



SCMUN

St. Catherine's Model United Nations Conference

INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

Official Manual & Rules of Procedure

Read this manual in full before the conference.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the International Court of Justice

1.1 What is the ICJ?

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations and one of its six founding bodies. Established by the United Nations Charter in 1945 under Article 92 and operational from 1946, it succeeded the Permanent Court of International Justice (PCIJ), which had sat between 1922 and 1946. The Court's governing Statute is closely modelled on that of its predecessor.

Widely referred to as the World Court, the ICJ fulfils two distinct functions within the international legal system. In contentious cases, it adjudicates legal disputes submitted to it by States. In advisory proceedings, it provides non-binding legal opinions on questions put to it by authorised UN organs and specialised agencies. The Court is composed of fifteen judges, elected to nine-year terms by the General Assembly and the Security Council jointly, with one-third of the bench renewing every three years.

The Court is seated at the Peace Palace in The Hague, Netherlands - the same building that houses the Permanent Court of Arbitration. It operates entirely independently of the rest of the United Nations system, maintaining its own permanent administrative body known as the Registry, which handles the Court's judicial, diplomatic, and administrative functions.

1.2 The ICJ and Other International Tribunals

Participants must understand clearly how the ICJ differs from other international judicial institutions. While these bodies share certain features, their jurisdictions, mandates, and procedures are fundamentally distinct.

	ICJ	ICC	PCA
Full Name	International Court of Justice	International Criminal Court	Permanent Court of Arbitration
Founded	1945 / active 1946	1998 Rome Statute; active 2002	1899
Parties before the Court	States only	Individual persons (criminal charges)	States, entities, and private parties
Case types	Inter-state disputes; advisory opinions	Genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, aggression	Arbitration, mediation, conciliation
Binding judgments?	Yes (contentious cases)	Yes (criminal convictions)	Yes (arbitral awards)
Location	Peace Palace, The Hague	The Hague, Netherlands	Peace Palace, The Hague

The SCMUN ICJ simulates the oral proceedings of the contentious jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice. It is not the ICC (which features Prosecution vs. Defence in



criminal proceedings). In the ICJ, States bring cases against other States. Advocates argue on behalf of those States.

1.3 The ICJ in the SCMUN Context

The SCMUN ICJ simulates the oral phase of a contentious case brought by application - that is, a case in which one party (the Applicant) formally institutes proceedings against another party (the Respondent). All incidental proceedings, including questions of jurisdiction, preliminary objections, requests for provisional measures, and applications to intervene, are treated as resolved prior to the conference and will not be argued during the simulation. All oral proceedings are conducted as though they take place at the moment of the application's filing.

The trial follows a defined sequence: opening statements, evidence presentation, deliberations, judicial questioning, witness examination, rebuttals, closing statements, and a final deliberation culminating in the delivery of the verdict. Each participant (Advocate, Judge, or member of the Presidency) performs a distinct role. The quality of the proceedings depends on every participant honouring the standards of preparation, professionalism, and conduct set out in this manual.

Judges are permitted to read only the memoranda submitted by each party before the conference. No independent research on the case is permitted. All facts and evidence must reach the judges through the advocates' in-court presentations. External knowledge introduced by a judge compromises the fairness and integrity of the proceedings.



Chapter 2: Composition of the Court

The SCMUN ICJ is structured around three distinct bodies: the Presidency, the Advocates, and the Judicial Panel. Each body carries specific responsibilities that are complementary and essential to the proper functioning of the Court. Every participant must understand their own role and its precise boundaries before the conference begins.

THE PRESIDENCY	THE JUDICIAL PANEL	THE ADVOCATES
President Deputy President Registrar	15 Judges Quorum: 9 Judges Majority decides verdict	Applicant Party Respondent Party

2.1 The Presidency

The Presidency is the presiding body of the Court. It comprises three officials: the President, the Deputy President, and the Registrar. The President and Deputy President serve simultaneously as members of the judicial panel and as presiding officers; the Registrar holds an exclusively administrative role and exercises no judicial function.

The President

- Presides over all court proceedings, managing the flow of debate and maintaining the decorum of the session.
- Rules on all points, motions, and objections raised during the trial (either sustaining or overruling them) and explains the reasoning where appropriate.
- Manages the time allocated to each phase, ensuring the conference adheres to the scheduled programme.
- Facilitates and organises the judicial panel during deliberations, assisting in the composition of the final verdict.
- Holds a casting vote in the event of a tie during the final verdict vote - meaning the President's vote is counted twice in that scenario.
- Communicates with advocates prior to the conference to assist their preparation.
- Possesses all the rights and responsibilities of a judge, in addition to the presidential functions above.
- May assign judges to review specific pieces of evidence during deliberation sessions.

The Deputy President

- Holds all the same rights and responsibilities as any judge on the panel.
- Supports the President in organising and managing the committee's proceedings.
- Assumes the full functions of the President in the event of the President's absence or incapacity.
- Contributes actively to the facilitation of deliberations and the drafting of the verdict.



- Casts a vote during deliberations as a full member of the judicial panel.

The Registrar

- Holds no voting right and does not serve as a judge.
- Documents all progress during the trial: speeches, evidence presentations, witness testimonies, objections, and deliberation outcomes.
- Administers the oath to witnesses before their testimony: 'I solemnly swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.'
- Manages the speakers' list and formally yields the floor to participants.
- Maintains a running record of the key arguments and outcomes of each session for the Presidency's reference.
- Stores and organises all pieces of submitted evidence so they can be retrieved at any point in the proceedings.

2.2 The Advocates

Advocates are the legal representatives of the parties to the case. They function as independent legal counsel whose professional obligation is to argue their client's case before the Court with the utmost persuasiveness and accuracy. Every contentious case involves two parties (the Applicant and the Respondent) and in some instances a third intervening party may also be present.

Advocates are not neutral participants. As legal counsel, their obligation is to their client. Statements, submissions, and conclusions made by Advocates during proceedings are legal arguments. Judges must evaluate them as advocacy, not as objective accounts of events.

The Applicant Party

Party filing the case — bears the Burden of Proof

- Represents the State that has instituted proceedings against another State, alleging a failure to comply with obligations under international law.
- Bears the Burden of Proof: the legal obligation to establish, through evidence and argument, that the allegations in its Prayer of Relief are well-founded. Failure to meet the Burden of Proof results in an automatic loss, regardless of the Respondent's arguments.
- The specific claims that must be proven are defined by the party's own Prayer of Relief.
- Has the right to divide its time during Opening and Closing Statements (see Chapter 4).
- Must submit before the conference: Memorandum, Evidence List, Witness List, and Stipulations.
- Opens proceedings in most phases: presents evidence and witnesses before the Respondent does.



The Respondent Party

Party defending against the case

- Represents the State accused of failing to meet its obligations under international law.
- Bears no independent Burden of Proof. The primary strategic objective is to demonstrate that the Applicant has not substantiated its claims.
- Seeks to undermine the Applicant's evidence, challenge the credibility and relevance of their witnesses, and expose gaps in their legal reasoning.
- Must also submit before the conference: Memorandum, Evidence List, Witness List, and Stipulations.
- Responds to the Applicant's presentations and may raise objections to evidence and witness testimony.
- Respondent's evidence is labelled with capital Latin letters (A, B, C...) to distinguish it from the Applicant's numbered evidence (1, 2, 3...).

In some cases, a third State may have been granted permission to intervene in the proceedings because its legal interests are affected by the outcome. This is an incidental matter considered settled before the conference. Where an intervening party is present, the Presidency will provide specific guidance on their role.

2.3 The Judicial Panel

The Judicial Panel is the Court's decision-making body. Composed of fifteen (15) impartial judges, and the President and Deputy President, it is responsible for evaluating all evidence, testimony, and legal argumentation presented at trial and for delivering the final verdict. A quorum of at least nine (9) judges must be present for the session to open.

The Judges

- Must remain entirely impartial and objective throughout the conference. Personal views on any State, government, or policy must play no role whatsoever in decisions or judicial conduct.
- Must not conduct any independent research on the case. Prior to the conference, judges may read only the memoranda submitted by both parties.
- Are strictly forbidden from communicating privately with Advocates about the case at any time. Note-passing between Advocates and Judges is absolutely prohibited.
- Must take detailed, structured notes during all phases of the proceedings: opening statements, evidence presentations, witness testimonies, questioning sessions, and deliberations.
- Are strongly advised to bring a laptop or tablet to the conference to access and review digital evidence during deliberations.
- Evaluate all real evidence and witness testimony during deliberations, assigning each a level of consideration: maximum, medium, or minimum.
- Pose questions to Advocates and witnesses at the formally designated questioning sessions.
- Participate actively in all deliberations, by presenting analysis, listening to colleagues, and being open to revising assessments in light of persuasive arguments.
- Compose the verdict in collaboration with the Presidency during the final deliberation.



- May submit dissenting (minority) opinions if they disagree with the majority judgment.



Chapter 3: Pre-Conference Preparation

Preparation before the conference is the single most consequential factor in determining the quality of proceedings. Both Advocate parties must submit a defined set of documents to the Presidency in advance. These documents establish the entire evidentiary and argumentative foundation of the trial. Judges also prepare, but their requirements are deliberately more limited.

Document	Submitted by	Read before conference by
Memorandum	Both parties (separately)	Judges, Presidency, and the opposing party
Evidence List	Both parties (separately)	The opposing party (to prepare objections)
Witness List	Both parties (separately)	The Presidency (to contact and prepare witnesses)
Stipulations	Both parties jointly (after the workshop)	All participants

3.1 The Memorandum

The Memorandum is the most significant document each pair of Advocates produces before the conference. It is the first and only case-related text that judges read prior to the trial and therefore serves as the primary frame of reference through which they understand the dispute. Each party submits a separate memorandum presenting the case exclusively from its own perspective.

Judges must bear firmly in mind: the Memorandum is not a source of objective fact. It is an advocacy document in favour of one party. Both memoranda should be read with that caveat clearly in mind, as the opening submission of each side.

The Memorandum is structured around five sections. Each must be clearly headed and substantively developed. A vague or underdeveloped memorandum places advocates at a significant disadvantage during the trial, as judges will have little context with which to evaluate their submissions.

Section 1: Introduction

The Introduction provides a concise but thorough overview of the case. As the first text judges encounter, it must be compelling, logically structured, and clear. It should address the following:

- The nature of the case: why it was brought to the Court and what the central dispute concerns.
- The primary legal document, treaty, convention, or resolution at the heart of the disagreement between the parties.
- A summary of the Applicant's main allegations, or the Respondent's principal defences and counterclaims, depending on the party.
- For the Applicant specifically: a brief acknowledgement of the jurisdictional basis on which the Court's competence over the case can be established. Jurisdictional arguments will not be litigated in court, but the Applicant should identify the grounds in their memorandum.



Section 2: Key Terms

This section defines words, phrases, or legal concepts that are directly relevant to the case and require clarification for judges to properly understand the party's arguments. Advocates must exercise careful judgement here: only include terms that genuinely need definition. Overly common or self-explanatory terms dilute the quality of the section, while failing to define a technically specialised concept central to the argument risks leaving judges without the context they need.

Term (example)	Definition (example)
Sustainable Development	Development that fulfils the needs of the present generation without impairing the capacity of future generations to meet their own. (Brundtland Commission, 1987)
Erga Omnes	Obligations owed by a State to the international community as a whole, rather than to a specific counterpart State — meaning any State has standing to demand compliance.

Section 3: Historical Background

The Historical Background is typically the longest and most substantive section of the memorandum. It provides judges with a thorough chronological account of the facts, events, and circumstances that gave rise to the dispute and ultimately led to the filing of the case. The section should be organised under clear subheadings and must be detailed enough that any judge can develop a solid understanding of the context.

Key elements to include:

- The political, social, or economic environment in which the dispute arose.
- A chronological account of the key escalatory events, presented from the party's perspective.
- The specific actions taken by each State, and how those actions are framed from the submitting party's position.
- Any prior attempts at resolution and why they proved unsuccessful.
- An explicit connection drawn between the historical events and the specific legal violations alleged by the Applicant, or defended against by the Respondent.

Section 4: Legal Grounds

The Legal Grounds section identifies and analyses all legal instruments and authorities that form the basis of the party's case before the Court. This is where the specific legal framework is established. Relevant legal instruments may include:

- International conventions and treaties (bilateral and multilateral)
- United Nations Security Council and General Assembly resolutions
- Prior ICJ judgments and advisory opinions
- Rules and principles of customary international law
- Bilateral agreements between the parties

For each legal instrument cited, the Advocates must: (1) identify it clearly by full title and date; (2) explain its significance in international law; (3) quote or precisely reference the specific article, paragraph, or clause in question; and (4) explain how that provision supports the party's position.



Section 5: Prayer of Relief / Judgment Requested

The Prayer of Relief is the concluding section of the memorandum. It sets out in clear, clause-by-clause format exactly what the party is asking the Court to declare, adjudge, and order in its favour, should it prevail.

This section carries exceptional strategic importance for Advocates:

- The specific points in the Prayer of Relief define precisely what the Applicant must prove. Failure to establish any point constitutes a failure of the Burden of Proof with respect to that claim.
- The Prayer of Relief may be updated or amended during the conference.
- Any amendment to the Prayer of Relief must be formally announced during either the Opening Statement or the Closing Statement.
- The winning party's Prayer of Relief will be reflected, at least in part, in the Court's final verdict.

3.2 The Evidence List

Real evidence encompasses any document, material object, or source that an Advocate presents to the Court to substantiate their arguments. It may take the form of legal texts, written reports and articles, photographs, graphs, charts, maps, audio or video recordings, or physical objects. The Evidence List must be finalised and provided to both the Presidency and the opposing party before the conference opens. Once submitted to the opposing party, the list is fixed and may not be altered.

Each party may present up to ten (10) pieces of real evidence during the first evidence presentation phase. A further five (5) rebuttal pieces may be presented during the dedicated rebuttal stage.

3.2.1 Evidence List Format

Every piece of evidence on the list must include all six of the following elements. Incomplete entries may attract objections on grounds of authenticity or reliability.

#	Field	Description
1	URL / Citation	A direct hyperlink to the online source, or — where no URL exists — a full formal citation: author, title, journal or publisher, and year of publication.
2	Title	The complete, official title of the document. For legal instruments, the specific articles, paragraphs, or clauses being relied upon must be clearly identified.
3	Source	The institution, organisation, publication, or body that produced or published the document (e.g., the United Nations Archives, The New York Times, the World Health Organization, Amnesty International).
4	Author Information	Where the document was authored by a specific individual or group: full name(s); country of origin; academic or professional qualifications; prior and current affiliations; expertise relevant to the subject matter. This information establishes the reliability of the piece.



#	Field	Description
5	Publication Date	The exact date of publication or last official revision. Only evidence published before the case's application date may be presented. If an earlier version of a document is to be used, this must be explicitly stated.
6	Summary	A concise (2–3 sentence) description of what the source says. This summary must describe the content of the document only — it may not argue for its relevance or significance. If advocates wish to direct judges to a specific passage, they may underline or highlight it, but judges will examine the full document.

Evidence from the Applicant Party is numbered sequentially: 1, 2, 3... Evidence from the Respondent Party is labelled with capital Latin letters: A, B, C... This applies to both the initial evidence list and the rebuttal list.

3.3 The Witness List and Testimony Evidence

Witness testimony carries equal weight to real documentary evidence in the proceedings. Each party may call up to three (3) witnesses to give evidence before the Court. Witnesses must be real individuals with a genuine and demonstrable connection to the case.

Witnesses may be drawn from the conference's Secretariat or Student Officer body. Advocates are responsible for identifying, briefing, and preparing their witnesses well in advance of the conference, so that the Presidency has sufficient time to contact them and ensure their readiness.

3.3.1 Selecting Witnesses

Witness selection is a strategic decision. The following considerations should guide advocates:

- At least one witness should have demonstrable expertise, authority, or direct personal knowledge relevant to the case. This strengthens the reliability rating the judges will assign to their testimony.
- Witnesses should be chosen to speak directly to specific claims in the Prayer of Relief.
- Witnesses whose testimony would contradict any stipulated fact must not be called. Evidence or testimony that contradicts a stipulation is immediately stripped of credibility before the Court.
- Every witness must be prepared for both direct examination (by the calling party) and cross-examination (by the opposing party). A well-prepared witness is one of the most powerful assets a party can field.

3.3.2 Preparing Witnesses

Advocates have a professional obligation to prepare their witnesses thoroughly:

- Witnesses must be provided with accurate, factual background information about the case. Coaching witnesses to give dishonest or misleading testimony is impermissible and will, if detected, significantly damage the calling party's credibility.
- Witnesses must be fully briefed on their role, their specific relationship to the case, and the facts they are expected to address in testimony.



- Advocates should prepare direct examination questions in advance and rehearse the examination with their witness.
- Witnesses must be readied for cross-examination. The opposing party will attempt to expose inconsistencies, challenge credibility, and limit the significance of the testimony.
- Wherever possible, testimony should be consistent with and supported by the documentary evidence already submitted. If a witness's account contradicts a strong, verified piece of evidence, this will be noted in deliberation and may substantially diminish the weight accorded to the testimony.

3.3.3 Witness List Format

The witness list submitted to the Presidency must include, for each witness: full name and title or role; a brief biography including relevant qualifications and their connection to the case; and a description of the factual or expert knowledge the witness will bring to the Court.

3.4 Stipulations

Stipulations are jointly agreed statements of fact that both Advocate parties accept as true and binding before the conference begins. They represent common ground: uncontested facts that do not need to be proven in court and therefore do not consume court time. Once the Presidency has formally accepted the stipulations at the opening of the conference, they become absolute, incontestable facts for the duration of the entire trial.

No piece of evidence and no witness testimony may contradict a stipulated fact. If any evidence is found to contradict a stipulation, that evidence immediately and permanently loses its credibility and will be disregarded by the judges in all subsequent deliberations.

3.4.1 The Stipulations Workshop

A Stipulations Workshop is convened before the conference, chaired by the Presidency and attended by both Advocate parties. The process unfolds as follows:

1. Each party independently prepares a list of facts they consider uncontested and important for the judges to know as established background.
2. Both parties share their proposed stipulations and negotiate which facts they can jointly accept.
3. A mutually agreed Stipulations List is produced and submitted to the Presidency.
4. At the opening of the conference, the Presidency reads each stipulation aloud. Advocates may object to individual stipulations at this stage.
5. The Presidency rules on any objections: sustaining those it considers valid (removing the stipulation) or overruling those it considers unfounded (retaining the stipulation).
6. Once the final list is confirmed, the stipulations become binding for the full duration of the trial without exception.

Stipulations can work significantly in your party's favour by establishing key background facts as absolute before the trial even begins. Equally, accepting an unfavourable stipulation can undermine your position.



3.5 Preparation for Judges

Judges face a more limited pre-conference preparation requirement than Advocates, since the integrity of the trial depends on judges approaching the case with maximum impartiality, forming their views based solely on evidence and argument presented in court.

- Read both parties' memoranda carefully and critically before the conference. This is the only case-related reading permitted.
- Conduct no additional research whatsoever on the case. Searching for news articles, encyclopaedia entries, precedent cases, or any other external material is strictly prohibited.
- Familiarise yourself thoroughly with the Rules of Procedure, Points, Motions, and Objections detailed in Chapter 5 of this manual.
- Bring a laptop or tablet to the conference to access and review digital evidence during deliberations.
- Arrive at the conference with no pre-formed view on the merits of the case.



Chapter 4: Court Procedures and Proceedings

This chapter maps out each phase of the SCMUN ICJ trial in full. The proceedings follow a defined, sequential structure. Every participant must understand not only what happens at each stage, but how their own role and responsibilities shift across the different phases.

4.1 Full Procedure Overview

Step	Phase	Description
PRE	Before the Conference	Advocates: Memorandum, Evidence List, Witness List, Stipulations Workshop. Judges: Read memoranda only.
1	Opening of Session	Roll call, quorum confirmation (min. 9 judges). Introductions and Rules of Procedure overview.
2	Stipulations	Presidency reads stipulations aloud. Advocates may object. Accepted stipulations become binding for the full trial.
3	Opening Statements	Each party: approx. 30 minutes. Applicant speaks first and may divide its time around the Respondent's statement.
4	Presentation of Evidence	Applicant: up to 10 pieces. Respondent: up to 10 pieces. Opposing party may raise objections after each piece.
5	1st Deliberation	Closed session. Judges evaluate evidence; vote on maximum, medium, or minimum consideration for each piece.
6	1st Judge Questioning	Judges pose questions to both parties on the evidence presented and their legal positions.
7	Witness Examination	Up to 3 witnesses per party. Each witness: 10 min direct, 10 min cross, 10 min judicial questioning. Redirect permitted if time allows.
8	2nd Deliberation	Closed session. Judges evaluate witness testimonies; vote on consideration levels.
9	2nd Judge Questioning	Judges pose questions regarding testimony and any evidentiary gaps identified in deliberation.
10	Presentation of Rebuttals	Applicant: up to 5 pieces. Respondent: up to 5 pieces. Objections may be raised.
11	3rd Deliberation	Closed session. Judges evaluate rebuttal evidence and the accumulated case to this point.
12	Final Judge Questioning	Judges pose final questions on rebuttals, unresolved matters, and the overall case.
13	Closing Statements	Each party: approx. 30 minutes. Applicant goes first and may divide time. Final opportunity to address the judges.
14	Final Deliberation	Closed session. Judges deliberate on the full case, vote on the verdict, and compose the written judgment.
15	Verdict	Presidency reads the verdict aloud. The case is formally closed.



4.2 Opening of the Session

The Registrar opens the session with a formal roll call, confirming that at least nine judges are present to satisfy the quorum requirement. If quorum has not been reached, the session cannot formally open. Following the roll call, the conference may include brief introductory activities and a presentation of the Rules of Procedure for the benefit of all participants.

4.3 Reading of the Stipulations

The Registrar reads each stipulation aloud to the assembled Court. After each individual stipulation is read, advocates from either party may raise an objection to it. The Presidency rules on each objection - sustaining it (the stipulation is removed) or overruling it (the stipulation stands). Once all stipulations have been addressed and the final list confirmed, they become binding for the remainder of the conference. From this point forward, no participant may challenge, contradict, or reopen any stipulated fact. Judges should note all accepted stipulations carefully.

4.4 Opening Statements

The Opening Statement is the first formal opportunity for each party to address the judges directly. It is not a reading of the memorandum; rather, it should establish the party's legal theory, frame the evidence to come, and make a strong first impression on the bench.

4.4.1 Content of Opening Statements

An effective Opening Statement should cover:

- A clear introduction to the case and the party's central legal argument.
- A summary of the historical context, drawn from the memorandum's Historical Background.
- The party's overall legal position, referencing the primary legal instruments from the Legal Grounds section.
- A preview of the strongest evidence and witness testimony the party will present.
- An anticipatory response to the opposing party's most likely arguments.
- A clear statement of the Prayer of Relief.

4.4.2 Procedure and Timing

- Each party has approximately thirty (30) minutes for its Opening Statement.
- The Applicant Party speaks first.
- The Applicant Party holds the unique right to divide its time: it may deliver part of its statement, yield the floor to the Respondent for their full Opening Statement, and then resume and complete its own. This strategic option enables the Applicant to address the Respondent's arguments in real time.
- Judges must listen attentively and take notes.

4.5 Presentation of Evidence



The evidence presentation phase is one of the most consequential in the trial. Advocates present their real documentary and material evidence to the Court, and that evidence forms the factual basis on which the judges will deliberate.

4.5.1 Procedure

- The Applicant presents all its evidence first; the Respondent follows.
- For each piece of evidence, the presenting advocate should state: the full title and source; the specific extract or passage being relied upon; and the relevance of the evidence to the particular claim being made.
- After each piece of evidence is presented, the opposing party may raise objections (see Chapter 5 for full details).
- After both parties have presented their evidence, the Presidency moves to the First Deliberation. Advocates exit the room during all deliberation sessions.

4.5.2 How Evidence is Evaluated

During deliberation following the evidence presentation, judges assess each piece of evidence against three criteria:

Criterion	Explanation	Key Questions
Relevance	Does the evidence directly address a material issue in the case? Peripheral or tangential evidence receives lower consideration.	Does this speak to a claim in the Prayer of Relief? Or to a side issue?
Reliability	Is the source trustworthy and credible? Legal instruments (UN resolutions, treaties, ICJ judgments) are automatically reliable. Non-legal sources must have reliability established through author information.	Who produced this? Do they have the expertise and independence to be credible?
Authenticity	Is the document genuine and unaltered? Evidence that has been edited, redacted without explanation, or cannot be verified may be challenged on this ground.	Has this document been modified? Does it accurately represent its stated source?

After discussion, judges vote to assign each piece of evidence one of three consideration levels:

- **Maximum Consideration:** highly relevant, fully reliable, and authentic. This evidence should be given significant weight in the final deliberation and may be decisive on a specific claim.
- **Medium Consideration:** has some merit but presents identifiable limitations in relevance, reliability, or authenticity. It will be considered, but will not serve as a primary basis for any finding.
- **Minimum Consideration:** has significant weaknesses across multiple criteria, or a well-founded objection has materially reduced its value. It will be noted but carries no real weight in deliberation or verdict.

4.6 Deliberations



Deliberations are closed sessions held at three points during the trial: after the Evidence Presentation, after the Witness Examinations, and after the Rebuttal Presentations. A final, comprehensive deliberation takes place before the verdict. All advocates exit the chamber during deliberations.

During each deliberation, judges discuss the evidence or testimony just heard, examining it against the three criteria of relevance, reliability, and authenticity. Following discussion, the panel votes on the consideration level (maximum, medium, or minimum) to be assigned to each piece. The Presidency may assign individual judges to review specific pieces of evidence in preparation for the session, drawing on any expertise individual judges can bring to bear.

The final deliberation brings together all threads of the trial. Judges weigh all evidence and testimony against the Applicant's Burden of Proof and the specific claims in the Prayer of Relief. Each judge then casts a vote: for the Applicant (if the Burden of Proof has been met) or for the Respondent (if it has not). A simple majority of the judges present determines the outcome.

4.7 Judge Questioning Sessions

Three judicial questioning sessions take place during the trial: after the First Deliberation (on evidence), after the Second Deliberation (on witness testimonies), and after the Third Deliberation (on rebuttals). These sessions give judges the opportunity to seek clarification, probe unresolved issues, and address specific gaps or inconsistencies identified during deliberation.

Judges are expected to ask targeted, neutral questions. The purpose is to build a fuller and more accurate picture of the case, not to advocate for a position.

4.8 Witness Examination

Witness examinations constitute a critical and distinctive phase of the trial. Each party may call up to three witnesses. For each witness, the examination follows a defined three-part structure: direct examination by the calling party (10 minutes); cross-examination by the opposing party (10 minutes); and judicial questioning (10 minutes). Where time permits and the Presidency grants approval, a redirect examination may follow.

4.8.1 The Oath

Before any examination begins, the Registrar administers the following oath to the witness, who must repeat it in full:

"I solemnly swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth."

4.8.2 Direct Examination (by the Calling Party)

The party that called the witness conducts direct examination. Its purpose is to allow the witness to provide testimony in a coherent, structured manner that supports the calling party's case.

- During direct examination, the calling party must use non-leading questions (questions that do not suggest their own answer and cannot be answered simply with 'yes' or 'no').



- Example of a non-leading question (PERMITTED): 'What were you doing on the date of the incident?'
- Example of a leading question (NOT PERMITTED during direct): 'You were present at the location on the night in question, weren't you?'
- The sole exception to the prohibition on leading questions during direct examination is if the witness has been formally declared a hostile witness or an expert witness by the Presidency.

4.8.3 Cross-Examination (by the Opposing Party)

Following direct examination, the opposing party cross-examines the witness. Cross-examination is adversarial: its purpose is to expose inconsistencies, challenge credibility, and diminish the significance of the testimony.

- During cross-examination, leading questions are both permitted and encouraged. The aim is to control the witness's answers and challenge the narrative established during direct examination.
- Example of a leading question (PERMITTED during cross): 'You were not actually present at that location on that night, were you?'
- Questions during cross-examination must stay within the scope of what was addressed during direct examination. Entirely new factual lines not covered in direct are out of order.
- Hearsay questions (those that ask the witness to relay statements made by an absent third party as evidence of the truth of those statements) are not permitted.
- The opposing party may raise objections during cross-examination on the grounds set out in Chapter 5.

4.8.4 Cross-Examination by the Judges

After both advocate parties have completed their examinations, the judges may pose their own questions to the witness. Judicial questioning aims to clarify ambiguities, test the reliability of testimony, or resolve inconsistencies between the witness's account and other submitted evidence.

- A Motion to Follow Up allows a judge to ask an immediate follow-up question to an answer given, before the floor returns to the Presidency.
- The witness may decline to answer a question if they consider it places undue pressure on them. This decision will be noted and considered during the witness deliberation.
- Objections may not be raised during the judges' questioning of the witness.

4.8.5 Redirect Examination

If time remains after cross-examination, either party may request a redirect - a follow-up examination limited strictly to issues raised during cross-examination. It does not allow advocates to revisit material from the original direct examination. The Presidency decides whether to grant the request.

Advocates may raise objections during both Direct Examination and Cross-Examination by the opposing party. Objections are not permitted during the judges' own questioning of the witness. Evidence may be presented to a witness at any point during examination to support or test their account; the witness should be given the document so they can read and respond to it accurately.

4.9 Presentation of Rebuttals



The rebuttal phase follows the Second Deliberation and Second Judge Questioning session. Each party may present up to five (5) additional pieces of evidence. Rebuttal evidence has a specific and limited purpose: it must be used solely to counter arguments, claims, or evidence introduced by the opposing party. Rebuttals may not introduce entirely new factual lines or arguments not previously addressed in the proceedings.

The Rebuttal List is a dynamic document. While it is advisable to have a preliminary list ready before the conference, advocates are strongly encouraged to update it throughout proceedings, in response to the opposing party's evidence and arguments, and in response to concerns and questions raised by judges during questioning sessions. The rebuttal phase is the final opportunity to address any evidentiary gaps in the party's case.

- The Applicant presents rebuttals first; the Respondent follows.
- The opposing party may raise objections against rebuttal evidence on the standard grounds: relevance, reliability, and authenticity.
- All rebuttal evidence is evaluated during the Third Deliberation using the same maximum/medium/minimum consideration framework.

4.10 Closing Statements

Closing Statements are the final opportunity for each party to address the judges directly. They represent the culmination of the entire trial.

4.10.1 Content of Closing Statements

An effective Closing Statement should:

- Consolidate the party's most important arguments and demonstrate how they have been substantiated by the evidence and testimony presented.
- Highlight specific pieces of evidence that received maximum or medium consideration and explain how they speak to the Prayer of Relief.
- Directly address and rebut the opposing party's strongest arguments, showing where they failed to meet the required standard.
- Acknowledge and respond to questions or concerns raised by the judges in the questioning sessions.
- Restate the Prayer of Relief clearly and persuasively, making the affirmative case for why the Court should grant it.
- Appeal, where possible, to the principles of international justice that the verdict will reflect.

4.10.2 Procedure and Timing

- Each party has approximately thirty (30) minutes.
- The Applicant speaks first and retains the right to divide its time, as in the Opening Statement.
- Judges should be especially attentive.

4.11 The Verdict

The Verdict is the Court's final judgment, composed by the Judges and the Presidency during the Fourth and Final Deliberation.



4.11.1 Structure of the Verdict

The verdict is a formal document containing the following elements:

- List of Stipulations: all facts accepted as binding at the start of the trial.
- Findings of Fact and Law ('Whereas' Clauses): formal findings expressed in the structure 'Whereas [fact/law established],' identifying what the Court found proven and on what evidentiary or legal basis.
- Declaration on the Burden of Proof: the Court's determination of whether the Applicant Party has or has not met its Burden of Proof.
- Orders of the Court: a numbered list of the specific relief granted or denied, drawn in part from the winning party's Prayer of Relief.

The Presidency will provide the specific format template for the verdict document before the Final Deliberation commences. The final verdict delivered in the closing ceremony by the Registrar will be condensed in order to ensure it is understandable for an audience unfamiliar with the ICJ case, and have the following format:

THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT,

After due deliberation,

Regarding the case of __ adjudges and decrees that:

The Applicant Party has/ has not met the burden of proof.

Convicts ____.



Chapter 5: Rules of Procedure

The Rules of Procedure govern the formal conduct of the trial, ensuring that proceedings remain orderly, fair, and consistent. All participants must familiarise themselves thoroughly with these rules before the conference.

5.1 Points

Points are formal interventions that any participant may raise to address a specific procedural or personal concern during proceedings.

Point	Purpose	May Interrupt?	Who May Raise?
Point of Personal Privilege	Addresses the physical comfort or well-being of a participant — e.g., an audibility issue, a health concern, or a request for a brief recess. May only interrupt if the issue concerns audibility.	YES (audibility only)	Any participant
Point of Order	Raises a specific procedural concern — used when a participant believes the Presidency has made a procedural error. If the error is acknowledged: 'The Chair stands corrected.'	NO	Any participant
Point of Judicial Inquiry	A question directed to the Presidency regarding what the Rules of Procedure say or require. Not to be used for substantive legal questions about the case.	NO	Any participant
Point of Information to the Presidency	Used for any matter not covered by the other three point types — requesting factual clarification, noting a discrepancy in the record, or raising any other non-procedural, non-advocacy concern.	NO	Any participant

5.2 Motions

Motions are formal requests submitted to the Presidency for a specific procedural action. They must be recognised by the Presidency before taking effect.

Motion	Purpose	Who May Raise?
Motion to Approach the Board	A request by an Advocate to speak with the Presidency privately about a sensitive or urgent procedural matter. Granted at the Presidency's sole discretion.	Advocates only
Motion to Follow Up	May only be raised by judges during witness examination or a judicial questioning session. Allows	Judges only



Motion	Purpose	Who May Raise?
	the judge to pose an immediate follow-up question to a response just given, before the floor returns to the Presidency.	
Motion to Extend Time	A request to extend the time allocated to a specific procedural phase. Granted at the Presidency's sole discretion.	Any participant
Motion to Enter / Exclude Evidence	A formal request relating to the admissibility of documentary evidence. Usually addressed in conjunction with objections. The Presidency decides whether to grant or deny.	Advocates only

5.3 Objections — General Principles

Objections are formal statements of disagreement raised by an Advocate when the opposing party presents evidence or questions a witness in a manner that is procedurally or substantively improper. Used effectively, objections can fundamentally alter the weight the judges assign to evidence or testimony.

The Presidency decides, for each objection raised, whether to sustain it (upholding the objection) or overrule it (dismissing it). The Presidency may ask the objecting advocate to elaborate on their grounds before ruling.

5.4 Objections to Evidence

Evidence objections are raised by Advocates during the Presentation of Evidence or the Presentation of Rebuttals. Both parties should analyse the opposing party's evidence list carefully before the conference and prepare their objections in advance.

Evidence objections are stated immediately after the opposing party presents a piece of evidence, before deliberation begins on that piece. The Presidency factors the objection into how the deliberation on that evidence is framed. Judges assess the merit of the objection during their deliberation.

Objection	Grounds	Example
Relevance	The evidence does not address a material issue in the case - it is too circumlocutory or unrelated to the legal claims at stake to merit consideration.	'We object on grounds of relevance. The submitted document addresses environmental policy in an entirely different geopolitical context and has no bearing on the treaty obligations at issue here.'
Reliability / Bias	The source or author of the evidence is not credible, is demonstrably biased, or lacks the expertise required to render their account trustworthy. Note: legal instruments (UN resolutions, treaties, ICJ judgments) are automatically	'We object on grounds of reliability. The article was authored by an individual with no verifiable credentials in international law, employed by an organisation with a direct financial interest in disputes of this nature.'



Objection	Grounds	Example
	considered reliable and cannot be challenged on this ground.	
Authenticity	The evidence has been altered, selectively edited, or redacted without justification, or cannot be independently verified as what it purports to be.	'We object on grounds of authenticity. Several paragraphs appear to have been removed without explanation, and it is not possible to confirm that the extract presented reflects the full and accurate content of the original source.'

5.5 Objections During Witness Examination

Witness examination objections may be raised by either party during Direct Examination and during Advocate-led Cross-Examination. They may not be raised during the judges' own questioning of the witness. Objections must be stated at once - immediately upon the question being asked, before the witness has answered. If an objection is sustained, the question is struck and the examining advocate must rephrase or move on. If overruled, the witness answers.

Objection	When?	Grounds	Example
Leading Question	Direct only	The question suggests or contains its own answer, typically answerable with 'yes' or 'no.' Impermissible during direct examination, as it allows the advocate to effectively testify in the witness's place. Leading questions ARE permitted during cross-examination.	'You were present at the border crossing on the night in question, weren't you?'
Relevance	Both	The question is immaterial to the case or falls outside the scope of the direct examination. Cross-examination is restricted to topics addressed in the direct examination.	'Objection, relevance. This question concerns policies the witness has no connection to and that are unrelated to the claims before this Court.'
Hearsay	Both	The question asks the witness to repeat statements made by an absent third party as evidence of the truth of those statements. Because the absent person cannot be cross-examined, the evidence is inherently unreliable.	'Objection, hearsay. The question asks what the Minister said. The Minister is not before this Court and cannot be cross-examined on that statement.'
Badgering	Both	The question is phrased aggressively, disrespectfully, or in a manner designed to intimidate or harass the witness rather than to elicit genuine information.	'Objection, badgering. The question is phrased in an insulting manner designed to intimidate the witness rather than to gather relevant testimony.'



Objection	When?	Grounds	Example
Lack of Competence	Both	The question requires the witness to provide expert knowledge or technical analysis that they are not qualified to give. Witnesses may only answer questions within the scope of their own direct knowledge or established expertise.	'Objection, lack of competence. The witness is an eyewitness to the events, not a forensic scientist. This question calls for a technical analysis beyond their qualifications.'
Ambiguous / Vague / Misleading	Both	The question is so broadly or imprecisely worded that it cannot be accurately answered, or it misrepresents facts in a way that could mislead the witness into giving an inaccurate response.	'Objection, ambiguous. The question refers to "the relevant events" without specifying a time, place, or incident. The witness cannot meaningfully respond to such an imprecise question.'
Non-Responsive Answer	Both (witness answer only)	The only objection that targets the witness's answer rather than the examining party's question. Raised when the witness has not actually answered the question asked, or when their response is wholly unrelated to it.	'Objection, non-responsive. The question asked for a specific date. The witness's answer addressed an entirely different sequence of events.'
Speculation / Opinion	Both	The question asks the witness to speculate about facts or events they did not directly observe, or to offer a personal opinion without the factual basis or recognised expertise to do so.	'Objection, speculation. The question invites the witness to conjecture about the motivations of a foreign government — a matter entirely outside their direct knowledge.'



Chapter 6: Key Legal Concepts

6.1 Burden of Proof

The Burden of Proof is the legal obligation to demonstrate one's claims through evidence and argument sufficient to persuade the judges. In the ICJ, this principle is grounded in the classical Latin maxim *actori incumbit probatio* (the burden falls upon the claimant to prove).

- The Applicant Party bears the Burden of Proof. It must persuade a simple majority (more than 50%) of the sitting judges that the specific claims in its Prayer of Relief have been established by the evidence and legal argument presented at trial.
- If the Applicant satisfies the Burden of Proof, it wins the case.
- The Respondent Party bears no Burden of Proof. Its strategic goal is to prevent the Applicant from reaching the required majority. If a judge is not persuaded by either party, that vote falls to the Respondent, because the Applicant has failed to convince that judge.
-

For Judges:

When casting your final vote, the decisive question is: Has the Applicant Party demonstrated, through the evidence and arguments presented in court, that its specific claims in the Prayer of Relief are more likely than not to be correct?

6.2 Evidence Types and Weight

Not all evidence carries the same presumptive weight. Judges should be guided by the following hierarchy when evaluating the reliability of different evidence types:

Evidence Type	Presumed Reliability	Notes
UN Security Council Resolutions	HIGHEST	Automatically reliable and authentic. Cannot be objected to on reliability grounds.
ICJ Judgments and Advisory Opinions	HIGHEST	Establishes legal precedent. Fully reliable and authentic.
International Treaties and Conventions	HIGHEST	Binding legal instruments. Automatically reliable. Specific articles must be cited.
Reports by UN Agencies (WHO, UNESCO, etc.)	HIGH	Generally reliable due to institutional credibility. May be objected to if bias is demonstrated.
Peer-Reviewed Academic Articles	MODERATE–HIGH	Reliability depends on author credentials and journal reputation. Author background is essential.
News Articles / Media Reports	MODERATE	Reliability must be established through detailed author and outlet information. Susceptible to reliability and bias objections.



Evidence Type	Presumed Reliability	Notes
NGO Reports	MODERATE	NGOs may hold advocacy positions. Organisational independence and author credentials must be established.
Photographs, Videos, Maps	VARIABLE	Can be highly compelling but susceptible to authenticity challenges. Provenance and metadata matter greatly.

6.3 The Prayer of Relief

The Prayer of Relief is the statement of what each party is asking the Court to do. It is comparable to the remedy section in a civil legal pleading. Understanding the role of the Prayer of Relief is essential for all participants.

- The Applicant's Prayer of Relief defines the scope of what must be proven. If the Applicant seeks a declaration of illegality, it must prove the illegal act. If it seeks compensation, it must prove the breach that gives rise to the obligation to compensate.
- The Respondent's Prayer of Relief asks the Court to find that no breach has occurred, that the claims are inadmissible, or to declare that the Respondent's own rights under international law have been infringed.
- During the Final Deliberation, judges refer to both Prayers of Relief in composing the verdict. The orders of the Court reflect the claims proven by the winning party.
- The Prayer of Relief may be amended during the conference. Any amendment must be announced by the Advocate during the Opening Statement or the Closing Statement.

6.4 Consideration Levels in Deliberation

The consideration level framework is specific to the MUN simulation of the ICJ. It provides judges with a structured mechanism for assigning differential weight to pieces of evidence and witness testimony, ensuring that deliberations are disciplined and their outcomes traceable.

Level	Meaning	Practical Effect
MAXIMUM	The evidence or testimony is highly relevant, fully reliable, and authentic. It directly supports or undermines a specific claim in the Prayer of Relief.	Will be referenced prominently in the verdict. May be decisive in the Court's determination on a specific claim.
MEDIUM	The evidence or testimony has genuine merit but presents identifiable limitations in one or more of the three criteria.	Will be acknowledged and weighed, but will not serve as the primary basis for any finding. May contribute to a cumulative picture.
MINIMUM	The evidence or testimony has substantial weaknesses across multiple criteria, or a sustained objection has materially reduced its value.	Will be noted in the record but will carry no meaningful weight in deliberation or in the verdict.



6.5 Stipulations vs. Evidence

The distinction between stipulations and evidence is one of the most important conceptual boundaries in ICJ proceedings. The table below clarifies the critical differences:

Stipulations		Evidence
Status in court	Absolute, undisputed facts for the entire trial	Submitted material evaluated and weighted by judges
Agreed by both parties?	Yes - both parties must agree	No - each party submits its own evidence independently
Can they be challenged?	No - once accepted, they are incontestable	Yes - through objections raised during proceedings and through deliberation
Must they be proven?	No - they are taken as true without proof	Yes - relevance, reliability, and authenticity must be demonstrated
What if evidence contradicts a stipulation?	The stipulation prevails. The evidence immediately loses all credibility.	N/A



Chapter 7: Expectations and Conduct

7.1 Expectations for Advocates

7.1.1 Pre-Conference Preparation

- Submit all required documents by the deadlines set by the Presidency.
- Prepare evidence lists that are thorough, well-sourced, and correctly formatted according to the requirements in Chapter 3.
- Brief, prepare, and rehearse your witnesses well in advance. Contact the Presidency immediately if any difficulty arises in reaching or preparing a witness.
- Review the opposing party's Memorandum and Evidence List carefully once shared. Prepare your objections to their evidence and your cross-examination questions for their witnesses before the conference opens.
- Familiarise yourself completely with the Rules of Procedure, Points, Motions, and Objections.

7.1.2 During the Conference

- Pay close attention to all court proceedings.
- Adapt your strategy in real time. Update your Rebuttal List based on what the opposing party presents and on what the judges appear to be questioning in the questioning sessions.
- Address the judges respectfully and formally at all times. Judges are collectively 'Honourable Judges'; individually, 'Your Honour'.
- Do not communicate with judges about the case outside of designated procedural phases.
- Collaborate actively with your co-counsel. Well-coordinated advocate teams consistently outperform parties where individuals operate without a shared strategy.

7.2 Expectations for Judges

7.2.1 Pre-Conference

- Read both memoranda thoroughly and critically. Take notes on key claims, contested facts, and the legal principles relied upon by each party.
- Formulate preliminary questions based on what you find unclear or unsubstantiated in the memoranda.
- Conduct no external research. Do not discuss the case with advocates under any circumstances.

7.2.2 During the Conference

- Maintain thorough, structured notes throughout every phase of the proceedings. Your capacity to deliberate effectively is a direct function of the quality of your notes.
- Remain entirely impartial. Your nationality, personal political views, and any sympathies toward particular States are wholly irrelevant to your judicial function.
- Listen to the evidence.



- In deliberations, be an active participant: present your analysis clearly and concisely, listen to your colleagues, and remain genuinely open to revising your initial assessments.
- During questioning sessions, ask targeted, neutral questions.
- Note-passing between advocates and judges is strictly and absolutely prohibited under any circumstances.

7.3 General Conduct and Decorum

The ICJ is a formal judicial proceeding, and every participant is expected to uphold the highest standards of professional decorum. The following principles apply to all:

- Formal English must be used whenever addressing the Court. Colloquial expressions and informal language have no place in these proceedings.
- All participants must be seated and prepared before the Presidency calls the session to order.
- Electronic devices may be used only for note-taking and reviewing evidence. Social media use and unrelated activities on electronic devices during proceedings are prohibited.
- When another participant holds the floor, all others must remain silent and attentive.
- If a participant must leave the room during proceedings, they must raise a Point of Personal Privilege.
- Advocacy must be professional. Disputes between participants must never become personal or disrespectful.
- All rulings and instructions issued by the Presidency must be respected at all times without protest or delay.



Chapter 8: Sample Conference Schedule

The following schedule provides an indicative programme for the SCMUN ICJ conference. Exact timings will be confirmed and adjusted by the Presidency based on the pace of proceedings on the day.

Approx. Time	Phase	Notes
Start	Opening of Session & Introductions	Roll call, quorum confirmation, icebreakers, brief Rules of Procedure overview.
+15 min	Reading of Stipulations	Presidency reads stipulations aloud. Advocates may object to individual entries.
+15 min	Opening Statements	Approx. 30 minutes per party. Applicant may divide time. Respondent speaks when floor is yielded.
+60 min	Presentation of Evidence	Applicant: up to 10 pieces. Respondent: up to 10 pieces. Objections may be raised after each piece.
Closed	1st Deliberation (Closed)	Advocates exit. Judges evaluate all evidence; vote on consideration levels.
After deliberation	1st Judge Questioning	Judges pose questions to both parties on evidence and legal positions.
Next	Witness Examinations	Up to 3 witnesses per party. Approx. 30 min each (10/10/10 split). Redirect permitted if time allows.
Closed	2nd Deliberation (Closed)	Advocates exit. Judges evaluate witness testimonies; vote on consideration levels.
After deliberation	2nd Judge Questioning	Judges pose questions on testimony and any evidentiary gaps.
Next	Presentation of Rebuttals	Applicant: up to 5 pieces. Respondent: up to 5 pieces. Objections may be raised.
Closed	3rd Deliberation (Closed)	Advocates exit. Judges evaluate rebuttals and the overall accumulated case; vote on consideration levels.
After deliberation	Final Judge Questioning	Judges pose final clarification questions on rebuttals and unresolved matters.
Next	Closing Statements	Approx. 30 minutes per party. Applicant may divide time. Last opportunity to address the judges.
Closed	Final Deliberation & Verdict Composition	All advocates exit. Judges deliberate on the full case, vote on the verdict, and compose the written judgment.
End	Reading of the Verdict	The Presidency reads the final verdict aloud. The case is formally closed.

Chapter 9: Glossary of Key Terms



The following definitions cover key legal, procedural, and institutional terms used throughout the SCMUN ICJ proceedings. All participants must be familiar with these terms before the conference opens.

Term	Definition
Actori Incumbit Probatio	The legal maxim establishing that the burden falls upon the claimant to prove: it is the Applicant's obligation to demonstrate its claims, not the Respondent's to disprove them.
Advocate	Legal counsel representing one of the parties before the Court. Argues the case on the client's behalf.
Advisory Opinion	A non-binding legal opinion issued by the ICJ at the request of an authorised UN organ or agency.
Applicant Party	The State that institutes proceedings against another. Bears the Burden of Proof.
Authenticity (Objection)	An objection claiming that a piece of evidence has been altered, falsified, or does not genuinely represent its stated source.
Badgering (Objection)	An objection raised when a question is aggressive, disrespectful, or designed to harass or intimidate the witness.
Bench	The collective term for the judges of the Court; also the physical position from which they preside.
Burden of Proof	The Applicant's obligation to establish its claims by persuading a simple majority of judges. If the Applicant fails, the Respondent prevails.
Casting Vote	The President's additional vote in a tie during the final verdict vote. The President's ballot counts twice in that scenario.
Closing Statement	Each party's final formal address to the judges, synthesising the case and making a final argument for the Prayer of Relief.
Consideration (Max/Med/Min)	The weight assigned by judges to each piece of evidence or testimony following deliberation: maximum, medium, or minimum.
Contentious Case	A case brought before the ICJ by one State against another. The resulting judgment is legally binding on the parties.
Cross-Examination	The questioning of a witness by the party that did not call them, or by the judges. Leading questions are permitted.
Deliberation	A closed session in which judges discuss and vote on the consideration levels to assign to evidence and testimony, and ultimately on the final verdict.
Direct Examination	The questioning of a witness by the party that called them. Leading questions are not permitted.
Evidence	Material submitted to the Court to substantiate a party's claims. Includes real evidence (documents, objects) and testimony evidence (witness statements under oath).
Hearsay (Objection)	An objection raised when a witness is asked to repeat an out-of-court statement made by an absent third party as evidence of the truth of what was said.



Term	Definition
Intervening Party	A third State that has been granted permission to participate in proceedings because its legal interests may be affected by the outcome.
Lack of Competence (Objection)	An objection raised when a witness is asked to provide expert knowledge or technical opinion they are not qualified to give.
Leading Question (Objection)	A question that implies its own answer. Not permitted during direct examination; expressly permitted during cross-examination.
Memorandum	The principal pre-conference document submitted by each Advocate party: Introduction, Key Terms, Historical Background, Legal Grounds, and Prayer of Relief.
Motion	A formal procedural request submitted to the Presidency for a specific action. Must be recognised and granted before it takes effect.
Non-Responsive Answer (Objection)	The only objection targeting a witness's answer rather than a question. Raised when the witness fails to answer the question actually asked.
Opening Statement	Each party's first formal address to the judges: introduction to the case, legal theory, key evidence preview, and Prayer of Relief.
Prayer of Relief	The specific orders and declarations each party asks the Court to make in the verdict. Defines the precise scope of what the Applicant must prove.
Precedent	A prior court judgment that may guide or justify the Court's decision in a case involving similar facts or legal questions.
Presidency	The presiding body of the Court: the President, Deputy President, and Registrar.
Quorum	The minimum number of judges required for the session to open formally: 9 out of 15.
Rebuttal	Additional evidence (up to 5 pieces per party) presented in the final evidence phase, used exclusively to counter the opposing party's arguments.
Redirect Examination	A follow-up examination by the calling party after cross-examination, limited strictly to issues raised during cross.
Registrar	The administrative officer of the Court. Documents proceedings, administers the oath, manages the speakers' list. Holds no voting right.
Relevance (Objection)	An objection claiming that evidence or a question does not address a material issue in the case.
Reliability / Bias (Objection)	An objection claiming that the source or author of evidence lacks credibility or is demonstrably biased.
Respondent Party	The State defending against the Applicant's claims. Bears no Burden of Proof.
Speculation / Opinion (Objection)	An objection raised when a witness is asked to speculate beyond their direct knowledge or to offer an opinion without the necessary expertise.
Stipulations	Facts agreed by both parties before the trial as absolute and binding. Incontestable once accepted. Evidence must never contradict them.
Testimony Evidence	Statements given under oath by witnesses called to the stand. Evaluated alongside real evidence during deliberations.
Verdict	The Court's final judgment: list of stipulations, findings of fact and law, declaration on the Burden of Proof, and the Court's orders.



Term	Definition
Witness	A real individual with relevant direct knowledge or expertise, called to testify under oath. Up to 3 witnesses per party.