

Guidelines for Oral Pleadings

A. General

1. Dress Code

- The Hearing Room is an official venue, so please be aware of the dress code.
- Business dress for both ladies and gentlemen.

2. Behaviour

- The WTO is a **diplomatic organisation** that provides a forum for the negotiation and settling of trade disputes that involve different WTO Member government regulations.
- You are a representative in your Government's delegation and should use **language and behaviour** that reflects the organisation.

B. The Oral Pleadings

1. General

- Don't waste precious time during the pleadings looking for provisions or paragraphs.
- Have your WTO Agreement texts, Written Submissions, notebooks, texts and other Treaties in the correct order.
- Place Tags or "Post-it notes" in the sections you need or which you might want to refer to during your presentation.
- Ensure that you do not have any documentation that reveals the identity of your university.
- Practice your oral presentation many times aloud. You may even want to video record your Team's presentations.
- A brief video of the Final Oral Round is available for viewing at the EMC² website.

2. Hearing Rooms

- Be ready to face a very serious atmosphere in the Hearing Room **as the Panel members selected are all WTO Law, Policy, or Economics experts.**
- Participants should be aware that sometimes the Panellists will ask numerous questions and perhaps not allow you to finish your oral submissions or that they wait until the oral presentations are done.



- In the Regional Rounds in the preliminary rounds will be 3 Panellists, in the semi finals 3-5 Panellists, Grand Final 5-7 Panellists.
- In the Final Oral Round in the preliminary rounds will be 3 Panellists, in the semi finals 3-5 Panellists, Grand Final 7-9 Panellists.
- **It is your responsibility** to monitor the time.
- Remember the **Timekeepers** are responsible for the Timekeeping.
- The Timekeepers are present to assist the Panel and **not the** competitors.

3. Oral Submissions

- Do not **read** everything from your notes.
- Know your submissions in detail and use cue cards to assist you.
- The quality of your oral presentation is the most important aspect of the competition.
- Teams shall be **seated**.

4. Legal Submissions

- Many non-native English speakers are concerned with the quality of their language skills and if this presents a disadvantage. The WTO is an international institution whose official languages are English, French and Spanish. The use of these languages also presents a number of the permanent delegates with a problem daily.
- The best advice we can give you is to ensure that your oral submissions are well structured and simple. Do not try to use too many fancy and/or technical words if it is not necessary, or especially if you do not know the meaning of them.
- Panellists like asking orators to explain WTO and International law, economic and/or international policy as well as related concepts especially if they suspect that you are not fully aware of their meaning or the impact on your pleading.
- Emphasise what your point is and express your submissions with the appropriate conviction, recalling that the **WTO is a diplomatic organisation**.
- If you need to take a moment to gather your thoughts or find the right “English” word, do not hesitate to ask the Panel, as most will not be native English speakers and understand you are working in an “international environment”.
- Conversely, non-native English speakers should pace their presentations and not speak in the speed of their native tongue.
- Students **are not permitted to present any written materials**.



5. Panellists

- Panellists are international trade law experts, international economists, trade diplomats, trade or policy negotiators or sometimes industry experts (e.g. a scientist in a dispute on a public health issue) – they are **not judges**.
- When addressing a Panellist, you should preface your statement with either:
 - **“Madam Panellist”** or **“Mister Panellist”**;
 - **“Ms. Jones”** or **“Mr. Smith”** - This form of address should only be used if you have been advised by an IOC/ROC Member that it is appropriate to use this form of address. At some Regional Rounds, the names of each Panellist will be placed on Panel table.
- In addition, the Chair of the Panel should be addressed as either:
 - **“Madam Chair”** or **“Mister Chair”**; or
 - **“Madam Chairperson”** or **“Mister Chairperson”**.
- Another unique aspect of the WTO Dispute Settlement mechanism **is the courtesy that disputing “diplomatic” delegates** show to the Panel or one another, for example:
 - **“Mr. Panellist (“Madam Chair” or “Mr. Smith”), it is the position of my Government or it is the position of (Country Name), that ...”**.
 - **“My colleague for the Country of (Country Name) presented to this Panel that ...”**.
- Terms such as: “Your Excellency”, “the Honourable Panel in EC-Chicken Cuts Case...”; “this Honourable Panel”; “Your Honour” and other terms used either in municipal courts or the International Court of Justice **are not used** when presenting submissions to a WTO Panel. Therefore, students should ensure that these terms are not used during their oral presentations.
- Sometimes students preference their answer to every question with “Thank you for your question”. Be selective and creative with the initial words of your response, otherwise it will appear to the Panel that you are either overly nervous, don’t understand the question, or worse don’t know the law. Furthermore, most EMC² Panellist intently dislikes this phrase.

6. Questions from the Panel

- A presenter may be asked many questions during oral submissions **and rebuttal and sur-rebuttal**.
- Such questions can frustrate a presenter, break motivation or even ruin concentration. Relax, calm down and do not panic – if you need to take a moment, then ask the Panel for additional time as they will usually grant such a request (**keep in mind however, that the clock is ticking**).
- It is highly recommended that competitors **understand the larger policy and/or international relations** issues that may be at play in relation to the trade dispute at hand.



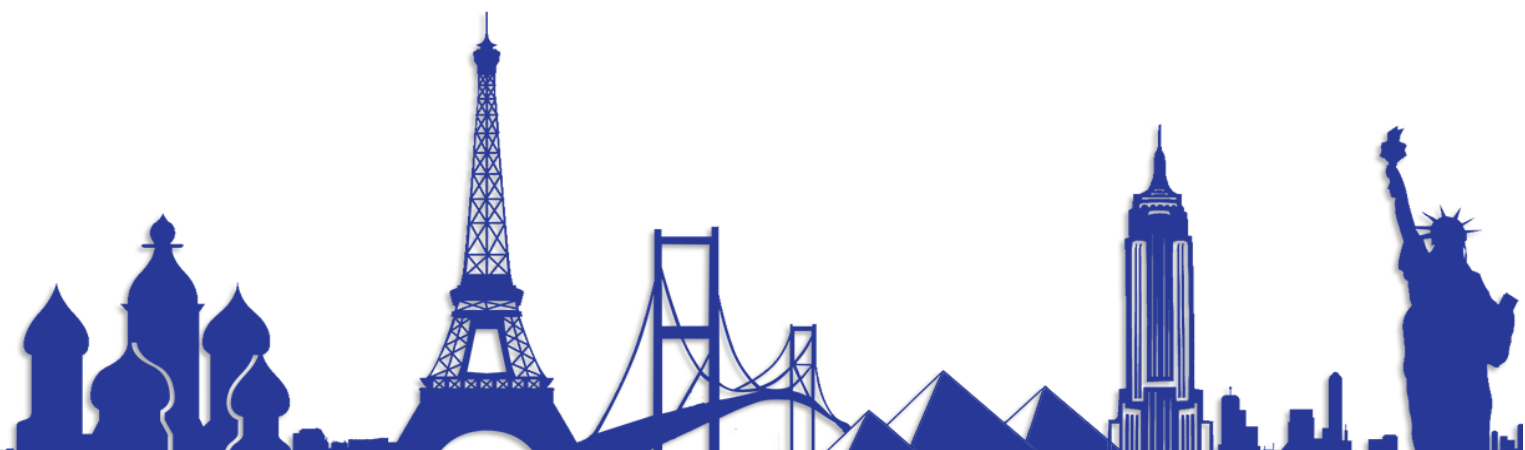
- Recalling that the Panels consist of diplomats, albeit with WTO Law expertise, these individuals **are highly trained in non-verbal communication skills. Why is this important?** For example, if a Panel's question relates to something that is not on-point with the competitor's submission, and the presenter displays his/her annoyance via facial expressions, a Panel is likely to interpret such a reaction as either:

- Lack of WTO Agreement and/or previous WTO case knowledge;
- Lack of EMC² Case facts and/or issue knowledge;
- Unwilling to assist the Panel (a true diplomatic faux pas); or
- Arrogance or even ignorance.

Remember you are on show to potential future employers, so maintain a professional exterior at all times.

- A Presenter is permitted to seek assistance from a fellow team member to answer a question from the Panel. This does not mean that you can ask your colleague to whisper the answer to you. A question from the Panel may be referred for answering by your fellow team member (**but once again keep the time allocation issue in mind**) for example: **“Madam Chair, I will ask my colleague Mr X to address/answer your question.”**
- Panellists will be instructed **not to ask** several questions in one statement.
- Furthermore, each presenter should be given time to answer each question before the next is asked by the Panel.
- **However, it is a tough competition and the Panellists, who are highly qualified in WTO Law, Economics, Policy and the Dispute Settlement process often ask many questions in order to understand your argument or test your knowledge or to even guide you.**
- On the other hand, some Panellists prefer not to ask questions and just listen or they may wait until the Team has completed its presentation and then ask questions.
- This means, that you must very quickly assess the Panel's questioning style and adjust your presentation accordingly.
- Remember that **time shall not be stopped** when a question is asked or answered!
- Furthermore, the art of diplomacy and advocacy is to persuade the listener to your point of view. Therefore never pass over any questions and remember to answer them all the moment they are asked.
- **For the following reasons never say:**
 - **“I will answer that question later”;** or
 - **“I will get back to it”.**

Firstly, there might not be enough time later for you or any member of your Team to answer the question. Secondly, the Panel may be trying to steer you to the “proper issue” via questions and finally, it is simply “bad form” to avoid questions from the adjudicators.



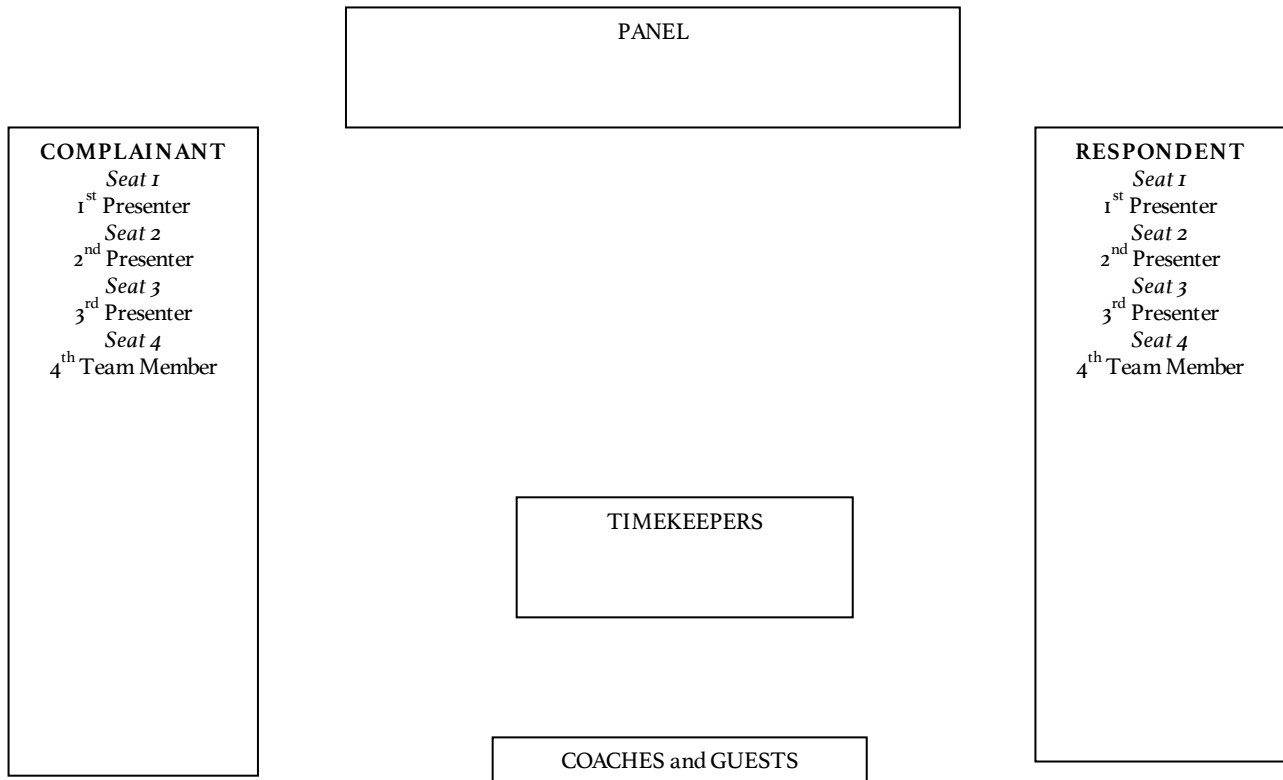
- If neither you or your Team Members cannot answer the question, it is better to be honest and say so, for example:
 - **“Unfortunately the delegates of (Country Name) are unable to assist the Panel with their question.”**
- However, it is permissible to give some form of an answer, for example:
 - **“My colleague Mr. X will address that issue in full, but if I can give the Panel a brief answer?”**
- A simple point but one often forgotten, **if you ask the Panel a question**, such as the point above, **make sure you wait for a response before launching into your statement!**
- Recalling that the presenter submitting does not have to be the person to answer a question, therefore, if the question is related to the argument that your colleague has or will present, he/she can answer immediately and then the original Presenter can continue his/her presentation after the questions are answered.
- If a Team Member answers any questions of another colleague, make sure the answer is brief and to the point. Do not allow the Panel to engage you in a conversation, but gently remind them that it is your colleague’s presentation time and he/she still has a number of submissions to present, for example:
 - **“Members of the Panel, I would be happy to answer your questions, however I note that my colleague Mr. X is only half way through his submissions and I would not want to deprive him of his allotted time. With your permission may I answer your question during my presentation?”**



C. The procedure during the Oral Pleading

1. Venue

- The competition Hearing Rooms will look like the following:



- Please note that all four (4) Team Members are permitted to sit at their Parties' table, but only three (3) Team Members are permitted to present oral submissions.
- Coaches are not permitted to sit at the Panellist table, nor are they permitted to speak to their team during the Oral Pleading Sessions.
- ELSA Members and Timekeepers will be present during all Preliminary Rounds and Elimination Rounds.



2. Opening of Panel Hearing

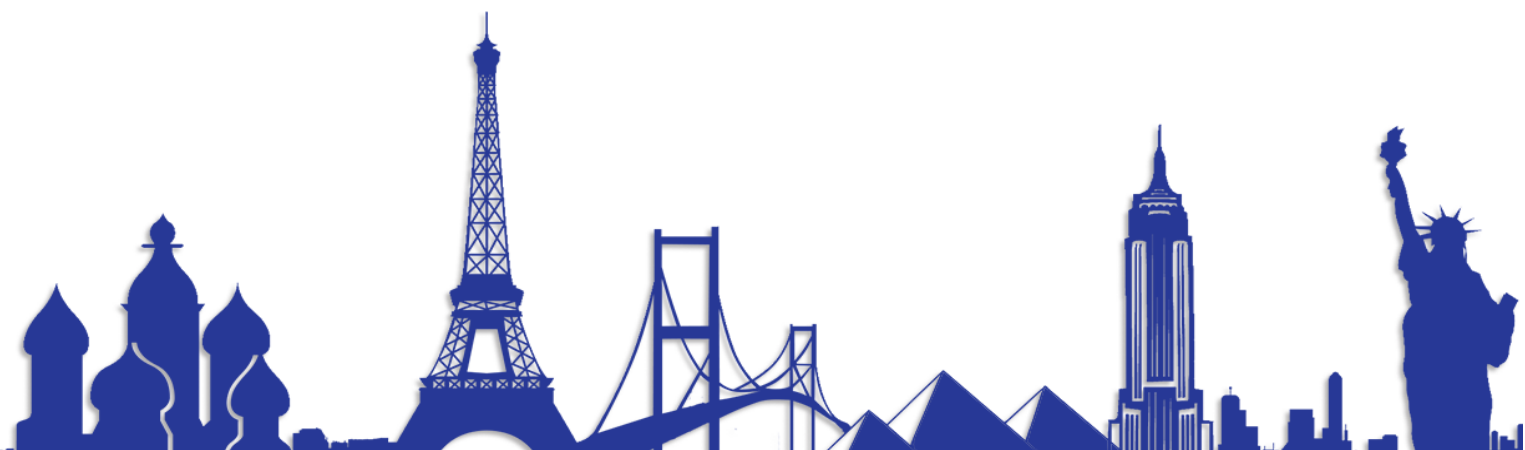
- Timekeepers lead the Panel into the Hearing Room and make a formal announcement that the Panel session is now open, **for example:**
 - **“Please stand, the WTO Panel in the “(Case Name)” is now in session. The Panellists sitting in this session are** (Timekeepers will announce the name of the Panellists and who will act as Panel Chairperson). **Please be seated.”.**
- Panel Chairperson will welcome delegates to the Hearing and then will introduce him/herself and members of the Panel, **for example:**
 - **“Good morning (afternoon), the Panel welcomes delegates from the Countries of (Country Name) and (Country Name) to this Panel hearing on the “(Case Name)”.** Firstly, I would like to introduce myself, I am Mr. XX your Panel Chairperson from XX and sitting today with me is Ms. XX on my left from XX and on my right Dr. XX from XX.”.

3. Confirmation of Appearances and Time Allocation

- Panel Chairperson will then request Appearance, for example:

“The Panel now wishes to hear the Appearances for the Complainant in this matter.”.
- Complainant Delegation Head (the nominated Team Contact Person) will make the opening statement, for example (and if you have four members in your team):
 - Complainant - Delegation Head: **“Good morning members of the Panel, my name is XX and together with my colleagues Ms. XX, Ms. XX and Mr. XX we represent the Complainant in this matter, the Government of (Country Name).**

Today my colleagues and I will present four issues: Ms. XX will address the issues of “ABC”, Ms. XX will address the issues of “DEF” and “GHI” I will address the issue of “JKL”. Mr. XX will not present oral submissions today, however with the Panel’s permission I will present the Rebuttal.”.



- ◆ Panel Chairperson will thank Complainant Delegation Head. He/She will then request the Respondent Delegation Head to present Appearances and time allocations, for example (and if you only have two members in your team):
 - **“Thank you Mr. XX. May we now have the Appearances for the Respondent in this matter?”.**

- ◆ Respondent Delegation Head (the nominated Team Contact Person) will make the opening statement, for example:
 - Respondent - Delegation Head: **“Good morning members of the Panel, my name is Mr. XX and together with my colleague Mr. XX we represent the Respondent in this matter, the Country of (Country Name).**

Today my colleague and I will respond to the four issues presented by the Complainant: Mr. XX will respond to the issues of “DEF and GHI” and I will respond to the issue of “JKL and then ABC”. With the Panel’s permission, I will present the sur-rebuttal.”.

- Panel Chairperson will thank Respondent Delegation Head. He/She will then check with the Timekeepers if the Appearances presented by the two Delegation Heads reflect the Appearance Sheets, for example:
 - **“Thank you Mr. XX. Timekeepers are there any anomalies in the oral statements made by the Delegation Heads and their “Team Appearance Sheets?””.**

- Timekeepers will respond to the Panel Chairperson, for example:
 - **“Mister/Madam Chairperson, the oral statements presented by the Delegation Heads are all in order (or state any anomaly that has arisen and be guided by the Panel Chair if any corrections are required due to a discrepancy(ies)).”.**



4. During Oral Submissions

- It is the role of the Timekeepers to monitor on the Panel's behalf the time of speaking per each Presenter. Each Orator must at least speak 7 minutes during the main OPs to be eligible for the Best Orator's award.
- Furthermore, the Timekeepers will monitor on the Panel's behalf that only one Team member presents the rebuttal/sur-rebuttal.
- The Timekeepers will show the remaining time with time signs, which will be displayed to the Panel and the teams. The Timekeepers will show the time of the speaker.
- The maximum time allocated for one speaker is 25 minutes. When 25 minutes (per speaker) has been reached, the Timekeepers will display the TIME sign and interrupt the Panel to advise that time for the speaker to present has expired.
- If a Team presents main oral arguments beyond the allocated 45 minutes, the Timekeepers are instructed to proceed with counting the time.

5. Primary Oral Submissions

Once the Panel Chairperson has ascertained if the Appearances and Statements are in order he/she will ask the Complainant to commence oral submissions and request the Timekeepers to "start the clock" for example:

- Complainant to commence and conclude oral submissions
 - Complainant - Delegation – First Presenter: **“Good morning members of the Panel, my name is Ms. XX** (the first part of this statement is made by the individual as the original reference was presented by the Delegation Head – this is the opportunity for an advocate to capture the Panel with his/her personality) **and I will be addressing the issues of “ABC”...** (presents submissions and answers Panel's questions).”. At the conclusion of submissions the presenter states: **“Mister/Madam Chairperson if the Panel has no more questions** (wait for an acknowledgement from the Panel), **that concludes my submissions. My colleague Ms XX will now address the Panel.”.**
 - Second Presenter: **“Good morning members of the Panel, my name is Ms. XX and I will be addressing the issues of “DEF & GHI”...** (presents submissions and answers Panel's questions).”. At the conclusion of submissions the presenter states: **“Mister/Madam Chairperson if the Panel has no more questions** (wait for an acknowledgement from the Panel), **that concludes my submissions. My colleague Mr. XX will now address the Panel.”.**



- Final Presenter: **“Good morning members of the Panel, as stated my name is Mr. XX and I will be addressing the issues of “JKL ... (presents submissions and answers Panel’s questions).”**. At the conclusion of submissions the presenter states: **“Therefore members of the Panel, it is the submission of the Government of (Country Name) that the Respondent has breached “Rule 123 of the WTO Agreement” and requests that the Panel determine that their “456 measures be deemed WTO inconsistent”. If there are no further questions from the Panel (wait for the Panel’s acknowledgment or questions), that concludes the submission of the Complainant, the Government of (Country Name).”**.
- Panel Chairperson will thank the Complainant for its submission and ask the Timekeepers if the Team kept within its nominated allocated Time.
 - **“Thank you Mr. XX. Timekeepers did the Complainant Team present their oral submissions within the allocated Time?”**.
- Timekeepers to advise the Panel Chairperson any additional time utilized by an individual Presenter or the overall Team time, for example:
 - **“Mister/Madam Chairperson, the oral submissions presented by the Complainant exceeded the 45 minutes allocated for the Primary Submissions by three (3) minutes.”**.

The Panel Chairperson should acknowledge the Timekeepers statement, check with his/her fellow Panellist if a time extension will be granted to the opposing team and then announce the actual time extension.

- **“Thank you Timekeepers, if my fellow Panellist agree (Chairperson should check with each Panellist) we will grant the Respondent an additional three (3) minutes. The Panel will now hear submissions from the Respondent, the Government of (Country Name). Timekeepers you may commence timing.”**.
- The Timekeepers must record if a time extension has been granted by the Panel Chairperson.
- Respondent to commence and conclude oral submissions, for example:
 - Respondent –Delegation – First Presenter: **“Good morning/afternoon members of the Panel, I am Ms. XX and I will be responding to the Complainant’s**



submissions regarding the issue of “ABC and JKL. (presents submissions and answers Panel’s questions).”. At the conclusion of submissions the presenter states: **“If the members of the Panel have no more questions (wait for an acknowledgement from the Panel), that concludes my submissions and I will hand-over to my colleague Ms XX.”**

- Final Presenter: **“Good morning/afternoon Members of the Panel, as stated my name is Mr. XX and I will be responding to the issues of “DEF and GHI” (presents submissions and answers Panel’s questions).”** At the conclusion of submissions the presenter states: **“Therefore members of the Panel, it is the submission of the Government of (Country Name) that the Complainant has not proved a breach of “Rule 123 of the WTO Agreement” and requests that the Panel determine that our “456 measures be found to be WTO consistent.”** If there are no further questions from the Panel (wait for the Panel’s acknowledgment or questions), **that concludes the submission of the Respondent, the Government of (Country Name).”**

- Panel Chairperson will thank the Respondent for its submission and ask the Timekeepers if the Team kept within its nominated allocated Time.

- **“Thank you Mr. XX. Timekeepers did the Respondent present their oral submissions within their allocated Time?”**

- Timekeepers to advise the Panel Chairperson any additional time utilized by an individual Presenter or the overall Team time, for example:

“Mister/Madam Chairperson, the oral submissions presented by the Respondent did not exceeded 38 minutes, which include the additional three (3) minutes grant by the Panel.”

6. **Rebuttal and Sur-rebuttal Submissions**

- The Panel Chairperson should acknowledge the Timekeepers statement, and conclude the Primary Submissions and commence Rebuttal and Sur-rebuttal. He/She will ask the Complainant to commence with his/her presentation and request the Timekeepers to “start the clock” for example:

- Complainant to present rebuttal

- Presenter: **“Members of the Panel, the Complaint asserts that ...”**. If there are



no questions from the Panel (wait for the Panel's acknowledgment or questions), **that concludes the rebuttal for the Complainant.**"

- Panel Chairperson will thank the Complainant for its rebuttal and ask the Respondent to commence his/her sur-rebuttal.
 - **"Thank you Mr. XX. May the Panel hear the sur-rebuttal from the Respondent. Ms. XX you may present the Respondents sur-rebuttal. Timekeepers you may commence timing."**
- Respondent to present rebuttal, for example:
 - Presenter: **"Members of the Panel, the Complainant has asserted that..., but has failed to present clear and conclusive evidence. If there are no questions from the Panel** (wait for the Panel's acknowledgment or questions), **that concludes the sur-rebuttal for the Respondent."**

7. Closing of Panel Hearing

- It is the responsibility of the Panel Chairperson to indicate to the Timekeepers that having heard the Oral Submissions, the moot is now concluded.
- Once the Panel Chairperson has made his/her announcement the Timekeepers should announce, for example:
 - **"Ladies and Gentlemen, we ask all competitors and guests to please leave the Hearing Room in order for the Panellist to complete their Marking Sheets and prepare comments for the parties involved. Teams and guests will be recalled by the Timekeepers for the informal Feedback session whereby the Panel members will provide comments to the competitors on their style and structure only. Thank you for your co-operation."**
- One Timekeeper will escort the competitors and guest out of the Hearing Room, whilst the other will arrange with the Panel how to proceed.
- Both Timekeepers should leave the Hear Room to allow the Panel to mark individually and independently, however they should be stationed just outside the room in order to respond to the Panel Chairpersons instructions.



8. Recalling of Competitors and Guests for Panel Feedback

- Once competitors and guests have returned to the Hearing Room, it is at the discretion of the Panel how the feedback will be presented.

Good Luck!

ELSA International 2016/2017

