



# North American Invitational Model United Nations

# CRISIS PROCEDURES

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

3

Introductory Information

4

Beginning Debate

4

Moderated Caucuses

4

Unmoderated Caucuses

5

Round Robins

5

Yields and Points

5-6

Directives

7

Miscellaneous Parliamentary Procedure

8

Closing Remarks

# INTRODUCTORY INFORMATION

While traditional Model UN committees like General Assemblies (GAs) or Economic and Social Councils (ECOSOCs) strictly follow rules of Parliamentary Procedure, crisis provides a more fast-paced and fluid committee experience. Because crisis updates can change the course of debate, parliamentary procedure is much more loosely followed, which can make Crisis parliamentary procedures more difficult for first-time delegates to quickly grasp. To familiarize yourself with parliamentary procedure terms, delegates should read the [Traditional Parliamentary Procedure](#) page.

Below you will find information on how crisis committees generally use parliamentary procedure. Be aware that some committees may have different rules, which will be explained in your committee background guide or at the beginning of the first session.

NAIMUN will also be offering free, virtual trainings for our delegates through the NAIMUN Training and Interactive Program with the Secretariat (TIPS) Program. Read more about TIPS [here](#).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION,**  
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## BEGINNING DEBATE

Committee will begin with a roll call. Unlike General Assemblies, a formal motion to open debate is not necessary, and motions do not need to be seconded by another delegate.

The largest difference between traditional and crisis parliamentary procedure is the lack of a Speaker's List in crisis committees. As such, a Motion to Set the Speaking Time or Set the Agenda are unnecessary. In place of the Speaker's List, crisis committees use three primary tools for discussion about the topic at hand: round robins, moderated caucuses, and unmoderated caucuses.

## MODERATED CAUCUSES

These are the most common in a crisis committee, and if there are no other motions on the floor, the Chair will default to a moderated caucus. Most crisis committees conduct debate through a series of rolling moderated caucuses. Like in traditional committees, the delegate proposing a moderated caucus should specify a topic of discussion, the duration, and speaking time per delegate. While there is no formal limit on the duration of a moderated caucus, a Chair will usually not entertain anything beyond 10-12 minutes. The Chair will individually call on delegates who wish to speak, and, due to the small number of delegates in a crisis committee, it is often possible for a delegate to speak twice in one moderated caucus.

### **SAY:**

“Motion for a six-minute moderated caucus with a 30-second speaking time to discuss the latest crisis update.”

## UNMODERATED CAUCUSES

Similar to unmoderated caucuses in traditional committees, delegates are able to leave their seats and discuss the topic freely. In crisis committees, however, unmoderated caucuses are usually for merging directives, rather than bloc-building. More information about directives will be discussed later. Unmoderated caucuses usually last no more than 10 minutes, and are more rare in crisis committees than in GAs or ECOSOCs.

### **SAY:**

“Motion for a ten-minute unmoderated caucus to merge directives on the table.”

## ROUND ROBINS

A round robin is a variation of the moderated caucus, where every delegate in the committee gives a speech in order of chairs around the room. The delegate proposing a round robin also specifies the speaking time per delegate, which is usually not more than one minute. Round robins are especially useful at the very beginning of a committee, since it allows each delegate to lay out their position and discuss what issues they believe to be most worthy of further discussion. They can also be useful after a major crisis update to allow all delegates to give their opinion on how to resolve the latest crisis.

**SAY:**

“Motion for a 30-second round robin.”

## YIELDS AND POINTS

Speeches in a crisis committee will rarely last more than a minute, so yielding to questions or to another delegate is often not possible or impractical. Yielding time back to the chair is sometimes optional, depending on the chairing style of the Dias.

Points still function largely the same as in traditional committees. Due to the small size of the committee, a delegate can simply say the point when another delegate is not speaking, instead of waiting for the Chair to recognize them.

## DIRECTIVES

Directives are similar to resolutions in traditional committees, with the notable exception that they do not include preambulatory clauses and are much shorter and more concise. Directives are generally written in response to a specific crisis update, and can be as short as two or three clauses. Once a directive has collected the required number of signatories, it is sent to the Dias. A delegate can then motion to introduce all directives on the table. Some Chairs may elect to set a cap on the maximum number of directives, and in which case an unmoderated caucus will often be necessary for delegates to compare similar directives and merge them.

## DIRECTIVES, CONTINUED

Directives are similar to resolutions in traditional committees, with the notable exception that they do not include preambulatory clauses and are much shorter and more concise. Directives are generally written in response to a specific crisis update, and can be as short as two or three clauses. Once a directive has collected the required number of signatories, it is sent to the Dias. A delegate can then motion to introduce all directives on the table. Some Chairs may elect to set a cap on the maximum number of directives, and in which case an unmoderated caucus will often be necessary for delegates to compare similar directives and merge them.

Once a directive has been introduced, a delegate may motion to enter into voting procedure. It is also possible to combine the two if the directives have broad support: a delegate may motion to introduce each directive and immediately enter into voting procedure after introduction. Unlike resolutions in traditional committees, there is no question-and-answer period. Instead, the motion to enter voting procedure will also specify a two-for, two-against speech and a speaking time for each speech. The Chair will then choose two delegates to speak in favor of the directive and two to speak against. Generally, the directive's sponsor or sponsors give the speeches in favor. If no delegates wish to speak against the directive, it automatically passes. Otherwise, after the for and against speeches, delegates will vote on the directive. Voting is similar to traditional committees: a delegate may vote in favor, against, or abstain. Roll call votes are not used in crisis.

During the for and against speeches, or if a moderated caucus occurs after a directive is introduced, a delegate may raise an objection that the sponsoring delegate may wish to address with an amendment. Amendments are similar to how they operate in traditional committees, but are more loosely structured — verbal agreement from all the sponsors is enough for it to be considered a friendly amendment. An unfriendly amendment must be voted on before being added to the directive. In some cases, the Chair may choose to vote on adding the amendment to the directive before voting on the directive as a whole, but this can vary with the Chair's discretion.

A delegate may propose to divide the question during voting. Dividing the question means they propose to split the directive into two or more parts, voting on each part individually. The committee must vote by majority to divide the question, and then sections of the directive will be voted on separately.

# MISCELLANEOUS PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

Occasionally, the crisis staff may introduce a “timed crisis,” where delegates have a limited amount of time to address a problem. In those cases, the Chair may further relax parliamentary procedure rules and skip parts of the formal voting procedure or allow a directive to be presented verbally without first being written.

Rarely, a crisis committee may enter into trial procedure if the committee wishes to put a delegate on trial for high crimes and misdemeanors. In those cases, the Chair will lay out the rules of trial, but generally, a delegate will be the prosecuting lawyer to present arguments against the accused, while another delegate will present arguments on behalf of the accused. The Chair may allow for additional arguments. To conclude the trial, delegates will vote to find the accused delegate innocent or guilty. This generally requires a two-thirds majority, and if found guilty, the offending delegate can be censured, meaning they lose voting or speaking privileges at the discretion of the Chair.

# CLOSING REMARKS

We hope that this guide will help you in your preparation from crisis committees at NAIMUN and beyond. The fast-paced, dynamic nature of crisis committees, while potentially daunting to new delegates, provides a unique engaging and substantive opportunity to engage with an evolving crisis. Mastering crisis procedures requires competition and practice— while specific procedures may still feel unfamiliar and confusing, your Dias will be there to support you as you navigate both the unique challenges and rewarding experiences crisis environments present.

Although an ever-evolving and constantly changing environment, crisis committee rooms should not be overly stressful or anxiety-inducing. Most importantly, you should enjoy the thrill of responding to crisis updates, the excitement of your crisis arcs developing and contributing to in-room situations, and the pride of working collaboratively and effectively as a committee to address the problems at hand. Come prepared for lively debate, creative solutions, and unforeseen events in the committee's simulated world at NAIMUN. We look forward to welcoming you to Washington D.C. in February!

**THE CONTENT OF THIS CRISIS  
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DIRECTOR-GENERAL  
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