Sample Position Paper

Part I: Position Paper Outline
A position paper is a written research document that states a country’s position on a certain topic of debate. Position papers follow a very specific format, which is outlined below:

Delegation(s):
School:
Country:
Committee:
Topic:

I. General Information
1st Paragraph – Opening Statement (3 – 4 sentences)
   ● Why is this topic important for the committee to address?
   ● Why does your country care about this topic?
   ● What is your country’s policy on this topic?

II. Specifics
2nd Paragraph – National Actions (3 – 5 sentences)
   ● Is the topic an issue in your country?
   ● What actions has your country taken to improve or address the issue on a national level?
   ● Can you reference government officials on this issue?

3rd Paragraph – International Actions (3 – 5 sentences)
   ● How has your country improved or addressed the issues on an international level?
   ● What conventions, treaties and resolutions has your country supported on this issue?
   ● What organizations is your country a member of that addresses this issue?

4th Paragraph – Recommendations for Action (4 – 6 sentences)
   ● What role would your country like to see the international community take to address the problem?
   ● What are your country’s recommendations to the committee on how to best resolve the issue?

Outline compiled and adapted from the Global Classrooms Preparation Timeline and Advisor Handbook and the St. Ignatius MUN Handbook.
Part II: Sample Position Paper
Now that you’ve learned the basic outline of a paper position, please read the sample position paper below, which was written by an 8th grade student at the Sage School in Foxborough, Massachusetts. As you read, fill in the position paper graphic organizer, focusing on how each of the important aspects of the outline are present in the paper. You don’t need to write out everything in the sample position paper on the graphic organizer; simply use bullet points for the main ideas!

The Sage School
Myanmar
SOCHUM

I. General
Racism is the “hatred or intolerance of another race or races.” It affects both people and their nations. Nations are permanently restrained by racist policy, and so we must work together to end racism. These efforts can only be successful through worldwide collaboration. Racism has caused tragedies such as world wars, xenophobia, intolerance, and genocide. The international community cannot allow such atrocities that are fueled by its flames to continue. Myanmar will continue to be an active participant in these efforts. In Myanmar, there are over one hundred major ethnic nationalities, so ending prejudice and committing to racial equality is a priority. This diversity is our crowning glory and one of the main draws of tourism revenue. Thus, maintaining this diversity is a priority as we move to democracy. Myanmar has a desire to eliminate racism completely, and we urge the international community to participate in this effort.

II. Specific
Myanmar prioritizes the deconstruction of racism in our governmental policy, but it is difficult to reform pre-existing racist policies and structures. This is because the international community has persistently waged a negative media campaign against us, making it impossible to get any assistance or to make any progress in the right direction. Much of this behavior is due to our “negative” treatment of illegal Bengali immigrants who take up one third of the population of Rakhine State. Any regulatory action that has taken place, such as the two-child per family limit so that each child can have adequate food, is solely for their benefit. We have had difficulty in making the pressure we face clear to the international community. Despite these setbacks, we have made significant progress such as jailing the Islamophobic monk Wirathu in 2003 and sentencing him to twenty-five years imprisonment. We hope that the international community sees this progress and will give us aid in helping existing progress to continue.

Myanmar has done its best to take as much of an active role in the international community’s efforts against racism as it has within its own borders. However, we can

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suffer from feelings of isolation from the international community due to economic sanctions. Though some have been lifted, it remains difficult to re-engage with the international community fully while our economy and our steps to democracy are affected by unfair sanctions. However, we do work with the international community in other ways and we hope to continue to do so. While Myanmar is one of the several countries who has not ratified the International Convention on All Forms of Racial Discrimination, it is in constant communication with the United Nations agencies in human rights work against racism and we regularly submit reports to the United Nations. We wish to continue our cooperation with the UN so that we may improve our anti-racism efforts at home and abroad. We also attended the World Conference against Racism, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance in Durban, South Africa. Myanmar hopes that this displays our commitment to the elimination of racism in the global community.

Myanmar would like to receive assistance from the international community as it attempts to combat racism instead of suffering from the press demonizing us. One step we strongly support is other countries taking in refugees. An example of this would be assisting our problematic Bengali immigrant population by transporting them to another nation. We have a large population of these immigrants in the Rakhine state area, and resources are scarce. Tensions between Bengali immigrants, wrongly referred to as “Rohingya Muslims” by the international community, and Buddhist citizens of Myanmar are high. Without assistance from the international community, we will be unable to care for them. Myanmar also suggests that educational programs about the history of racism and its current forms be provided by countries who can afford to give aid. The United Nations’ Slave Route program also serves as a good example of possible efforts to undertake. The use of new technologies and educational systems in order to interest and educate the youth in the elimination of racism is an important pathway to abolishing racism in popular culture. Social media has already been organized in a grassroots fashion to vent frustrations and raise awareness, and this is a viable tool for the international community to use to eliminate racism in popular culture. Governments must be supported by the international community and the United Nations in order to fight discrimination by officials and private citizens.
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<th>Name: ____________________________</th>
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<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
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<td>Basic Facts of the Issue:</td>
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<td>Does my country suffer from this issue? Yes/No</td>
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<td>Supporting facts:</td>
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<td><strong>Past and current actions</strong></td>
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<td>National policies and actions</td>
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<td>International policies and actions</td>
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<td><strong>Future actions</strong></td>
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Name: ____________________________

My Position Paper Outline

Delegate Name(s):
Country:
Committee:
Topic:

I. GENERAL INFORMATION
   1st Paragraph – Opening Statement (4 – 5 sentences)
   Why is this topic important for the committee to address?
   ●
   ●
   ●

   Why does your country care about this topic? What is your country’s current policy on this topic?
   ●
   ●
   ●

II. SPECIFIC INFORMATION
   2nd Paragraph – National Actions (4 – 6 sentences)
   Is the topic an issue in your country? Is your country prepared for an outbreak? Explain.
   ●
   ●
   ●

   What is your country’s experience with a previous outbreak? Explain.
   ●
   ●
   ●
3rd Paragraph – International Actions (4 – 6 sentences)
How has your country taken international action or received international aid during an outbreak, epidemic, and/or pandemic?

●
●
●

What are the important lessons to learn from these previous experiences?

●
●
●

4th Paragraph – Recommendations for Action (4 – 6 sentences)
What does your country believe that the international community should do to prevent a future pandemic? Why? (Consider Who? What? When? Where? How? for these recommendations.)

●
●
●

If there is a serious outbreak in the future, what should the international community do? Why? (Consider Who? What? When? Where? How? For these recommendations.)

●
●
●