

**Unity Against the
Tides of Conquest:
The Council of the
Nusantara Seas**



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LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL

Delegates, Club and Team Advisors, Parents, and Any Other MUN Folks,

It is my esteemed privilege to welcome you all to Davis Model United Nations Conference XXIII! My name is Brody Andrews, and I am honored to serve as your Secretary-General for the 23rd DMUNC. On the weekend of May 2-3, 2026, delegates will have the opportunity to engage in fruitful debate and cooperation, and hopefully, make lifelong connections.

As a senior at UC Davis, this will be my final DMUNC and my final Model UN Conference. I've been to over 30 conferences in the eight years I've been doing MUN but nothing I've gotten to do in my Model UN career has been as rewarding as DMUNC. Last year I got the opportunity to serve as the Director General of DMUNC XXII and it brought me so much joy to watch a massive number of future leaders bring their imaginative ideas to important debates. Thank you all for the opportunity to watch the magic unfold again, I truly cannot wait to see and be inspired by all of you in May.

I joined MUN my freshman year in high school and I could not be more grateful for the experiences it has brought me. Having been in your position I know how simultaneously nerve-wracking and exciting a MUN weekend can be. Whether this is your first conference or your 100th I'm happy you chose to come to DMUNC. In college, MUN has only become a larger part of my life. Not only has MUN afforded me educational and competitive opportunities, but it has also brought me lasting relationships with incredible people who continue to push and support me every day.

As someone who has done Model UN for so many years, I've had all the classic MUN experiences. Every author's panel, crisis update, closing ceremony celebration, and moderated caucus speech led me to DMUNC and I couldn't be happier. As graduation looms large, I want to remind all of you of the amazing joys that MUN can bring and all of the exciting things college has in store for all of you. When you love MUN, it loves you back. The skills you will improve, friendships you will form, and knowledge you will gain from even one MUN conference is enough to make having to explain what a crisis committee is to your non-MUN friends worth it.

I have had the honor of serving as the Director General of DMUNC XXII and as the crisis director for DMUNC XXI's The Muppets committee and DMUNC XX's Star Wars JCC on the Rebels side. With three DMUNCs and countless more conferences under my belt, I feel confident that my experience and passion will help make DMUNC XXIII a truly memorable conference. However, none of this would be possible without the hard work of the CONSEC and staff members who have worked tirelessly for months to prepare for DMUNC XXIII. Running DMUNC is in *no way* a one person job and I am eternally grateful to every single DMUNC staff member. My greatest thanks goes to my Director General Mae Tyson who has stepped up at every turn in extraordinary ways. Thank you Mae, CONSEC, head chairs, crisis directors, and all the DMUNC staff.

Delegates, we have been planning this weekend since August of 2025 and we're so excited for you to enjoy it. I encourage you to read through your committee background guides thoroughly and formulate collaborative resolutions. I look forward to the thought-provoking ideas that each of you will bring forth to your respective committees. Good luck! We truly can't wait to share this with you.

Sincerely,

Brody Andrews | Secretary-General

Davis Model United Nations Conference XXIII

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LETTER FROM THE HEAD CHAIR

Dear Delegates,

This committee bridges the gap between history and ancient mythology, combining complex events from centuries ago with stories passed down orally over millennia. While this may seem daunting, we will guide you every step of the way to make these stories clear, engaging, and fun. We understand that MUN can be stressful, especially in a crisis committee, and we are committed to creating a welcoming and enjoyable environment. Our goal is for everyone to feel confident contributing while having fun exploring these fascinating topics together. This is my first year at UC Davis, and I am a first-year International Relations student on the Peace and Security track. It is also my first year in MUN, transitioning from high school experiences in civil discourse. Outside of MUN, I play on the club lacrosse team, enjoy making and listening to music, working out, and spending time outdoors. I chose this committee because of my personal connection to the ocean.

While I may not have a personal connection to these particular stories, my love for all things aquatic runs deep. I have spent much of my childhood surfing, fishing, and SCUBA diving, and I have always associated the ocean with joy, curiosity, and adventure. While we will not be doing these activities in committee, I hope we can create our own oceanic adventures together through the stories we build. Preparing for this committee has exposed me to many fascinating aspects of Indonesian culture and mythology, and I'm excited to bring this global perspective to our committee discussions. I am truly looking forward to crafting an incredible experience with all of you as we explore the fascinating and sometimes challenging intersection of history and mythology.

Best Regards,

Cyrus Allen | *Head Chair*

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LETTER FROM THE VICE CHAIR

Dear Delegates,

Hello Everyone! My name is Manas Basavaraju, and I'm a freshman at UC Davis studying Neurobiology, Physiology, and Behavior on the pre-med track. I've been in MUN for around 3 years now, and this is actually my first time chairing a committee, especially one as chaotic as a crisis committee, so I hope you'll forgive me for any stumbles I make along the way. DMUNC holds a special place in my heart, as in high school it was the first collegiate conference I ever attended, and I hope it can hold that special place in your hearts as well.

Outside of MUN I read (an obsessive amount), write in my spare time, listen to music almost constantly, research history and mythology, and debate politics with my friends. I chose this committee due to my love mythology of any kind, and I hope it interests you as much as it does me. While this committee may be complicated and seem to hold many undiscovered nuances and may seem difficult to navigate, remember that we as chairs are here to guide you whenever you wish for it, so feel free to ask! Be prepared to have your creativity challenged, especially with the range of characters present for you to get assigned, your skills tested, and your ideas brought to life in front of your very eyes.

Most importantly though, remember to always have fun. MUN, especially crisis committees, always have a healthy dose of chaos and tomfoolery, and so please remember to make the most of it and move at your own pace. Once again, if you have any questions, please feel free to ask. I wish you all a joyful time at DMUNC, and welcome to the adventures of the Nusantara Seas!

Best Regards,

Manas Basavaraju | *Vice Chair*

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LETTER FROM THE CRISIS DIRECTOR

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the twenty-third iteration of DMUNC! My name is Aishea Nugroho, but you can call me Shea, it's so nice to meet you! I'm a sophomore studying International Relations with plans to minor in Human Rights, and I currently serve as the USG of Training for Davis MUN. While this is only my second year in Model UN, I've spent the past four years debating in Asian and British Parliamentary circuits in Jakarta and internationally, where I fell in love with fast-paced argumentation, storytelling, and a little bit of chaos. You may recognize me from last year, as this is my second year serving as a Crisis Director after directing the Mistfall committee, and it truly reflects how much I love building immersive, fantasy-driven crisis committees. It's an honor to finally bring one of my own to life.

This committee is inspired by the bedtime stories my late grandfather used to tell, stories filled with gods, oceans, and legends that shaped my childhood and instilled in me a deep pride in Indonesian culture. It is also a tribute to my father, who spent six long months choosing a name for his eldest daughter after the ocean itself. Through their stories, prayers, and love, they taught me the power of heritage, storytelling, and carrying pride in one's name.

This committee is built from those same spaces, imagination, memory, laughter, and love, and I hope it becomes a place where you feel empowered to be creative, bold, and collaborative. I'm beyond excited to see how you bring the Council of the Nusantara Seas to life. Thank you for being part of something so meaningful to me, and I can't wait to see you all in May!

Best Regards,

Aishea Nugroho | *Crisis Director*

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INTRODUCTION AND COMMITTEE FORMAT

The seas of Nusantara have long been ruled by spirits, gods, dragons, and guardians — unseen by mortals, yet deeply intertwined with the fate of the archipelago. For centuries, these mythological beings governed ocean currents, trade winds, and sacred waters from the shadows, maintaining a fragile balance between realms. That balance is now breaking. Foreign sails bearing the banner of the Dutch East India Company have appeared on the horizon, marking the beginning of Dutch East Indies colonization and threatening to claim not only land and spice, but the seas themselves. As cannons echo across the waters and borders are challenged, the once-isolated rulers of the oceans are forced into the open.

In response to this looming conquest, the most powerful entities of the Nusantara seas have been summoned to convene in an unprecedented council. Old rivalries between regions, ancient grudges among gods, and conflicting visions for the future complicate any hope of unity. Some see cooperation as the only path to survival; others view chaos, conquest, or even alliance with the invaders as opportunity. Delegates must navigate diplomacy, warfare, and mythic power as they decide whether the oceans of Nusantara will stand united — or fall divided beneath foreign rule.

As a general note, the Historical Context section of this background guide provides an overview of Dutch East Indies colonization alongside the folklore and mythological traditions that shape this committee. Delegates already familiar with Indonesian history or mythology may choose to skim this section and proceed directly to the Committee Objectives.

As per DMUNC procedure, this crisis committee will operate using the two-notepad system. Only one notepad may be submitted to the backroom at a time. Delegates are encouraged to use their second notepad to draft additional directives, crisis notes, or private actions while awaiting a response. Both notepads may not be outside the committee room simultaneously unless otherwise instructed by the crisis director.

HISTORY

Before 1200 CE — The Age of the Sacred Seas

Before foreign ships ever reached the Indonesian archipelago, the seas of Nusantara were believed to be ruled by mythological beings, spirits, and guardians. These figures controlled tides, storms, fertility, volcanic activity, and safe passage between islands. Powerful entities such as Nyi Roro Kidul, Dewi Danu, Antaboga, and ancient Naga dragons governed different regions of the ocean, maintaining balance between land, sea, and humanity.

Mortals respected this order through rituals, offerings, and taboos. Fishermen, sailors, and coastal communities believed that the ocean was alive and must be treated with reverence. While rivalries existed among the spirits themselves, the seas remained largely unified and protected from outside interference.

1200–1500 — The Rise of Maritime Kingdoms

As trade expanded, powerful maritime kingdoms such as Sriwijaya and later Majapahit rose to dominance. These kingdoms relied heavily on the seas for trade, communication, and influence. Spices such as cloves, nutmeg, and pepper made Nusantara one of the most valuable regions in the world.

Merchants from China, India, and the Middle East traveled through these waters, but most respected local customs and spiritual traditions. The mythological guardians of the seas allowed this trade to flourish, believing balance was still being maintained.

1500–1602 — Growing Human Ambition

By the late 15th century, European interest in Southeast Asia increased dramatically. Advances in navigation brought Portuguese and Spanish ships into the region, followed closely by the Dutch. Unlike earlier traders, Europeans sought control rather than cooperation.

The spirits of the seas began to sense growing disruption. Trade routes became contested, sacred waters were crossed without respect, and coastal conflicts increased. Though tensions rose, no unified response was formed among the ocean rulers.

1602 — The Arrival of the Dutch East India Company

In 1602, the Dutch East India Company (VOC) was founded. The VOC was not just a trading company — it had the power to wage war, build forts, and control territory. Dutch ships entered the waters of Nusantara with cannons and soldiers, determined to dominate the spice trade.

This marked the beginning of Dutch East Indies colonization. The VOC seized ports, forced unfair trade

agreements, and committed violent acts to secure monopolies — most famously in the Banda Islands, where much of the population was killed to control nutmeg production.

To the mythological beings of the seas, this was a direct violation of sacred order. The oceans were no longer treated as living realms, but as property to be exploited. Storms grew stronger, sea creatures became restless, and ancient powers began to awaken.

1602–1619 — Fractures Within the Ocean Realms

As Dutch influence expanded, divisions among the ocean rulers deepened. Some spirits believed the only way to survive was through unity and cooperation. Others saw opportunity in chaos, wealth, or alliances with the colonizers.

Old rivalries resurfaced:

- Sea gods clashed with land guardians over control of trade routes.
- Spirits of balance opposed those who thrived on destruction.
- Eastern realms questioned whether western conflicts threatened them at all.

These disagreements weakened the collective strength of the seas just as the VOC tightened its grip on the archipelago.

CURRENT SITUATION



1619 marks a turning point for the seas of Nusantara. With the fall of Jayakarta, now claimed by the Dutch as Batavia, the Dutch East India Company has established itself as a dominant force in the region. Foreign ships patrol once-sacred waters, forts rise along the coasts, and the oceans are increasingly treated as territory to be claimed rather than realms to be respected.

In response, the most powerful mythological beings of the Nusantara seas have been summoned to an unprecedented gathering: the Council of the Nusantara Seas. For the first time in centuries, gods, spirits, dragons, and guardians from across the archipelago must confront both an external threat and their own internal

divisions. Some seek unity and defense, others power or survival at any cost.

Delegates enter the committee at this critical moment. The decisions made in this council will determine whether the oceans of Nusantara remain sacred and sovereign — or are divided, conquered, and reshaped beneath the rising tides of empire.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

Q1: How should the mythological rulers of the Nusantara seas cooperate to defend their realms against Dutch East Indies colonization while managing long-standing rivalries among themselves?

Q2: Who has the authority to define and enforce ocean borders, trade routes, and sacred waters, and how should conflicts over these boundaries be resolved?

Q3: How can delegates strategically use their unique mythical powers and spiritual influence—such as controlling storms, protecting coasts, blessing harvests, or guarding trade routes—not only to advance their own interests, but also to safeguard the lives and livelihoods of Nusantara’s fishermen, farmers, sailors, and coastal communities?

Q4: What balance should exist between preserving sacred ocean realms and ensuring the survival of mortal societies that depend on the sea, and how can that balance be upheld during times of conflict and foreign expansion?

CHARACTER LIST

Antaboga — Serpent of Creation (Central Java)

An ancient creator deity who formed the earth through meditation, Antaboga is neutral, wise, and deeply patient. He prefers peace but holds immense power if balance is truly threatened. He serves as a mediator and advisor, aligning with calm, strategic figures and opposing greed-driven decisions.

Barong — Protector Spirit of Bali (Central Currents)

Barong embodies balance, protection, and order, serving as a guardian of communities and sacred spaces. He openly opposes chaos and views foreign exploitation as a threat to harmony. He is deeply suspicious of **Nyi Roro Kidul's** darker ambitions and stands in direct opposition to **Rangda**, working best with defensive, unity-focused figures.

Buto Ijo — Giant Guardian (Java)

Often feared as a monster, Buto Ijo is a powerful protector of forests and islands. He responds strongly to respect and loyalty and may become fiercely defensive of mortals. If mistreated or manipulated, he could turn destructive, resenting elite arrogance and exploitation.

Dewi Anjani — Mountain Fairy Queen (Lombok)

A ruler balancing harmony and vengeance, Dewi Anjani believes balance between humans and spirits must be maintained. She supports cooperation but will act decisively if sacred lands are threatened, often aligning with land-based guardians and peacekeepers.

Dewi Danu — Goddess of Lakes and Freshwater (Central Currents)

Dewi Danu governs Lake Batur and all freshwater sources that sustain farmers and inland communities. Her priority is protecting rivers and irrigation systems from disruption caused by war or colonization. She aligns closely with **Dewi Sri** and **Naga Basuki**, opposing reckless actions that disrupt nature.

Dewi Lanjar — Sea Princess of Pekalongan (North Java Coast)

Governing trade and fisherman prosperity, Dewi Lanjar balances mortal survival with oceanic authority. Both ally and rival to **Nyi Roro Kidul**, she is pragmatic and influential, often mediating between powerful sea rulers and human communities.

Dewi Sri — Goddess of Rice and Fertility (Central Currents)

As the protector of harvests and prosperity, Dewi Sri represents the survival of farmers and rural communities. She seeks peace, stable trade, and cooperation to prevent famine. She works closely with **Dewi Danu**, **Putri Siboru Deak Parujar**, and **Manarmakeri**.

Empu Gandring's Spirit — Cursed Blacksmith (Central Java)

A legendary smith whose cursed blade brought death, Empu Gandring seeks vengeance and legacy. He can forge divine weapons, ships, or defenses, making him crucial to any military strategy. An antihero, he may support whichever side grants him purpose.

Guardian of Banda Islands — Spirit of Nutmeg (Eastern Depths)

The embodiment of spice wealth, this spirit has witnessed extreme violence under Dutch exploitation. Fiercely anti-VOC, they seek protection or vengeance and align closely with **Manarmakeri** and eastern guardians.

Jaka Tarub — Trickster Mortal (Central Java)

A symbol of human ambition and deceit, Jaka Tarub navigates between gods and mortals with ease. Clever and opportunistic, his loyalty is flexible, and he may act as a spy, negotiator, or saboteur. He is a prime candidate for secret cooperation with the **VOC Commander**.

Jin Laut — Sea Djinn of Chaos (Everywhere)

A spirit of floods, rebellion, and tsunamis, Jin Laut embodies uncontrollable nature. His loyalty shifts constantly, and he may side with any force—divine or mortal—that enables chaos, including foreign colonizers.

Karaeng, Sea Turtle of Sulawesi — Timekeeper Spirit (Northern Winds)

An ancient recorder of history, Karaeng observes without bias. While neutral, he may support those who learn from the past. His knowledge is invaluable, but his loyalty must be earned.

Laut Kidang — Antelope Sea Spirit (Eastern Depths)

A swift messenger between realms, Laut Kidang protects trade routes and communication. Neutral but essential, he bridges factions and may expose betrayal or secret alliances.

Makara Raja — Guardian of Natural Law (Northern Winds)

A mythical sea creature representing balance between gods, creatures, and nature, Makara Raja values order and long-term stability. He favors diplomacy and structured defense, opposing chaotic or selfish actors.

Manarmakeri — Hero of Papua (Eastern Depths)

A bringer of light, renewal, and knowledge, Manarmakeri believes unity and wisdom are the only paths forward. He strongly opposes exploitation of eastern realms and acts as a moral leader in the council.

Naga Basuki — Serpent Guardian of Earthquakes (Central Currents)

Dwelling beneath Mount Agung, Naga Basuki controls tectonic forces and volcanic stability. Calm and disciplined, he prioritizes balance and prevention of catastrophe, opposing reckless use of power.

Naga Padoha — Destroyer of Lake Toba (Western Seas)

Once punished for rebellion, Naga Padoha caused the destruction that formed Lake Toba. Now seeking redemption and authority, he struggles between guilt and ambition and may be tempted by promises of power.

Nyai Blorong — Enchantress of Wealth (Western Seas)

A half-serpent spirit associated with gold and fortune, Nyai Blorong is driven by greed above all else. She may be tempted to ally with the Dutch for wealth or influence and thrives in secret deals.

Nyi Roro Kidul — Queen of the Southern Sea (Western Seas)

Ruler of storms and tides, Nyi Roro Kidul sees colonization as a violation of sacred waters but also an opportunity to expand her reign. She demands balance while seeking dominance, aligning with sea rulers and clashing with land-based powers.

Putri Siboru Deak Parujar — Sky Maiden of Batak Legend (Western Seas)

A creator figure who values harmony and humanity, Putri Siboru Deak Parujar prioritizes human survival over territorial disputes. She aligns with peace-focused figures and distances herself from power-hungry rulers.

Raja Laut Utara — Lord of the Northern Seas (Northern Winds)

A cold, strategic ruler who values defense networks and alliances, Raja Laut Utara prioritizes security and preparedness over sentiment. He aligns with structured coalitions and military planners.

Rangda — Witch Queen of Chaos (Central Currents)

Thriving on fear and destruction, Rangda seeks to destabilize balance and manipulate conflict. She opposes **Barong** and may cooperate with colonizers or morally grey figures if it increases chaos.

Spirit of Malin Kundang — Cursed Sailor (Western Seas)

Once a mortal turned to stone for his arrogance, Malin Kundang's spirit haunts the seas with bitterness toward humanity and elites alike. He may side with forces promising justice or vengeance.

Hendrick van der Velde, The VOC Commander — Agent of Empire

Representing the Dutch East India Company, the VOC Commander seeks control through negotiation, coercion, and manipulation. He exploits division and may secretly ally with greedy or chaotic spirits to secure dominance.

Watu Gunung — King of Mountains (Java)

A representative of land-based power, Watu Gunung is uneasy with oceanic dominance and advocates for mortal sovereignty. He may clash with sea gods while working with agricultural and land guardians.