



# **GUIDELINES FOR THIMUN SECURITY COUNCIL AND HISTORICAL SECURITY COUNCIL**

**A Short Explanation  
Including Advice  
For Delegates and Student Officers**

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*For a more comprehensive guide on purpose and history, see the booklet by Hylke Hoekstra and Dirk van Leeuwen*

## THIMUN Security Council

The THIMUN Security Council aims to give students the chance to examine the mandate and experience the dynamics of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). As stated in Chapter V of the United Nations Charter, the Security Council focuses on maintaining international peace and security. Unlike the General Assembly and other UN organs, the Security Council has the exclusive and primary responsibility to determine the deployment of peacekeeping forces.

During a four-day simulation, THIMUN delegates debate pressing world issues confronting the international community and deliberate on what options to take in order to ameliorate the suffering and restore peace and stability. In The Hague as in New York City, only through compromise and consensus-building is a positive outcome possible.

The THIMUN Security Council, like the UNSC, consists of 15 members: five permanent members with veto powers (China, France, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, and United States of America) and ten non-permanent members elected for a two-year term – without a veto-power. The non-permanent members are elected by the General Assembly with equitable geographical distribution in order to ensure that the views of all regions of the world are represented.

The THIMUN Security Council is made up of double delegations. Two delegates from the same school represent their delegation. Due to the urgency of the issues discussed and the legally binding nature of the resolutions produced by the UNSC, it is imperative that delegates in the THIMUN SC work as one competent and experienced delegation.

## Historical Simulation

For students with a strong interest in history and international relations, THIMUN runs a Historical Security Council (HSC). Members of the HSC are given the opportunity to explore what measures the UNSC might have or should have taken to address international conflicts or humanitarian crises that occurred in the past. By engaging in the HSC, delegates gain insight into the geo-political realities at a given time in the past as well as possible responses or limitations confronting the United Nations. The timeframe is strict, and delegates are usually given a key date of an event of historic significance which requires UN intervention. Delegates are not to draw upon any information after the timeframe which is being simulated. For example, if the delegates are in session debating the Yom Kippur War (8 October 1973), they are not allowed to discuss any information / events that took place after that date. In short, delegates in the HSC take a time machine into the past.

The rules of procedure of the Historical Security Council are identical to those of the THIMUN Security Council

## Preparation

**Research** the issues on the agenda very carefully. Please remember that the Research Reports provided by the Student Officers, although extensive, should not be the only source of information. There are many valuable resources available. After collecting general information, we advise you to research what the United Nations has done so far (if anything) to address the topics. The resolutions you will create are intended to help solve the issue. The more extensive your research, the more comprehensive your deliberations and resolutions will be.

Consider the following questions when researching the UN context of the issues:

- What do previous resolutions say?
- What has been attempted before?
- What are the previous successes and failures of the international community?
- Are there UN reports by a Special Rapporteur, the Secretary General or other UN committees?

A further reminder: The issues debated in the THIMUN Security Council are contemporary, pressing and in the news. Being up to speed with current events until THIMUN SC commences will help you formulate strong, action-oriented solutions.

**Draft resolutions** are strongly recommended from all delegates. The **draft resolutions** should include preambulatory and operative clauses on every issue.

*Please note:* Although delegates will submit clauses and not resolutions to the chairs, preparing resolutions before the conference helps ensure a more substantive basis for lobbying and debate.

### Special considerations for the HSC

In order to make this historical simulation as engaging and realistic as possible, the following points must be taken into consideration when researching the issues:

1. **Setting:** The makeup of the Security Council and the policies of the Member States are as they were in the selected year. No references are to be made to the actual outcome or effects of the historical event in question.
2. **Timeframe:** Research should concentrate on the specific day(s) and year of the given issue. Possible areas to consider:
  - What were the geo-political constellations at the time?
  - What were the political and economic circumstances?
  - What were the dynamics between the various parties either directly or indirectly engaged in the issue?
  - How might existing alliances and international tensions at the time affect the dynamics of the crisis under consideration?
3. **Hindsight Bias:** Delegates should make every effort to avoid hindsight bias. It is imperative that current tensions and emotions do not spill over into the debate.

## Conference Proceedings

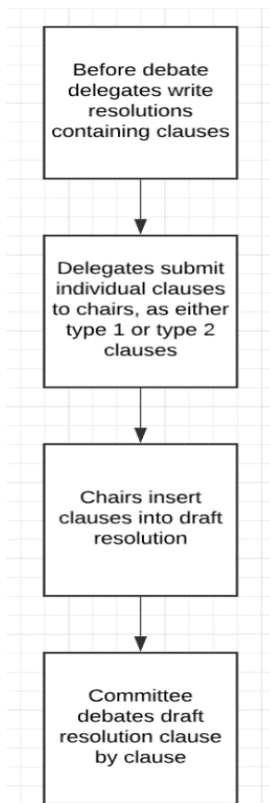
**Lobbying/Merging:** In the UNSC, informal meetings precede formal debates. THIMUN simulates this by providing unstructured / unmoderated sessions before each debate to allow delegates to merge clauses with other delegates and enlist support for their clauses. This is also the chance to discuss potential shortcomings in the clauses that will result in veto threats and to address these through negotiation. A delegate should try to gather signatories for their clauses, particularly from the P5.

*A brief reminder:* Delegates can submit three types of clauses:

1. *Preambulatory Clauses* state the background to the issue, the argumentation and reasoning behind the called for action. These clauses **require nine signatories**.
2. *Type 1 Operative Clauses* express the will or calls for action to address the issue. These clauses likewise **require nine signatories and are debated first**.
3. *Type 2 Operative Clauses* are clauses that are especially controversial, and while relevant they lack the required signatories. *Type 2 Clauses* are only considered after all *Type 1 Clauses* have been debated.

The expert chair will be involved in the lobbying session for their respective issue and will be available to advise delegates. Delegates are highly encouraged to co-submit merged clauses and NOT submit multiple highly similar clauses.

### Lobbying / Merging process:



Unlike other THIMUN committees, in the THIMUN SC all of the submitted clauses are grouped into one draft resolution.

After passage of all clauses and amendments through committee, the draft resolution is sent to the Approval Panel. Once any recommended changes and content considerations have been addressed, it is then formally presented to the committee for final approval.

**Process:** The President will inform the delegates of the committee's schedule.

- Delegates will get three sessions to lobby – one for each issue.
- In the **HSC**, topics will be debated in chronological order.
- In the **THIMUN SC**, the Student Officers and delegates will decide on the order in which the issues will be debated.

At the discretion of the presiding Student Officers and depending on the time frame, lobbying can proceed as follows:

- **In the HSC**, the procedure has been that both delegates actively engage in lobbying, merging and debate.
- **In the THIMUN SC**, a more involved procedure has been followed:
  1. For the first issue both delegates of the double-delegation lobby together.
  2. When formal debate on the first issue commences, one delegate of the delegation debates the first issue while the other delegate of the delegation is engaged in lobbying for the second issue.
  3. When the formal debate on the second issue commences, one delegate will debate this issue while the other delegate will lobby for the third (or last) issue.
  4. Finally, all delegates of all double delegations will debate the third (or last) issue on the agenda together.
  5. Delegates of the double delegation should decide on their roles with the idea that both delegates get an equal opportunity to lobby and debate.

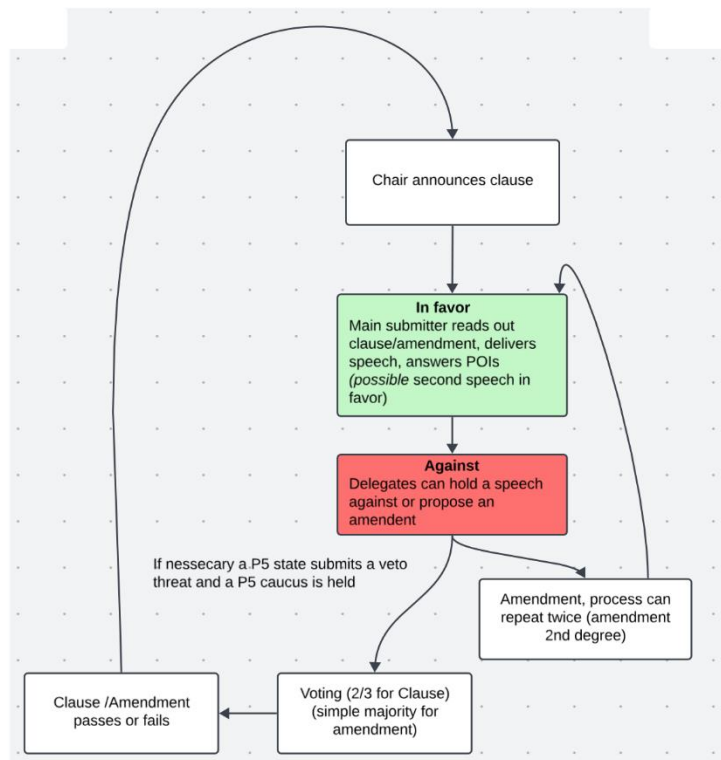
### **Debate: Clause by Clause**

The Security Council uses standard THIMUN General Assembly procedure, with a couple of exceptions.

### **Process of debate:**

- Although the committee works with a draft resolution, **debate is clause by clause**. As such, all clauses are debated in a void; references to previous clauses are not appropriate. The committee will mostly be in **closed debate on clauses**.
- At the discretion of the Chair, a follow-up **Point of Information** may be entertained. This privilege should not be abused and is intended to provide clarification and substance to the debate.
- In the event of a **veto threat**, a so-called P5 caucus is held. The P5 Member States and one Chair leave the room to try to arrange compromise and avoid a veto. The remaining delegates are in an unmoderated caucus.
- **Amendments and amendments to the second degree** will be entertained during debate on the relevant clause only.
- If a delegate feels more time is needed before a clause is passed, they can either ask to extend debate time or ask to table a clause until the end of the debate on that issue.
- **Open debate** resumes after all clauses in the draft resolution have been debated. Additional clauses can be submitted as amendments, and if passed will be added to the main resolution.
- After all Operative Clauses have been debated and voted upon, **Preambulatory Clauses are debated en-bloc**.

## Debate Procedure



## Voting in the Security Council

The Security Council is different from other THIMUN forums in regard to voting. The resolutions passed by the Council are legally binding, thus Member States have a responsibility of grave importance when making decisions and voting. Below are the voting requirements:

### **Clauses and resolutions: minimum 9 - 6 (supermajority):**

→ **Nine** votes **FOR** / **Six** votes **AGAINST** or **ABSTENTIONS** are required for a clause/resolution to pass.

### **Amendments (including amendments to the second degree) - the (simple) majority vote:**

→ More than half of the committee vote in favour for an amendment to pass.

The intention behind this is to avoid mistaken vetoes or veto-threats on amendments.

**ABSTENTIONS DO NOT COUNT AS VOTES IN FAVOUR**

## Veto power:

- If a clause / amendment seems to be absolutely unacceptable to a P5 Member State and against their policy, they need to warn the President of a potential veto-threat. This is done by sending a note to the Chair.
- If a P5 Member State fails to send a veto-threat to the Chair before voting, they cannot vote against the motion.
- If any P5 country votes no, this will constitute a veto, and the clause / resolution will not pass.
- The President can discourage overuse of the veto, but the final decision of whether or not to veto rests with the delegation.
- As shown by the chart below, veto threats are extremely rare in the United Nations. As such, P5 Member States should exercise their right sparingly.

The following statistics have been taken from Chart 13: Voting on Resolutions 2017-2020

[Highlights 2020 | United Nations Security Council Highlights Of Security Council Practice 2020](#)

Year	Resolutions Adopted	Unanimously Adopted	Vetoes
2017	61	59	6
2018	54	45	3
2019	52	44	3
2020	57	44	3

**Warning to P5 Member States:** As stated above, the veto is an anomaly in the UNSC and THIMUN endeavours to create a realistic debate. P5 delegations are responsible to respect this privilege.

**Quorum:** A quorum of 9 of 15 delegations exists in the Security Council.

In the event that delegates walk out, they will be reminded that this takes away from their debate time. If necessary, the Secretary General can be called to help the delegates find a solution. If the President and Secretary General decide that too much time has been lost and no agreement can be reached, delegates must return to debate. Failing to do so, may result in further consequences.

## Guidelines for Student Officers

The goal of the Student Officers is to facilitate an accurate, productive and engaging debate.

### Preparation

- Each Student Officer should write a research report on one topic and then act as Expert Chair on that topic. Chairs should be familiar with all topics.
- Chairs must be versed in the rules of procedure prior to the conference. Before the opening of the conference, it is advisable that the Chairs do a quick run through of procedure together.
- The President / Vice Presidents should discuss and agree on a clear and equitable division of roles prior to debate.

### At the start of the conference:

Chairs should:

- hold an introductory presentation on procedure and the THIMUN conference / Security Council schedule.
  - **In the THIMUN SC**, the first order of business will be to determine the agenda in consultation with the forum.
  - **In the HSC** the issues will be debated chronologically.
- respond to delegates questions.
- conduct quick introductions/ice-breaker activities.

### Lobbying and merging:

- During Lobbying, the Expert Chair of the topic and a Second Chair should be actively involved by advising delegates, answering questions, facilitating merging, and encouraging the more reluctant members to participate.
- During this time, the Third Chair will be working on the computer receiving clauses, editing them, and entering them into the resolution. If there are no clauses yet prepared, the Chair should likewise assist in lobbying.
- The Chairs should rotate these roles.

### Debate:

- One Chair should be chairing the debate (**Moderating Chair**).
  - Debate proceeds clause by clause.
  - Amendments and amendments to the second degree are encouraged from delegates.
  - Should grammar or content be poorly phrased, chairs could accept non-debated oral amendments in order to remedy these issues.
  - Should a proposed grammatical change lead to disagreements, Student Officers can reverse the decision and ask that the oral amendment be submitted as a full amendment at a later stage.
  - Once the list of operative clauses has been completed, Type-2 Clauses as defined earlier in this document can be introduced.



- One Chair should keep track of participation and suggest to the Moderating Chair who to call on (**Recording Chair**).
- One Chair should handle the draft resolution and tech, i.e. inserting amendments into the document (**Logistical Chair**).
- These posts should be rotated.
- **Guest Speakers** are introduced by the Expert Chair of the issue.

## Final passage of the resolution:

Once a draft-resolution is ready for debate, the following procedure will be followed prior to final passage of the resolution:

- The draft-resolution is presented to the Approval Panel to ensure content quality.
  - The Approval Panel will make corrections regarding any grammar or logical issues that were not caught by the chairs.
  - In the event that questions concerning content issues arise (for example, misrepresentation of country policies, factual errors, etc.), the Approval Panel will inform the Student Officers.
  - The responsibility and choice of action to address these issues, rests with the President and Deputy Presidents.
    - Potential solutions:
      - Inform the key sponsors of the resolution and advise them to address the questions raised by the Approval Panel.
      - A motion to table problematic clauses can be recommended and put to a vote.
  - The Approval Panel and Student Officers share responsibility to ensure that no resolution consists of factual and grammatical errors.
  - Once the corrections and changes have been entered by the Chair in consultation with the key-sponsors, a final vote will be taken.
- While the Approval Panel is reviewing the resolution, the THIMUN SC / HSC will either be engaged in lobbying and / or entertaining a limited break. The time allotted is determined by the Chair.

## Realism/Quality

The Student Officers have a huge responsibility to ensure a realistic session where delegates are held accountable for following their country policy during lobbying, voting and debate. Lobbying and debate work hand-in-hand. As such, Student Officers play an instrumental role in facilitating lobbying. Constructive, engaged lobbying, negotiations and debate are key to making participation in the THIMUN SC / HSC an enriching experience for all participants