

The Bucharest Model NATO Conference: Handbook for Delegates and Chairpersons



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A Greeting on Behalf of the Secretariat

Esteemed future attendee,

The Secretariat would like to thank and congratulate you for your registration. It is a great honour for us to organize this year's edition of the Bucharest Model NATO Conference, and we sincerely hope that it will be a pleasant and memorable experience. Laid out in this document, you will find a complete and facile explanation of the entire process, from the research process to the etiquette of committee sessions, as well as a general elucidation of the [Rules of Procedure](#).

Once again, we express our deepest gratitude and earnestly anticipate the conference.

Sincerely,

The Secretariat of the Bucharest Model NATO Conference

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NATO is an alliance of countries from Europe and North America, which provides a unique connection between the two continents, thereby facilitating a transatlantic cooperation within the field of defense and global security.

The chief purpose of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is to safeguard the freedom and security of its regional blocs by means of political and military strategies.

Politically, the Alliance advocates for intrinsically democratic principles and thus allows member states to discuss and collaborate on defense and security-related matters to resolve ongoing issues, build consensus and preclude conflict.

Militarily, the Alliance is committed to the peaceful reconciliation of disputes. If diplomatic endeavors do not succeed, NATO has the military capacity to undertake *crisis-management operations*.

The ideological foundation of NATO is grounded on the underlying principle of *collective defense* that “an attack against one or several of its members is considered as an attack against all”, which is enshrined in Article 5 of the Washington Treaty.

The major tasks of the Alliance are delineated the 2010 Strategic Concept and encompass three crucial aspects – collective defense, crisis-management and cooperative security.

The Bucharest Model NATO Conference

The Bucharest Model NATO Conference is a simulation of the inner workings of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, in which high school and university students assume the roles of delegates of a country in a specific committee and are charged with representing their country's best interests while trying to reach a consensus on pressing matters.

The six committees immerse delegates in the complex world of diplomacy, allowing them to explore tensions in the international community firsthand and providing them with the chance to interact with diplomats, all while developing their understanding of current affairs and the world as a whole.

Intense debate sessions coupled with novel social events, both formal and informal, are the ideal opportunities to develop rhetorical skills, confidence, and explore the composition of a convincing argument.

Now an annual tradition, the conference celebrates its sixth anniversary this year and is integrally student-run.

The Role of a Delegate

As previously stated, the role of a delegate is to act as a representative of the assigned country in a given committee, which refers to the adherence to the corresponding country's policy throughout. The delegate must portray this through the nature of his or her speeches, the choices and political alliances made within the committee, and the voting procedure.

As a result, among the most important resources for a delegate is a firm understanding of the country's policy, its history, its alliances, as well as extensive knowledge of the agenda topics, both from a NATO and national perspective. In part, the Research Guide prepared by the chairpersons should be used as a point of departure, but it is essential for the delegate to also consult national sources of information.

For new and experienced delegates alike, a fundamental understanding of the principles upon which NATO was constructed as an alliance is crucial to successful participation. As such, one should review the [NATO website](#) and particularly the [North Atlantic Treaty](#).

Delegates should attend the conference fully prepared to participate in committee sessions, with a written Position Paper, a Laptop (or device comparable in functionality), and completed research.

The Role of a Chairperson

The core function of a chairperson resides in coordinating the entire activity of his or her committee by enforcing a procedurally adequate flow of debate. In order to maintain a diplomatic decorum and foster an environment wherein delegates can debate effectively on the issues of the agenda, a chairperson must bear in mind the following guidelines concerning the chairing process:

The chairman should master the topic being addressed within his or her forum: it is only through a comprehensive research that the chair can preside over the committee session with alacrity and professionalism.

The chairman should promote equity and fairness: treating everybody righteously, offering each delegate equal chances, and judging impartially shall represent the hallmark of a highly commended chair.

The chairman should enforce the Rules of Procedure: guaranteeing that everybody follows the same procedural framework shall in result in a well-coordinated committee session that simulates as accurate as possible the real-life debates of NATO.

The chairman should be approachable, enthusiastic, and supportive: lastly, apart from his or her purely executive function, the chair must also be affable to create a sense of comfort, relentlessly enthusiastic to encourage active participation and deliberation, and sympathetic to help delegates transcend their boundaries and escape from their comfort zone.

The Research Process

The research process is perhaps the most significant part of the pre-conference preparation. Debating the issues of the agenda during the conference would be literally inconceivable in the absence of a thorough research. Thus, it is highly recommended that the research process should encompass the following aspects:

Country profile at the social, economic, political, geographical, and cultural level (The CIA Factbook might be useful in this regard)

Topic background consisting of the roots of key issues, timeline of events, major state and non-state actors involved and relationships amongst them, prior endeavors to tackle the problem, plausible and viable solutions.

Complexities and implications: this last component shall account for the in-depth analysis of the issue at hand by understanding the underlying intricacies of the problem and the consequences that certain actions could cause.

Writing a Position Paper

Writing a Position Paper for each of the agenda topics is important, as it demonstrates each delegate's understanding of the issue and of their country's policy. The structure is as follows:

Introduction: The introduction should consist of a brief preface to the topic and a short summary of the stance taken by the respective country. If any vague but pertinent concept is addressed in the Position Paper, it should be defined in the introduction, under the heading *“Key terms”*

Body: Context should be given on the issue, a statement should be made regarding its significance and impact. Then, precedent should be referenced, including relevant past NATO action and important national documents. The Position Paper should also suggest further action to be taken by NATO, eventual solutions to the issue.

Conclusion: The conclusion should reiterate the country's stance and the overall importance and significance of the issue, followed by a logical conclusion.

Writing a Position Paper

In addition, delegates should:

→ Reference any external sources used (all Position Papers should reference research) and italicize all referenced documents (past communiqués, conventions, treaties)

→ Use the third-person singular throughout (We support... → The French Republic supports...). Under no circumstances should the first-person singular be used (I).

→ Aim to fill one page per agenda topic (12 pt. Times New Roman font, 1.5 line spacing) and organize ideas in separate paragraphs, **without** using the headings *“introduction, body, conclusion”*

→ Clearly identify each topic, along with the name, country, and committee at the top of the page.

→ Use an academic register of language, ensuring that the Position Paper is written entirely in English.

! Plagiarism is strictly prohibited and, unless directly cited, all of the content should be put into the delegate's own words.

Writing a Country Position Speech

It is in the best interest of each delegate to have an introductory speech prepared for each agenda topic, as the delegates will be required to hold one upon the introduction of each agenda topic, in alphabetical order according to the quorum.

The speech should not exceed 60 seconds in duration and should, first and foremost, **state the country's position** regarding the agenda topic, referencing country policy as well as NATO policy. Furthermore, a broad statement about effective collaboration within the committee should also be made.

In general, speeches are most effective in composition and delivery when making use of the Aristotelian means of persuasion: *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*.

Plagiarism and informal use of language are strictly prohibited. In formal session, use of the first-person singular and second person singular pronouns is barred.

[EXEMPLAR](#)



At the Conference

General Attire and Conduct

As described in the Rules of Procedure, “*during the formal conference sessions at the venue, all delegates are expected to don formal business attire, including a mandatory collared top.*”

In terms of conduct, all attendees must engage in respectful interaction throughout the conference. They are also required to use an academic register in all activities when in Formal Session.

Similarly, the delegates must address the chairpersons and fellow delegates with respect and may not use the first or second-person singular (I, you) in Formal Session, instead utilizing the appropriate titles (*The delegate of ...*, *The United States of America*, *Distinguished/ Honourable Chairpersons*).

When yielded the floor to hold a speech, the delegate must recognize the chairpersons and fellow delegates in the committee, in that specific order.

Glossary of Points and Motions

The points accepted at the Bucharest Model NATO Conference, as stated within the Rules of Procedure, read as follows:

1. **Point of Personal Privilege:**

- a) is used in order to bring to the attention of the Chair/President an urgent matter of personal comfort or well-being of the delegate,
- b) may interrupt the speaker under the aforementioned circumstances.

2. **Point of Information:**

- a) is used in order to address a question to the speaker, related to his or her speech,
- b) brief introductory or explanatory statements are allowed,
- c) must be stated as a question,
- d) granted by the Chair/President with the prior accord of the speaker in question.

3. **Point of Order:**

- a) is used with the purpose of underlying a breach of the Rules of Procedure either by delegates or by the Chair/President.

4. **Point of Parliamentary Inquiry:**

- a) is used with the aim of asking the chairs for information related to any procedural matters.

Glossary of Points and Motions

The motions accepted at the Bucharest Model NATO Conference, as stated within the Rules of Procedure, read as follows:

1. Motion to Go into Q&A Session:

- a) is proposed if a delegate wishes to enter a Questions & Answers session directly addressed to the speaker holding the floor. The Q&A session accounts for a dialogue between the speaker in question and the delegates who expressed their wish to join the session,
- b) should be entertained with the prior consensus of the speaker,
- c) the question limit will be set by the chairpersons after its approval,
- d) if objected, it requires a simple majority to pass.

2. Motion to Move Directly into Voting Procedure:

- a) is proposed if a delegate wishes to vote upon the Amendment/Resolution,
- b) fails if objected.

3. Motion to Adopt the Amendment by Acclamation:

- a) is proposed if a delegate wishes to pass an amendment without proceeding with the entire General Debate,
- b) fails if objected.

4. Motion to Table the Amendment:

- a) is proposed if a delegate wishes to end the General Debate on the amendment by automatically declaring it failed,
- b) fails if objected.

5. Right of Reply:

- a) is proposed if a delegate wishes the speaker to apologize in front of him or her for statements that blatantly and severely offend or denigrate the delegate's country,
- b) the accused delegate is allowed a time to reflect,
- c) is not seconded or objected,
- d) requires the permission of the Chair or President in order to be entertained.

Glossary of Points and Motions

The motions accepted at the Bucharest Model NATO Conference, as stated within the Rules of Procedure, read as follows:

1. Request for a Follow-up:

- a) is proposed if a delegate wishes to obtain the approval of the Chair or President to address another question to the speaker,
- b) strictly one Follow-up per Point of Information should be granted,
- c) is not seconded or objected,
- d) requires the permission of the Chair or President in order to be entertained.

2. Motion for an Unmoderated Caucus (Lobbying time):

- a) is enacted by the Chairpersons if it is decided that delegates should write on working papers or amendments, or if the Chairpersons want to have a delegate approach their desk,
- b) is proposed if a delegate wishes to move and act freely in the committee room, as to talk to other delegates directly or to work on documents to be submitted,
- c) when stating the motion, it requires a set duration and an adequate explanation for its need,
- d) is not seconded or objected,
- e) requires the permission of the Chair or President in order to be entertained.

3. Motion to Extend/Elapse the time of an Unmoderated Caucus:

- a) proposed by a delegate who wishes to extend, or completely elapse, the time of an unmoderated caucus,
- b) in the case of an extension, the time settled upon must be shorter than the original time of the caucus,
- c) fails if objected.

4. Motion for a Home Government Caucus:

- a) is enacted when a delegate proposes military intervention or aid in any of the committees and when a delegate wishes to give a directive in the Crisis Council,
- c) is not seconded or objected,
- d) a member of the Home Government shall exit the committee room and give a decision on whether the action is approved or not, followed by a short explanation on the decision made,
- e) the delegate in question shall act in accordance with the decision made by the Home Government,
- f) when re-entering the committee room, the Home Government representative shall summarize the caucus.

The Flow of Debate

After any adjournments, a *Motion to Set the Quorum* is required to commence the committee session.

The Speaker's List (delegates can request to be added to the Speaker's List by raising their placards) will be followed. The delegate can yield remaining time either to POIs, to another delegate, or to the chairpersons.

Once the subject is discussed at length from all relevant points of view and there is relative consensus on important issues, an *Unmoderated Caucus* may be proposed by either parties, so that the delegates can prepare their draft documents. Once submitted to the chairpersons, there is General Debate, in which the main submitter has 5 minutes to present an argument in favour of the document, amendments are then put forward and debated upon (unfriendly first), lobbying time is at 2-5 minutes, and, finally, either adopted or discarded. The draft document is then voted upon by the committee and, if it passes, is submitted to the North Atlantic Council via the chairpersons.

This structure is common throughout the committees, however, the Crisis Council and North Atlantic Council have a slightly different structure, which is laid out in Chapter VIII, Parts II and III ([Rules of Procedure](#))

Elementary Rules of Procedure

In terms of basic rules of procedure, the conference attendees must be aware of the fact that the **official language** of the conference is English. Thus, all formal committee sessions and assemblies shall be held exclusively in English. Besides, the use of an academic lexical register is obligatory throughout the sessions.

Another major aspect governing the fundamental procedural outline consists of **taking floor and delivering speeches**. In this respect, delegates are expected to **address the house** with respect and remain standing while speaking and receiving answers without any direct dialogue being permitted – the chairperson / presidency shall represent the only authority that can moderate discussions among delegates, ensuring that they engage in the debate with diplomatic courtesy.

Elementary Rules of Procedure

Regarding the general rights and duties, all participants have the right to respectful interactions, as well as the duty to have a respectful behavior towards all fellow delegates and members of the organizing team and staff. Besides, all absences or delays must be announced to the staff in time. All delegates are required to be well-versed in the subject matter, including their country's policies, and should participate actively in the formal committee sessions of the conference. Lastly, delegates shall be held accountable for their actions; hence, in case of gross misconduct or non-compliance with the Rules of Procedure, the Bucharest Model NATO Conference reserves the rights to address and redress such incidents accordingly.

For a holistic grasp of the rules of procedure, we suggest that every conference attendee should consult the official document uploaded on the website of the conference: [Rules of Procedure](#).

The Voting Procedure

Substantial Matters (draft documents, amendments)

→ Votes in favour manifest themselves as votes of silence

→ Votes against manifest themselves as objections

→ Lobbying ensues until there are no more objections

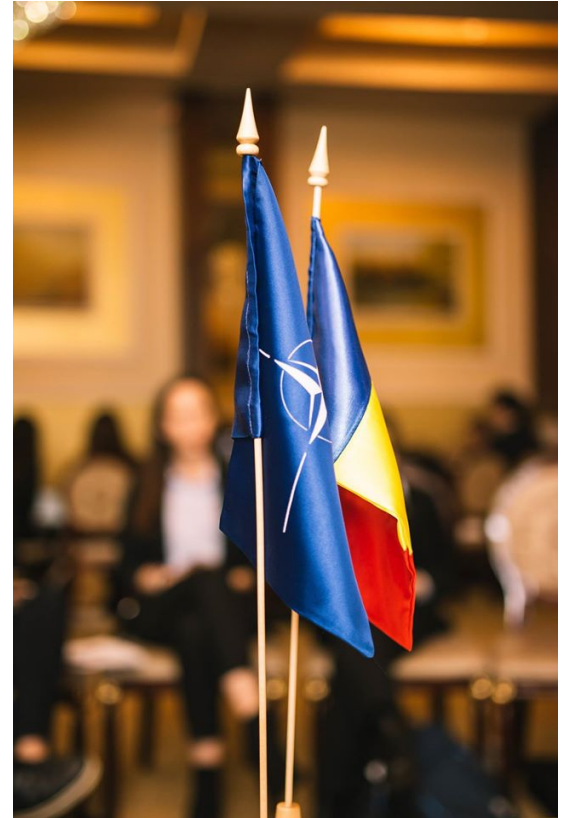
Procedural Matters (Motions, etc.)

→ Voting in favour is done through the simultaneous raising of placards, independent of the order of the quorum

→ No right of abstention

→ Generally require Simple Majority to pass (50% + 1)

→ Exceptions to the point above can be found in Chapter IV of the [Rules of Procedure](#)



Writing a Communiqué

Draft documents that are passed both in the respective committee and in the Open Session of the North Atlantic Council are formally “adopted”.

For the scope of the Conference, communiqués are to follow the structure of United Nations Resolutions. Hence, they must consist of *Preambulatory* and *Operative Clauses*.

Preambulatory Clauses reiterate any past action that was taken by NATO and its affiliated bodies, any past communiqués or official statements made that pertain to the topic. As such, they are expected to be brief and must start with a [verb](#) in the present continuous tense.

Operative Clauses reflect the consensus that was reached during committee sessions and act as a type of action plan that is to, ideally, be followed by the Member States of NATO. They ought to be longer than the Preambulatory clauses and may have sub-points (more than one subpoint is needed, however, to justify the presence of a such feature). These clauses must also start with a [verb](#) in the present continuous tense.

Writing a Communiqué

Draft documents submitted are expected to be written in an academic register, following the conventions of the English language (British and American variants are equally acceptable).

Communiqués must also identify a Main Submitter, Sponsors, and Signatories, as well as the name of the committee, the Chairpersons, and the topic.

The end of each Preambulatory clause is marked with a comma, while the end of each Operative Clause is marked with a semicolon. A full stop follows the last operative clause.

EXEMPLARS

If submitting a Treaty as opposed to a Communiqué is required, please read Annex A, Chapter 3 of the [Rules of Procedure](#).

Amendments

Amendments can basically change, strike, or add onto all non-preambulatory parts of a draft document. The order in which the amendments are entertained shall be determined by the board according to the general rule of disruptiveness: amendments that have a non-constructive nature (i.e. strike-out amendments) shall be discussed first, subsequently followed by constructive amendments (change or add amendments). The delegate who submits the amendment is required to deliver a speech in which he reads it out loud and provides a proper justification of the suggestion.

Generally, there are two types of amendments: **friendly amendments** that alter grammatical aspects and are accepted and introduced automatically, as well as **unfriendly amendments** that can strike, change or add a non-preambulatory part of the draft document.

Bear in mind that there are also **secondary degree amendments**, or, to put it explicitly, amendments to amendments. If a secondary degree amendment passes, the original amendment, or the first-degree amendment also passes. Conversely, if a secondary degree amendment fails, without any other secondary degree amendment to be discussed, the debate is redirected towards the unmodified first-degree amendment.

The North Atlantic Council

The North Atlantic Council is the primary decision-making body of NATO. After the final committee sessions end, all delegates will attend the assembly of the North Atlantic Council, which will, after completing its Closed Session, enter Open Session on the last day of the conference.

The Main Submitters will read out their draft documents and advocate for them, and the floor will be yielded to Points of Information. Amendments may be submitted by the members of the North Atlantic Council. Through Substantive Procedure, the documents will be voted upon and adopted in the case of no objections.

In the case of the document not being a communiqué, it will, upon passing, be signed by the President.

The Open Session will conclude with the Crisis Council and North Atlantic Council's documents being read aloud. These documents are not voted upon in the Open Session.

Following this procedure, the conference officially adjourn, being followed by the Closing Ceremony.

Conclusion



Hoping that this handbook has been helpful in elucidating some of the more intricate aspects of Model NATO, the Bucharest Model NATO Conference Secretariat eagerly awaits the commencement of the event and your attendance.