



OLINMUN 2026

Preparation for Debates



Preparation for OlinMUN 2026

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The main objective of Olinca Model United Nations is to raise awareness of global issues in young people by opening new perspectives for them. This forum encourages all students to respectfully debate and propose solutions to worldwide issues affecting us all.

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I. Preparation before Debates

Studying the issues

Investigating the topic to gather information and expand your knowledge is the first step of research.

You may find a wide variety of information about the crisis but try to figure out if the sources you are using are trustworthy and reliable. Consulting on the official UN sites is recommended since you may locate and retrieve copies of resolutions and voting records.

II. Preparation for Debates

a) Investigating about your country

Once you have understood the issues, you should become familiar with your country's position regarding the topics. You will learn who your allies and adversaries are. This will be helpful during the UN debate to form alliances and coalitions. It will be vital to know the strengths and weaknesses of your country so you can defend your position.

Other important facts you should consider are your geographical location, your trading partners, your adversaries (religious, economic, and historical) as well as your allies.

b) Where your country stands on the issue

Investigating decisions that have been made in your country regarding the issue, as well as understanding the background of these decisions, is one of the most important things you should do. This will allow you to debate and **defend the exact position** of your country.

c) Know your country's weaknesses

You should objectively study your country's weaknesses and prepare defenses in case those vulnerabilities are brought up during the debate. A delegate caught unaware of these facts may lose support from others.

d) Teamwork

This is the most important part of your participation since you cannot succeed without the support of other delegations. Listen to what every delegate has to say, study about other countries, and how they are related to the issues. This will help you during the debate.

e) Having all the information together

After doing all your research, certain information may come in handy on the day of the debate. This is why we encourage all delegates to have a binder where they keep important information including all debate formats. Delegates are also encouraged to write their initial speech with the objective of presenting the most pertinent information during the first quorum.

III. Debate Formats

1) Position Paper

When the agenda is set, you will be asked to hand in your country's position paper, which is intended to state your country's point of view. No plagiarism is accepted; copying your position paper will cause a direct warning. You should use the following format:

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Sample Position Paper

COMMITTEE: The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

COUNTRY: The United States of America

TOPIC A: Children and armed conflict

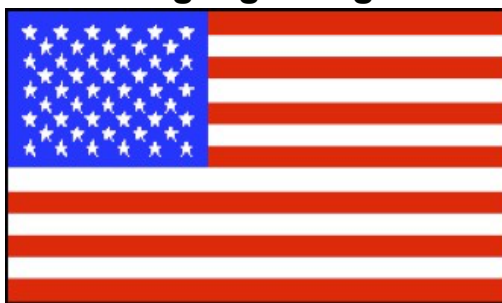
Official name: United States of America

Capital: Washington D.C.

Population: 294 million

Currency: US dollar

Official Language: English



(HISTORICAL BACKGROUND)

Throughout history and in many cultures, children have been extensively involved in armed conflicts. Children can take direct part in hostilities, used as porters, spies, messengers, and sexual slaves. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 38 proclaimed: "State parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that people who have not attained the age of 15 years do not take a direct part in hostilities." However, minors who are over the age of 15 but remain under the age of 18 are still voluntarily able to take part in combat as soldiers. Nevertheless, the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers reports that the use of children in military forces, and the active participation of children in armed conflicts is widespread.

(POSITION PAPER)

In the United States 17-year-olds may join the armed forces but may not be stationed outside the continental US or deployed in combat situations. The United States military is based on voluntary recruitment, though minors also must have parental permission to enlist. The US has founded organizations like the War Child that promotes not using children in armed conflicts, according to The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Also, the US has offered military assistance to countries using child soldiers.

(PROPOSAL)

To stop using children in armed conflicts or in any other military force, the US proposes all the countries sign and ratify the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict. The protocol requires ratifying governments to ensure that while their armed forces can accept volunteers under the age of 18, they cannot be conscripted and States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that members of their armed forces who have not attained the age of 18 do not take a direct part in hostilities.

Sources of information shall be written below in APA format.

2) Resolution Paper

After debating a topic, resolutions will start to be developed. Please follow this sample:

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Sample Resolution Paper

Submitted to: The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Subject: Children and Armed Conflict

Proposed by: The United States of America

Topic A: Children and Armed Conflict

(PREAMBLE PARAGRAPH)

The preamble paragraph should include a brief explanation of the topic that has been discussed. Preamble phrases should be used to take into consideration any resolution paper.

Preamble Phrases

| | | |
|------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Affirming | Emphasizing | Observing |
| Alarmed by | Expecting | Realizing |
| Aware of | Fully aware | Reaffirming |
| Believing fully | Having considered | Recognizing |
| Convinced | Further | Taking into consideration |
| Declaring | Keeping in mind | Viewing with appreciation |
| Deeply disturbed | Noting | |

Example: Emphasizing the problem of children and their roles in armed conflicts, and alarmed by the number of children involved in armed conflicts, and fully aware of the countries that suffer from this problem, etc. ...

(OPERATIVE PARAGRAPH)

The actions that will be taken should be explained in this paragraph, using operative clauses.

Operative Phrases

| | | |
|------------|------------------|----------|
| Accepts | Encourages | Reminds |
| Approves | Fully recommends | Requests |
| Calls upon | Invites | Resolves |
| Condemns | Notes | Supports |
| Confirms | Proclaims | Trusts |
| Considers | Reaffirms | Urges |
| Declares | Recommends | Yields |
| Emphasizes | Regrets | |

Example

1. Approves the intervention of military support to assist the countries that are affected, following the next restrictions:
 - a. These bodies would assess other military forces.
 - b. No country is forced to accept this clause.
2. Supports the existence of nongovernmental organizations.

3) Evidence and witness for ICC

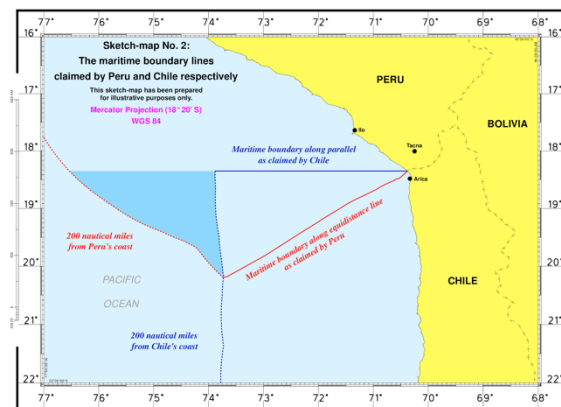
Evidence

The presentation of evidence must be brief and concise. Agents must clearly explain the point to be proven and relevance of the piece. It may be of any nature: physical; videography; photography; phonographic; printed documents. Judges may require an extraordinary session of questions. After a piece of evidence has been presented, justices may then retire to review it.

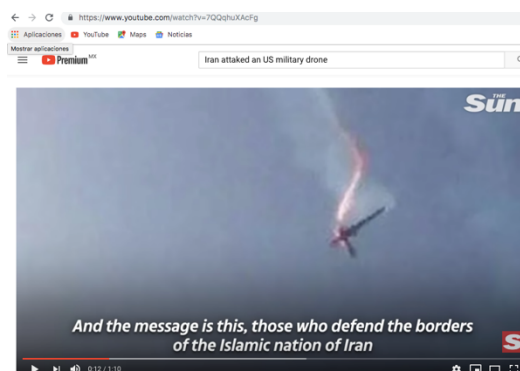
Images: Agents may present images to the court to present their case in front of the justices. Images must be explained thoroughly, giving details of both the content and its relevance to the case.



Maps: Agents usually bring maps to court when they want to explain a geographical matter in a dispute between states' members. Most of the time it focuses on territorial matters or regarding resources.



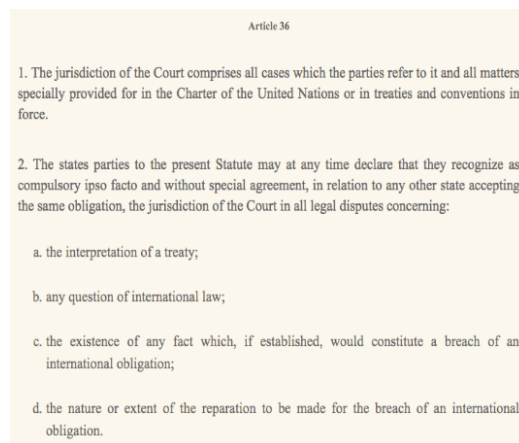
Videos: Agents are allowed to present short videos with the purpose of exposing their stand in court.



Graphs: Agents may bring graphs or statistical data to sustain their arguments.



Legal Framework: Agents are allowed to quote a treaty or a specific article as evidence.



Witness

Just as the presentation of evidence, the presentation of a witness must be brief and concise. Agents must clearly explain who their witness is and what their relevance is to the case. A cross-examination (questions to discredit or undercut testimony already given) by the counterpart must be allowed. Judges may require an extraordinary session of questions for the witness. After a witness has been presented, justices may then move to a retirement to review it.

Sample of Witness (ICJ/ICC)

THE LAWYER

AGENTS: Your honors, as our (1st or 2nd) witness, we introduce Ms. Fernanda Smith.

MODERATOR: Thank you, agents. (Ms. Fernanda Smith) Ms., please place your right hand on your heart and raise your left hand. Do you solemnly swear or affirm that you will tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, under pain and penalties of perjury?

SMITH: I do.

MODERATOR: You may introduce yourself briefly and tell us why you are here.

SMITH: My name is Fernanda Smith. I am a lawyer who strongly believes in the US Constitution, their laws, and their policies. I studied at Harvard University where I got a master's degree in international law and politics, and I am an expert in constitutional rights.

MODERATOR: Thank you. (To the agents) You may now proceed with the testimony. I remind you that you have... (time considered suitable by the court).

AGENT: Based on your knowledge, could you explain to the court what the Kelsen pyramid is?

SMITH: Of course, it is a graphic legal system used to represent the hierarchy of laws. In a few words, the Constitution is the supreme law of the land. Below the constitution lie the laws made by the congress, the international treaties and the supreme decrees.

AGENT: Taking it into account, under what circumstances may a country breach an international treaty?

SMITH: The only reason to breach an international treaty would be if the country's constitutional rights were in danger.

AGENT: Based on what you have said, how does this apply to the situation of the United States of America?

SMITH: Based on the Article VI of the United States Constitution (which considers the supreme Law of the Land, the US Constitution is the primary Law) all the international treaties are below their Constitution. The government is obliged to accomplish every single paragraph of the United States Constitution; in this case the US is forced to preserve the "National Security" in their country.

AGENT: What is the National Security System of the United States based on?

SMITH: The National Security of the United States is based on the total defense, nationalism, and internationalism, of the economic and political interests of the United States of America, whenever it is necessary and when this cannot be guaranteed by diplomatic means or intelligence actions, the US has all the right to proceed however it considers suitable.

AGENT: Based on your historical knowledge, could you please explain to the court what the violations of Iran to the US national security are.

SMITH: Of course. For many years, Iran has been one of the largest States sponsoring terrorism by providing a wide array of weapons, funds, intelligence, safe harbor and logistical support to Al Qaeda and Hezbollah terrorists, organizations which have attacked my nation whenever they have had the opportunity to do so. For example, in the year 2001, when Iran facilitated the transit of al Qaeda members in and out of Afghanistan a day before the 9/11 attacks, or in the year 1983 attacks in Beirut attacks when a group of Hezbollah terrorist killed 241 US marines. Based on this connection between Iran and terrorism, the US has the right to apply the national security system, placing their citizens first.

AGENT: As you can see, Mr. Smith's testimony tells us that Iran has violated the United States national security, based on their connection with terrorism, so we are allowed to use our national security system to provide security to our citizens. The defense rests.

