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How to Write a Position Paper

Writing a position paper might appear to be a daunting task, especially for new delegates. But with enough research, you will find that writing a position paper will be easy and useful.

Position papers are usually one to one-and-a-half pages in length. Your position paper should include a brief introduction followed by a comprehensive breakdown of your country's position on the topics that are being discussed by the committee. A good position paper will not only provide facts but also make proposals for resolutions.

Many conferences will ask for specific details in a position paper, so be sure to include all the required information. Most conferences will provide delegates a background guide to the issue. Usually, the background guide will contain questions to consider. Make sure that your position paper answers these questions.

A good position paper will include:

- A brief introduction to your country and its history concerning the topic and committee;
- How the issue affects your country;
- Your country's policies with respect to the issue and your country's justification for these policies;
- Quotes from your country's leaders about the issue;
- Statistics to back up your country's position on the issue;
- Actions taken by your government with regard to the issue;
- Conventions and resolutions that your country has signed or ratified;
- UN actions that your country supported or opposed;
- What your country believes should be done to address the issue;
- What your country would like to accomplish in the committee's resolution; and
- How the positions of other countries affect your country's position.

Position Paper

Here is a Sample Position Paper provided by UNA-USA. At BUMUN a one page position paper is all that is needed in preparation, and will be easier to write. Keep the major points in your paper, which you have gained through research.



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SAMPLE POSITION PAPER

Committee: Commission on Human Rights

Topic: Violence against Women

Country: The Kingdom of Denmark

Delegate: William Hayward Wilson, Shea University

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, “no one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.” Although this doctrine was adopted in 1948, the world has fallen quite short of this goal. Violence against women pervades all states and it is the duty of the international community to ensure that all persons are afforded equality and respect. Despite cooperative efforts at combating gross human rights abuses, such as the adoption of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, the United Nations has not been able to alleviate the injustice women worldwide experience daily.

The Kingdom of Denmark believes that in order to end violence against women, nations must look to empower women in all aspects of society. This includes promoting equal gender roles in government, civil society, education and business. However, Denmark also recognizes the need to combat human rights abuses against women as they occur, and no nation is immune to gender violence.

In 2002, the Danish Government launched an extensive action plan to combat domestic violence against women. The plan includes measures to help treat abused women, identify and prosecute the perpetrators, and incorporate professional medical and psychological staff into the rehabilitation process. The action plan currently reaches out to both governmental and nongovernmental groups on the local level throughout the nation.

The Danish Centre for Human Rights in Copenhagen, Denmark’s foremost national human rights institution also promotes and protects human rights. Based on the Centre’s research, Denmark’s parliament can promote human rights-based legislation and education/awareness programs throughout the nation. The Centre also addresses the UN Commission on Human Rights annually regarding human rights developments in Denmark and internationally. Denmark has no record of committing major human rights violations, most importantly any targeted at women. In its 2003 Annual Report, Amnesty International also found no human rights violations against Danish women.

Women are invaluable to Denmark’s society and have achieved significant economic and social gains in the 20th century. Currently, 75 percent of medical students in Denmark are women. Denmark is confident that this Commission can bring about an end to violence against women without compromising the sovereignty of member states. Education remains perhaps the most useful tool in protecting victims of gender-based violence. Governments, UN agencies, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) can plan a coordinated campaign that educates national populations on the various ways women are violently targeted. Similarly, harmful traditions, such as honor killings and female genital mutilation, must be stopped by reforming traditional views of women in society. Children of both sexes need to be taught at an early age to value the rights of women in order to prevent such violence in their generation.

Another way to stop gender violence would be to reproach member states that consistently violate treaties such as the Convention on Political Rights of Women (1952), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979), and the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993). Although this Committee cannot impose sanctions, it can pass resolutions verbally condemning states that commit human rights violations. The UN High Commissioner for Human

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Rights can also meet with representatives of governments that violate the above treaties to discuss possible solutions.

In order to prevent gender violence, nations must work together to build a culture of support, equality and community. As such, the Kingdom of Denmark looks forward to offering its support, in whatever form possible, to nations firmly committed to ending violence against women in all its forms.

