



18TH-20TH JUNE, 2018



Ways to increase the transparency in media coverage dealing with strategic areas, keeping in mind the threats given to several news agency by UN for publishing articles which exposed the negative aspects of the organization's missions, mainly MINUSCA and UNIMAS.

JOURNALISTS

Many MUNers, delegates and press members alike, are often under the impression that journalists do not have to do any research or preparation at all. Let's make it clear that this notion is absolutely false.

It is essential that journalists have an in - depth understanding of not only their allotted committee and its agenda but also the knowledge of the identities and stances of the countries or portfolios that have a key role to play in the conference. While it is perfectly okay to request for clarifications from Executive Board members or IP heads in their free time or from delegates via chit, under no circumstances should you reach your committee on the day of the final conference absolutely clueless.

PRESS CONFERENCE

This is your platform to flaunt your abilities and research on the agenda. The motive of the press conference is to elicit information from diplomats that the press and the public feels has not been explored or expanded upon adequately. It can be used to ensure the committee considers the humanitarian aspect of the topic being discussed, hold delegates accountable for their words and actions, and even demonstrate public opinion through the mouthpiece of the press. Your goal is to ask hard - hitting questions to specific

delegates or the committee in general, leaving anyone free to answer; questions that stump even the brightest of them.

You may quote a specific delegate, ask them or the committee to clear their stance, and inquire about solution. A prerequisite for the same is, of course, extensive research about the topic or sub - topic, and presence of mind.

The key to a great press conference is, undoubtedly, confidence, but ensure that you are in no way rude to the delegates and especially not to the Executive Board members.

ACCURACY

This section aims to describe the acceptable practices of journalism used in SSMUN.

Accuracy is at the heart of what we do, and takes precedence over speed.

•Sourcing

Accuracy entails honesty in sourcing. Journalists are expected to use sources unaltered and avoid naming sources in the plural when only one is available. Named sources are always better than unnamed ones, and anonymous sources are the weakest. Cross-check and corroborate information wherever possible, and be honest while citing them.

• Quotes

Quotes are sacred, and must never be altered except to delete a redundant word or phrase and that too only if the change doesn't alter the sense of the quote in any way.

A quote should be representative of the speaker and elements such as sarcasm or revealing body language (such as a wink to hint that it wasn't meant seriously) must always be reported as well. Quotes should be accompanied with the relevant context and circumstances. If there is any doubt whether the quote can be run verbatim, the editor-in-chief must be consulted. Also, mention who you are quoting and make sure the spelling is correct.

• Reflecting Reality

Often, it can be tempting for journalists to hype or sensationalise stories, skewing the reality of the situation and misleading the reader into assumptions that are wrong or potentially harmful. For instance, a "flood" of immigrants may be a small group of people in reality, or a "surge" in inflation may, in fact, be a modest rise. Stopping to consider the words being used leads to more precise and accurate reporting.

• "Take no side, tell all sides"

At SSMUN, stories should reflect all sides of a conflict or dispute and a single stance must not be taken (exception-

Op-Eds). This objectivity doesn't always come down to giving equal space to all sides. For instance the perpetrator of an atrocity warrants less space than the victims. However, we must strive to be scrupulously fair and balanced. Allegations shouldn't be portrayed as fact, nor charges as a sign of guilt. Words must also be carefully considered- words like "rebut", "refute" or "failed to comment" hint at an editorial judgement and should best be avoided.

•Opinion and Analysis

We maintain a clear distinction between our factual news and our opinion pieces.

Factual news reports or articles cannot show any bias or favour a particular side of a dispute. They may showcase the opinion of others through quotes or paraphrasing, however they cannot reflect the opinion of the journalist, or of the Fourth Estate.

This also holds true for analysis or feature articles, which offer in-depth explanations on particular issues without being biased or compromising the standards of fairness.

Opinion articles, on the other hand, provide an insight into the journalist's stance on the matter. These will naturally be biased, however, they are vital for greater understanding of a single perspective on a certain issue.

• Discriminatory Language and Stereotypes

We must avoid inappropriate references to gender, culture, religion, ethnicity, appearance, age, or sexual orientation. Journalists should be sensitive to unconscious stereotyping and dated assumptions and their language should be neutral and natural.

Moreover, journalists shouldn't believe that their particular cultural values, religious beliefs, or social practices are the norm. Remove yourself from your mind and write as a third-person i.e. someone from the outside, where the reader probably will be too.

TYPES OF ARTICLES

As you may already be aware, this year, we'll be exploring the different types of articles that you will be required. As this is a new concept to most, feel free to contact us anytime for any queries regarding the same.

We need you to follow the requirements below:

1. **EB Member Profile: 300 - 350 words**

For this year's MUN, we guarantee that this will be the most fun article you will write, in spite of its slightly challenging nature.

An EB member profile is a fun - filled, mostly humorous, and light - hearted article, whose purpose is to essentially be an entertaining read.

It can include, but is not limited to, the individual's funny habits, how they handle committee, their general disposition/demeanor, his thoughts about himself.

Keys to a good EB profile:

- **Research:** Carry out informed interviews with your assigned EB members, their friends on and off the Executive Board, their delegates and even their committee's logistics members.

Ask interesting and funny questions to elicit the best possible answers, but be mindful of the fact that these Q&As will have to be turned into comprehensive articles. That is to say, they should not seem like a copy - pasted interview,

- **Observe:** Sure, interviews get you a ton of interesting facts about the EB member, but it is your keen observational skills that really bring the article alive. You will have a lot of opportunities to watch your EB members in action, so use them wisely.

- **Flow:** You've collected lots of information, full of little juicy tid-bits that you REALLY want to include. Excitements aside, ensure that you do not place obscure, awkward information in random, broken paragraphs. Instead, try to weave all your information together, making sure the transition is not abrupt, and leave out unnecessary details that don't seem to

work. Keep it quirky, if you'd like, but maintain a smooth flow.

- **Subtlety:** Yes, you do get that precious opportunity to point out an EB member's funny attributes, but ensure that you are not offensive, insulting, or blunt. You are free to use satire, sarcasm and humour, but don't make the article just a list of insults. While you are not under any obligation to write what someone tells you to say about him, be mindful of presenting your information in a refined, thoughtful manner.
- Lastly, as the format of this article is moderately flexible, (the only restriction being that it cannot be in a question-answer format), feel free to experiment and make it as interesting as possible.

2. Beat - based Articles: 300 - 450 words

The purpose of a beat - based article is to inform someone who was not present in the committee about the committee proceedings. That being said, it can be subtly and slightly opinionated, but preferably keep it as neutral as possible.

Ideally, a beat based article is centered around a 'beat' or turning - point of the committee, consisting of what led up to the beat, what it was, how it changed committee, as well as its implications. This requires careful observation and attention.

You may choose to focus on one particular sub - topic in the discussion, but giving a comprehensive overview of the proceedings is highly recommended. However, the core idea

of the article must be conveyed to reader clearly and concisely.

Examples of Beat-Based Articles:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/11/01/AR2005110101644.html>

<http://www.sfgate.com/green/article/100-years-100-million-acres-of-land-saved-2469558.php>

3. Opinion – Editorials (Op-Ed): 400 - 500 words

It's natural to form opinions, on the agenda and the committee, and this is your chance as independent journalists to express it.

Opinion - editorials are simply put opinionated articles that propose an idea, or more accurately, a hypothesis about the agenda, and strive to prove it.

The first step to writing an Op-Ed is research. This does not include just verifying facts but also examining and analysing different perspectives on the issue. Thoroughly read the background guide, ask questions, research on your own, and, most importantly, listen and take notes in committee. The most important aspect of an Op-Ed is analysis. Examine an argument against different perspectives, and try to consider as many perspectives as possible so as to generate the most holistic analysis.

Be precise and not vague. Since an Op-Ed is not just factual, you can't beat around the bush easily and so it is imperative

that you have a thorough understanding of the agenda, your argument and its implications, so as to tackle any loopholes successfully.

Lastly, for the structure, begin by stating the agenda and your opinion, analyse it, and present your arguments. A comprehensive Op-Ed addresses any counter arguments that may occur, completely convincing the reader of the truth and validity of your stance, so try to incorporate facts, information and ideas related to the same. Op–Eds are not just affirmations that the problem exists, and a reiteration of its gravity, but they also provide viable solutions to whatever the conundrum may be. Additionally, you can also add some lines analysing the committee’s proceedings and the proficiency of the committee in addressing the agenda. Sum up by reiterating your stance with the problem at hand, really driving the point home.

Examples of Op-Eds:

<http://edition.cnn.com/2013/10/22/opinion/riffle-marijuana-safety/>

<https://livableworld.org/reuters-op-ed-on-iran-by-jim-walsh/>

<https://www.nytimes.com/pages/opinion/index.html>

4. Interview: ideally one page long

While writing an interview, you are empowered with a considerable amount of freedom concerning the style. You may choose to interview a delegate or an Executive Board

member to get more information about him/her as a person or MUNer, or to inquire about their portfolio and seek clarifications on the same. Additionally, you may choose whether to make the interview humorous or formal, or even a mix of both, but ensure that you don't ask redundant and random questions, while capturing the reader's interest. A title and a by - line are required, and a little introduction to the person/scenario is preferred.

Keys to a good interview:

- **Research**: This is an obvious one. Be present in committee, decide your interviewee beforehand, and pay extra attention to him/her. Formulate pertinent questions and try to anticipate the kind of answers you will get.
- **Establish a rapport**: Request politely, introduce yourself, and try to put your source at ease by not ranting off your list of questions right away.
- **Keep it natural**: An interview is not a press conference so the idea is not to ask hard - hitting questions; don't make the source uneasy. Try to maintain eye contact, and, if needed, try to record their answers. (Inform the interviewee before doing so)
- **Pay attention to the answers**: Don't be afraid to question them on the basis of their answers and deviate from your prepared list.

- **Wrapping up**: At the end of the interview, ask your source if there is anything else they'd like to add and double - check the meanings of any terms or any spellings you are unsure of. Don't forget to thank them.

5. Feature Article: 200-350 words Message

A feature is a piece that lets the creative juices flow. It's open and explorative- any style, be it poetry, prose or free verse can be used. But, with such freedom, one must be careful. The piece must align with the assigned committee. The writing can be relatively casual but as a journalist of the Fourth Estate, words should be chosen wisely. Usually, these pieces tend to be thought-provoking and question certain perspectives on events, decisions or actions. Use observations made during conferences, interviews taken, witty conversations or funny instances into creating a feature one can't resist reading till the very end.

The Ask: Feature articles are not very factual in nature and hence, they have a tendency to become vague at times. You must focus on sticking to the agenda. The reader must understand what the message being put forth. Hence, the theme and genre of this piece should be decided keeping the MUN in mind, if not the assigned committee or agenda.

Background information: A feature usually doesn't require an extensive or detailed background. However, when an instance or minor event is referred to or a delegate is quoted then the context is imperative. An observation needs a

context because not all readers are present during the conference.

Analysis: This section is fluid and varies from piece to piece. The focus should be on accuracy and precision of writing.

Persuasive: The words must sell the piece to the reader. Keep your diction in line with the emotion you want to evoke in the reader's mind. If the piece is talking about a humorous instance, the vocabulary should resonate with humour. Use sarcasm, satire, metaphors, poetry and so on, to put your message forth.

Tone: The register must be formal and dignified. If you are writing about something you don't personally agree with, be constructive but not offensive. As in other forms, no slang or profane words should be used.

Examples of Feature Articles:

<http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/featurehub>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/05/magazine/all-the-presidents-lawyers.html>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/05/magazine/hated-by-the-right-mocked-by-the-left-who-wants-to-be-liberal-anymore.html>

6. Report: 100-250 words

Reports are completely factual in nature. The piece simply recounts the events of the conference. The reader must get a view of the proceedings and understand what has been accomplished by the delegates. Such pieces require attention to be completely focused on the conference proceedings. These pieces have to be informative, the reader must be kept up-to-date with the conference. This does not mean that each and every detail has to be reported verbatim or that a simple summary has to be narrated. Approach the Executive Board, the Organising Committee or delegates for information.

Example of Report:

http://www.bbc.com/news/special_reports

GRAMMAR

- The newsletter follows Oxford English and so should your writing.
- Re-read each line. Each word must have a purpose. Edit and re-edit.
- Capitalise the beginning of sentences, names, places and so on.
- Mention the full form of the abbreviation followed by the abbreviation in brackets.

For example - Republic of Korea (RoK); The MUN and its committees are accepted abbreviations hence don't require this rule.

- Pay attention to punctuation. The Oxford comma is to be followed.
- Use different paragraphs for marking a change in thought, context or event.
- Focus on syntax and avoid long sentences. Try using and/or only once in a sentence.

It makes the text easily comprehensible to the reader.

- All articles must be accompanied by a title, the name of the journalist, and the date

GENERAL INFORMATION

Rules that apply to all articles:*(exceptions have been mentioned)*

1. Title: Every article must have a title. The title decides whether your piece will be read, so spend some time to make this an eye-catching/interesting/humorous/dramatic/attractive/controversial/intriguing as possible.

2. Bylines: An integral, yet often overlooked part of your article is the by - line. It is simply a line inserted right after the title, indicating who has written the article and what the article wishes to convey. This device can even be used to add a touch of humour to your more serious articles.

3. British spellings: Quite self-explanatory, yet again, often overlooked. E.g. The delegate did not realise the implications of his suggestion.

4. Originality: We simply cannot emphasise the importance of this point enough. While you are allowed to research and take inspiration from various sources (songs, nooks, etc.), ONLY original pieces will be accepted. Plagiarism can result in debarment from awards.

5. Accuracy: accuracy of facts, stats and quotes is of immense importance.. Like in some committees, if you are not permitted to access the Internet, do seek out one of the heads for any clarification you may require. Ensure that you do not misquote anybody and employ chits for the same.

6. Filter: Most writers absolutely detest that dreaded word limit; all of us just have so much to say. While we understand that, we too, are under certain restraints and it is imperative that we keep the reader and his/her attention span in mind. Expression is important, but so is concision and crispness. Don't spew all the information you have onto your laptops; instead, take some time to select the key points from all the details you have jotted down and weave it into a cohesive piece.

7. Flow: Often, while trying to keep the point above in mind, we tend to put in disjointed ideas together with foggy connections. Read and re-read to ensure you have expressed your thoughts in a cohesive manner that is not awkward and broken by any means.

8. Spell check: Those squiggly lines aren't just for decoration. Use them to your advantage!

9. Third person: Please do not use 'I', 'my' and such words to refer to yourself, in beat - based articles specifically. You are allowed to use 'the International Press' and 'the reporter'.
Exception: Op-Eds

10. Less is more: 'If you can't convince them, confuse them.' This saying may be one most delegates use when they are out of ideas, but it is definitely not one we can use.

While we love complicated, mellifluous, and straight - up fancy words, do think of the poor reader while writing your articles. Be creative, by all means, and don't compromise on expressing your gift of the gab, but avoid overindulging in unnecessarily extravagant and profligate vocabulary to make your treatise surfeit with extraneous utterances.

11. Grammar: refer to the grammar section above

12. Punctuality: We know, at this point, being punctual and it sounds like too much to ask, but this is the very role of a press member! While we just might understand a 5-minute delay, due to annoying pen drives and what not, punctuality is absolutely essential. Just one delayed article can leave us with no newsletter at all. All heads are no strangers to panicking over submissions, but it does get easier, and the satisfaction of submitting something right on time is irreplaceable. Think of yourself as a juggler, and if you can't juggle, well, learn!

13. Read, re-read, and then re-read again: A helpful tip that was given to me: I know that one gets tired after finishing the article and just want to be done with it and submit, but it really helps to just shut your laptop (after saving it, of course), give yourself a break for 5 minutes, and then re-read it like you are someone who has never seen it before. Works every time.

Marking Scheme

Each submission will be marked out of 35, with each criterion below being marked out of 5:

1. Content /Essence
2. Creativity
3. Vocabulary/Use of language
4. Flow of language/Paragraph structure
5. Mood and tone
6. Grammar/Punctuations
7. Punctuality and Instructions adhered (includes adherence to deadlines and word limits, paying attention to the requirements of the types of articles)

Sample Articles

Keep in mind that some of these articles were written in view of requirements that slightly differ from those above, but you are expected to adhere to the rules that have been mentioned.

Sample articles:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1wb7Ue3jjWYjyP1KORMvEWBUsg3yII1o1MhGEH-ByRFY/edit?usp=sharing>

Font: Times New Roman

Font Size: 12

PHOTOGRAPHERS

NOTE: Photographers are expected to coordinate with the Journalists if specific pictures are needed for an article.

TIPS

While clicking pictures, here are a few pointers you must keep in mind-

1) Understand your camera as much as you can!

Know your camera's ISO limits; know when it starts to get grainy, and set a mental note for that. This way, you can increase your ISO to the highest value, while maintaining quality.

2) Framing and composition:

The eye is always drawn to the brightest part of the frame first. Having bright lights or colors at the end of the photograph is discouraged. This is why photographers are encouraged to correctly expose for the subject of their photographs, rather than other elements.

Try finding patterns and shapes within your frame to make it more interesting without compromising on the subject. Shapes such as lines can become an interesting part of your photograph.

Keep your backgrounds as clean as possible so that the viewer does not get distracted from the subject(s). Avoid unnecessary clutter/ colours in the background.

3) When you have the advantage of daylight, make the most of it!

This means shooting wherever daylight is available- from windows to doorways. Not only does daylight look natural, it is significantly brighter than even the brightest flashes.

4) Avoid overhead lighting: Overhead lighting casts these unflattering shadows that exaggerate wrinkles and eye bags.

5) Get out of automatic mode to take control of the all-important shutter speed:

When shooting indoors, it is recommended to shoot on shutter priority mode (Tv for Canon, S for Nikon) with a shutter speed no slower than 1/60 to 1/200. Anything higher than 1/200 may gain interference from any artificial lighting source you may have.

1/60 to 1/200 is a nice range, because it affords you enough speed to capture a sharp image without motion blur, and it avoids capturing that nasty light frequency interference.

Shooting on aperture priority or manual mode indoors is incredibly helpful as well because you can then control the

depth of field. Indoor photos usually have very busy backgrounds, so reducing your depth of field can produce a much more pleasing photo.

6) Be patient:

Few people these days associated with the tag of photographer possess patience. It is the single most necessary trait of a good photographer. The advent of digital technology and the ability to take thousands of photographs on a SD Card rather than wait for the single most powerful photo because you only have 36 exposures on a reel, has diluted the quality and skill of many young photographers today.

Only with patience can a photographer study their subject, the light in a scene, capture the peak of an emotion/action and compose an interesting photograph.

Submissions

- All photographers will shoot in RAW+JPEG format.
- The entire shoot must be submitted to the IP head. For this, all photographers must report to the IP Room at a specified time on the days of the conference. Here, the Photographers will first select 50 of their best photographs based upon guidelines given in the Guide and copy these images (RAW Images) into a folder called First Select. Then from these 50 images, they will select 20 best photographs and copy them to a folder within the First Select folder, called Second Select.

Photographers will submit the post-processed versions (High Resolution JPEGs) of all photographs in the folder called 'Second Select'.

- The IP head will supervise the process and support the photographers wherever necessary, whether it is in selection of photographs or in post-processing. It is his job to ensure that all photographs are submitted according to the deadlines given, and that all memory cards are empty before the photographers leave the Conference on each day.
- 20 photographs must be showing all members of a council/committee, with different perspectives.
- At least five of them should be at the time of a moderated caucus or a procedural vote when placards are raised.

Marking Scheme

1. Technical excellence (blur, lighting, contrast, angle, colour balance, exposure, sharpness, colour and tonal rendition)
2. Originality (post-production is generally frowned upon, no edits, no watermarks) the idea of taking pictures in a creative manner
3. Clear and impactful focus on the subject
4. Composition of the photo, I.e., what is being covered and the colour balance is maintained or manipulated to give a better picture

5. Visual and aesthetic criteria (framing of the picture, elements and the principle, visual impact and background)
6. Content (emotion, information, ideology, feeling, mood, communication meaning and subject impact)
7. Style
8. Validity
9. Photographic vision
10. Interest
11. Activity during the conference (how much does the photographer move, does the photographer create any kind of disturbance during the committee sessions, whether every part of the conference is covered or not)

I hope this guide has been informative and helpful. However, you can approach me whenever you wish to.

Lastly, enjoy this conference and learn as much as you can!

Regards,

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IP Head, SSMUN 2018