

Background Guide

International Press



Letter from the Executive Board

“It’s a journalist’s job to be a witness to history. We’re not there to worry about ourselves. We’re there to try and get as near as we can, in an imperfect world, to the truth and get the truth out.”

- Robert Fisk

We welcome you, the members of the International Press (IP), with warm greetings, ready for an exhilarating conference. We are glad that your love for writing has brought you to this platform, to perform one of the most imperative tasks one can with words- journalism.

Journalism is how every individual gets to know and experience the political world around them. And as journalists ourselves, it is our duty to do justice to this noble cause. We must ensure that we report with utmost honesty, diplomacy, and integrity, upholding our conduct and courtesy.

We must present narratives that are captivating and moving, yet fully based in truth. We must be creative with our presentation while keeping in mind the sanctity and integrity of all the institutions involved. We must adhere to the strictest professional standards. Nothing less will be tolerated.

We must work together as a team, helping each other, with goodwill for all those around us, including those not part of the team. We must not let our competitiveness get in the way of supporting everyone to perform their best and enjoy a fruitful conference.

We hope that we can provide you with a challenging and rewarding conference where every individual can take something away. We hope that you ensure a good spirit in facilitating the same. For this, we expect you to come thoroughly researched and ready to write. We advise you to go through this style guide and the background guide of your respective committee. Your talents, skills, timeliness, multitasking, character and everything in between will be tested.

We look forward to working with you and making this journey meaningful for all of us.

Wishing you the best,

Arianna Majumder,

Head of the International Press,

arianna.majumder3@gmail.com

Anirudh Thota,

Editor-in-Chief,

janirudht@gmail.com

An introduction to the International Press

The International Press(IP) is an integral part of any Model United Nations(MUN) conference.

Although it is not part of the actual United Nations, its importance to any MUN cannot be denied. The IP is made up of individual reporters who are trying their best to produce the most

transparent and informative articles to inform the world of political happenings.

As such, they make note of all the happenings of the committees and write captivating yet grounded articles, conduct press conferences, and work together in other ways to ensure the dissemination of information. They opine on imperative matters and open up new perspectives to

readers.

Unity Among the International Press

The members of the International Press must work together to ensure a fruitful conference and a constant flow of resourceful articles. Reporters must cover for each other in terms of taking notes and keeping up with the happenings of committee sessions. Photojournalists and reporters must work together to supply an apt photo to every article submitted. Any discrepancies between

members of the team must immediately be brought to the notice of the Executive Board.

Types of Submissions

There are several articles through which journalists present events and convey their opinions about them. Listed below are a few of the common types of articles. Articles must be well-researched with credible sources and proper formats, as detailed in later parts of this style guide. Professional and personal courtesy must be upheld in all submissions.

Beat

A beat-based article covers the intricacies of a particular incident or exchange observed in the committee. For example, a problem discussed by a delegate and a solution supplied by another can be the central topic, known as the beat, presented through every line of the beat. Beat-based articles are a testament to the reporter's observational skills and must be detailed yet concise. No opinion must be present within the beat. The reporter may, however, use facts and figures to elucidate the points discussed.

Word Limit: 300 to 400 words

Opinionated Editorial

An opinionated editorial, unlike a beat, is the reporter's opportunity to detail their opinions on a specific topic regarding the agenda. Every opinion or theory presented, however, must be strongly backed by research and facts. They can be very creative and written in a narrative style, making them very impactful on the reader. Baseless theories and propaganda are not journalistic and do not come under this type of article.

Word Limit: 500 to 600 words

Creative Piece / Feature

A creative piece is an article where there are almost no rules for the reporter to follow. The reporter can showcase their creativity, presenting facets of their committee's agenda in a novel and creative way. It can be presented as a poem, diary entry, letter, character sketch, short story, or any other novel format. The committee's agenda must be adhered to as the central topic of the piece. The format of the chosen type of presentation must also be adhered to. A title and byline are also necessary. These articles must remain journalistic in their nature, no matter how creative they are.

Word Limit: 150 to 800 words (depending upon the type of submission)

Interview Transcript

An interview gives a reporter the opportunity to extract information from delegates that might not have otherwise been discussed in the committee. They can also be used to obtain further details or clarity on the points discussed in the committee. For the purposes of this article, the questions must be well researched, concise, and aligned with a certain line of inquiry. The questions should be able to flow from one to the next, giving a theme to the interview. Any form of commentary or analysis from the reporter is not required for this article. The reporter may record the audio of the interview and make a transcript from it later. The article must be presented as a conversation. For example:

International Press(IP): a question

The Delegate of the Republic of India(India): the response to the question asked

IP: a follow-up question

India: the response to the follow-up question

The reporter is expected to submit an interview with five to seven question-response pairs from an interview with a single delegate. In the unusual case that the reporter wants to submit interviews with two different delegates, there must be three to four question-response pairs for each delegate. The two interviews must also be related to each other and must be similar in their lines of questioning so that the article as a whole can adhere to a certain theme. Word Limit: 450 to 600 words

Opinion Poll:

A poll must be taken in the committee or restricted to a certain set of delegates, posing a well-thought-out question, where delegates can choose the option they deem most adequate. The answers to this poll can be presented in the form of pie charts, bar graphs, etc. These results must then be opined on, and any amount of analysis can be given. The premise of the question must be clear and presented in the article. The sample space of the poll must also be detailed.

Word Limit: 250 to 350 words

Consolidated Report:

This article is a concise overview of all the happenings of the committee. It must be presented only in the third person and in reported speech. It must provide the reader with a brief synopsis of the committee. The information must not be segregated day-wise and must be shown as a single flow of deliberations.

Word Limit: 300 to 400 words

Format

Title / Headline - Times New Roman (The title must be catchy and hooking.)

Size - 14 points; bold; centre-aligned

Byline - 13 points; Italics; justified alignment

The byline is essentially a single sentence or 2 sentences at most that summarise the body of the article. The by-line must include the reporter's name, committee and the summary. For example,

Anirudh Thota, reporting from the World Health Organisation (WHO), opines on the current status of COVID-19 vaccine aid.

Body - 12 points; justified alignment; must be written in paragraphs, unless informed otherwise

Press Conference

A press conference is another opportunity for reporters to interact with and extract information from delegates. These questions must be well-researched, and meticulous follow-ups must be crafted for them. Decorum and political courtesy must be maintained throughout the press conference (and the committee sessions as a whole). Research must be thorough and from the right sources. If any fact or figure presented by a reporter is questioned by a delegate, it is the reporter's responsibility to clarify with a credible source.

Research

Every reporter must be knowledgeable about the agenda at hand. Any fallacy in research can lead to inconsistent or erroneous articles. Adequate facts and figures supplied to your claims make them stand out and have more impact. Every reporter needs to go through the background guides of their respective committees. It is also helpful to keep oneself aware of current debates about the agenda. No claim can be made by a member of the International Press without being backed by proper evidence and research. This research must come from credible and valid sources. Given below is a list of sources with reference to their credibility.

1. Primary Sources - Most Credible

- **The United Nations:** Any information released by the United Nations and any of its offices, like the OHCHR, UNESCO, etc, is credible.
- **Multilateral Organisations:** Any information released by multilateral organisations such as BRICS, OIC, ASEAN, etc, is credible.
- **Government Reports:** Any information released by the government of any country or any offices that work under it can be cited credibly.

2. Secondary Sources - Moderately Credible

- **Reputed News Agencies:** Information from reputed news agencies such as Reuters can be cited with moderate credibility. Snippets from interviews with these agencies can also be cited. Refrain from using information from tabloids.
- **State-operated News Agencies:** These news agencies (for example, Al Jazeera of Qatar) can be used mainly to support or deny claims made by a particular country. Based on their credibility and substance, they can be used for claims made by any country, although they can be denied by members of the committee.

3. Tertiary Sources - Rarely Credible

- **Wikipedia:** Articles on Wikipedia can be edited by multiple people and are, hence, not credible. A reporter may make use of any reputable sources linked in the bibliography of an article on the site.
- **Social Media:** Crowd-sourced information from social media is rarely reliable, as it can be mischaracterised and twisted to fit a narrative. Statements made by political leaders or members of the committee themselves, however, can be used in select conditions where they are apt.

It is recommended to cite the sources used in your article as footnotes¹ Rigorous methods of citation, as seen in research papers, are not required. In case of any doubt or issue, please reach out to your Executive Board.

Rules and Regulations

- The subject of the mail and the file name should be in the format:
“Name_Type of Submission_Committee_Day”.
- Abbreviations can only be used once they have been introduced
- Please refrain from plagiarism.
- Refrain from referring to a delegate by name or personal pronouns. Address them by their portfolio.
- Numbers within a hundred must appear as words. Numbers greater than that can be expressed in digits.
- Avoid the usage of contractions. For example, use “do not” instead of “don’t”
- The correct usage of grammar is of the utmost importance. Punctuation must be used adequately. The type of speech and subject-verb agreement must be kept in mind. Revise your articles meticulously to ensure correct grammar and good lexis.
- Keep the time period or freeze date of your committee in mind.
- Refrain from referring to, or even mentioning, the executive board in your articles.
- Relevant pictures must be attached to your articles, with the photographer or source being credited.
- Uphold professional and personal courtesy at all times.

Rubrics for Marking

1. Grammar and Lexis
2. Content
3. Relevance
4. Orderliness (sticking to deadlines and word limits)
5. Research

6. Diplomacy
7. Conduct (as an attendee of the MUN)
8. Any Brownie Points Decided by the EB

The usage of AI in any one article on a particular day will lead to the disqualification of all articles of the reporter for that day.

