



VMUN 2027

Position Paper

What is a Position Paper?

A position paper is a paper written by you, a delegate in a committee, to express your delegation's position on the topics of debate to the Dais team. A well-researched paper will be required of you at nearly every Model UN conference that you attend. For most committees at VMUN 2027, excluding UNSC and crisis committees, position papers are not mandatory but, nonetheless, strongly recommended. However, in every committee, position papers are required for delegates hoping to receive an award.

To submit your position paper, please download it as a PDF and email the file to your relevant Dais team by January 22, 2027, at 23:59 PT.

GUIDELINES

All papers should be written in a legible, serif font such as Times New Roman or EB Garamond with the size set to 12-point font. Each paper should be no longer than one page (excluding the bibliography), and for committees with two topics, delegates must write one for each topic. At the top left-hand corner of the first page, delegates should write the conference name, committee name, country/position title, name of the delegate, and topic. Each position paper should have a bibliography with sources cited in MLA format. A guide to MLA formatting can be found [here](#) from Purdue University.

RESEARCH

The first step in creating a comprehensive, logical position paper is researching the topic fully. The best way to begin this process is to read the backgrounder in its entirety. This will provide you with crucial information necessary to begin researching.

Throughout this process, delegates should first look to gain a deeper understanding of the topic as a whole, focusing on its historical development, previous solutions, and current situation. Your background guide, alongside news articles, organizational websites, and academic literature are all reliable and valuable sources of information for this purpose. Wikipedia can provide a good introduction and overview of relevant information as well, and provide links to additional references; however, it should not be cited in your position paper nor solely relied on. Additionally, you should also have a good grasp of general information on your delegation in particular. Basic knowledge—including your delegation's history, characteristics, and allies—will help orient your subsequent writing.

Delegates should then move on to breaking the overarching issue into approachable and researchable sub-topics. The provided background guides should have important aspects of the topic outlined and elaborated upon under its “Current Situation” sections, and delegates can reference these sections alongside their own research. The ultimate goal is to identify and understand a few sub-topics most relevant to your delegation so you can develop stances and solutions accordingly. This will require further research into your position’s historical and present relation to the issue, including through country-specific trends or its participation in previous initiatives in the topic. Understanding your nation’s focus and concerns will help you identify favoured paths of actions as presented in the backgrounder and allow you to construct your own solutions based on your nation’s previous actions.

For a more in-depth guide on research strategies, tools, and sources, please refer to the “How to Research” section in the “VMUN 2027 Delegate Guide” on our website’s “Resources” page.

Structure

A position paper is generally split into four sections or paragraphs. It begins with an introduction, followed by a description of your delegation’s stance and past actions. Afterwards, you can discuss potential solutions to the topic your nation agrees with, and finish the paper with an effective conclusion. Position papers pertaining to countries should use “we” when referring to the country. For example: “The Government of Canada is committed to transparency, and we hope other countries are too.” Delegates representing people, such as those in crisis committees and parliamentary committees, may use the first person in their papers.

I. Introductory Paragraph:

The first paragraph should serve as an introduction to your paper. To begin, you can employ a hook, such as an interesting statistic or a piece of rhetoric, to captivate readers and reinforce the gravity of the situation. No matter how you choose to start the paper, ensure that you are writing in the third person or using the first person plural to express your delegation’s position. Unless you are in a committee where delegates represent specific individuals (e.g. House of Commons, U.S. Senate, or crisis committees), refrain from using personal pronouns (“I”, “me”, or “my”) in your position paper.

It is advisable to provide some context to your audience about why the topic is of importance. Perhaps it has economic relevance, geopolitical implications, or socio-political influence; if so, elaborate on why this is important to your country and how this affects your country’s stance on the issue. Present the main sub-topics that your country is interested in—more simply, why your nation cares about the topic—and provide an overview of what these sub-topics entail. Explicitly outlining key areas of concern surrounding your topic is also essential, but try to keep the introductory paragraph brief.

While the purpose of a backgrounder is to provide information about the committee topic and an insight towards your assigned country's position, avoid reusing parts of the backgrounder. Your Director wrote the backgrounder and thus, will be more interested to hear new information and ideas presented to them.

II. Past Action/Country's Stance:

The second paragraph will detail any relevant historical actions of your country/position or other relevant bodies; it will also act as the introduction to your delegation's stance. This is where most of the background research that you have completed will be useful.

In this section, you should elaborate further on why this topic is important to your nation/position. Is it of regional, geographic, or economic impact? Does it specifically affect a demographic group in your nation? Does your country have a historical connection with the topic? Have any policies been previously implemented to address it? Note that this section should cover the historical background between your country and the topic to outline how the current situation came about. Otherwise, you should also aim to inform the Dais of the present issue. Be sure to provide sufficient detail on its contemporary relevance to your delegation without overly argumentative or opinionated writing.

Past UN actions, regional or domestic legislation, and NGOs that have been created to combat the issue should also be mentioned, along with commentary on whether your nation supported the actions and how they have affected your nation.

III. Potential Solutions

The third paragraph should focus on the potential solutions and next steps your country/position will support during the committee sessions at the conference. Outline your position's particular interest in the issue being discussed and begin to discuss what needs to be changed about the current interpretation of the situation. Cite the areas needing attention and provide insights on specific parts of the status quo.

Following this, you may want to focus on one area of particular concern for your country. Your solutions should be multifaceted, including both short- and long-term components, and you should be specific in how exactly your solution will be implemented if passed. You should also justify why your country/position would support your solution and why it is the most effective in remedying the issue.

IV. Conclusion

The final paragraph should serve as a conclusion to your position paper. Restate your country/position's stance towards the topic and any goals that your delegation wishes to achieve throughout the duration of the conference. Make sure to summarize your position in language that differs from your body paragraphs.

Crisis Position Papers

Given their speculative nature, crisis committees require a position paper format that varies significantly from standard committees. In this case, since delegates are primarily the representatives of individuals, rather than UN member states, crisis committees permit the use of personal pronouns ("I", "me", or "my") within their position papers. Furthermore, while writing from your position's perspective, you can use a fluid, relaxed structure to illustrate the main components of your paper: your position's beliefs and powers, alongside your position's plans immediately after the initiation of the crisis. You can separate your content into a compelling introduction, a main body paragraph, and an interesting conclusion. Be sure to detail your agenda and schemes, as well as the goals you hope to achieve within the first committee session. Summarize your perspective, including your objectives for the committee, as well as your personal ambitions, and take artistic liberties; nonetheless, remember to maintain historical accuracy, and root all of your position's thoughts in evidence.

Citations

One of the most important aspects of a position paper is your bibliography. Each paper should have its own bibliography, which is not included in the one-page limit. Please ensure that your bibliography is properly formatted in MLA format. There is an example below on how to properly cite sources.

Citing a Page on a Website:

1. Last Name, First Name. "Document Title." Title of Website. Date, URL.

Example:

1. Levin, Rachel. "Can California Tourism Survive Climate Change?." The New York Times. October 26, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/26/travel/california-tourism-climate-change.html>.

Sample Papers

SAMPLE POSITION PAPER

Below is an edited example of a position paper, written for the European Union (EU) at a previous iteration of VMUN. The work below is that of a delegate, and therefore, does not represent the views of this conference or its staff.

Sample Position Paper:**Committee: European Union (EU)****Country: Austria****Topic A: Reform of the Monetary Union**

A hallmark of the European Union (EU) is the Eurozone, a monetary union consisting of nineteen states. However, after several financial crises, a number of Eurozone countries are struggling to stay out of debt and remain financially stable. Presently, Europe is working to solve these issues through bailout programs and the intervention of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), but these efforts have been largely stalled due to differences in policies and a lack of consensus within the EU. Austria sees it necessary that the EU boost regional economies and help reform government financial policies, but is concerned that continued loans and bailouts will lead to detrimental outcomes domestically.

The October 2017 election of the coalition government in Austria of the conservative Österreichische Volkspartei (ÖVP) and its junior partner, the far-right Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs (FPÖ), has led Austrian policy on the financial issues of Europe to grow intolerant of continued bailouts and failure of austerity measures. If nations are expected to quickly recover from the ongoing crisis, drastic austerity measures should be lifted as soon as possible. In an interview with an Austrian newspaper, previous Austrian finance minister and ÖVP member Hans Jörg Schelling proposed a new \$1 billion European investment program in Greece. This aimed to generate sustainable economic growth and improve employment, allowing Greece to grow economically before reforms take place. In order to achieve economic prosperity across the European community, new paths towards reform must be debated within the EU.

Austria has long supported measures to prevent Greece's financial collapse, including supporting all European bailout funds to Greece in recent years. To maintain the Eurozone and the European project, Austria believes that the only effective solution would be to lift the austerity measures and prerequisites imposed on nations. Providing economic help to boost economies and reduce unemployment would ensure that reforms to fiscal policies and debt payments can subsequently be made. Removing the effect of austerity measures on a country's recovery and providing economic growth and employment programs is essential; such actions create a foundation on top of which countries can reform their fiscal policy and eventually pay their debts. Also, removing or decreasing requirements such as the 3.5% of the GDP budget surplus can allow economic growth before reform. Therefore, to obtain complete recovery from the crisis, synchronized austerity measures and major reforms prevent European nations from achieving the necessary economic growth and restoration.

Austria, despite concerns brought about by its recent election, remains committed to the European Union and to helping other nations. The nation has continued to support EU measures to repair the fragile financial situation within the region. Recognizing the detriments of major reform and austerity measures, Austria believes in prioritizing economic growth to recover from present issues.

Bibliography

Barkin, Noah. "What Austria's Election Says About Europe's Political Landscape." *Reuters*. October 15, 2017, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-austria-election-europe/what-austrias-election-says-about-europe-political-landscape-idUSKBN1CK0QT>.

Hope, K. "Greece Hopes Reforms Deal Will Smooth Bailout Exit." *Financial Times*. December 3, 2017, <https://www.ft.com/content/58465626-d814-11e7-a039-c64b1c09b482>

Matthews, Dylan. "The Greek Crisis: 9 Questions You Were Too Embarrassed to Ask." *Vox*. June 30, 2015, <https://www.vox.com/2015/6/30/8867939/greece-economic-crisis>.

Murphy, Francois, and Shadia Nasralla. "Austria's Kurz Says Pro-EU Stance Secured In Deal With Far-Right." *Reuters*. December 14, 2017, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-austria-politics/austrias-kurz-says-proeu-stance-secured-in-deal-with-far-right-idUSKBN1E81J2>

Reuters Staff. "Austrian Parliament Backs Greek Bailout." *Reuters*. August 18, 2015, <https://www.reuters.com/article/eurozone-greece-bailout-austria/austrian-parliament-backs-greek-bailout-idUSL5N10T18D20150818>

Reuters Staff. "EU Should Consider Billion-Euro Investment Boost for Greece - Austrian Finmin." *Reuters*. April 10, 2017, <https://www.reuters.com/article/greece-bailout-austria/eu-should-consider-billion-euroinvestment-boost-for-greece-austrian-finmin-idUSL8N1HI0ZE>

SAMPLE CRISIS POSITION PAPER

Below is an edited example of a crisis position paper, written for the Historical Crisis Committee (HCC) at a previous iteration of VMUN. The work below is that of a delegate, and therefore, does not represent the views of this conference or its staff.

Committee: Historical Crisis Committee

Topic: The Japanese Warring States, 1560

Position: Uesugi Kenshin

As one clan falls, another clan rises. Such is the case of the death of Imagawa Yoshimoto and the rise of Oda Nobunaga. Only during such tumult could I, Uesugi Kenshin take advantage of and become the shogun. As one of the most powerful daimyos in Japan, if not the most powerful, I must march my way to Kyoto and declare myself shogun. Anyone who stands in my way shall be eliminated.

However, I cannot do so at my current stage. I need to create many strategic alliances in order to march to Kyoto as swiftly as possible. I cannot risk creating any conflicts that could divert my attention from the march. As of now, the immediate conflict that must be dealt with is my battles with the Takaeda and Go-Hojo clans. The border skirmishes with the Go-Hojo and Takaeda clans are significantly hindering my ability to march to Kyoto. With the adoption of Go-Hojo's 7th son now named Uesugi Kagetora as my heir, I should have no difficulty negotiating peace with Go-Hojo Ujiyasu. On the other hand, Takaeda Shingen, who, despite being my rival, is also a man whom I deeply respect, may be a challenge. I've heard he wants to invade the weakened Imagawa lands. I could use this opportunity to negotiate for a temporary truce: while he invades Imagawa lands, I take Hida province. I could use it as a safe passage for my march to both avoid Takaeda troops and divert his attention towards his march to Kyoto. If I am unable to take the Hida province, I must march through the Kaga province of the Ikko-Ikki. Instead of fighting the Ikko-Ikki, I must befriend them as fellow buddhists, and declare myself as Bishamonten, the buddhist god of war. This plan should at least let me be granted permission for a safe passage through their territory. Conversely, the Asakura are much less of a threat. I can easily request for them to either submit to me as a vassal, and enter into an alliance together or defeat them. Only one clan stands in my way: the Azai. Because of their increasing distrust with the Rokkaku clan, I can offer support to them in exchange for a safe passage through to Kyoto. However, as I march to Kyoto, I must also ensure the safety of my northern flank. An arranged marriage with the Date clan will be the most effective way to do so. I shall leave one division within my territory and create as many divisions as possible to prevent potential invasions.

Once I become shogun, I shall make all clans submit to me. Those who want to join me and become my retainers shall be given rewards. I shall go to war with those who refuse and crush them with my overwhelming power. With the help of the Ikko-Ikki, I shall declare Japan a buddhist state and further expand my influence. At the same time though, I do want to keep our amicable relationships with foreigners however I do not want a rise of christianity in Japan. For too long has Japan been divided! It is time to unite Japan by taking Kyoto first and then deal with everyone else. Only then can I, Uesugi Kenshin, be ruler of Japan!

Bibliography

Elison, George, and Bardwell L. Smith. *Warlords, Artists, & Commoners: Japan in the Sixteenth Century*. Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1981.

Hall, John Whitney, Nagahara Keiji and Kozo Yamamura, eds. *Japan Before Tokugawa*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1981.

Hawkins, V. (2015, September 25). The Battle of Kawanakajima. Retrieved from <https://warfarehistorynetwork.com/2015/09/25/the-battle-of-kawanakajima/>. Inoue, Yasushi, and Yoko Riley. *The Samurai Banner of Furin Kazan*. Tokyo: Tuttle Pub, 2005.

Kure, Mitsuo. *Samurai: An Illustrated History*. Boston: Tuttle Pub, 2002. *Rekishi Gunzô Shirizu #51, Sengoku no Kassen Taizen*. (in Japanese), Japan: Gakken, 1997. Sato, Hiroaki. *Legends of the Samurai*. Woodstock: Overlook 1995. 0879516194 *Suzuki, Daisetz T. *Zen and Japanese Culture*, revised and enlarged. (First published as *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture*. Kyoto, 1938) Princeton University Press, 1970.

Turnbull, Stephen R. *Kawanakajima 1553-64: Samurai Power Struggle*. (Praeger illustrated military history series.) Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2005. Turnbull, Stephen R. *War in Japan 1467-1615*. Oxford: Osprey, 2002.

