

MODEL UNPO

BRIEFING FOR UNPO PRESIDENT AND SECRETARIAT



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

SoGE | School of Geography
and the Environment



The Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) is an international movement and organisation established to empower unrepresented and marginalised peoples worldwide and to protect their fundamental rights. The UNPO is comprised of over 45 national minorities, indigenous communities, stateless nations, and governments-in-exile. 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 participants 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. Participants research their assigned non-state actor and then simulate a debate of the UNPO's General Assembly based on pre-established rules of procedure.

YOU HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED THE ROLE OF UNPO PRESIDENT OR UNPO SECRETARIAT MEMBER.

UNPO President: It is your job to open the General Assembly and welcome everyone. You will need to briefly discuss the structure and procedures of the Assembly. You will chair the session – directing the discussions towards a consensus and using simple rules to decide on the resolutions and guide discussion.

Member of the UNPO Secretariat: Your role is to work with the UNPO President in preparing for the General Assembly and assisting them on the day, taking notes of proceedings, monitoring the progress of the debate, and enforcing the timing of members' speeches.

PREPARING FOR THE MODEL UNPO:

1. Familiarise yourselves with the history and role of the UNPO as an organisation, and the role of the UNPO Secretariat: www.unpo.org
2. Familiarise yourselves with the rules of procedures (see below).
3. Find out about the UNPO Members who are taking part in the debate. Suggested resources for selected UNPO Members are available here: <https://linktr.ee/munpo>
4. [OPTIONAL] Select 6-9 draft clauses submitted by UNPO Member delegations that will form the basis of the skeleton resolution.

*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).

DURING THE MODEL UNPO

The debate will focus on amending the preamble and operative clauses of the resolution before the group votes on whether to accept the resolution. 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. Operative clauses set out what is to be done about the issue described in the preamble, and by whom (e.g. the UNPO secretariat, UNPO members, governments, UN bodies, NGOs).

Assisted by the member of the Secretariat, the role of the President is to guide the session. You 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

STRUCTURE OF THE DEBATE

1. **The UNPO President opens the session** with a brief speech (approx. 5 minutes). Welcome everyone to the debate and provide an overview of the structure of the debate and rules of procedure.
2. **UNPO Member statements:** Each delegation representing a UNPO member is given up to 5 minutes to present their initial statement. There will be 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. Participants are aiming to produce a resolution which should at the end of the debate, if possible, be agreed through consensus.

- 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. A vote is held to approve the preamble.
- ii. Operative clauses (either as set out in the draft resolution or compiled from clauses submitted by UNPO Members). 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.

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;

