



POSITION PAPER FORMAT

A position paper is a document describing a topic, your country's position, and possible solutions. It is important to write a position paper for each of your topics because it will help you gain insight on the issue and prepare you for the MUN conference. Writing a good position paper not only requires research skills, but also involves the ability to critically analyze the information you gather through your research.

Normally, you'll be writing two position papers for each topic, one to be sent to the host school to evaluate, the second for SiR and the MUN IS. The typical position paper that is sent to the host school is one to two pages long, consisting of the first three sections below: the background. Each is about three paragraphs in length. School's needs vary with some asking for more information, others for less. Some conferences (such as Cerritos) don't ask for position papers.

The format below is for SiR and the MUN IS to evaluate. You have more freedom to include more research and information without much restrictions. Basically, you write the MUN's position paper first, then you edit it down for submission.

Part One: Background of Topic

- Historical background of the topic;
- Who is directly involved;
- Why does the international community consider it a problem?

Part Two: United Nations Involvement

- How did the UN get involved?
- Organs, committees, agencies, or NGOs (Non-governmental Agencies) affiliated with the UN;
- Past United Nations actions;

Part Three: Country Policy and Actions

- Country's involvement with the topic;
- Country's position on the topic;
- Country's actions to deal with the problem;
- Country's position on possible solutions;

Research from delegate from the same committee can be shared, so long as it is rewritten to reflect your country's point-of-view. Much of the pertinent information can be found in the topic synopsis, but you can't just copy and paste—you need to do your own information and make it your own.

Part Four. Country Profile: (Include only with Whitney position papers. Host schools will hardly ever ask for this information)

Political Geography

1. Official name of country
2. Capital
3. Type of government [ex. "Representative Democracy", "One-Party State," etc.]
4. Type of economic system [ex. "Capitalist", "Socialist", etc.]
5. Names and position of major government officials (head of state, cabinet members, etc.)
6. Major political parties. Include a short description of each one
7. Major International Organization affiliations. Include a short description of each one. Five to ten. (do not just put in initials, you have to write out each by name).
8. Size of armed forces

Physical Geography

9. Climate (major types of climate, rainfall, vegetation)
10. Location, absolute (latitude and longitude) and relative (to physical features and other nations)
11. Physical features (mountains, deserts, plains, major rivers, coastlines, etc.)
12. The size of the country in square mi/km

Cultural Geography

13. Official language, other languages spoken
14. Ethnic composition
15. Major religions
16. Population, population growth rate, and population distribution
17. Major cities
18. Infant mortality rate and average life expectancy
19. Teachers and doctors per population

Economic Geography

20. GNP (Gross National Product) and GDP (Gross Domestic Product). Include for the total country and per capita.
21. Percent of arable land
22. Natural resources
23. Major agricultural and industrial products
24. Major exports and imports
25. Currency (include current exchange rate with the US dollar)
26. Balance of trade (include amounts in US currency of total exports and imports)
27. Historical events (time-line format only since about 1990)

Map

28. One full-page map of your nation
29. A map of your nation in geographical context

