

DEBATE. INSPIRE. ACHIEVE.



IP

International Press
Style Guide

Reporters

Letter from the Executive Board

Greetings to the members of the International Press,

We take it that it is your innate passion for either words or pixels, or both, that has brought you here, and we warmly welcome you aboard the world of the International Press. We look forward to facilitating an intense mind-boggling experience that will always be cherished.

The International Press is the binding force between the people and their rulers. It serves as a bridge to inform a common man about the happenings around the globe. Furthermore, it serves as a medium for unspoken words and unvoiced opinions. As members of the International Press, you are required to adhere to the highest standards of diplomacy and transparency. The journalists have the creative liberty to evaluate the proceedings in your committee and document them in the most grasping, yet factual way possible.

As a member of the International Press, freedom of speech and expression must be exercised only as long as it upholds the sanctity and integrity of the conference and its delegates. Always remember that you are a part of a team. Individual competition aside, our collective goal is also to produce resourceful articles for an informative newsletter. Any lack of decency or diplomacy in reporting the proceedings and absence of factual correctness would not be entertained.

We hope this experience will be as challenging as an endeavour as it would be exciting. This document provides basic information about the role the journalists are expected to be thoroughly familiar with. We also expect the reporters to be well-researched about their respective committees. At the conference, the intellectual and emotional quotient of the journalists, as well as their ability to work impeccably under pressure, would be tested.

To overcome all the challenges that this role might bring along, we strongly recommend the members start the basic research well in advance to efficiently produce impeccable pieces of work. We eagerly look forward to working and interacting with all the members of this forum.

Regards,

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About International Press

The International Press (IP) is neither a traditional committee of the United Nations nor an authentic part of any UN committee. In a Model United Nations (MUN), the IP refers to the collection of international press agencies or independent journalists from all corners of the world to report on the activities of the proceedings of various committees. As the delegates or diplomats representing countries from all over the world gather under a roof to engage in deliberation, the International Press records all the crucial moments in words as well as photographs. The International Press has always been an indispensable part of any MUN and serves as the most pertinent function of documentation and analysis of the deliberation.

The primary motive of the Press team thereof shall be to provide an unbiased platform for astute journalists and amateur photographers, to channel their sublime thoughts into concrete content. One of the most important tasks journalists in the International Press perform is formal reporting. They are primarily required to cover the deliberations and describe them to others in the best thought-out and concise way possible. For this purpose, they are supposed to take notes and submit articles that contain the major discussions in their respective councils. A good news article is supposed to be articulate, and brief that should be able to convey the very essence of any discussion.

While at the conference, you are expected to research and keenly observe the happenings while taking note of worthy instances to prepare reports, formulate opinions, conduct interviews and polls, and press conferences for the delegates. Our vision is to ensure that this is a learning experience, and we hope to embark upon this journey creating a magnificent fusion of words and experiences. There will be obstacles in your path, but to learn, you need to be willing to push yourself and be open to new perspectives and possibilities. In the words of William H Gass, 'The true alchemists do not change lead into gold; they change the world into words.'

There are three things which come as a part and parcel of any International Press Team at a Model UN Conference simulation.

1. **Research:** Comprehensive research forms the basic framework of the art of reporting. A journalist in a committee needs to be well informed, rather better equipped with their research since it is not going to be country specific. Half-baked knowledge on the agendas reflects factual inconsistency in the articles. Kindly go through the background guides of your respective committees to have a better understanding of the agenda. Knowledge of current debates pertaining to the agenda is also encouraged. Further information regarding sources of research will be provided in this document as well.

2. **Unity:** The International Press team will consist of a number of reporters, who need to be working in synchronization with each other as well as photojournalists. The spirit of competitiveness should never come in the way of team-work, and all the efforts should be to publish a prosperous newsletter. Every article must contain a picture that may be clicked by the photojournalist. Coordination among photojournalists is necessary to maintain uniform coverage of each committee with the least number of overlaps possible.

3. **Code of Conduct:** Reporters are expected to maintain diplomatic courtesy at all times towards fellow members of the team, delegates, executive board and the Secretariat. Even while critically looking at the committee proceedings, respect must be extended to the delegates. Frivolous reporting, like reporting on a delegate's attire or manner of speaking, is highly discouraged.

How to Research:

Nature of Source/Evidence: A reporter or a journalist is expected to be factual and accurate with their research. Reporters should not form any opinion without factual basis, whether it is legal evidence, statistics, historical evidences or even sound logic and analysis. Since IP is expected to have credible information, various sources of information can be categorised into the following:

1. Primary or most reliable sources of information:

- a. **United Nations:** Documents and findings by the United Nations or any related UN body such as OHCHR, UNODC, etc are held as credible proof to support a claim or argument.
- b. **Multilateral Organizations:** Documents from international organizations like OIC, NAFTA, SAARC, BRICS, EU, ASEAN, the International Criminal Court, etc. may also be presented as credible sources of information.
- c. **Government Reports:** These reports can be used to research as well. While these can be denied by certain delegates, the information can be considered as official information or statements made by a particular country and its government.

2. Secondary or moderately reliable sources of information:

a. News Sources:

- i. **Reputed news agencies:** Any facts or incidents reported, and press conferences or interviews conducted by reputed news agencies can be used for their factual information. For example, if the German Chancellor was interviewed by Reuters, the statements made by the minister can be quoted in your article in the following manner: "German Chancellor Olaf Scholz said in an interview with Reuters that Berlin's investigation would make sure that nothing was concealed and do its best to ensure that those responsible for the blasts were punished."

Keep in mind that mentioning the source of information, or rather the agency helps establish a sense of transparency and credibility of the information. Do not use information originating from tabloids or controversial sources as it may be counterintuitive.

ii. **State operated News Agencies:** These reports can be used in the support of or against the State that owns the News Agency. These reports, if credible or substantial enough, can be used in support of or against any country as such but may be denied by the delegates of that particular committee. Some examples are – RIA Novosti (Russian Federation), Xinhua News Agency (People’s Republic of China), etc.

3. Tertiary or rarely credible sources of information:

a. **Wikipedia:** As the platform remains to be a crowd sourced platform to gather its information, it cannot be deemed credible. However, any credible sources mentioned in its bibliography can be taken advantage of.

b. **Twitter / X / social media:** While most of the information posted or tweeted through social media is not credible, certain tweets or press releases made by a government, head of state, reputed organization or person of interest can be used in very selective situations, based on the requirement, relevancy and credibility

Note: It is crucial for the reporter to be as factual and credible as possible for their articles and the press conferences. When in doubt, approach the Executive Board of the International Press to resolve any such doubt. Moreover, make it a habit to cite your sources of information at the end of the document as a list or preferably as a footnote to the information obtained as illustrated.¹ This practice helps maintain the transparency of your articles. Citation formats usually prevalent in research papers are not required

¹ You can paste the link of your source here.

Types of Submissions

The heart of journalism lies in observing and articulating thoughts and information. Articles written by reporters can be categorized into different types to highlight the intent, format and objective of each type of article. While the following types of submissions are the most common types of articles, there may be a few changes or a new type that can be introduced during the conference.

Opinionated Editorial

An Opinionated editorial (Op-Ed) is an article that appears opposite the editorial page of practically all newspapers. This is one such article where the writer gets an opportunity to pen down his/her perspective on the agenda. Research is of utmost importance and opinions must be backed by relevant facts. These are some of the most impactful articles and creativity here is boundless. The article must be written in the third person's view or a narrative style. Always remember that an opinion that is not supported by arguments or facts is only a thought or sometimes propaganda.

Word Limit - 500 to 600 words

Beat

A beat-based article is a specialized article where the Reporter presents in-depth coverage of a particular issue, situation, or likewise. It involves amassment of more knowledge than a traditional news report. The beat is a central idea around which the contents of the article revolve. Ideally, it is the core concern or subject and should pertain to every single line used in the forming of the article. Requiring clear observations and grasping power, beats should be devoid of the reporter's opinion. This article must cover a fraction of the committee proceedings or rather a singular topic or event that occurred in the committee. It can be a solution proposed and its counter-arguments or even a statement or an accusation made by the delegate and responses of other delegates. While you can provide facts based upon your research to provide a premise for the beat, opinions cannot be present in this article.

Word Limit - 300 to 400 words

Creative Piece / Feature

‘But out of limitations, comes creativity.’ This is the only submission where the reporters can explore any format of creative writing. It just has to adhere to the agenda of the respective committee. A feature can be a poem, diary entry, letter, character sketch, short story, or any format you desire, as long as content is original and absolutely your own individual brainchild. This gives you the poetic ability to play with words and ideas, albeit in keeping with the agenda, as your piece should revolve around a central theme that is drawn off the agenda, in whole or part. You need to follow the format of the chosen type of creative piece in the body of your article. Title and byline for this article remains the same as that of other articles (clearly elaborated further in this document).

Word Limit - 150 to 800 words (depends upon the chosen format)

Interview Transcript

An interview transcript provides an opportunity for the reporter to interact with delegates. An interview should be utilized to highlight aspects that might not otherwise be discussed during the conference or to get further clarification or comments on the statements made. The questions must be precise, should surround a topic, and essentially have a flow of questioning. While the information can be summarised if required, the reporters are to ensure that the essence of the views put forth by the delegate remains intact. There is no requirement for any analysis or comments by the reporter in the transcript of an interview. The reporter may record the audio of the interview to write the transcript and can use the statements made by the delegate in the press conference. The article should be written in the format of a conversation.

For example:

International Press (IP): The question asked....

The delegate of French Republic (France): The answer or response provided by the delegate.....

IP: The follow-up question.....

France: The response.....

Reporters are expected to submit a minimum of 4 to a maximum of 7 pairs of responses (each pair refers to the question by the reporter and the answer by the delegate). While reporters can conduct multiple interviews, they are generally expected to submit only one transcript. In such a case a reporter wants to submit two interviews, there should be exactly 3 to 4 pairs of responses for each of the interviews, and the line of questioning or the topic of the interview must remain the same for both the delegates for the interview for the interviews to be related to each other.

Word Limit – 450 to 550 words

Consolidated Report

A piece written in reported speech exclusively, this submission focuses on the observations of the committee and gives a concise overview. Ideally, to be written in paragraphs, this piece provides the reader with an overview regarding the happenings of the committee during the duration of the conference. The information should not be segregated day-wise and shall be viewed as a single flow of deliberations.

Word Limit – 300 to 350 words

Opinion Poll

This particular type of article allows you to express your opinion in any manner you want. The content needs to be restricted to the agenda. The use of graphs, pie charts, or any other statistical analysis is highly encouraged. The reporter should construct a question based on research or observations that can be addressed to the entire committee or a set of delegates. Delegates can choose the most appropriate option according to them, to express their stance. The responses of the delegates are later analysed and conclusions can be drawn based upon the same.

Word Limit – 250 to 350 words

Press Conference

The Press Conference is another opportunity for the reporters to ask the representatives about any of their statements or policies in the committee. Reporters must establish dialogue with the representatives and are required to adhere to diplomatic courtesy. Decorum and composure regardless of the situation must be maintained. Moreover, facts must be derived from credible sources; if challenged, the burden of proof rests on the reporter. Statements made in the interview and the responses recorded in the opinion poll can also be used to construct questions in a press conference.

Submission Deadlines

All reporters are expected to strictly adhere to the deadlines allotted to them. The types of submissions and deadlines for each day will be notified at the beginning of the first session for the day. The reporters are expected to submit the mandated submissions, any brownie (additional) submissions will only be marked or taken into consideration in case of a tie breaker. Further information will be notified during the briefing on day 1.

Rules and Regulations

✓ Reporters are required to adhere to British English.

✓ **Formatting Guidelines:**

- **Title / Headline** - Times New Roman (Font must be catchy and should be able to captivate the attention of the reader)
- Size - 14 points, Bold, Centre alignment
- **By-line** - 13 points, Italics, justified alignment
- By-line is essentially a single sentence or 2 sentences at most that summarize the body of the article. The by-line must include the reporter's name, committee and the summary.
- *For example:* Sai Preethi Polu, reporting from World Health Organization (WHO) interviews the delegate of People's Republic of China regarding the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Body** - 12 points, Alignment – Justified, must be written in paragraphs unless informed otherwise.
- The format of the body in case of a creative piece should be that of the type of the feature.

✓ By - lines are mandatory for all types of submissions.

✓ The subject of the mail and the file name should be in the format:

Name_Type of Submission_Committee_Day

For example: Preethi_Beat_UNHRC_Day1

✓ Abbreviations are to be used only once they have been introduced.

- *For example:* A Life sentence in the United Kingdom (UK) does not necessarily mean a prisoner will spend the rest of their days in prison.

✓ Plagiarism will be dealt with strictly. Cite your sources and references without fail.

✓ Refrain from referring to a delegate by his/her/their name. Address them by the profile/country they are representing.

For example: The Delegate of India highlighted the mass influx of refugees into the country post the Rohingya Crises.

- ✓ Deadlines are of prime importance. In the words of William Shakespeare, ‘Better three hours too soon than a minute too late.’
- ✓ Numbers within hundred must appear in words here as, anything beyond hundred can be expressed in numbers.
- ✓ Stick to the timeline of your committee. If your committee is based on an event in history, adhere to the time period of that event.
- ✓ Avoid using contractions in sentences. For example; use ‘do not’ instead of ‘don’t’, ‘cannot’ instead of ‘can’t’.
- ✓ Sentences must be well punctuated with the inclusion of semi colons, full stops, apostrophes, and hyphens/dashes wherever necessary.
- ✓ Relevant pictures must be attached to each of the assigned articles. The source/credit for the picture must be given to the appropriate source/photojournalist using the textbox feature in word.

For example:

Credits: Reuters

- ✓ Diplomatic courtesy must be maintained while reporting. Ensure that negative language used by any representative is expressed very subtly without offending anybody.
- ✓ In your articles, refrain from mentioning things like, ‘The Board entertained a motion to break for lunch.’ Or in fact anything related to the Executive Board.
- ✓ Refrain using terms such as ‘moderated caucus’, ‘unmoderated caucus’, etcetera. Instead use words such as ‘formal debate’, ‘informal debate’ or simply ‘deliberations’, ‘discussions’.

Marking Scheme

The members of the press corps (reporters) will be marked on the following set of general criteria. However, the individual heads may follow additional parameters, which you may request at the end of the conference.

- a. Grammar and vocabulary
- b. Structuring and formatting (syntax)
- c. Press conference
- d. Content (substance and creativity)
- e. Orderliness (punctuality and sticking to word limits)
- f. Research and diplomacy
- g. Demeanour (being present in committee during all times, dressing as per code, behaviour, etcetera)
- h. Readability and relevance of content submitted
- i. Brownies points

‘Journalism can never be silent: that is its greatest virtue and its greatest fault. It must speak, and speak immediately, while the echoes of wonder, the claims of triumph and the signs of horror are still in the air.’ - Henry Anatole Grunwald

All the Best!