

Observer Delegations

Featured Committees: ITLOS, NATO

Functionality and Reality:

After many years out of use, a new type of delegation will return to CNYMUN: the Observer Nation. An Observer nation is a nation that is part of an international body but does not have the same privileges as full voting members of said organizations such as voting rights. For instance, at the United Nations, there are many members—the State of Palestine and the Holy See—in the process of gaining international recognition but are not yet fully recognized as members. These states often receive the designation of observer states in the UN.

Other places where you can find Observer Nations are multinational cooperative bodies. For example, the US maintains observer status with the European scientific body CERN. While the US cannot vote on CERN affairs, its observer status helps to further US-EU cooperation.

In committee, delegates who are offered the observing member status may not vote on any substantive matters (entering voting procedure and voting on resolutions) but retain the right to make speeches, make any procedural motion, vote on any procedural motion, actively contribute to working papers and resolutions, and act as a signatory or sponsor on a paper. While the observer state's role will depend on the committee, delegates should try to leverage their nation, individual, or organization's unique positions to mold the committee to their advantage without using their voting powers. While, it is uniquely challenging but will help create a richer debate for your committee, Good Luck!

Effect on Awards:

Just because you are assigned an observer nation in your committee doesn't mean you cannot influence the flow and outcome of the debate. Observer nations can help bring new perspectives and solutions to the committee and keep the flow of debate compelling. In that light, observing members are eligible for awards in the same criteria as other delegates, and must also submit position papers.