can include sub-clauses (1a, 2a, 3a), should each end with a semi-colon and start with a verb such as 'accepts', 'affirms', 'calls upon', 'condemns', 'deplores', 'endorses', 'proclaims', 'recommends', 'reminds', 'supports', 'urges'.

They should be organised in a logical progression, and each clause should be brief and contain a single idea or policy proposal.

1. *Challenges* the UN position on territorial integrity and condemns its inability to authorise interventions in matters which are within the domestic jurisdiction of a member state when there are human rights violations;
2. *Recommends* the UN's establishment of a mechanism that will effectively mediate in claims of self-determination which includes unrepresented nations and peoples;
3. *Notes* the importance of referenda for enacting the right to self-determination and calls upon the UN to assist in the peaceful running of referenda in disputed territories;
4. *Calls* on the international community to implement mechanisms that protect minority rights including language and cultural rights;
5. *Demands* all UN members to recognise acts of genocide when they occur, including recent human rights violations of Uyghur people in East Turkestan;

Operative clauses can include reference to specific examples. Delegations may come together to jointly propose clauses.

6. *Encourages* states to...

7. *Recommends* the UNPO to...

APPENDIX II: EXAMPLE OF AN AMENDED OPERATIVE CLAUSE

An amendment is a proposal that adds to, deletes from, or revises a clause. Amendments are suggested by delegations, the change is made to the resolution so that everyone can see it (using track changes is useful), and each amendment is discussed and voted upon before moving to the next clause.

[ORIGINAL DRAFT OPERATIVE CLAUSE]

Calls on the UN to produce a comprehensive list of ethnic groups and nations that are entitled to the right to self-determination;

[AMENDMENT 1]

Delegation A suggests the deletion of 'ethnic groups and'

Calls on the UN to produce a comprehensive list of ~~ethnic groups and~~ nations that are entitled to the right to self-determination;

A vote is held, and the deletion is accepted

Calls on the UN to produce a comprehensive list of nations that are entitled to the right to self-determination;

[AMENDMENT 2]

Delegation B suggests the addition of 'and peoples'

Calls on the UN to produce a comprehensive list of nations **and peoples** that are entitled to the right to self-determination;

A vote is held, and the addition is accepted

Calls on the UN to produce a comprehensive list of nations and peoples that are entitled to the right to self-determination;

[AMENDMENT 3]

Delegation C suggests the addition of these words to highlight the role of the UNPO

Calls on the UN to produce a comprehensive list of nations and peoples **in collaboration with the UNPO** that are entitled to the right to self-determination;

A vote is held, and the addition is rejected

Calls on the UN to produce a comprehensive list of nations and peoples that are entitled to the right to self-determination;

[AMENDMENT 4]

Delegation D has highlighted the importance of this list being updated over time and suggests this addition

Calls on the UN to produce **and maintain** a comprehensive list of nations and peoples that are entitled to the right to self-determination;

[FINAL, ACCEPTED CLAUSE]

A vote is held, and the addition is accepted

As no more amendments are suggested, this is the final version of the clause

Calls on the UN to produce and maintain a comprehensive list of nations and peoples that are entitled to the right to self-determination;

