



THIMUN ROP

CHAPTER A3

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Introduction

This chapter explains how The Hague International Model United Nations Rules of Procedure (THIMUN) is run in the context of Malaysia's Model UN circuit. It should be read alongside the Standardised THIMUN ROP booklet, which can be found from MYADP's website (<https://www.my-adp.org>). It is recommended that you have read through the rules of procedure prior to reading this chapter of the textbook. You should use this textbook to clarify aspects of the rules of procedure that you are more unfamiliar with.

What is THIMUN

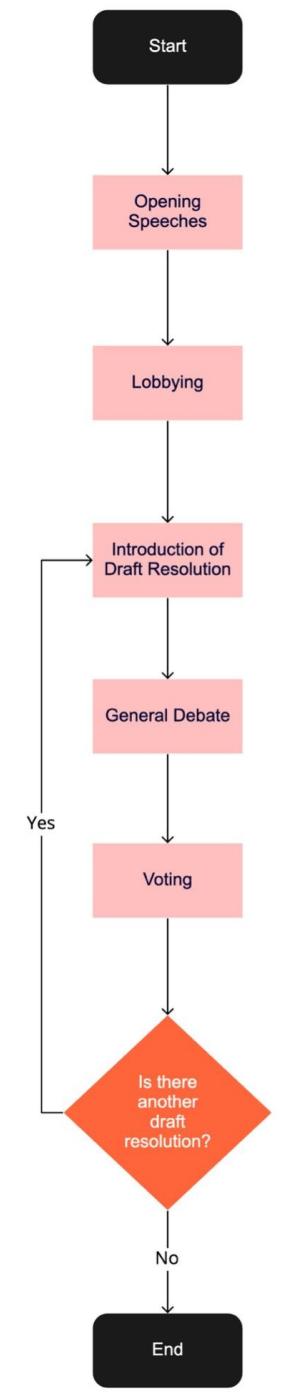
THIMUN is a rules of procedure developed by Harvard University for their Model United Nations Conference. It is used across many countries and international conferences, most notably WorldMUN. However, it is important to note that there are slight distinctions between the official HMUN ROP and the way HMUN is run in the context of the Malaysian Model UN community. Hence, MYADP has developed an official standardised HMUN ROP to standardise ROP in the Malaysian community. However, do note that if you participate in international conferences, certain aspects of the ROP might differ from what you would read in this textbook.



Flow of Debate

The diagram on the right gives a general idea of the flow of debate in THIMUN ROP. You will find a similar flow chart in the standardised THIMUN ROP document.

The unique thing about THIMUN ROP is that lobbying occurs prior to formal debate. This allows delegates to meet each other in a more informal setting and discuss ideas prior to having a formal debate.





Pre-Debate Procedures

Roll Call

In the beginning of every council session, chairs will conduct a roll call. This is similar to the concept of taking attendance. There are two possible responses you could give - *present* or *present and voting*. To understand the differences between both options, you would need to understand the types of voting.

Procedural Vote

A procedural vote is when the council votes to decide whether they proceed with a motion. These are votes that decide **how the council will debate**. During procedural votes, all delegates must vote for or against the motion and are not allowed to abstain from the voting process. [A motion to open debate](#) is an example of a procedural vote, since the decision to open debate does not decide what solutions will be taken by the council, but how the council will debate.

Substantive Vote

A substantive vote is when the council votes to decide on substantive content in the council. These are things like draft resolutions and amendments. During a substantive vote, delegates who chose present during roll call are allowed to abstain. However, delegates who chose present and voting will not be allowed to.

The intuitive question would then be - wouldn't it be more strategic to just choose present during roll call, since it does not limit your options. The benefit of declaring yourself as present and voting implies that you are willing to participate in debate, as your country has a strong opinion on this issue, and will not be willing to abstain and be excluded from the debate.

Speech Etiquette

Pronouns

Giving speeches in Model UN has unique requirements that can often catch newcomers out. The fourth general rule in the Standardised HMUN ROP states that

Delegates should always refer to themselves, the Chair and other delegates in the third person during formal committee sessions.

The point of this is that since in Model UN, you are not representing yourself but the nation you are given, the opinion you hold is not your personal opinion but the opinion of the nation.



Therefore, you would refer to yourself as your own nation. For example, if you were representing Malaysia, you would perhaps say - the delegate of Malaysia believes that it is unfair on the delegate of Canada to place such tariffs. Despite you being the delegate of Malaysia, you are not allowed to say "I". This is the third person pronoun rule in Model UN. If you feel that it is too lengthy, you could always use words like "we" and "they".

Yielding

There are many ways to understand the concept of yielding. I find it easiest to explain by understanding the concept of HMUN ROP. HMUN is made with the concept that there is a "floor". The floor is an intangible concept that determines who has speaking rights at that point in time. Most of the time, the floor is given to the chairs. However, when the chair selects someone to speak, the floor is passed to that person. This means that the person now has speaking rights, and the chair has lost theirs. The chairs can control how a delegate uses the floor by setting time limits and specifying the purpose of the time set. This is usually - the delegate has 90 seconds to give their speech.

The time limit and purpose has been set for the delegate on how they can use the floor. This would mean that by the end of their 90 seconds, the floor will immediately be yielded back to the chair. However, what if a delegate gave their speech for 50 seconds. What should they do then? With the remaining time they have, it is up to the delegate on how they wish to use the remaining time that has been allotted to them.

At this point, the delegate has three options.

Yield to another delegate

They can consider yielding to another delegate. This means that another delegate can give a speech with the remaining time you have. They do this by ending their speech with - this delegate yields their remaining time to the delegate of x.

Yield to x number of POIs

A more frequently known option is to yield to POIs. POIs stand for points of information, or more colloquially known as "questions". This allows discussion and critique of your speech, but also allows others to clarify parts of your speech that they are uncertain about. You can do this by ending your speech with - this delegate yields their remaining time to x number of POIs. You are allowed to determine how many POIs you wish to take.

Yield to the chair

Yielding back to the chair means that you wish to end your speech completely. As a general rule, if you do not wish to yield to another delegate or POIs, you should yield back to the chair by saying - this delegate yields their remaining time back to the chair.



Opening Speeches

Opening speeches give delegates the opportunity to declare their stances on the topics that are discussed prior to lobbying. The purpose of the opening speech is for other delegates with similar stances to identify potential delegates to work with. Hence, it is important that you make your opening speech clear on the stance your country takes, and the topic you are interested in working on.

Opening speeches are part of formal debates. Hence, it would require proper speech etiquette. However, at the end of the opening speech, you can only yield back to the chair, as questions are not entertained during this time. All delegates are required to give an opening speech, and is usually done in alphabetical order.

Lobbying

Lobbying usually lasts for about 4-5 hours. This is where delegates can move around talking to other delegates, but more importantly, formulating a draft resolution. A frequent term heard in the process of lobbying is the establishment of “blocs”. Blocs can be seen as a group of individuals working together, and are grouped based on a common stance.

Draft Resolution

Draft resolutions are actions that the council will take to tackle the topic at hand. The draft resolution should be divided into two sections - preambulatory clauses and operative clauses. Preambulatory clauses are used to set the premise and build legitimacy for your resolution. These are referencing past resolutions that your resolution would work alongside with, and also putting statistics that reflect the severity of the issue you are dealing with. Operative clauses are used to determine the actions that the council is going to take.

In each draft resolution, there are countries that can add themselves as main submitter and co-submitters. There are many stereotypes and disputes when it comes to this issue. First, there can only be one main submitter, and that should be the delegate who led the discussion and suggested the majority of the ideas. Occasionally, it might be difficult to identify the leading delegate, but the bloc must decide on a single main submitter. Everyone else within the bloc will be added as co-submitters. Submitters must more or less agree with the draft resolution.

After a draft resolution is completed, it needs to be sent to the chairs for a vetting process. The chairs will then decide which draft resolution will be introduced to the council for general debate first.



Introduction of Draft Resolution

Reading Time

During this time, the chair will allocate a specific amount of time for reading the draft resolution. When this time has elapsed, delegates can ask for [points of clarification](#).

Main Submitter Speech

When a draft resolution is introduced by the chairs, the main submitter has to give a speech to introduce the draft resolution. This speech is the delegate's opportunity to explain the thought process of how the draft resolution was written, why specific sections are there, and advocate for the implementation of the draft resolution. At the end of the speech, it is expected that the delegate yields to [points of information](#).

General Debate

After the main submitter speech elapses, we enter into general debate. There are three possible things to do during general debate.

General Speech

Delegates can choose to give a general speech about the draft resolution. It is a 90 seconds speech where delegates can voice out any opinions they have.

Amendments

Amendments can be introduced after a draft resolution has been introduced. Amendments are used to change the draft resolution if the council sees flaws in it. There are three actions you could take with an amendment - to strike, to amend, or to add. To strike is to remove a certain clause, likely due to a principle clash. To amend is to change a certain clause, perhaps because there could be more depth and detail added into it. To add is to add a new clause, likely due to the draft resolution previously lacking in certain areas.

There are two types of amendments.

Unfriendly Amendments

A more common action by delegates is to introduce unfriendly amendments. An unfriendly amendment is an amendment that has to first be introduced by stating that [this delegate believes they have submitted an amendment](#) after it has been sent to the chairs. There is no limit to how many unfriendly amendments a delegate can submit, but it is recommended that you only send in another amendment after your first amendment has been voted upon.



After an amendment is introduced, the chairs might allocate a specific reading time for it and entertain any points of clarification.

After the reading time, the council will enter into an allocated time for discussion with the amendment. There is time to debate for the amendment and against it. During the time to debate for the amendment, any delegates can raise their placards to advocate for the amendment through a speech. During the time against, delegates can do the same. Additionally, if a delegate feels that the amendment is insufficient and lacking, but does not have a principle clash with it, it could look to submit an amendment to the second degree. The amendment to the second degree allows delegates to amend the existing amendment. An amendment to the second degree has to be introduced to the council through the same process an amendment was. Amendments to the second degree are rare as it has minimal impact on overall debate.

When the time to debate for and against the amendment has both elapsed, the council will move into a substantive vote for the amendment. If there is an amendment to the second degree, the amendment to the second degree will be voted upon substantially first, and depending on the outcome of the vote, the initial amendment might be changed. The initial amendment is only then voted upon substantially.

Friendly Amendments

A friendly amendment is an amendment that is agreed upon unanimously by the main submitters and co-submitters prior to its introduction. This passes immediately after its introduction and does not go through any voting procedure. However, the chairs will notify the council if such a change is made.

Motions

Motion to open debate

As referred to earlier, a motion to open debate is to begin a conference. It is called after the chairs have conducted roll calls. A motion to open debate can only be called for when a quorum ($\frac{1}{3}$ of the delegates are present) is reached in the council.

Motion to resume debate

A motion to resume debate is called upon to begin a council session after a break, and is also called after the chairs have conducted roll calls. A motion to resume debate can only be called for when a quorum ($\frac{1}{3}$ of the delegates are present) is reached in the council.



Motion to adjourn debate

A motion to adjourn debate is similar to the motion to open debate, as it is called to end a conference.

Motion to suspend debate

A motion to suspend debate is similar to the motion to resume debate, as it is called before a break. The difference between the adjournment and suspension is that after a suspension of debate, the council can resume later, but an adjournment is permanent.

This delegate believes they have submitted an amendment

To introduce your amendment in THIMUN, there is no specific motion to do so. When you are recognised during a general debate, you can say that *this delegate believes they have submitted an amendment*, and your amendment will be recognised. Make sure that you have already sent the amendment to the chairs for vetting and have been approved by them.

Motion to move to the previous question

A motion to move to the previous question is used during a debate on an amendment. If the time to speak for or against the amendment has not elapsed, but the council has no interest to discuss it anymore, they can call for a motion to move to the previous question, which will go to the next “section”. For example, if a motion to move to the previous question is passed during a time to speak for the amendment, the council will then go ahead to the time to speak against the amendment.

Motion to move into voting procedure on the draft resolution

A motion to move into voting procedure is a motion that would be called when the chair stops GSL to ask for any motions and a motion to introduce draft resolution or amendment has already passed. The purpose of the motion is to move into substantial voting on the stated document.

Upon moving into voting procedure, there are three possible motions that could be called as a result

Motion to vote clause by clause (Divide the Question)

This motion is also known as the motion to divide the question. This motion helps in filtering out specific clauses of the resolution that is disliked by the council, or any specific clauses that could threaten the outcome of the vote of a resolution.

The delegate who called for this motion can choose how they wish to divide the question. Usually, delegates would divide it by only singling out specific contentious clauses (e.g. clause



1-14 will be voted together, clause 15 will be voted on its own, and the remaining clauses together). Some delegates can also opt to vote on all clauses of the resolution one by one.

The clauses that fail to attain a majority vote will be removed from the resolution. After the vote of clause by clause, the resolution has to be voted on as a whole again, but without the clauses that have failed.

Motion to roll call vote

A motion to roll call vote is a different type of voting method. Normally, the chair will just ask the delegates who wish to vote for the resolution to raise their placards up, and count the number of placards raised up. However, when a roll call vote is conducted, the chair will call each member nation out and record their vote.

Motion to divide the house

A motion to divide the house occurs in a specific circumstance and needs a bit of mathematics. In a scenario where a simple majority is not achieved, but if the abstention votes were for votes it would be able to attain a majority, a motion to divide the question can be called for. For example, if a simple majority was 24, and only 20 delegates voted for, but 10 delegates abstained, it implies that a simple majority could be achieved if there were no abstentions.

In this scenario, a delegate can call for a motion to divide the question. This means that the vote is conducted again, but no abstentions are allowed.

Points

Point of Clarification

As referred to earlier in the [draft resolution](#) and [amendments](#) section, a point of clarification is used to seek clarity of certain phrases or words in the documents proposed by other delegates. These differ from questions as questions seek to gain more information about why certain clauses of the resolution were added, but a point of clarification seeks to understand what they meant to avoid confusion.

Point of Parliamentary Inquiry

A point of parliamentary inquiry is the most important thing to remember in this whole chapter. In a Model UN conference, and if you are unsure about ROP, you can pose a point of parliamentary inquiry to the chairs to ask for help or clarifications regarding the ROP.



Point of Personal Privilege

The point of personal privilege addresses the comfort of the delegate in the council. This could be the temperature of the room, or if the delegate wishes to excuse themselves from the council. A point of personal privilege can also be raised during another delegate's speech if they are unable to hear them.

Point of Order

A point of order can be called when the delegate believes that the chair has made a mistake in ROP. Although it is part of the ROP, it is more considerate to use a point of parliamentary inquiry to point out a chair's mistake in ROP. A point of order can be called at any point in time.

Point of Information

A point of information can only be requested when a delegate yields themselves to points of information. A point of information allows you to better understand the reasoning of other delegates.

Right to Reply

A right to reply occurs in a specific circumstance. You can only call for a right of reply when you feel that you or your country has been insulted by another delegate. This is known as a "ground", which is the reason you have to provide when you call for a right to reply.

During a right to reply, you will be provided a specific time to give a speech. This time is not a chance for you to fire insults back at the other delegate, but to clarify the situation and explain yourself by deconstructing the delegate's insult and explaining why it is incorrect.

Special UNSC Provisions

HMUN ROP has two changes in the UNSC.

Binding Resolutions

A resolution in the UNSC is known to be binding. A binding resolution means that there is an obligation for nation states to adhere to the resolution, and failure to do so would be considered breaching international law. This differs from the resolutions of other councils, as those are non-binding. Hence, in order for substantive votes to be passed in the UNSC, a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority must be reached by the council.



Veto Power

In Chapter A1, it was briefly mentioned that there is something known as the P5 nations. These stand for the permanent 5, which are the United States of America, People's Republic of China, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, and France. These countries have veto power. Veto power allows them to fail a resolution as long as they vote against it.