

# RiMUN2011

## Lesson III

Writing a position paper



**RADBOUD INTERNATIONAL  
MODEL UNITED NATIONS  
CONFERENCE**



United  
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## LESSON III: WRITING A POSITION PAPER

A position paper is not only obligatory in order to be taken into consideration for winning an award, it is also very useful for your preparation. A position paper (PP) is a brief document that clearly and persuasively presents your country's position on a given topic and proposes your country's solution to the issue at hand. It will help you define your country's policy. Also, since PP's will be made available to all participants in your committee, it allows you and others to identify potential allies.

Position papers are usually one to one-and-a-half pages in length. Your position paper should include a brief introduction followed by a comprehensive breakdown of your country's position on the topics that are being discussed by the committee. A good position paper will not only provide facts but also make proposals for resolutions.

### **A good position paper will include:**

- A brief introduction to your country and its history concerning the topic and committee;
- How the issue affects your country;
- Your country's policies with respect to the issue and your country's justification for these policies;
- Statistics to back up your country's position on the issue;
- Actions taken by your government with regard to the issue;
- Conventions and resolutions that your country has signed or ratified;
- UN actions that your country supported or opposed;
- What your country believes should be done to address the issue;
- What your country would like to accomplish in the committee's resolution; and
- How the positions of other countries affect your country's position.

### **Format Position Paper**

At the top of the page, you must always state the committee, topic, the country you are representing, and the university you are from. You are expected to write half a page of text per topic. This excludes headings, sources and the required information mentioned above. Every PP has a distinct three-paragraph structure.

### **Some extra Position Paper Tips**

Keep it simple: to communicate strongly and effectively, avoid flowery wording and stick to uncomplicated language and sentence structure.

Make it official: try to use the seal of your country or create an 'official' letterhead for your position paper. The more realistic it looks, the more others will want to read it.

Get organized: give each separate idea or proposal its own paragraph. Make sure each paragraph starts with a topic sentence.

Cite your sources: use footnotes or endnotes to show where you found your facts and statistics. If you are unfamiliar with bibliographic form, look up the Modern Language Association (MLA) guidelines.

Read and reread: leave time to edit your position paper. Ask yourself if the organization of the paper makes sense and double-check your spelling and grammar.

Speech! Do you plan to make an opening statement at your conference? A good position paper makes a great introductory speech. During debate, a good position paper will also help you to stick to your country's policies.

Use bullets: try not to let your proposals become lost in a sea of information. For speechmaking, create a bulleted list of your proposals along with your most important facts and statistics so that you will not lose time looking for them during debate.

Lesson two in our RiMUN Delegate Series will focus on Effective Negotiation Techniques.