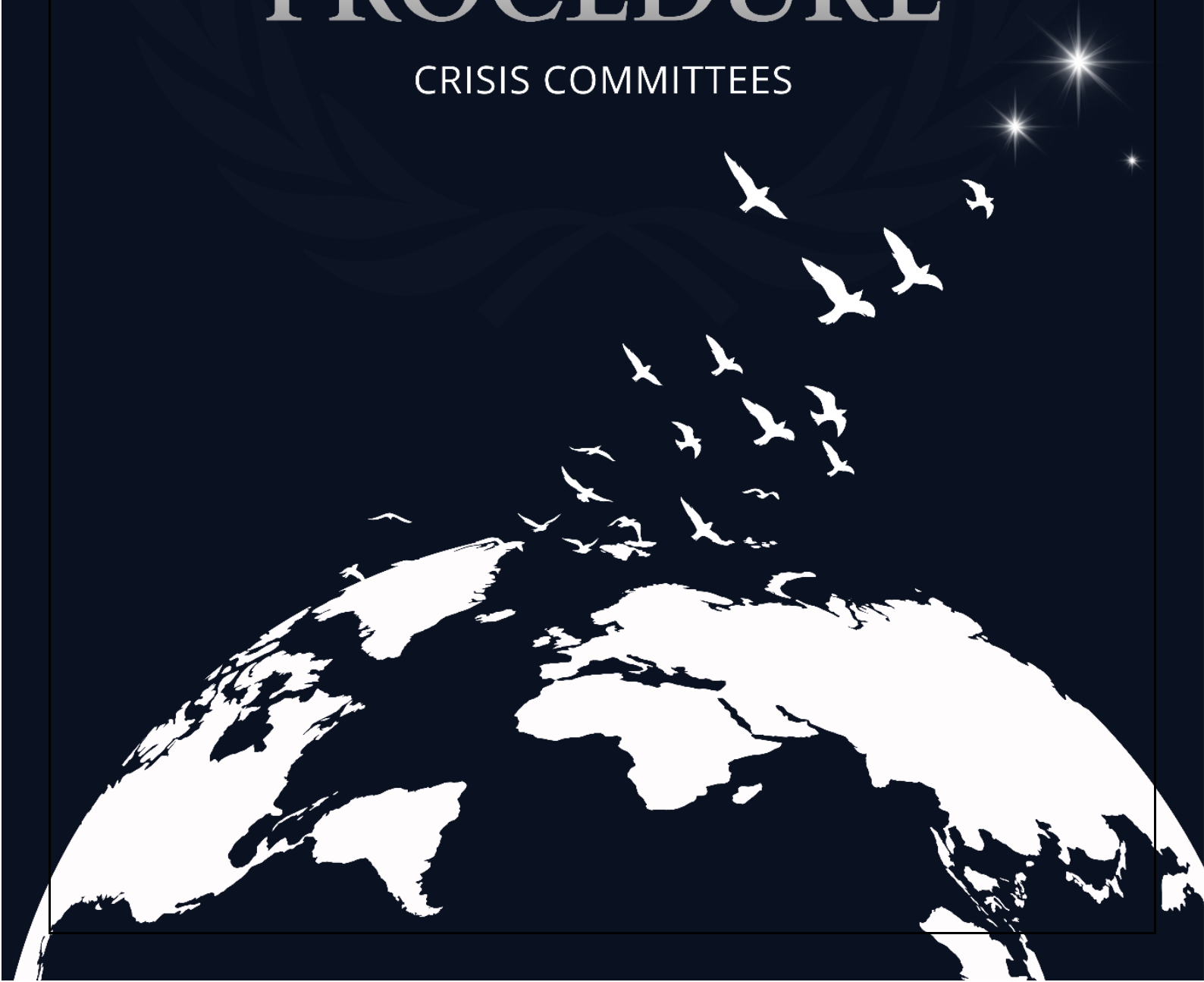




VIDYAGYAN SITAPUR MODEL UNITED NATIONS

RULES OF PROCEDURE

CRISIS COMMITTEES



I.WHAT IS A CRISES COMMITTEE?

A Crisis Committee is a dynamic form of Model United Nations where delegates take the roles of ministers, diplomats, military officials, political leaders, or other influential people who must react to an unfolding emergency.

Unlike traditional MUN committees, Crisis Committees are not necessarily based in existing United Nations institutions. They may take place in presidential cabinets, war councils, emergency summits, advisory bodies, or completely fictional institutions.

Crisis Committees can take place in historical, contemporary, fictional, or futuristic settings. Every delegate assumes a specific character with individual goals, responsibilities, resources, and areas of authority. These differences can have a major impact on the actions a delegate can take and the strategies they might pursue.

For example, in a Crisis Committee on the 1973 Oil Crisis, delegates could represent political leaders, diplomats, economic officials, and representatives of major oil-producing and oil-consuming states. Each character would have distinct responsibilities and portfolio powers, such as managing foreign relations, regulating energy supplies, or shaping economic policy, allowing their decisions to influence the course of the international crisis.

II. UNDERSTANDING THE CRISIS

At the beginning of a Crisis Committee, each delegate receives a role that sets out their responsibilities, goals, and portfolio powers.

The delegate's powers determine the decisions and actions the delegate can take within the simulation.

Unlike a traditional MUN committee, where the debate generally revolves around pre-existing policy positions, Crisis Committees are continuously evolving. Every decision a delegate makes can fundamentally change the direction of the simulation.

In a simulation of the 1973 Oil Crisis, for example, an oil-producing state's representative might restrict oil exports, while an economic official from an oil-importing country might introduce measures to manage shortages. The consequences of these decisions can create new developments and cause the simulation to diverge from the historical course of events.

III. HOW IS A CRISIS COMMITTEE DIFFERENT FROM A STANDARD MUN COMMITTEE?

The fundamental differences between Crisis Committees and traditional MUN committees can be understood through three elements: time, debate, and output.

1. Time

Time passes much more rapidly within a Crisis Committee than it does. Several hours, days, or even weeks can pass within the simulation for a relatively short period of discussion. As a result, delegates must make decisions quickly and anticipate their consequences.

2. Debate

Crisis debate is generally more fluid and spontaneous than debate in a conventional MUN committee. Rather than relying heavily to formal motions and structured speaker lists, Crisis Committees often operate through a continuous moderated discussion in which the dais repeatedly recognizes delegates for short interventions. This allows the committee to respond rapidly to new information and changing circumstances.

3. Output

The most significant difference involves what delegates produce. Traditional MUN committees generally culminate in draft resolutions and resolutions. Crisis Committees, by contrast, rely on instruments such as directives, communiques, crisis notes, and press releases.

This allows delegates to directly influence the simulated world. Their effects are reflected in subsequent crisis updates, which means that the events of the simulation can change dramatically based on delegate actions.

It is important to remember that the events of the simulation may diverge significantly from historical reality because delegates' decisions are what determine the direction of the crisis.

IV. RULES OF PROCEDURE

Crisis Committees generally operate under a less rigid procedural framework than traditional MUN committees. Exactly what rules apply depends heavily on the conference and the preferences of the dais. The dais typically determines the pace of debate, speaking time, voting procedures, and the circumstances under which different forms of debate are introduced.

Delegates communicate extensively with the dais and crisis staff through crisis notes and directives. Many actions can be undertaken on an individual rather than collective basis. As a result, traditional parliamentary procedure plays a considerably smaller role.

V. DELEGATE COMMUNICATION

One of the most important mechanisms of a Crisis Committee is the crisis note. Delegates use crisis notes to communicate privately with the dais and request information or initiate actions in the fictional world.

A crisis note may be informational, such as:

- “What is the current level of public support for the government?”
or contain a specific action, such as:
- “Deploy 5,000 troops to the northern border and establish defensive positions.”

The dais evaluates the feasibility and consequences of the proposed action and incorporates the results into subsequent crisis updates.

Since delegates may submit several actions during a session, organization is essential. Some conferences use a crisis pad, digital submission system, or docket to organize these communications.

VI. DEBATE IN A CRISIS COMMITTEE

The primary form of debate in many Crisis Committees is the perpetual moderated caucus. Unlike traditional MUN procedure, where delegates may have to formally establish a moderated caucus through a motion and vote, the dais can continually recognize delegates to speak for short periods, speaking time usually being approximately thirty seconds to one minute.

Delegates raise their placards and the dais selects speakers based on the direction and requirements of the discussion. Other forms of debate may also be employed.

1. Round Robin

A Round Robin gives every delegate an opportunity to speak once, generally in a predetermined order, on a specific question or issue. This is particularly useful at the beginning of a session or immediately following a major crisis update, since it allows every participant an opportunity to outline their position.

2. Moderated Caucus

A Moderated Caucus focuses discussion on a particular dimension of the crisis. Delegates speak for a predetermined period, usually thirty seconds or one minute, while the dais determines the speaking order. This allows the committee to concentrate on a particular issue rather than discussing the crisis in general.

3. Unmoderated Caucus

An Unmoderated Caucus suspends structured debate and allows delegates to move around the room and negotiate informally. Delegates may use this time to form alliances, exchange intelligence, negotiate agreements, coordinate joint directives, and formulate private strategies.

Unmoderated caucuses are particularly valuable after major developments, since delegates often need time to re-evaluate their strategies and coordinate their next actions. The format of debate is always flexible, however. The dais may introduce or modify procedures depending on the demands of the crisis.

Delegates are therefore always encouraged to remain adaptable and continuously observe developments within the simulation.

VII. VOTING

Unlike conventional MUN committees, Crisis Committees generally do not vote on traditional draft resolutions. Voting is usually conducted on public deliverables such as public directives, communiques, or press releases.

Voting procedures are generally faster and less formal. When a delegate proposes a directive for committee consideration, it may be introduced and put to a vote before the committee returns to ordinary debate. If the directive receives the required support, it is passed to the crisis staff and incorporated into the fictional timeline.

VIII. THE ROLE OF DELEGATES

Every delegate represents a particular individual, office, or institution, and therefore has a distinct set of objectives, responsibilities, relationships, and resources. This makes Crisis Committees substantially more individualistic than traditional MUN committees. Delegates are not necessarily required to pursue a single unified outcome; rather, they are often encouraged to advance the interests of their assigned character.

Depending on the role, this can involve negotiation, coalition-building, strategic manipulation, intelligence-gathering, political manoeuvring, or even betrayal. A delegate's success therefore depends not only on their speaking abilities but also on an understanding of the character they are representing, and the resources they have at their disposal.

IX. CHARACTER GOALS

Every role is generally accompanied by a set of objectives that reflect the interests and priorities of the character being portrayed. These objectives can vary considerably.

A character may be primarily concerned with preserving political stability or preventing war. Another character may seek to expand their personal authority, strengthen their institution, promote a particular ideology, or secure control over government resources.

Delegates should therefore develop strategies that reflect their character's individual motivations rather than simply trying to fulfil the interests of the committee. These objectives should influence both public debate and private actions.

X. PORTFOLIO POWERS

Portfolio powers are the specific authorities associated with a delegate's role. They determine what a character can realistically accomplish without needing the authorization of the committee.

For example:

- A military commander may be able to deploy troops or reorganize military units.
- A finance minister may control government expenditure, taxation, or financial policy.
- A Foreign Minister may conduct diplomatic negotiations.
- An intelligence official may possess access to intelligence networks or covert operations.

Portfolio powers are particularly important because they allow delegates to submit private directives based on the authority associated with their position.

If there is uncertainty regarding the limits of a portfolio, delegates should communicate with the dais and clarify what their character is capable of doing.

XI. CRISIS DELIVERABLES

Deliverables are the primary mechanisms by which delegates influence the simulated world. The major forms of deliverables include:

- Directives
- Communiqués
- Press Releases

Each deliverable should generally contain a clear title, a type, sponsor or sponsors, and where applicable, required signatories.

XII. PUBLIC DIRECTIVES

A public directive is a committee-wide proposal that requires approval through a vote. It describes a concrete course of action that the committee intends to take in response to the crisis.

Public directives must be realistic, relevant to the crisis, and within the authority of the committee, with clear structure, and with the required number of sponsors and signatories.

Typically, a public directive requires at least one sponsor and a specified number of signatories, often approximately one-fifth of the committee. Once approved, the directive becomes part of the simulated world, and its consequences are determined by the dais and crisis staff.

XIII. PRIVATE DIRECTIVES

A private directive is submitted directly to the dais without being presented to the entire committee. Its contents are generally only known to the sponsoring delegate and crisis staff.

Private directives are especially useful for exploiting portfolio powers, conducting confidential operations, gathering intelligence, influencing others, or pursuing personal objectives without revealing intentions to the rest of the committee. They can therefore become a central component of strategic play.

XIV. JOINT PRIVATE DIRECTIVES

Joint private directives are confidential actions undertaken collaboratively by a small group of delegates, generally no more than three participants.

By combining their portfolio powers, delegates can execute more sophisticated operations than any one character could do on their own. Since these directives remain private, they also allow delegates to cooperate without revealing plans to the wider committee.

XV. COMMUNIQUES

A communique is a formal message directed towards another individual, institution, organization, government, or committee. They can be either public or private, depending on the circumstances. The recipient institution must be clearly identified, as well as the contents of the message.

In a Joint Crisis Committee, communiques take on added importance since they provide a formal mechanism for communication between delegates occupying opposing rooms. The response can come from the recipient delegate, or, where appropriate, from the dais and crisis staff.

XVI. PRESS RELEASES

Press releases are official statements intended for the fictional population represented within the simulation.

They can be used to shape public opinion, defend government decisions, justify controversial actions, influence political sentiment, promote a particular narrative, undermine opponents, or build public support.

Since press releases become part of the public record of the fictional world, delegates should consider both their immediate political impact and potential long-term consequences.

XVII. PREPARING FOR A CRISIS COMMITTEE

Preparation is essential and should begin well before the conference.

Delegates should do thorough research into three interconnected areas:

- The character they are representing
- The position or institution associated with the character
- The historical, political, military, or fictional context that the crisis is based on
- It is especially important to understand the character's authority, relationships, objectives, resources, and limitations.
- Delegates should also identify the portfolio powers available to them and consider how those powers could be expanded through alliances, negotiations, or successful directives.
- A strong position paper should therefore do more than summarize historical events; it should establish the character's objectives, priorities, strategic outlook, and potential courses of action.

Ultimately, success in a Crisis Committee requires three qualities: preparation, creativity, and adaptability.

Delegates should enter the room with a coherent strategic plan, but they should not be so committed to that plan that they cannot respond to unexpected developments. Since the crisis is always evolving, the strongest strategies are those that blend preparation with adaptability to new developments.