



# INTRODUCTION

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The *Issues at AMUN Handbook* is published to assist Representatives in their preparations for the American Model United Nations (AMUN) Conference. When combined with students' own research on the Member States they represent and the topics of discussion, this handbook provides Representatives with all the substantive information they will require to function effectively at the simulation. Its sister handbook, *Rules and Procedures*, provides an overview of the Committee rules and Conference logistics with which Representatives need to familiarize themselves for the simulation.

“Chapter One – The United Nations” provides essential background information to give all Representatives a common orientation to the history of the United Nations. This section begins with the origins of the United Nations and covers some important points about the organization. Finally, the chapter focuses on problems confronting the United Nations today.

“Chapter Two – Conference Preparation & Position Papers” outlines a recommended process for preparing for the AMUN Conference. Following these steps will lead you well on your way to acquiring all the content knowledge to be a successful Representative at AMUN. You will also find general information about topic purviews and position papers here.

Chapters Three through Nine then contain brief overviews of the topics to be discussed in the Committees, Councils, Commissions and International Court of Justice at the 2014 Conference. These are intended as a guideline and basis for Representatives' further research of the issues involved. In keeping with this goal, each overview includes a bibliography to guide Representatives to appropriate sources of additional information.

The overviews provide background on each topic and state some areas of current United Nations and international activity on the topic. In many cases, the overviews will frame the topic in terms of a few limited aspects of a complex issue. For example, the general issue of “the environment” has dozens of sub-issues—in such a case, the overview may direct Representatives to concentrate their research on “Ozone Depletion” and “Limiting the Destruction of the Rain Forests,” only two of the many subsidiary issues. This format allows Representatives to go into greater detail in their preparations without needing to research all aspects of a multifaceted main issue.

AMUN's philosophy in providing these topic overviews is to give Representatives direction in their research but to leave the work up to them. *These overviews are not intended to be the sole source of Representatives' research on the topics prior to the Conference.*