



# BACKGROUND GUIDE



## ECOSOC

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

---

**SMIS MUN '25**

**IMAGINE · INSPIRE · INNOVATE**

# **LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE BOARD**



Greetings delegates,

It is with great pleasure that we, the Executive Board for ECOSOC present to you the consolidated background guide on the following agendas, "Developing Frameworks Regarding International and Regional Energy Security and Sharing". There is a lot of matter covered by the background guide itself, however, we hope this acts as only a catalyst for furthering your research, and not limited to just this guide.

The delegates are expected to do thorough research about the agenda item in order to gain a solid understanding of what the discourse in committee is going to revolve around. We, the Executive Board can only moderate debate, however, it is you that can facilitate and control the same.

At any point during your research, do not hesitate to contact the Executive Board Members for clarifications. Please note this guide cannot be used as proof during the committee proceedings under any circumstance. The idea of a Model UN is a debate competition, but the best way to approach it is with a learner's mindset. You are here to learn about how the world works, and the powers that control it. Take this as a learning experience, meet new people, and have a good time. All the best for your research, and we hope to see you at Sancta Maria Model United Nations 2025.

Best regards,

The Executive Board.

Chair - Anish Raja

Vice Chair - Rusheel Alla

# GUIDELINES



- Read the entirety of the background guide in the order it was written. Make sure to highlight the names of specific treaties, documents, resolutions, conventions, international bodies, events and any other specific incidents so that you can get back to them later and do a lot more thorough research .
- Understand some of the basic details regarding the country that you've been allotted whether this be the capital, current affairs regarding geopolitical situation, political hierarchy etc. While not strictly necessary, you never know when this can turn out to be handy. Geography Now's A - Z Country List has been a particularly helpful resource for this.
- Use a search engine of your choice to create as many tabs as possible for the highlighted terms from your background guide. Wikipedia or a YouTube video act as a great way to get a brief summary of the incidents at hand but such sources (especially Wikipedia articles) cannot be used in committee as sources.
- Delve into deeper research regarding the particular position of your allocation with the agenda at hand. Try searching for the voting stances of your allocation in related conventions and understanding the reasons for voting as so. UN Press Releases are also a helpful source for this matter.

# GUIDELINES



- Find the website for the foreign ministry of the country you have been assigned alongside the "Permanent Mission of COUNTRY to the United Nations" website and search for a key term relating to the agenda, this should often give you statements from recent press conferences or UN committee sessions that can act as valuable sources of information in forming a position.
- Keep a handy copy of the Charter of the United Nations, whether as a .pdf file extension or a physical copy works. This contains the founding principles of the United Nations and contains articles that lay out the mandate of the six bodies that the United Nations is primarily divided into. Spend some additional time researching the specific mandate and functions of the committee that you have been assigned.
- The Executive Board may ask for the source of a statement that a delegate makes in committee either during a Point of Order circumstance or if said statement stands to be of interest to the Executive Board. Therefore it is recommended that delegates keep track of their sources when making / disputing a claim and also ensure their validity. Please do remember that while you as a delegate are allowed to cite any source you wish during committee.



# **HIERARCHY OF EVIDENCE**

Evidence can be presented from a wide variety of sources but not all sources are treated as equal. Here's the hierarchy in which evidence is categorised:

**Tier 1 :** Includes any publication, statement, resolution, or document released by any of the Nations' official organs or committees; any publication, statement, or document released by a UN member state in its own capacity. The evidence falling in this tier is considered most reliable during the simulation.

**Tier 2 :** Includes: any news article published by any official media source that is owned and controlled by a UN member state. E.g.: Xinhua News (China), Prasar Bharti (India), BBC (United Kingdom) etcetera. The evidence falling in this tier is considered sufficiently reliable in case no other evidence from any Tier 1 source is available on that particular fact, event, or situation.

**Tier 3 :** Includes: any publication from news sources of international repute such as Reuters, The New York Times, Agence-France Presse, etcetera. The evidence falling under this tier is considered the least reliable for the purposes of this simulation. Yet, if no better source is available in a certain scenario, it may be considered.

# **FOREIGN POLICY AND FOREIGN RELATIONS**



Foreign policy, in simple terms, is what your country aims to achieve in regards to the issue at hand or in general with its relations with other countries.

## **1. What role must foreign policy play in your research?**

Understanding the foreign policy of your country must be a checkbox that you tick off at the very beginning of your research. Your foreign policy should dictate everything from the arguments you make, the reasoning you give for making those arguments, and the actions you take in the Council.

## **2. Where do I look to find foreign policy?**

Most of the time, foreign policy is not explicitly stated. It must be inferred from the actions and statements issued by the country. Reading the meeting records from previous meetings of UNSC (or any other UN body where your country might have spoken on the issue) is a great place to start. If such records are unavailable, look for statements from your country's Foreign Ministry (or equivalent like Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry for Foreign Affairs etcetera) and top leadership (PM, Pres., Secretary of State, Defense Minister).

# **FOREIGN POLICY AND FOREIGN RELATIONS**



Foreign Relations on the other hand refers to the diplomatic ties that one country has with another and considers elements such as the mutual presence of embassies, consulates, ambassadors & diplomatic dialogue. More often than not, foreign policy is what will be of your primary concern during your MUN but it is important to also consider any extremities in your allotted country's foreign relations.

# **RULES OF PROCEDURE**



ROP, or rules of procedure are the set rules to be followed whilst in committee session. Rules of procedure are generally the same for all simulated conferences, and some parts can be amended based on the executive board of that specific conference. Since the ROP is universally followed, the link below will take you to a cheat sheet which you can use for future reference as well.

# POINTS



## 1. Point of Parliamentary Enquiry

**Purpose:** Used when a delegate has an enquiry regarding the parliamentary procedure or any other proceedings of the committee.

**Usage:** “Point of Parliamentary Enquiry.” This can be used at any time but cannot interrupt a speaker.

## 2. Point of Order

**Purpose:** Used when there is a mistake in the rules of procedure or when there is a factual inaccuracy in a statement given.

**Usage:** “Point of Order.” This can be used at any point in time but cannot interrupt a speaker.

## 3. Point of Personal Privilege

**Purpose:** Ensures that delegates are comfortable and able to perform. If a delegate has any discomfort, this may be raised (e.g., washroom or inaudibility).

**Usage:** “Point of Personal Privilege – [reason].” This may interrupt a speaker only in the case of inaudibility.

## 4. Point of Information

**Purpose:** Used when a delegate seeks to ask a question to another delegate who is delivering a speech.

**Usage:** The delegate need not say anything. They may just nudge or indicate to the chair they would like to ask a POI when the chair asks for it.

# POINTS



## 5. Request to Follow Up

**Purpose:** Used when a delegate wants to follow up on the POI asked by them by asking another question.

**Usage:** “Request to follow up.” This may be said only after the first delegate has finished answering. It is up to the chair to allow or deny the follow-up.

## 6. Right to Reply

**Purpose:** Used when a statement given by a delegate is offensive to the delegate’s country or them personally.

**Usage:** “Right to Reply.” This may be raised at any time but may not interrupt a speaker.

# **MOTIONS**



## **1. Motion to open the floor for debate**

Purpose: A formal procedure to begin committee debate.

Passing Requirement: Chair's discretion / Simple majority

## **2. Motion to set the agenda/topic**

Purpose: A formal procedure to choose which agenda to discuss. If there's only one topic, it is automatically passed.

Passing Requirement: Chair's discretion

## **3. Motion to open a GSL (General Speaker's List)**

Purpose: A GSL allows delegates to freely speak about the topic. Often used for opening speeches. If a motion fails, the committee reverts to the GSL.

Passing Requirement: Simple majority

## **4. Motion to open a moderated caucus**

(Specify individual speaker's time: \_\_\_\_ min and total time: \_\_\_\_ min on topic \_\_\_\_)

Purpose: A formal debate to discuss different aspects of the topic to develop solutions.

Passing Requirement: Simple majority

# **MOTIONS**



## **5. Motion to open an unmoderated caucus**

(Specify total time: \_\_\_ min)

Purpose: An informal debate where delegates discuss freely, form blocs, and work on resolutions.

Passing Requirement: Simple majority

## **6. Motion to discuss resolution proposed by sponsors**

Purpose: To discuss specific draft resolutions submitted by countries.

Passing Requirement: Chair may skip this and proceed by order of submission / Simple majority

## **7. Motion to extend:**

1. Points of Information
2. Time for moderated/unmoderated caucus

Purpose:

1. To ask additional POIs to another delegate
2. To extend debate time for better discussion
3. Passing Requirement: Chair's discretion

## **8. Motion to divide the house**

Purpose: Used when many delegates abstain during a resolution vote. Voting is then conducted via roll call and abstentions aren't allowed.

Passing Requirement: Chair's discretion

## 9. Motion to Challenge

Purpose: Raised to clarify a specific country's viewpoint on a topic to aid committee understanding.

Passing Requirement: Chair's discretion

## 10. Motion to divide the question

Purpose: When the delegate agrees with parts of a resolution but not the whole. Chair votes on each clause individually.

Passing Requirement: Chair's discretion

## 11. Motion to adjourn/suspend committee

Purpose:

This motion is used at the end of a committee session.

- If it is before a break, the committee is suspended.
- If it is the end of the MUN conference, the committee is adjourned, meaning there will be no more formal discussion on the topic.
- Passing Requirement: Chair's discretion

# FLOW OF COMMITTEE



## 1. Roll Call

Purpose: To know which delegates are present in the committee and their voting status.

Usage:

The chair calls out countries alphabetically. Delegates respond with:

- “Present” – when a delegate responds with present they vote for, against or abstain from voting procedures
- “Present and Voting” – when a delegate responds with present and voting they may not abstain they have to vote for or against. This applies to the voting procedures of resolutions and amendments only. It is mandatory to vote for or against motions.

## 2. Open Floor for Debate

Purpose: A formal procedure indicating the committee wants to begin the debate.

Usage: Say: “Motion to open the floor for debate.”

## 3. Setting the Agenda/Topic

Purpose: To decide which agenda/topic to discuss.

Usage: Say: “Motion to set the agenda to [Topic Name]”

Example: “Motion to set the agenda to Privacy in the Age of Digitalisation”

# FLOW OF COMMITTEE



## 4. Opening/Establishing the General Speaker's List (GSL)

### Purpose:

The GSL allows delegates to deliver opening speeches or speak on the topic freely.

### Usage:

Say: "Motion to open GSL with [x] minutes total time and [y] minutes individual speaker time."

## 5. Opening/Establishing Moderated Caucus

### Purpose:

To discuss specific aspects of the topic in a more structured manner.

### Usage:

Say: "Motion to open a moderated caucus with total time of [x] minutes and individual speaker time of [y] minutes on the topic [topic]."

## 6. Opening/Establishing Unmoderated Caucus

### Purpose:

Allows informal debate, block formation, and collaborative discussion.

### Usage:

Say: "Motion to open an unmoderated caucus of [x] minutes."

Example topics: Mass Surveillance, Climate Crisis, etc.



## **7. Selection of Resolution to Discuss**

**Purpose:**

To choose which draft resolution will be discussed first.

**Usage:**

Done by chair based on submission order or motion raised by delegates.

## **8. Discussion on Resolution – Speech by Sponsors**

**Purpose:**

To explain the resolution's contents before formal debate begins.

**Usage:**

The sponsors are given time to explain the resolution clause-by-clause.

## **9. Discussion on Amendments**

**Purpose:**

To address proposed changes (amendments) to the resolution.

**Usage:**

The chair allocates time to read, explain, and allow debate on each amendment (speeches for/against).



## **10. Voting on Amendments**

**Purpose:**

To determine if amendments pass.

**Usage:**

Chair announces vote. Delegates vote for, against, or abstain (unless present and voting).

## **11. For and Against Speeches on Final Resolution**

**Purpose:**

To finalize discussion before the final vote.

**Usage:**

Delegates deliver speeches supporting or opposing the full resolution. The chair decides how many speakers.

## **12. Voting on Final Resolution**

**Purpose:**

Final decision-making step on the full resolution.

**Usage:**

Chair announces the vote. Delegates cast votes (for/against/abstain).

## **13. Adjourning Committee**

**Purpose:**

Marks the formal end of committee sessions.

**Usage:**

Say: "Motion to adjourn committee."

## **AGENDA**



*Developing frameworks regarding international and regional energy security and sharing.*



# TABLE OF CONTENTS:

- 1. Introduction to the Committee

## 1.1 History of the 1973 Oil Crisis

- 

- 2. Primary Threats to Energy Security

- 

- 3. Pathways to Security

## 3.1. Global Strategic Petroleum Reserves (GSPR's)

## 3.2. Legal Frameworks and International Treaties

## 3.3. United Nations Resolutions & Relevant International Material

## 4. Points of Contention

- 5. Conclusion

## 5.1. Questions to be Answered

## 5.2. QARMA



# 1. INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE

National energy security is ever-important. Access to energy is tied to a state's ability to function without being beholden to others, to operate independently—essential for any kind of true sovereignty. But now more than ever, energy security is coming into question, with rising political instability in oil exporters like Russia, Iran and Venezuela, alongside the growing pressures of climate change and unsustainable consumption.

At this point, it is necessary to better define energy security, for delegates new to international relations or experienced delegates looking for a rigorous framework

Energy security is a party's ability to access its energy sources. In that respect, this can apply to individual neighborhoods, nations, regions, or the world. Over the three days of the conference, we will be discussing national and regional energy security—that is, whether individual nations or regions have difficulty accessing energy, and if so, how best to remedy it through international cooperation and frameworks.



It is useful to think of a state's energy security from three main perspectives:

**1. Does the state have direct control over the energy? (Sovereignty)**

- Saudi Arabia is a country with control over its energy resources; it's a dominant producer of oil (2nd largest in the world) and has the capacity to refine that oil domestically.
- Japan is a country that does not have direct control over its energy; it imports around 87.3% of its total energy consumption and does not have the means to produce energy domestically. This puts it at risk in the long-term; however, the country has other means of maintaining security.

**2. How long can the state's energy systems last? At what point do they become ineffective, or in other words, unsustainable? (Robustness)**

- France's energy system is diverse and sustainable. Because reliance on fossil fuels is less than half, with reliable nuclear energy sourcing to make up 40%, there is a diversity in native energy sources that ensures consistent output regardless of external shocks.
- The UK is an example of the inverse, suffering from depleting primary energy sources in the North Sea, importing a significant portion of their energy supply in 2024. However, their renewed focus on offshore wind farms may, in the long term, help in shoring up energy supply with respect to diversity.



### 3. How do the state's energy systems respond to shocks? (Resilience)

- Japan, although mentioned previously as having little energy sovereignty, can likely respond fairly well to shocks, due to its incredibly large SPRs (sovereign petroleum reserves), alongside sharing agreements with South Korea and New Zealand
- The USA is a country whose resilience in the face of shocks is strained; despite being the biggest producer of oil in the world, much of that crude oil cannot be refined domestically, as the refining infrastructure was specifically designed for imported oil.

**Advice:** In your analysis of your portfolio's own energy security, it will be helpful to look at energy security from these three angles in understanding what your portfolio is *looking for* with respect to energy security. If you are a significant supplier but heavily reliant on sources that are unsustainable (fossil fuels), you may be looking at diversification efforts domestically while securing the strength of your energy demand externally by pushing for freer restrictions. If you are heavily reliant on imports, you may be looking to encourage regional cooperation via international frameworks that encourage energy and technology sharing.

# 1.1 1973 ENERGY CRISIS



Following the events of the Yom Kippur War, the Arab members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) placed an oil embargo on nations who supported the State of Israel during the war. These countries included but were not limited to: the United States of America, Japan, Germany, France, etc. This was a catastrophic embargo, considering these members made up 55% of the world's oil supply. In addition to this, OPEC also increased the prices of oil.

As part of the embargo, petroleum exports were banned and oil production was heavily diminished. This highlighted the immense vulnerability that the rest of the world faces when it comes to petroleum supply chains. There were disruptions in production, distribution and prices, which led to immense inflationary and deflationary effects on a macro economic scale. For instance, the average cost per gallon of gasoline in the United States of America alone shot up by 350% as a result of the embargo. In Western Europe, many nations began rationing gasoline and oil,



## 2. THREATS

### 1. Lack of Diversification

- Energy diversification is necessary to distribute risk; excessive dependence on specific energy sources, especially less stable ones, runs the risk of staying vulnerable to price changes, depletion, and sector-specific shocks.
- A dependence on oil or natural gas for domestic consumption faces the risk of volatile pricing; a dependence on hydropower leaves your supply at the mercy of volatile weather conditions.
- A case study for this is South Africa; 70% of the energy supply of the country comes from coal. Although South Africa produces most of this coal externally, the climate pressures that come from coal have led to negative externalities—significantly higher death rates in communities living close to coal plants, etc. Additionally, with rising carbon-adjacent tariffs (eg: EU's recent CBAM), South Africa's economic dependence on coal exports becomes a lot more scary. Although South Africa has begun the transition away from coal power, many dependent countries, especially African ones, don't have the infrastructure to do so.



## 2. Import Dependence

- Import dependence is a bad thing; having to import a necessary resource like energy offers nations less control over the development of that energy and the prices that they are bought at. A lack of domestic supply leaves nations vulnerable to external shocks or political instability.
- An especially relevant case study of this is Russia; specifically, Europe's dependence on Russia for natural gas. Russia's invasion of Ukraine led to the European Union imposing sanctions on Russia, which in turn led to heavy increases in the prices for natural gas and energy. This was in addition to the sabotage of the Nord Stream pipeline from Russia to Germany, which raised prices on the little natural gas that was being bought. Germany was an example of a country that especially struggled, factories in the country closing down due to unworkable energy costs. Since then, the EU has begun the process of cutting dependence on Russia, but the costs of the war have been real and significant.
- This isn't to say imports aren't a necessary part of a nation's energy mix; they serve as diversification as well, in case national sources fail. Japan is a good example of this; the nation resorted to imports after its nuclear plant serving 30% of the country's energy supply was hit with an earthquake. Because of the preexisting import terminals, infrastructure, and cooperation deals, Japan was able to resort to international markets to service their deficit and stay resilient. Yet, overdependence becomes a surrender of control on a resource that is *integral* to the functioning of a nation.



### 3. Vulnerable Infrastructure

- Energy is very much dependent on the infrastructure that supports it. When energy supply is too dependent on singular plants or transport infrastructures, and these infrastructures do not have built-in resilience mechanisms, the nation's energy systems become subject to natural disaster or external political interference.
- For instance, the Venezuela blackouts in 2019 were primarily caused by a lack of technical expertise in the development of the electricity network that led to limited safety nets and resilience.
- Although not a direct form of infrastructure, the politicization of energy pathways like the Strait of Hormuz is a vulnerable system that blocks energy transport.

# **3. PATHWAYS TO RESILIENCE AND SECURITY**



## **3.1 GLOBAL STRATEGIC PETROLEUM RESERVES (GSPR'S)**

GSPR's are reserves that hold large amounts of crude oil or natural gas for national strategic importance. These are especially important for any country in the case of a supply disruption. These SPR's are maintained to ensure that the supply of petroleum reserves is maintained, and also act as a counter measure for import-heavy member states. The causes of these disruptions can be multiple.

These are:

- i. *Force Majeure Events*: These refer to extraordinary events or circumstances beyond control. These events are typically unforeseen and unavoidable, and include natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, etc. and heavily disrupt supply chains.
- ii. *Conflicts and War*: In the event of a conflict or a war, the supply chains responsible for petroleum and other natural gas products are damaged, considering the lack of authority and control over the same.
- iii. *Pricing Volatility*: Economic situations where there is a sudden spike in prices, either suffering from heavy inflation or deflation can cause major rifts in any supply chain, and have a catastrophic effect on the macroeconomic situation across the world.

## **3.2. THE INTERNATIONAL ENERGY AGENCY (IEA) AND SPR'S**



The International Energy Agency (IEA) was set up under the framework of the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development. The purpose of the IEA is to respond to physical disruptions in global oil supplies, provide data and statistics about the global oil market and the energy sector, amongst other things. The IEA also coordinates the use of the oil reserves that its members hold. According to the IEA Treaty, 'Agreement on an International Energy Program (IEP)', member states are required to commit to the following conditions:

- i. Hold oil stocks equivalent to at least 90 days of their prior year's daily net oil imports,
- ii. In the event of a major oil disruption, contribute to IEA collective actions by way of a stock release, demand restraint, fuel switching, increased production or fuel sharing.

In the event of supply disruptions, which are measured by set thresholds such as a 7% or 12% drop in supply, the IEA's coordinated emergency measures are activated, including mandatory demand restraint and equitable oil allocation based on pre-calculated consumption and reserve ratios. The system ensures that states with surplus reserves supply and assist those facing the disruption.

### **3.3. UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTIONS & RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL MATERIAL**



The following treaties and resolutions serve as agreements between member states which agree to the existence of these conventions. For the purposes of this committee, international documents relating to energy sharing will be observed and are required to be researched upon.

1. UNGA Resolution 67/215 (2012)
2. UNGA Resolution 70/1 (2015)
3. UNGA Resolution 74/225 (2019)
4. UNGA Resolution 76/213 (2021)

1. Agreement on an International Energy Program (IEP) (1974)
2. Energy Charter Treaty (ECT) (1994)
3. Paris Agreement (2015)
4. ASEAN Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation (APAEC)

Although not an official treaty, the EU has oil sharing laws in times of crisis.



## 5. CONCLUSION

As mentioned in the letter from the Executive Board, this background guide serves as a catalyst for research. With a broad agenda such as this, breaking down the agenda into sub-topics will aid the committee's understanding of the agenda, along with the facilitation of high quality debate. The Questions to be Answered and QARMA sections will help you for the same.

# 5.1 QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED



1. Developing energy self-sufficiency vs. increased energy sharing networks
  - a. Many countries—the UK, the USA, India—have begun pursuing energy independence. However, an energy-independent policy risks sacrificing the import networks and relations that sustain nations when they suffer shocks to domestic supply. Japan is a primary example of this; when their production was hit, they were able to recuperate due to their strong import networks and existing infrastructure. Which of these do you choose to develop?
2. Role of developed nations and MNCs in aiding energy security of developing ones:
  - a. Many developing nations have stayed increasingly fossil fuel or non-waste biofuel dependent; examples include South Africa, Indonesia, and Nigeria. Many of these countries are attempting to divert from this dependency, but face difficulty in developing the infrastructure to get it started. Solar energy, for example, has high upfront costs and infrastructure requirements due to the expensive storage systems required. The costs of dependency in these countries is showing in the wake of increased isolationism from significant aid providers like the United States. What role must developed nations play in inserting this infrastructure? Could they help via a common pool fund? What can MNCs do?



Additionally:

1. How can the international forum ensure that member states with considerably limited energy resources receive reliable energy supply during any emergency?
2. Should member states create reserves extending to renewable energy resources, as they do with petroleum products?
3. Can the EU's internal energy-sharing framework serve as a reliable model for the rest of the international community, and if not, what changes are required?
4. How do you encourage regional sharing frameworks? Look to instances in the past where regional resource and technology sharing legal systems were developed; this may be water or oil field sharing agreements (eg - Indus Water Treaty). What role have international actors played then, and how is that an example for the roles they must play in the future?

# **5.2 QUESTIONS A RESOLUTION MUST ANSWER (QARMA)**



1. What are the specific goals, objectives and outcomes you are aiming to achieve and the measure of success?
2. Who is responsible for implementing the resolution's provisions? Are there clear roles and responsibilities assigned to various stakeholders?
3. What resources are required to implement the resolution effectively? How will these resources be mobilised and allocated?
4. How will the progress and effectiveness of the resolution be monitored and evaluated?
5. Does the resolution consider the needs and perspectives and address potential disparities of all relevant stakeholders?