

## **BrizMUN Position Paper Guide**

### **Goal of a Position Paper**

A position paper is a statement of your country's/organisation's foreign policy both generally and in relation to the topic you'll be debating. It should be a summary of the key issues in your topic and the views of your country/organisation on these challenges, plus any possible solutions your country/organisation may propose.

### **General Outline**

Please note the structure of this will alter depending on the nature of your topic and your role in committee.

#### *History of the Issue*

You should give a description of past actions/policies undertaken by your country / organisation. This could include your position on any past UN action taken on the topic. As well, you should give a general statement of your country's/organisation's foreign policy. Also research whether your country/organisation is involved in a regional/country bloc, e.g the European Union or Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The websites of these organisations could give clues to what measures your country has supported in the past and what actions it may support in the future.

#### *Current Position*

Give a summary of your country's/organisation's current position on your topic of debate. Check your country's/organisation's website especially their foreign ministry and the website of their delegation to the UN.

#### *Possible Solutions*

In the last part of your position paper you should give a list of possible solutions your country/organisation would support. These would be taken from your research so far. Use past actions to guide which solutions you would support/propose. You can even mention solutions your country/organisation would not support and reasons for it.

#### *Tone*

Your position paper must be written from the perspective of the country/organisation you're representing. This may mean you won't completely elaborate on the truth of an issue in its entirety e.g. a position paper by Russia on freedom of speech would not mention the suppression of opposition groups and independent media.

#### *Style & Format*

A position paper should be written in the style of a brief. It should be concise and to the point. You are welcome to use headings and dot points. It should be an easily readable font such as Times New Roman and of 12pt font size.

#### *Word Count*

Your position paper should be around 200 words with a maximum of 500 words.

### *Submitting Your Paper*

All Position Papers must be emailed to your Directors by Sunday the 4th of April:

**Security Council:** [sc@brizmun.org](mailto:sc@brizmun.org)

**Human Rights Council:** [hrc@brizmun.org](mailto:hrc@brizmun.org)

**1st General Assembly:** [1st.ga@brizmun.org](mailto:1st.ga@brizmun.org)

**6th General Assembly:** [6th.ga@brizmun.org](mailto:6th.ga@brizmun.org)

**UN Environment Programme:** [unep@brizmun.org](mailto:unep@brizmun.org)

**International Monetary Fund:** [imf@brizmun.org](mailto:imf@brizmun.org)

### **Sample Position Paper**

*Position Paper:* France

*Committee:* Security Council


*Topic:* Response to the mass killings of ethnic minorities in Myanmar (hypothetical)

France strongly believes that a multilateral solution through the Security Council is the best way to address the situation in Burma. The conflict between the military government and Karen fighters has reached a stage where immediate and decisive action is required. We seek an immediate and binding ceasefire between the Burmese military and the Karen fighters.

Since the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen on the 26th of August 1789, the protection of human rights has been a cornerstone of French Foreign Policy. These are universal values which are shared by all human beings on this Earth. The actions of the Burmese government amount to a blatant violation of Universal Human Rights and International Law, in particular, Article 7 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court relating to crimes against humanity. In addition, the use of child soldiers by both sides is a clear infringement of the 1989 International Covenant on the Rights of Child. France asks that the Burmese government and the Karen come to a peaceful resolution without any further loss of life.

France does not rule out the use of force when there is a sufficient humanitarian crisis. However, it should only be used as a last resort when all other alternatives have been thoroughly exhausted. Any use of force must be endorsed by the United Nations and no state has the right to use it unilaterally.

At the 2005 World Summit all UN Member States adopted a document which clearly outlines the role of the international community when a State neglects to protect its population. Paragraph 138 states that "each individual State has the responsibility to protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity". Paragraph 139 goes on to say that should a State deliberately fail to protect its own people from such harms. The international community through Chapters VI and VIII of the United Charter has a duty then to assume that responsibility and be prepared to take collective action.



France does not seek to impose its will on Burma or violate its sovereignty and territorial integrity. Any humanitarian intervention into Burma will not set a precedent for interference in other areas of the globe, since it should only be used on a case by case basis. We only wish to ensure the protection of civilians in armed conflict and ask the Burmese government to fulfil its responsibilities and obligations to its people.

In the past, some nations have argued that the situation in Burma poses no threat to international peace and security. France believes that continued conflict in Burma will intensify waves of refugees into Thailand exacerbating crowded refugee camps thereby destabilising an already fragile State.

At the conclusion of the proceedings France wishes to see the implementation of the following three actions. One, there must be a greater tightening of sanctions against the Burmese leadership. These include a global embargo on the sale of arms or weapons expertise to Burma or any equipment that may be used to further internal repression. France also advocates increased economic sanctions targeting Burma's key exports of timber and rubies. Two, guarantee the protection of civilians in armed conflict, allowing NGOs and other aid agencies to provide food, shelter and health care to the internally displaced. Three, only after all other means have been exhausted should the Council entertain the possibility of humanitarian intervention.