

Mock International Court of Justice
Guidelines for Witnesses

General Protocols and Reminders

- Always speak courteously.
- Always stand when the judges enter or leave the room.
- Dress appropriately – There is a dress code for The Union League. Business attire is the general rule.
- When responding to a question from a judge, say “Yes, your Excellency” or “No, your Excellency.”

Witnesses: Preparing and Giving Testimony

- The objective, when preparing testimony (2-3 minutes), is to **represent the views and facts of the witness portrayed.** Students must research carefully and play their role realistically.
- Students are to bring two additional copies of their testimony. When called to the podium, the student witness is to present these two copies to the World Court Registrar (the Registrar will keep a copy and give the other to the President Judge).
- Witnesses may rely on their written testimony when giving the statement; however, we encourage all students to rehearse their testimony so as not to appear to be reading verbatim.
- When delivering your statement, remember that you want to be convincing as well as informative. Be an actor and display appropriate passion in your delivery.
- Student witnesses are reminded to speak directly into the microphone, clearly and SLOWLY.
- Student witnesses must be prepared to answer questions related to their testimony (be ready to think on their feet) as well as the topic of debate. It is very important that you have attended the preparatory sessions and have familiarized yourself with all the preparatory materials on our Council website.

Note: You are encouraged to do your best in answering questions. If you do not know the answer to a question, a proper response is “I do not know (or ‘have’) the answer to your question.” Another reply: “I am not prepared to comment on that question.”

- Student witnesses are allowed to “refresh” their memories on the stand by reviewing pertinent information in their statement. In other words, you may bring additional documents to the podium. These documents are often helpful when questions are asked.
- Remember that you will be asked 2-3 questions by the attorneys on your team, 1-2 questions by the opposing legal team, and then 1-2 questions by the judges. Do your research and be prepared!