

Ensuring the Freedom and Independence of Press and Digital Media

Committee Guide

Special Conference





Table of contents

Committee Guide	1
1. Your Chairs	3
2. You	4
3. The Special Conference	4
4. Definitions of Key Terms and Names	4
4.1 Reporters without Borders	4
4.2 Media Outlets	4
5. World Press Freedom Index	5
6. Important Dates	6
7. Press	6
7.1 Definition	6
7.2 Current State	7
7.3 Threats to Freedom of Press	7
8. Digital Media	8
8.1 Particularities of Digital Media	8
8.2. Recent Development	8
9. How to Use this Guide	9
10. Sources and Further Reading	10

1. Your Chairs

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the Committee Guide of the Special Conference!

What we want to say first:

Preparation is the key to any conference and therefore we are proud to present you this Committee Guide which is supposed to provide you with the most important information. Whenever you are in trouble, please let us know! In the (highly unlikely) event that both of us cannot help you (nearly 0% chance), we can at least connect you with another highly professional Inner Circle (IC) member. Do not wait until it is too late and do not be shy, there will not be punishment for the worst question.

Please send your mails to spc@olmun.org.

Lukas Winkler

My name is Lukas Winkler and after finishing School in June 2018, I travelled for five months through Australia, willing to improve my English but finding it more headless then before. I have never been a chair before, but with Paul as my Co-Chair we will be able to handle it properly, I promise. I took part in several MUN conferences, for example at the MUN of Malmö and of course OLMUN the year before.

My personal interests are in politics but mainly in science, probably as a result of that I am quite rational and realistic, which sometimes isn't helpful, but helped me to find out that I want to start study economic engineering in October. Beside that I like to go in the nature for a run or on the pushbike but I also like to meet friends in a bar to play an old traditional card game called SKAT.

Paul Pagnia

My name is Paul Pagnia, I am 19 years old and very happy to be your chair in this year's SpC. After finishing school last year, I went abroad to Peru in order to gain working experience and.

I first took part in any kind of MUN in 2015. I right away fell in love with the discussions, all the important topics and especially the possibility to meet so many new and nice people from all over the world. As my first MUN had such a mesmerizing impact on me I wanted to do more. The following year I did an exchange year in New Zealand. After improving my English and having hard time to lose my slang I decided that I want to chair a committee. 2017 I then was allowed to chair the Committee on the Status of Women with last year's President Nika Andouz and 2018 I chaired the United Nations Industrial Development Organization together with Justus Neudendorff. At the beginning of this year I also took part in the Harvard National Model United National South America.

I am very much looking forward to meeting all of you.



2. You

As we said above, we want you to feel comfortable during the week and with everything related to the OLMUN. To keep that up we all need to follow rules. We have some formal debating agreements you all should know, but additionally we already want to start remembering you at this stage of our collaboration that we highly recommend you to be attentive about the deadlines. Otherwise you might collect the first punishments before the week even started.

Talking about all the things we do not want you to do, the most important thing you should do is to be brave. We would like to see that every one of you is not only physically present but is also taking actively part with at least short questions and some small speeches. Most of **us** are not professionals, so we do not expect you to come up with a speech such as “I have a dream” or similar. But please say something.

We are excited to meet all of you in June.

3. The Special Conference

Each primary organ of the United Nations (the General Assembly, the UN Secretariat, the International Court of Justice, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council) can establish special agencies that are entrusted with a specific topic as laid down in the UN Charter. In the OLMUN context, one of these agencies will be simulated in the Special Conference.

What makes this conference so special is that it is not bound to a certain field of action. Every year a different agency is chosen that deals with a recent problem of high urgency. Therefore, it provides the possibility of debating a wide variety of issues of international importance with an ever-changing selection of UN member states depending on who is affected by the chosen topic.

4. Definitions of Key Terms and Names

4.1 Reporters without Borders

An organization trying to protect and defend the freedom of being informed and inform others all over the world

4.2 Media Outlets

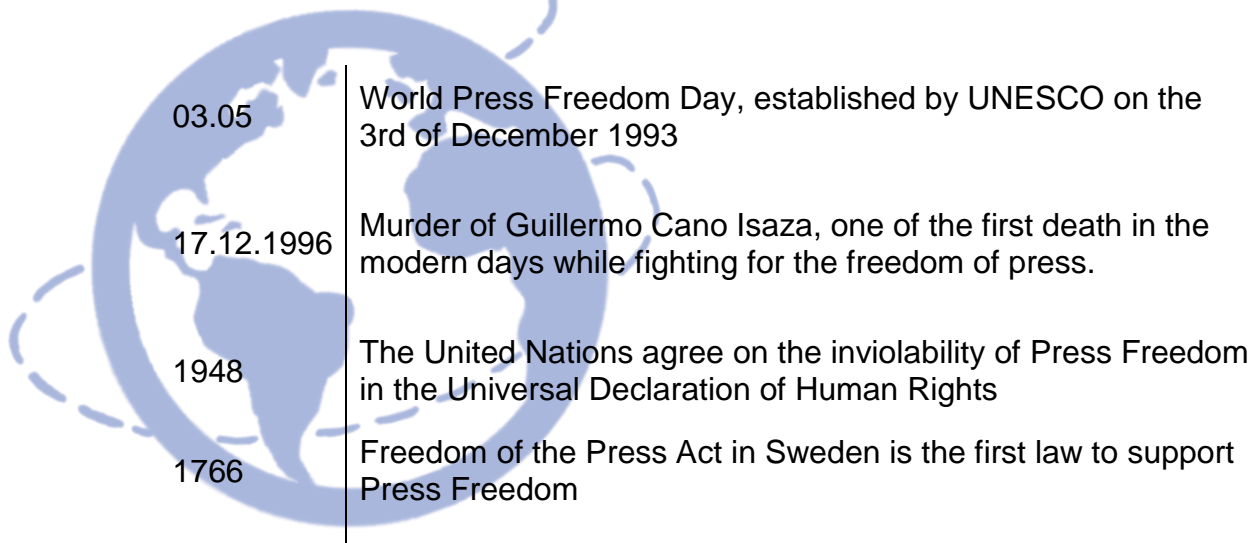
Services that provide the public with news and information through print, broadcast or online publications

5. World Press Freedom Index

2018 World Press Freedom Index from Reporters without Borders:

1.	Norway	61.	Georgia	121.	Angola
2.	Sweden	62.	Bosnia	122.	Gambia
3.	Netherlands	63.	Niger	123.	Chad
4.	Finland	64.	Malawi	124.	Indonesia
5.	Switzerland	65.	Malta	125.	Qatar
6.	Jamaica	66.	El Salvador	126.	Zimbabwe
7.	Belgium	67.	Japan	127.	Oman
8.	New Zealand	68.	Lesotho	128.	United Arab Emirates
9.	Denmark	69.	Croatia	129.	Cameroon
10.	Costa Rica	70.	Hong Kong	130.	Colombia
11.	Austria	71.	Mongolia	131.	Sri Lanka
12.	Estonia	72.	Mauritania	132.	Jordan
13.	Iceland	73.	Hungary	133.	Philippines
14.	Portugal	74.	Greece	134.	Palestine
15.	Germany	75.	Albania	135.	Morocco
16.	Ireland	76.	Serbia	136.	Algeria
17.	Luxembourg	77.	Northern Cyprus	137.	Myanmar
18.	Canada	78.	Kosovo	138.	India
19.	Australia	79.	Sierra Leone	139.	Pakistan
20.	Uruguay	80.	Armenia	140.	Thailand
21.	Suriname	81.	Moldova	141.	Honduras
22.	American Samoa	82.	Ivory Coast	142.	Cambodia
23.	Ghana	83.	Guinea-Bissau	143.	Venezuela
24.	Latvia	84.	Benin	144.	South Sudan
25.	Cyprus	85.	Seychelles	145.	Malaysia
26.	Namibia	86.	Togo	146.	Bangladesh
27.	Slovakia	87.	Israel	147.	Mexico
28.	South Africa	88.	Peru	148.	Russia
29.	Cape Verde	89.	Liberia	149.	Tajikistan
30.	Liechtenstein	90.	Nicaragua	150.	Ethiopia
31.	Spain	91.	Panama	151.	Singapore
32.	Slovenia	92.	Ecuador	152.	Eswatini
33.	France	93.	Tanzania	153.	Brunei
34.	Czech Republic	94.	Bhutan	154.	DR Congo
35.	Org. of E. Caribbean States	95.	Timor-Leste	155.	Belarus
36.	Lithuania	96.	Kenya	156.	Rwanda
37.	Andorra	97.	Tunisia	157.	Turkey
38.	Chile	98.	Kyrgyzstan	158.	Kazakhstan
39.	Trinidad and Tobago	99.	Mozambique	159.	Burundi
40.	United Kingdom	100.	Lebanon	160.	Iraq
41.	Burkina Faso	101.	Ukraine	161.	Egypt
42.	Taiwan	102.	Brazil	162.	Libya
43.	South Korea	103.	Montenegro	163.	Azerbaijan
44.	Romania	104.	Guinea	164.	Iran
45.	United States	105.	Kuwait	165.	Uzbekistan
46.	Italy	106.	Nepal	166.	Bahrain
47.	Belize	107.	Paraguay	167.	Yemen
48.	Botswana	108.	Gabon	168.	Somalia
49.	Comoros	109.	Macedonia	169.	Saudi Arabia
50.	Senegal	110.	Bolivia	170.	Laos
51.	Tonga	111.	Bulgaria	171.	Equatorial Guinea
52.	Argentina	112.	Central African Republic	172.	Cuba
53.	Papua New Guinea	113.	Zambia	173.	Djibouti
54.	Madagascar	114.	Congo	174.	Sudan
55.	Guyana	115.	Mali	175.	Vietnam
56.	Mauritius	116.	Guatemala	176.	China
57.	Fiji	117.	Uganda	177.	Syria
58.	Poland	118.	Afghanistan	178.	Turkmenistan
59.	Dominican Republic	119.	Nigeria	179.	Eritrea
60.	Haiti	120.	Maldives	180.	North Korea

6. Important Dates



7. Press

7.1 Definition

Freedom of Press is a fundamental human right, established through the rights to Freedom of Opinion and to share opinions and information (Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UDHR). Particularly, it is the freedom of media outlets to provide news and information in the form of print, broadcast, and digital media, and the freedom of individuals to access them.

Freedom of Press is compiled by several factors: First of all, **PLURALISM** ensures that the media reports on a variety of topics, showcases a variety of opinions and represents the interest of various groups as diverse as the society. Secondly, editorial **INDEPENDENCE** prevents governments from influencing the media coverage and enables criticism. However, financial dependence, particularly state funding for public broadcasting, does not necessarily diminish press freedom if the funds are distributed fairly and regardless of the content of the media. Although all nations agreed on the value of Freedom of Press by signing the UDHR, **LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK** in the form of national laws or constitutions is needed to give media outlets a binding assurance of their freedom. Unfortunately, such laws are oftentimes not applied or ignored. On the other hand, some nations even have laws that restrict media directly or laws that are abused to suppress media actors. This facilitates abuses and violence against journalists although their **SAFETY** is crucial to avoid self-censorship and to guarantee their free operation. Apart from that, the quality of the **INFRASTRUCTURE** (which is dependent on factors such as the financial and political status of a state) also affects the production of news and information. Finally, **TRANSPARENCY** of media-related institutions and procedures is needed to be able to assess the above-mentioned factors.

Even though the definition of Freedom of Press and the factors that influence it apply for both traditional (print, broadcast) and digital media, we will distinguish between them in the following. On the one hand, this is because both their history as well as their current and possible future development are very different. On the other hand, traditional and digital media differ in terms of creation, spreading, range and use and therefore need different measures of protection.

7.2 Current State

According to Reporters without Borders' annual report on Freedom of Press around the world, a growing lack of safety of journalists causes Freedom of Press to decline globally. While attacks, imprisonment and assassination still mostly affect media associates in countries with authoritarian regimes (such as Turkey and Egypt), two recent journalist murders in Malta and Slovakia raise doubts about Europe's status as region that respects the Freedom of Press the most.

Verbal violence becomes more and more common in democratic states as well, facilitated and amplified by social media (the most popular example being the USA). The importance of verbal assaults and threats must not be downplayed since they create a general fear among media actors leading to self-censorship like in Venezuela.

China has developed the most tightly controlled censorship model. This affects not only their own people but also the citizens of neighboring countries whose governments import China's information control technologies. On the other hand, democracies in the region, such as Taiwan and South Korea, have a hard time resisting China's growing influence.


Another international player is Russia, whose propaganda methods are copied in other former Soviet states, helping Russia to extend its influence beyond its borders.

The least Freedom of Press is seen in the war-torn countries of North Africa and the Middle East where journalists have the most unsafe working environment.

7.3 Threats to Freedom of Press

In conclusion of the findings mentioned above, the biggest threats to Freedom of Press are:

- abuses and violence against media actors, leading to self-censorship
- censorship and restricted access to information
- all forms of propaganda, the worst being a state monopoly on news and information
- corruption and bribery
- authoritarian regimes or war



During your research and development of your policy statement, please bear in mind that Freedom of Press can not only be threatened by governments but also by economic actors or other interest groups!

8. Digital Media

8.1 Particularities of Digital Media

On one hand we are coming to a lot of old questions where to find new, renovated answers for. On the other hand, we need to be quick, because the digital world and the problems followed by its daily new inventions are growing a lot faster than you might know it from other forms of media. If you feel lost in this new and contemporary topic try to find parallels to the old fashion press (*or have a look at the point Recent Developments*).

Where does everyone's freedom to *load up* start and where does everybody's right to the own face end?

Is there a difference between a celebrity and a normal civilian? If yes, where is the line to draw between a celebrity, do you need more than thousand Instagram followers or what could be an indicator?

Who allows or denies the access to what kind of webpages? Is it the right of a state to declare the darknet a forbidden page? If there is a controlling institution, how could it be powerful enough to be on top of all the other users?

Whenever you are starting to think or when you are preparing for a speech, it does not matter if it is in favor or against, keep in mind, that **the world wide web never forgets**. So, you might find out some good arguments why or why not that very important point will not be a problem for your matter.

8.2. Recent Development

One of the current debates in the European Union is about the copyright reform (known as "article 11 and 13"). There are many analogies to our topic, especially comparable to *ensuring the freedom of (digital) media*. It could be helpful and maybe even the easiest way to collect some good arguments following this subject carefully. Read some statements, comments and reactions not only by the prime ministers, but also by smaller politicians, they are often more into the topic than the most powerful.

That could also be a good start for you to get into your topic as it is very up to date and important to know anyway, not only if you are living in the EU.

9. How to Use this Guide

This is a Committee Guide which means it should guide you, help you to familiarize yourself with the topic and motivate you to further learn about the Freedom and Independence of Media. Its purpose is not to limit your research to this guide, since your resolutions should be as diverse as possible in the end! Please remember:

- Begin your research in time and don't wait until the last minute because understanding the topic and its complexity is essential for you to write a resolution, a policy statement and taking part in debate and in lobbying processes
- Use a variety of sources for your research! Be sure not to use just one single source for your whole resolution. Diversity in research is important, in order to reach a well-thought-out resolution with useful and debatable points. In addition, the more sources you use, the more you broaden your horizon on the topic. Also, use the links inside this guide!
- At a MUN conference you are not required to elaborate your personal opinion on the topic, but the opinion that your country represents. Therefore, you need to find out every detail about the situation in your country
- When researching the position of your country, look for various measures it has or has not taken yet, the existing programs and what possible new measures you as a representative of your country could introduce
- Elaborate a comprehensible, realistic resolution considering the position of your country! Of course, this resolution needs to be realistic considering that you are a representative of an existing country with existing positions. Within this frame, you need to find a self-contained solution, which you can present in our committee

Furthermore, we want to see some of your research results before the conference, since we don't want anyone to be unprepared in our committee. Because of this, we would like you to send us a **policy statement** and a **draft resolution** of your country until **June 1st 2019**. Keep in mind that these dates are the latest, so we advise you to send us these documents earlier in advance. For those of you, who do not know how to write a policy statement or a resolution, please look it up in the Official OLMUN 2019 Handbook. If you have any further questions, whether they concern preparation, the conference or anything else, please do not hesitate to contact us and consult us: spc@olmun.org

Sincerely yours,
Lukas and Paul



10. Sources and Further Reading

World Press Freedom Index and Regional Analyses by Reporters without Borders: <https://rsf.org/en/ranking> <https://rsf.org/en/news/rsf-index-2018-regional-analysis>

Freedom of the Press Report and Freedom on the Net Report by Freedom House: <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/freedom-press-2017>
<https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-net/freedom-net-2018>

UNESCO Initiatives on Press Freedom and Internet Universality:
<https://en.unesco.org/themes/press-freedom-all-platforms>
<https://en.unesco.org/themes/freedom-expression-internet>