

Western Model United Nations

Crisis 101



Introduction

Crisis committees differ vastly from General Assembly and other more traditional MUN simulations; they are less formal and, in many ways, far more dynamic. A committee is generally comprised of 10 to 20 delegates, headed by either two co-chairs or one chair responsible for moderating debate. Besides debating, delegates may communicate with one another and with the Crisis Room through written notes. These are generally kept secret, although there is always a chance that they may be leaked.

The Crisis can revolve around one committee in which members struggle for power internally, or several committees called Joint Crisis, where committees will battle each other for the control of a territory or a state. By far the most exciting aspect of crisis simulations are the crises themselves. Unlike other types of committees, Crisis actually moves forward in time and can be affected by events that occur in the outside world. In sessions debate may be interrupted with important news or information. Wars may break out, natural disasters can occur, and scandals or corruption can be revealed, just to name a few.

Delegates must be able to think quickly, for a single crisis may alter the course of the debate and create new problems that must be responded to immediately. Typically, most of the time in a crisis committee is spent in either moderated or unmoderated caucus, debate formats appropriate to the small number of participants and the rapidly changing nature of the situation.

General Procedure and the Basics of Crisis Committees

Once the crisis begins, Crisis Committees will not move from topic to topic or set the agenda. Instead, the committee will debate the crisis until it is resolved.

Perpetual Moderated Caucus

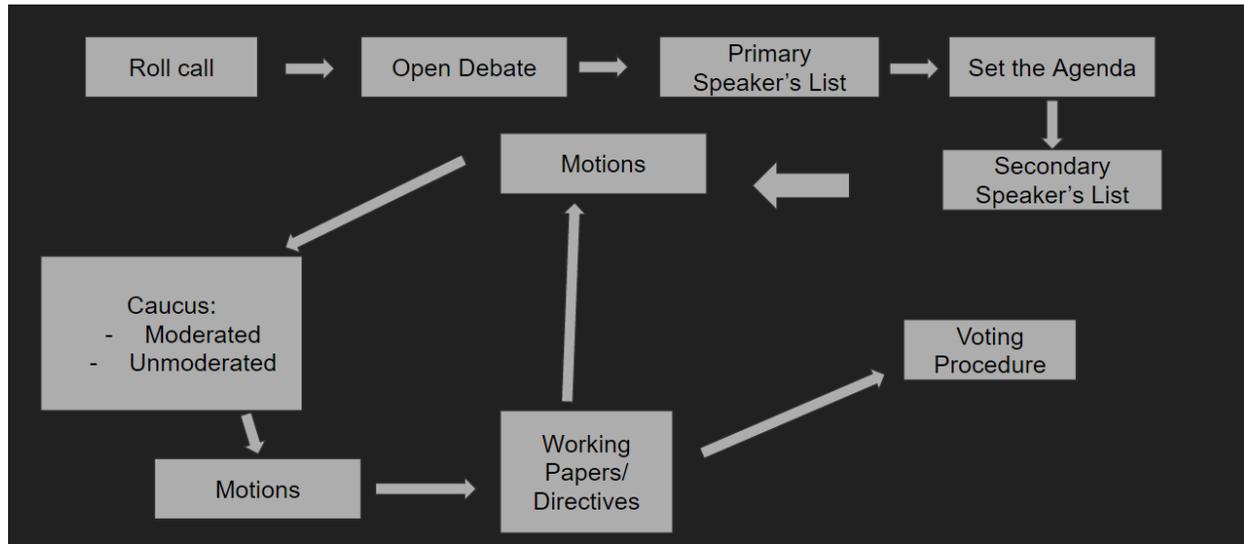
Because of the dynamic nature of the crisis, the committee will not rely on a Speaker's List and instead conduct debate through a perpetual moderated crisis. If there are no points or motions on the floor, the chair will immediately proceed into a moderated caucus with a 45 second speaking time. At the discretion of the Chair, points or motions may be called for between speakers.

*Although in a perpetual moderated caucus, delegates may call for both an unmoderated caucus and a moderated caucus to focus on a specific subtopic or draft directive.

Two main effects result from this arrangement:

- 1 – Debate is more freeform and reactive to events
- 2 – The committee does not enter voting bloc when the Speaker's List is exhausted

GENERAL FLOW OF DEBATE:



Despite being a perpetual moderated caucus, delegates may make motions. The following points and motions are permissible (in order of precedence).

Points

Points are actions that individual delegates are able to raise throughout the duration of the committee sessions, in scenarios they deem important to bring attention to, in a personal or a committee-wide setting.

- **Point of Order** - used to bring attention to the use of improper procedure or any violation of the committee rules. The Chair will immediately issue a decision on the Point in accordance with the rules. The delegate raising the Point of Order may only speak to the procedural matter in question and not the substance of debate. A Point of Order may interrupt a speaker in the case the speech is not in accordance with the rules
- **Point of Personal Privilege** - used when a delegate is experiencing a personal discomfort that impairs their ability to participate in committee proceedings. When a delegate experiences an affront to their personal or national integrity they may raise a Point of Personal Privilege. If sustained by the Chair, they may submit a request for a Right of Reply in writing. A Point of Personal Privilege will be ruled out of order by the Dais except in extreme circumstances.
- **Point of Information** - used to ask a question of a delegate after a substantive speech if time remains and the speaker has so yielded or if time is set aside for questions. In crisis committees, points are raised to the Chair, but the question may be directed to the delegate in question and that delegate may directly respond to the question. However, a back and forth dialogue is not permitted.

Points of Information may not interrupt a speaker. Except in special circumstances, this point is rarely used in crisis committees.

- Point of Inquiry - used to ask the dais about questions regarding the committee, procedure, or for a clarification of the rules.
- Adjournment of the Meeting - used to suspend committee proceedings for a specified time and purpose. This motion requires a second and a simple majority for passage. This motion is not debatable.
- Motion to Amend the Rules - used to adopt a new rule for committee proceedings. These are considered at the discretion of the chair. A second is required and a three-quarters majority needed for passage.
- Motion to Consider a Draft Directive, Communiqué or Press Release - used to introduce a document to the committee for consideration. This motion must only be seconded for passage. When seconded, the Chair may at his or her discretion allow the document to be read to the committee before voting on the document. At the discretion of the chair, multiple documents may be presented sequentially before votes are taken.
- Motion for the Participation of a Non-Member - used to request special speakers or presentations from an outside entity or expert. This motion requires a second and simple majority for passage and is debatable at the discretion of the Chair.

Inviting Guests: The Crisis Committee may call for external speakers to address the body. To do so, a committee member must move to invite the guest; that motion is requires a majority vote to pass. For instance, in a hypothetical Security Council, the State of Utopia could make the following motion:

“The State of Utopia moves to invite the Nation of Bliss to the Security Council.”
If the motion passes, the dais will then pass this request to the crisis staff. If available, a representative will be summoned to the committee chambers, where she will give a brief statement and then answer questions. Any delegate wishing to ask a question of the speaker must be called upon by the dais and must direct the question to the dais. After answering a few questions, the invited guest will depart from the committee and will not be available for further questioning.

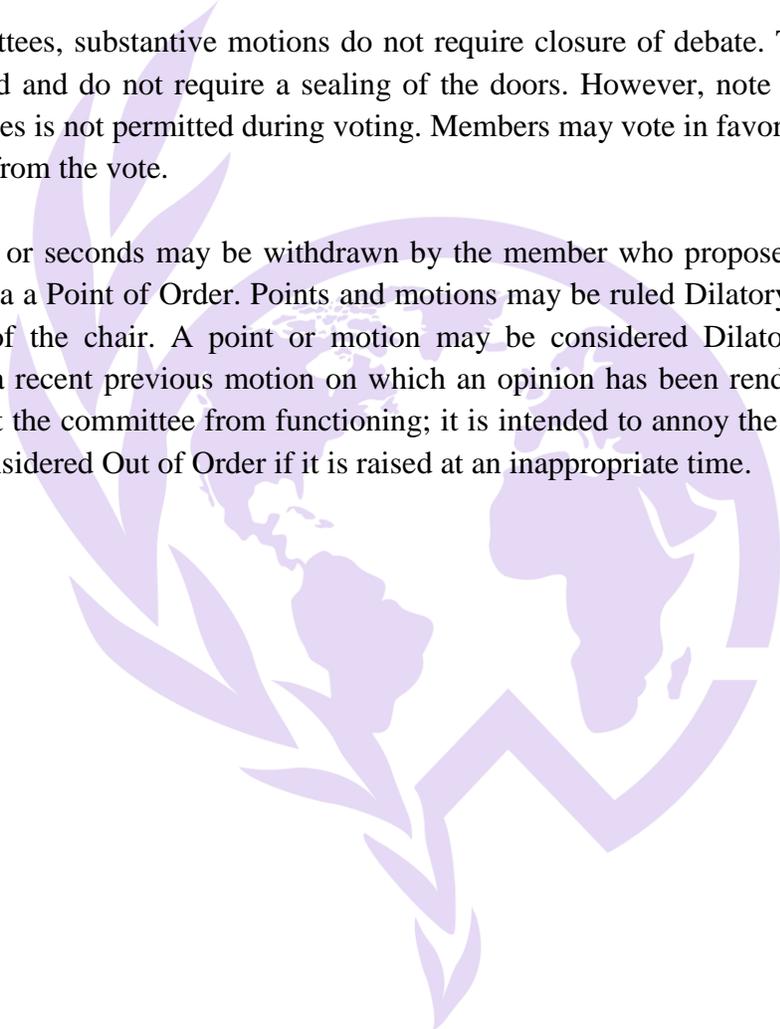
Points and Motions Points are called out by members to request the immediate attention on the chair on matters of procedure or personal comfort with regards to committee proceedings. Motions are made when called for by the Chair. They are used to propose a course of action, such as the initiation of an unmoderated caucus or a suspension of the meeting. Procedural motions are those

that relate to the operation of a committee. All procedural motions are collected at once and voted upon in order of precedence from most to least disruptive until a motion is passed.

At the end of the passed motion, voting will continue on any motions that remain on the table. All members in attendance must vote on procedural motions. Abstentions are not allowed in procedural votes. Substantive motions are those that concern documents such as directives or communiqués.

In crisis committees, substantive motions do not require closure of debate. These votes may be taken by placard and do not require a sealing of the doors. However, note passing and talking between delegates is not permitted during voting. Members may vote in favor or against a motion or may abstain from the vote.

Points, motions or seconds may be withdrawn by the member who proposed them at any time before voting via a Point of Order. Points and motions may be ruled Dilatory or Out of Order at the discretion of the chair. A point or motion may be considered Dilatory if: it is seen as approximating a recent previous motion on which an opinion has been rendered; it is meant to delay or prevent the committee from functioning; it is intended to annoy the committee. A point or motion is considered Out of Order if it is raised at an inappropriate time.



Short Crisis Procedure Form for Quick Reference

<u>Rule</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Vote Required</u>
Point of Order	Used to bring attention to the use of improper procedure or violation of committee rules	Ruling of the Chair
Point of Personal Privilege	Used to indicate personal discomfort	Ruling of the Chair
Point of Information	Used to ask a question towards any delegate after a speech or presentation	Yield by delegate
Point of Inquiry	Used to ask the chair for clarifications of the rules of procedure	Ruling of the Chair
Appeal of the Chair	Used to overturn the decision of the chair on a procedural matter	$\frac{3}{4}$ of the committee
Motion to Adjourn the Meeting	Used to suspend committee proceedings	Majority
Motion to Amend the Rules	Used to adopt/modify rules for committee proceedings	Ruling of the chair and $\frac{3}{4}$ of the committee
Motion to Consider a Draft Directive, Communiqué or Press Release	Used to introduce a document to the committee for consideration and voting	Majority
Motion for the Participation of a Non-Member	Used to request special speakers, presentations from outside experts, or members from other committees	Majority
Motion for an unmoderated caucus	Used to temporarily suspend the rules of committee to enter into informal debate	Majority

Role of the Crisis Team

While delegates debate in their committee room, a whole host of staff members is hard at work in the Crisis Room creating further scenarios. These staff members are also responsible for presenting crisis updates to delegates in creative and innovative ways, and for responding to the notes that delegates may send at any time. There are four types of documents which be released by an individual delegate or by the committee as a whole.

Directive: A formal action taken by the entire committee, which must first be voted upon.

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Example: Directive 1.1

Historical Crisis Committee - Bay of Pigs

Crisis Sponsors: United States, United Kingdom

New orders for Minuteman I ICBM silo operators :

- Arm all missiles on the United States Western Sea Board
- No fire unless fired upon
- The United States will also scramble all fighter jets to assemble over Cuban Airspace

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Communiqué: A formal message from a committee or delegate to be communicated to other bodies (stimulated or un-simulated). If sent from the committee, communiqués must first be approved by a majority vote.

Press Release: Press releases are similar to communiqués in the fact that they are sent from the committee as a whole; the difference lies in the fact that a press release is addressed to the public. Press releases can help sway the opinions of the public or provoke public reactions to crises at hand. In some committees, press releases take on different forms. These include propaganda, public announcements, and publications. Press releases require a second to be considered to for voting and must receive a simple majority for passage.

Individual Action Order: Action taken by an individual delegate in accordance with their portfolio powers. For example, a Minister of the Interior may send a note to the Crisis Room requesting to place police officers on patrol in front of the house of another delegate to investigate who enters and leaves.

General Tips

“Succeeding” in a crisis committee, means that you have faithfully represented your character throughout the simulation (to the best of your ability). In some cases, you will need to focus purely on one of the four types of reactions; however, you will most likely need to utilize all four to achieve the greatest effect. Good delegates will demonstrate in-depth knowledge of the subject matter and exploit this information to respond to crises faced by the committee, even if it involves some shady dealings out of public view or behind the backs of their fellows.

Questions

If you have any questions concerning your preparation for the committee or have any other procedural questions, please feel free to contact the secretariat at secgen@uwomun.org.

