

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING RESOLUTIONS

What is a Resolution?

A resolution is a statement of international opinion, or in some cases a piece of international law. It is the primary output of most committees in the United Nations. Most committees' resolutions are statements of international opinion. However, the Security Council and Reformed Security Council's resolutions are pieces of international law, and in some cases other committees (most notably the General Assembly) may adopt new international law as well.

Stages in the Life of a Resolution

WORKING PAPER

When delegates have just begun working on the document, the document is called a “working paper,” not a resolution. A document is a **working paper** from the moment it is created until it is “codified” or “approved by the dais,” which essentially means that it has been edited and meets the format rules of the conference, at which point it becomes a **draft resolution**. Prior to this approval, it is not officially property of the committee. Additionally, delegates are permitted to refer to it generally, but may not discuss specific text within it; for example, “please come and work with our bloc on a working paper that will address [general issue]” is permissible, but “we’d like to discuss Working Paper A’s operative clause 1, which says [specific quote]” is not.

DRAFT RESOLUTION

The **draft resolution** phase begins with being codified, at which point the code is added to the top of the document by committee staff, and the sponsor and signatory lists are removed. At this point the document will receive a vote whenever the committee moves into voting procedure on the current topic. It can be printed and distributed to the delegates; delegates may now discuss the specific text of the document. It is also now the “property of the body,” meaning that it is no longer “owned” by the authors but by the committee at large. The **draft resolution** phase ends when delegates move into voting bloc on the topic.

RESOLUTION

After a **draft resolution** is voted on and passes during voting bloc, it becomes a **resolution**.

Parts of a Resolution

CODE

The code is used for identification and consists of four parts – the committee acronym (i.e. “SC”), the status (“RES” for resolution, “DR” for **draft resolution**), the number of the topic (you can find this in the background guides), and the number of the document itself, with 1 being the 1st one being approved by the Dais.

Example: For the General Assembly’s 1st draft resolution on its 3rd topic, the code is GA/DR/3/1.

COMMITTEE

This is the full name of your committee.

SPONSORS

Sponsors of a draft resolution are countries that support the resolution; they are bound to support it and vote in favor of it by virtue of being a sponsor. Usually, the list of sponsors is the list of the primary authors of the draft resolution. The dais removes the list of sponsors when the working paper is codified.

SIGNATORIES

Signatories are similar to sponsors, except that they are not bound to support the document. “Signing on,” or becoming a signatory, means that you want the resolution to be debated and/or voted upon – no more, no less.

Note: The number of total signatories and sponsors will be announced by the dais during the first committee session, and will be displayed visibly within the committee room. The total minimum number of sponsors + signatories is equal to 20% of delegates present during the first committee session, with a minimum of 1 sponsor. Please note that this threshold does not change after the first committee session, regardless of future sessions’ attendance.

For example, if you have 50 delegates present after the first roll call has taken place, the minimum number of sponsors + signatories is 10. This can take the form of 1 sponsor and 9 signatories, 5 sponsors and 5 signatories, 10 sponsors and 0 signatories, etc.

TITLE

The title is usually the title of your topic (i.e. “The Situation in Iran”), though it can also refer to a particular proposal within the document at the discretion of the sponsors and the dais.

PREAMBULAR / PREAMBULATORY CLAUSES

Preambular clauses (also known as “preambulatory clauses” or “pre-ams”) are the clauses that provide context, reasoning and justification for the operative clauses. They usually “set up the problem” or explain why the committee feels a need to act. They also usually get more specific and state why the committee feels a need to act in the specific way they’re going to. The first portion of the clause is italicized. Preambular clauses may not be amended or divided.

OPERATIVE CLAUSES

Operative clauses are the parts of the resolution that actually do something. If you’re sending in peacekeepers, condemning a country’s actions, calling for a ceasefire, or allocating money, it takes place in the operative clauses. The first portion of the clause is underlined, and each operative clause is numbered.

Please see the next two pages for words that can be used to begin preambular and operative clauses as well as examples of the language, tone and structure of these clauses.

Preambular Clauses

Affirming	Appreciating	Bearing in mind
Also bearing in mind	Believing	Calling attention
Commending	Conscious	Deeply alarmed
Deeply appreciative	Deeply concerned	Deeply conscious
Deeply disturbed	Desirous	Determined
Emphasizing	Expressing concern	Expressing its concern
Expressing its regret	Expressing particular concern	Expressing its satisfaction
Expressing its support	Having considered	Having examined
Having received	Looking forward	Noting with concern
Noting with gratitude	Noting with satisfaction	Profoundly concerned
Reaffirming	Realizing	Recalling
Re-emphasizing	Regretting	Reiterating its appreciation
Reiterating its conviction	Reiterating its dismay	Stressing
Stressing its desire	Strongly emphasizing	Strongly supporting
Taking note	Taking note with satisfaction	Welcoming

Examples of Preambular Clauses:

Guided by the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and recalling the International Covenants on Human Rights and other relevant human rights instruments,

[Note the broad reference to the Charter of the United Nations and all relevant international human rights instruments – often at the beginning of a resolution]

Reaffirming the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and international law, in particular international human rights and humanitarian law,

[Note the specific references to international documents of particular relevance to the topic at hand, which in this case is gender equality]

Calling upon the [Member State] to cooperate with the international community in order to achieve concrete progress with regard to human rights and fundamental freedoms, and to take immediate steps to ensure a free and fair electoral process which is transparent and inclusive, leading to a genuine democratic transition through concrete measures,

[Note the specific calls for a Member State in particular to take action broadly within their country]

Recalling also all relevant Security Council resolutions and statements by the President of the Council on the situation in [Country], in particular resolutions 1659 (2006) of 15 February 2006, 1817 (2008) of 11 June 2008, 1868 (2009) of 23 March 2009 and 1890 (2009) of 8 October 2009, as well as the statements by the President of the Council of 11 July 2008 and 15 July 2009,

[Note the specific list of relevant resolutions and presidential statements]

Operative Clauses

Acknowledges	Affirms	Affirms its confidence
Appeals	Appoints	Appreciates deeply
Approves	Authorizes	Calls
Calls for	Call upon	Calls once more upon
Commends	Condemns	Considers
Declares	Declares its firm opposition	Declares its solidarity
Demands	Denounces	Deplores
Determines	Encourages	Endorses
Expresses concern	Expresses its appreciation	Expresses its deep concern
Expresses its full support	Expresses its gratitude	Fully supports
Notes with appreciation	Notes with interest	Notes with satisfaction
Proclaims	Reaffirms	Recalls
Recommends	Rejects	Renews its appeal
Renews its request	Requests	Shares the concern
Stresses	Strongly condemns	Suggests
Supports	Takes note	Takes note with appreciation
Takes note with satisfaction	Urges	Welcomes

Examples of Operative Clauses:

6. *Requests* the States parties to the relevant instruments on weapons of mass destruction to consult and cooperate among themselves in resolving their concerns with regard to cases of non-compliance as well as on implementation, in accordance with the procedures defined in those instruments, and to refrain from resorting or threatening to resort to unilateral actions or directing unverified non-compliance accusations against one another to resolve their concerns;

[Note: Clause calls upon Member States that are party to specific agreements to adhere to guidelines and take action on implementation]

12. *Strongly calls upon* [Government] to take urgent measures to put an end to violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, including the targeting of persons belonging to particular ethnic groups, the targeting of civilians by military operations, and rape and other forms of sexual violence, and to end impunity for such acts;

[Note: Clause calls upon a specific Government to end human rights violations in country]

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on the issue of the promotion of multilateralism in the area of [issue] and to submit a report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session;

[Note: Requests that the Secretary-General submit a report on a specific aspect of an issue for the next session]