

*Developing a reform of UN structures
and procedures*

Committee Guide

Fifth Committee of the General Assembly





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Personal Introduction

Honourable delegates,

My name is Thomas Dvorak and it is my honor to be one of the chairs of the General Assembly 5th Committee at the Oldenburg Model United Nations 2015. To introduce myself a little bit, I am 20 years old and currently living in Glasgow, United Kingdom, where I study Economics and Politics at the University of Glasgow. Apart from the student life, I am also a keen golfer and football player, however, I also appreciate literature and love to travel.

Having already chaired at OLMUN last year, I am looking forward for another great experience in 2015. We are striving to prepare a great week packed with fun as well as learning something new. I will therefore try my best to provide an enjoyable MUN experience for all of you. I am confident that we will have productive debates and indeed a great week!

Thomas Dvorak

Honorable delegates,

my name is Anne Freericks and I am a 19-year-old student from Oldenburg. This year will be my first time chairing a committee and I am looking forward to it! I have been part of OLMUN in 2012 as a member of staff and as a delegate in 2014. Unfortunately I was not able to be part of OLMUN in 2013 since I went on exchange to the United States.

Right now I am still attending school but by the time the OLMUN starts I will have passed my final exams.

It is an honor for me to be part of this year's conference and I can't wait for it to start in June and to meet all of you!

Anne Freericks

1. Committee introduction

1.1 General Assembly

The General Assembly of the United Nations is the main deliberative body of the United Nations. It consists of all 193 member states, with each state delivering one representative. The whole General Assembly is led by the President, elected from among the member states, and 21 vice-presidents. The General Assembly meets annually, however, emergency sessions for occurring crises can also be called in. Eight committees are allowed to forward a draft resolution to the General Assembly, which then votes on them, searching for 2/3 majority.

1.2 General Assembly Fifth Committee (Budgetary and Administrative)

The UN organ which serves as a role model for our OLMUN 2015 committee is the GA 5th committee, responsible mainly for budget and administration. Set up in the Article 17 of the UN Charter, it meets during the General Assembly sessions, although other sessions usually take place in March and May as the fifth committee tends to have a heavy workload. Its main obligation is to negotiate and report the budgetary matters to the General Assembly, which then votes on it. GA 5th committee also plays an essential part in authorizing the financing of peacekeeping missions. Because of that, the Fifth Committee needs to act swiftly and fluidly, as unexpected circumstances can arise. A number of issues are dealt with on a biennial basis: Odd years (e.g. 2009/2011/2013) are 'budget years' where the biennial programme budget is discussed. In off-budget years the Committee considers the Programme Plan. Off-budget years are informally also referred to as 'human resources years' as the Committee takes up the biennial report on progress of the human resources reform efforts. In every committee in the GA, the main staff consists of a Chairman, three Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur. These officers shall be elected on the basis of regional rotation. The Chairman is elected from the selected region, the Rapporteur from the region of the previous Chairman, with three remaining regions taking the three Vice-Chairmen spots. The 5th committee does not usually use voting as a method for deciding or adopting measures. Instead, the delegates try to form a *broadest possible consensus*. However, at OLMUN, we will proceed by the Rules of Procedure used in all other OLMUN committees.

2. Description of the issue

Ever since its establishment in 1946, the United Nations were faced with some of the most burning issues of the current world. However, even though keeping peace worldwide, fighting poverty or helping the less developed countries possess a status of noble goals, the leaders of the United Nations soon found out that their own goals were very difficult to achieve. The harsh reality made them realize that most of the UN workload consists of dull bureaucracy, budgetary negotiations and searching for consensus rather than actually solving the aforementioned issues, and that all procedures are very rigid. The UN has often been criticized for lack of flexibility and actual power, instability, inability to reach an agreement on even basic matters. In addition, the UN are sometimes seen as another field which the world superpowers could use for their disputes and to broaden their influence on the rest of the world.

2.1 Peacekeeping

These critics have their point. The United Nations have failed to act swiftly on several occasions, which resulted in a catastrophe. Perhaps the most vivid example of this was Rwanda in 1994, where the UN Peacekeeping forces were acting woefully slow, the General Assembly and the Security Council could not react efficiently and adjust to the situation and the result was the worst genocide since the Second World War. However, the situation that caused the conflict developed, once again, from the United Nations' failure. The unstable situation in Rwanda and neighboring countries (including the class differences) was created during the Colonial Era. Once the European powers withdrew from Africa in 1960, it was the UN's responsibility to ensure a smooth transition of power and oversee an establishment of democratic regimes in Africa.

2.2 Excessive organisations?

However, the inefficiency of the United Nations was not pointed out only in terms of peacekeeping. Providing the humanitarian aid, which is another essential purpose of the UN, has also come under criticism in recent years. The FAO (Food and Agriculture Organisation), which is the UN body designed to deal with food shortage is deemed ineffective and very expensive to run, while many smaller NGOs nowadays do the same job for much smaller cost. The same goes for the UNDP (UN Development Programme), a body for development of less developed countries. Many of these agencies were accused of not putting in any effort to actually achieve their goals, of lack of enthusiasm and of serving merely as a place for quick career progress.

2.3 Question of accountability

Furthermore, the United Nations are widely considered an unaccountable organization. This lack of accountability manifests itself especially when it comes to a failure in a UN operation. Also, there is a gap between the United Nations and the public, as there is no directly elected organ in the United Nations - the UN ambassadors are appointed by the national governments, while the majority of the public has no idea about how the administration works, or even what the UN consists of.

2.4 Security Council

Last but not least, the executive body of the United Nations, the Security Council, does have its share of controversy, namely because of the five permanent member countries. With the US-Russian relationships returning to Cold War state in the past few years and the increasingly aggressive Russian foreign policy and more involvement in the international affairs (e.g. Libya in 2011), the Security Council is once again becoming a diplomatic battlefield of two stubborn opponents, both equipped with veto laws to any resolution. Third element in this equation, China, has also been following its interests more and more strongly and consistently, often siding with Russia. The veto law is often named as one of the main reasons for the UN inefficiency.

2.5 Implementation

Every organization is as strong as its weakest part. Obviously in the United Nations with 193 member states, it is very difficult to oversee implementation of the measures passed by the General Assembly. The UN is actually very loosely structured, from which arises a serious issue - the effective lack of enforcement. If a country decides not to obey a resolution from the Security Council, the UN has very little power to enforce its ruling. The United Nations avoid the usage of power and unilateral actions and try to engage in a dialogue with every 'rogue' state, however, that can be perceived ineffective and very slow.

3. Possible solutions

Solutions to these problems are very difficult to perform. The United Nations consist of 193 countries, each following their own interests, often contradictory to the interest of others, or indeed to the common good. Any sort of reform to the UN's processes is therefore rather difficult. Also, the UN itself is lacking a strong movement or effort towards this change, as it is deviating more and more over the time from its principals and initial values. With organisations as vast as the UN, it is always precarious that not every employee will be as driven and enthusiastic as it is expected, even in the higher position. However, some disturbing news arose around both the UN employees in the offices based in Europe, and the UN field teams in the underdeveloped countries.

3.1 Exogenous and endogenous

One way of tackling the issue would therefore be a much more strict Human Resources and hiring policy. This obviously consists of both exogenous and endogenous shift: The UN needs to change both from the inside and outside. The change from the inside is obviously going to be much more challenging, as very few of the employees would be willing to give up their benefits.

3.2 The UN structure

In terms of monetary issues, although the UN has enormous resources, they are way too often used very excessively and ineffectively. There is an incredible amount of different committees, focus groups, commissions and so on that produce little to none results and do not really contribute anything, yet their employees have to receive their wages, the UN has to pay for the offices, equipment etc., where the UN is usually overly generous. An austerity program would most likely be very beneficial for the United Nations, as it would both free a large amount of resources and also improve the credibility of the organization. This should be the main concern for the GA 5th committee as the budgetary matters are its single most important task. Providing a thorough analysis and report of the various parts of the UN, including their efficiency, capability, flexibility, success rate and expenditure should prove vital for the General Assembly in deciding the future procedure.

3.3 Humanitarian aid

As for the humanitarian aid, time has maybe come to leave the actual delivering of the aid to the smaller NGOs, which have outperformed the UN in recent years and are much more capable of delivering the aid where needed, while cooperating with the locals. The UN must widen their cooperation with these NGOs, provide them with the necessary funding, training and equipment (of which the UN definitely has plenty), as well as with the public presentation, supervision and coordination, as the UN are capable of put a solid amount of pressure on the states. Successful cooperation would be in this case mutually beneficial.

3.4 The International Court of Justice

The institution of the International Court of Justice could provide an answer to the lack of enforcing power of the UN, adding the necessary credibility to the decision of the SC and putting extra international pressure on the states that do not behave according to their vows or break either the Charter or an adopted resolution. However, as long as the Security Council remains a battlefield for fractious world superpowers, gaining the credibility will be extremely hard. Also, the rulings of the ICJ do take some time, which can be crucial as swiftness is usually required in the times of crisis.

4. Conclusion

These are just a few of the current issues with which the UN is facing. There is obviously far more than this committee guide can encompass. It should merely provide you some basic information and reference points for your own research, which you must undergo prior to the conference. Remember that there are more possible solutions than changing or amending the UN charter, which is actually very long, tiring and difficult process. It is up to the delegates to choose the most vital problems and to try to come up with a solution that would be both efficient and agreeable for the committee. There are a few points to add to the Committee Guide. The GA 5th Committee at OLMUN will work under the MUN agenda and MUN rules of procedure, therefore the delegates will not be required to reach the complicated consensus according to the original UN rules.

We also require every delegate to prepare two documents before coming to the conference. First is delegate's country **Policy Statement** - a brief summary of the country's stance on the issue and a description of policies the country is willing to put forward or support. Length-wise, it should not exceed a page of text. As a chairs of the committee, we would like to see these Policy Statements in advance and therefore would like to ask the delegates to send their statements to our email (ga5@olmun.org) with the **deadline** set on the **31st of May**.

The other document will be your **Draft Resolution**. Each delegate is asked to prepare his own resolution before coming to the conference. The resolution should be a more elaborate policy statement, containing the policies and solutions the country is trying to gain support for and put forward to the General Assembly. The resolutions will be negotiated and merged during the Lobbying Session in the Committee. A resolution must be written in a formal manner and must fulfill certain formal requirements. You will find the guidelines on how to write a resolution in the Conference Guide.

Should you have any queries, please feel free to contact any of the chair, we will be more than happy to help you.

5. Useful links

Link	Description
http://www.un.org/en/ga/fifth/	GA 5th official webpage
http://www.un.org/en/ga/fifth/faq.shtml	GA 5th processes and duties
http://www.un.org/en/ga/fifth/The%20Processes%20of%20Informals%20in%20the%20Fifth%20Committee.pdf	An article about GA 5th procedures
http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/commentators/becky-tinsley-the-un-is-inefficient-wasteful-self-serving-and-plain-corrupt-313407.html	An article about controversies in the UN (warning - not an academical source)
http://www.chathamhouse.org/publication/un-peacekeepers-who-accountable-their-misdeeds	An article about the lack of accountability
https://www.globalpolicy.org/security-council.html	Very good source of data about the Security Council
https://www.globalpolicy.org/security-council/32797-tables-and-charts.html	UN data, charts and graphs
http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=LkMwNCvEo-koC&lpg=PA15&ots=22QHs3nAVH&dq=united%20nations%20controversy&lr&hl=cs&pg=PP1#v=onepage&q=united%20nations%20controversy&f=false	Academic source on the role fo the UN in the 21st century
www.olmun.org	obviously