



LAGOS  
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NATIONS

# How to Form Blocs and Work with Other Delegates

Lagos Model United Nations







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# Introduction

**M**odel UN (MUN) conferences are all about teamwork and collaboration. No man is an island and this is even more relevant in MUNs. Hence, for every new and even more experienced delegates, the question is, how do I form blocs and work with other delegates in my committee?

Forming blocs is one of the most essential parts of MUNs because of how important blocs are to the conference process. Blocs are simply groups of delegates with similar ideas, working together to solve the issues before the committee. Admittedly, it can be daunting at first, walking into a committee with unfamiliar faces and being expected to work for three days or more with these unknown faces. However, knowing how to break the ice and network with other delegates is an important first step. (You can go through the documents on “First Impression Tips”, “Diplomacy & Delegate Behaviour” and “Negotiations” for more tips on communications with other delegates).



While blocs in MUNs are often groups of delegates working together on documents or amendments, blocs could also be groups of countries with similar policy stances. These countries usually vote the same way on a topic and come up with a resolution based on their similar views. In fact, there could be a few determinate factors with which blocs are formed. For instance, there are blocs along geographical lines e.g. South-East Asia blocs, West Africa blocs, Latin America blocs etc. As identified earlier, blocs can even be formed based on similar foreign policy stances. For example, if a country has an opposite viewpoint to that of your country on a very controversial topic, it might be quite difficult to be in the same bloc with such a country.



There are many benefits to being in or forming a bloc with members of your committee. Working with a substantial number of delegates in your committee means that you already have access to more votes when the time to vote on your resolution comes. It also represents a diversity of thoughts and stronger ideas, which could bring about better solutions and ultimately, the best resolutions. It is a chance for diplomacy and strengthens your capacity for team work.

# Tips on Forming Blocs

Here are a few tips on forming blocs and working with other delegates at your MUN:

## ***Connect Before Committee Sessions***

At the first event of the Conference, there is a golden opportunity to meet members of your committee, and potential bloc members before you even begin committee sessions. So, walk around. Introduce yourself. Ask questions. You could also chip in a few things regarding your topic, when or if you meet delegates from your committee. Remember to ask for their names, countries and put them in mind.



## ***Give a Strong Opening Speech***

(Check out the document on “Giving speeches”)  
Always start strong! Your opening speech or opening statement is your chance to make a good first impression on the room, make the most of it. Get the room’s attention and always give room for follow up. Even if it’s the speech for Setting the Agenda, make the most of it.



## ***Never be too Proud to Reach Out First***

Get yourself out there. Tell a really good speaker that you loved their speech or tell them they have good ideas, if they do. However, do not lie or give false praises. Pass notes and tell them you would like to work with them or hear more about their solutions. During informal sessions, walk up to delegates, ask them if they have any ideas. If they do, listen to them intently and invite them to work with you if you like what they say. Sometimes, people just need someone to reach out to them first.



### ***Engage and Contribute***

Committee sessions can get very overwhelming, especially for first timers. However, you can't be by yourself all the time and expect to have or be in a bloc. MUNs don't really work that way. You have to speak up and speak with your fellow delegates. Contribute to the group and always engage. However, be careful not to steal anyone's spotlight or rain on anyone's parade. It's a team effort so, you shouldn't always be the one doing everything. You should delegate and give others a chance to speak or do something too.



### ***Be Organized***

MUNs are fast-paced environments so it's easy to get disoriented or disorganized. To avoid this, write down ideas, opinions and suggestions. Not only will that make you the go-to person for all the information, it also helps you to avoid being overwhelmed and lost in the process.



### ***Use Your Speaker's Time Maximally***

When it comes to forming blocs, speeches are often underrated. However, if harnessed well, they can be great tools to help you with working with other delegates. In your speeches, you can briefly describe what your bloc is working on, invite delegates to join your bloc or engage with your solutions. Remember however that you are not allowed to call your working papers by name in your speeches. This is very important. But you may describe its contents. Don't forget to acknowledge everyone's work, appreciate the members of your bloc and give updates as to the progress of your work. This earns you huge loyalty points with members of your bloc and sparks interest within the entire committee.





# Other tips

- Use call to actions such as, “join us at that corner of the room if you are interested in engaging with our bloc and seeing our practical solutions”.
- Never stop researching. Many delegates erroneously stop researching on the first day of the conference. Not only does researching during the conference make you resourceful, it also helps you to create fool proof resolutions. However, do take note of your Conference’s guidelines on the use of electronic devices during formal and informal sessions. Also, take note of the rules against plagiarism.
- Merging two or more blocs is not the worst thing! Many delegates frown against being merged and often times, this makes the process of the merger long, hard and tedious. However, mergers are not bad. Ditch that mindset and make them work for you instead. In fact, if your bloc has pretty similar ideas with another bloc, you could always present the idea of being merged to the other bloc and your Dias at initial stage. Many blocs with similar ideas would often wait till the second or the last day of the conference, when they would be asked to merge. This can bring about lots of panicking and a hastily thrown together resolution.
- Division of Labour is never a bad idea. Never attempt to do all the work on your own. Even if the other delegates of your bloc are not encouraging or eager to work, sometimes all they need is a little push. So, divide the tasks. Let sub-groups of persons tackle certain clauses.
- If you are going to keep working after committee sessions are over. Make sure everyone is on board with it. Don’t delete someone’s work without giving them a chance to defend it. Learn to compromise and let down people easy. You don’t know everything and never try to make it seem like you do.
- Be genuinely kind. Enjoy the process and keep the team spirit. That way, you will definitely reap the fruits of your hard work.
- Create blocs! Join blocs! Genuinely check out the ideas of other blocs and make suggestions where necessary! Connect with others in the spirit of Model United Nations!





**That's it! See you at  
the conference!**