

**Forum:** Special Conference

**Question of:** Ensuring the Freedom and Independence of Press and Digital Media



**Submitted by:** Russian Federation

**Co-submitted by:** Afghanistan, Belarus, Bolivia, Brazil, China, Colombia, Egypt, India, Iran, Iraq, Papua New Guinea, Poland, Romania, Syria, Uganda

1 The Special Conference,

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3 *Recognizing* the importance of Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)  
4 stating that “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes  
5 freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and  
6 ideas through any media regardless of frontiers”,

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8 *Reaffirming* every person’s right to “life, liberty and security” stated in Article 3 of the UDHR,  
9 *Convinced* that national security and the protection of its citizen is every member states’ mon-  
10 umental responsibility and challenge,

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12 *Deeply concerned* by the ever-growing danger posed by the spread of misinformation and  
13 propaganda especially through digital media and its effects on the political and social environ-  
14 ment in every member state,

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16 *Realizing* the importance of accountability and transparency of media outlets and journalists in  
17 order to ensure their accuracy and conformity with national law in the interest of national se-  
18 curity and stability,

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20 *Deploing* the stigma caused by "the Press Freedom Index" published by the NGO "Reporters  
21 without Borders", that holds developing countries in particular to far too high standards and is  
22 based on very vague criteria,

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24 1. **Calls upon** all member states to implement the freedom of press and media as stated  
25 in Article 19 of the UDHR in their constitution to ensure that this fundamental human  
26 right is granted to everyone;
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28 2. **Proclaims** that all news media must be published in the public’s interest and therefore  
29 journalists should consider restraining from:  
30 a. endangering national security,  
31 b. threatening national and regional stability,  
32 c. threatening an individual’s right to safety as declared in Article 3 of the UDHR;
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34 3. **Expresses** its conviction that all press and commentary provided by journalists must  
35 be adequately researched and verified by data received from legitimate sources such  
36 as but not limited to:  
37 a. governments,  
38 b. non-governmental organizations (NGOs),  
39 c. universities and other educational institutes;
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41 4. **Invites** all member states to define the term journalist through national law;
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5. **Calls for** the establishment of national broadcasters funded by governments grants and regulated advertising in every member state in order to:
- a. prevent any underfunding of journalistic work which often leads to insufficient research and thereby the spread of misinformation,
  - b. circumvent financial dependency on groups and individuals not acting in the public's interest but rather aiming to make profits with the distribution of information or aiming to create false images of governments organizations and individuals and therefore willingly harming them such as but not limited to:
    - i. foreign governments,
    - ii. foreign and regional companies;
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6. **Further calls upon** all member states to consider new laws regulating foreign influence on national news distribution by obligating news outlets financed by foreign funders and believes to be registered as such in order to be aware of and possibly reduce their influence on national news with the intention of an increase of independence of press;
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7. **Suggests** the establishment of an international database recording active journalists worldwide overlooked by the UN and funded by the International Monetary Fund with the help of:
- a. Reporters without Borders and other relevant NGOs,
  - b. media outlets employing journalists,
  - c. governments,
  - d. journalists themselves;
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- to which journalists should report their current place of work in order to ensure their safety and protection in areas affected by a crisis of any nature by:
- e. being aware of their location and therefore being able to find them in case of them vanishing for unknown reasons,
  - f. assigning local law enforcement to protect them;
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8. **Recommends** the accessibility of the database mentioned in clause 7 to be limited to:
- a. the journalists' employers,
  - b. Reporters without Borders and other relevant NGOs,
  - c. governments who through law enforcement are responsible for the provision of protection and security,
  - d. individuals chosen by registered journalists themselves such as family and friends;
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9. **Endorses** the establishment of an UN-approved list under the name of "Press High-Risk Zones" (PHRZ) that:
- a. lets governments name certain areas in which journalists are at high risk and not at all time protected by law enforcement specifying:
    - i. the exact location of these zones,
    - ii. the timeframe in which the area is not expected to be safe,
    - iii. the threat, which is posed towards journalists, as far as naming it is proper in terms of national security,
  - b. urges journalists to evaluate the security situation in the areas they plan to report about,
  - c. makes journalists aware that entering these high-risk zones without the direct consent of a government leads to the loss of concerning personal safety;
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10. **Reminds** all member states that the right to free press does not include the right of publishing content wilfully and unjustifiably harming others publications breaking national law;
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11. **Further reminds** all member states that only through transparency and accountability of journalists, member states are able to uphold the public's trust in journalism and to

- 99 prevent the spreading of *content breaking national law*, threatening national security  
100 and stability such as but not limited to:
- 101 a. propaganda of any form,
  - 102 b. publications from extremist groups such as but not limited to:
    - 103 i. the Islamic State and other religious groups with extremist views,
    - 104 ii. conspirators who incite the public by publishing theories disregarding
    - 105 any facts,
  - 106 c. other purposefully spread misinformation;
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- 108 **12. Urges** all member states to establish laws prohibiting journalists from concealing their  
109 identity in any situation but most importantly online to:
- 110 a. increase transparency of all published media,
  - 111 b. increase accountability of every journalist expressing harmful commentary;
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- 113 **13. Recognizes** the inevitability of further research and discussion on the enforcement of  
114 newly created laws as those called for in clause 12 by including but not limited to
- 115 a. national governments,
  - 116 b. multilateral organizations such as but not limited to:
    - 117 i. the UN,
    - 118 ii. the European Union,
  - 119 c. relevant NGOs;
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- 121 **14. Decides** to stay actively seized of the matter.