

MODEL UN CRISIS KIT PART 1

HOW TO RESEARCH YOUR ROLE

& WRITE A POSITION PAPER

LEVEL: For Intermediate MUN Delegates, Ages: 14 - 18



How to Research Your Role

Your Crisis Toolkit

Any information you can find about your crisis, your portfolio, or your character could be useful in committee. Make sure before walking into a committee that you can answer all of the following questions to make sure you have all the “tools” you need to rock your crisis. If you can’t find any of these answers after extensive research, you’ll need to decide what’s best for each of these items!

Guiding Questions

What is your job? What responsibilities does that job entail, and what are you in charge of?

Have you had any past relevant jobs in government, in the military, as a business leader, or some other public figure role that you could now leverage through past contacts and expertise?

Do you have any family? Spouses, parents, children, and siblings can be used both for you and against you in a crisis. Also, do you have any remarkable financial resources?

Do you have any political allies or other important links to people in your country? Any special relationships with foreign governments?

What is the currency, and how does that compare to currencies you’re familiar with (so you can appropriately allocate resources)? What weapons were used in your country during this time? What other time-dependent specifics do you need to consider? (if your crisis is historical).

What does your country look like? Find major cities, military installations, topography, and border crossings on a map to bring with you.

What is your personality? If you can’t find out through your research, pick a consistent personality and political leaning that you’ll represent throughout the crisis.

What if your character is made up?

With fantasy committee, committees from very far back in history, or committees of informal organizations, it’s possible your character will be made up. If your character does not exist, check the background guide to see if the chair has written position blocs or character bios. If not, it is important to see the title of your character and consider the topic and committee you are in. A good step is to check on the actions and opinions of previous or current real people who may have held the same position, and base your ideas on that real person. If the position never existed, it’s on you to determine what your portfolio might be, and what your policies are. Feel free to be creative and design your own character. As long as your crisis staff allows it, you’re good!

How to Write a Crisis Position Paper

Many conferences may require you to submit a position paper for a crisis committee. These are very different from traditional MUN position papers, because now you're representing a person, rather than a Member State. Crisis Committees also are discussing topics more fixed in time than ongoing global issues like "Extreme Hunger" so much of the time spent on historical context and "Past International Action" is irrelevant here. Instead, the entire paper should be a coherent narrative hitting on the major sub-issues of the topic, and proposing solutions for each of them— basically just the Topic Background and Possible Solutions sections of a normal Position Paper.

Crisis position papers are much more flexible in structure.

Keep in mind:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the crisis, so your Chair knows you researched. Feel free to write with the bias of the character you're representing and using the language of the time.
2. Talk about what you think will be the major sub-issues of the crisis, and propose solutions for each of them that your character would support. (What are the economic, political, military, social, and other subtopics?)
3. Talk about what you want the committee to do, but also discuss how your character and your office are critical to solving the crisis. (Do you have any special responsibilities pertaining to this crisis?)
4. Write in first person, and with your character's bias. Feel free to get more creative and less diplomatic than normal Position Papers, and use rhetoric if you want to.

Sample Crisis Position Paper

Committee: US National Security Council

Topic: The Crisis in Ukraine

Position: James Clapper, Director of National Intelligence

School: Best Delegate High School

The current situation in Ukraine and Crimea stems from the issue of the country's European Union membership. Former Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich, a supporter of Ukraine siding with Russia, was removed from his office by Verkhovna Rada, after he vetoed an EU agreement and ordered special police forces to suppress the protesters against his policies. On March 16th, Crimea seceded from Ukraine after a largely criticized and boycotted vote. This peninsula provides a strategic location for Russia, who has jurisdiction over a Crimean port city named Sevastopol. Currently, militants are fighting over Donetsk Airport with heavy shelling and artillery fire, largely ignoring the cease-fire signed on September 5th. Although Petro Poroshenko, the current Ukrainian president, reported that about 70% of Russian troops have withdrawn, the lack of progress in peace talks in Italy between Russia and Ukraine only continues the violence that has totaled over 3,500 deaths, according to the United Nations. Peace and stability in Ukraine is of vital US interest for three core reasons: countering Russian expansionism toward Eastern Europe, economic stability in the energy market for our European allies, and naval security in the Black Sea.

Looking to our upcoming discussions as the National Security Council, I must express my strongest sentiment that we must take more of a proactive approach to this crisis. We have exhausted our diplomatic options; now we must step up our support for Ukrainian forces to protect their territory. Our involvement should take three different forms, leveraging our strategic capabilities in the region to counter Russian aggression. First, we must continue to support the Ukrainian army, but with expanded support in the form of lethal defense weapons. Secondly, we must expand our degree of intelligence sharing with Ukrainian intelligence forces. We have assets and information critical to the Ukrainians and they have information relevant to our interests, however without a policy of expanded intel sharing we will miss out on a strong opportunity to support Ukraine. Third, we must revitalize our intelligence capabilities concerning Russia. While during the Cold War we had enormous intelligence assets and policy experts on Russia, as well as Russian speakers throughout our intelligence organizations, we have significantly scaled back these capabilities to support Counter-Terrorism initiatives. We need more funding, expertise, and intelligence assets to counter this renewed Russian threat and implant more agents within Eastern-European countries. Only through these actions spearheaded by our Directorate of National Intelligence can be combat the Russian threat to our interests and our allies.

Yours Truly,
James R. Clapper
Director of National Intelligence



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