



UCBMUN XXI



UNESCO: Media Pluralism and Sexual Literacy in the 21st Century

Head Chair: Dianne Chung

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Chair Welcome Letter

Lovely and Esteemed Delegates,

Welcome to UCBMUN XXI! My name is Dianne Chung and I am honored to be serving as your head chair for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) committee. I enter this committee with high hopes and excitement as the blank slate with potential for change is presented to all those with an open mind and commitment to this safe space.

As for myself, I am currently a sophomore pursuing a degree in Molecular and Cell Biology with a concentration in Neurobiology as well as a minor in Peace and Conflict Studies. Since joining UCBMUN as a freshman last year, I have served as a vice chair for the World Social Forum during UCBMUN XX as well as head chair for BayMUN Spring '16. Born and raised in Southern California (which makes me an avid LA Dodgers fan by default) with a Korean-American identity, I can be found actively advocating for the increase of Asian American voices in the American political process. Otherwise, you'll often find me curled up at a café reading a book or travelling in search of new experiences, out and about and always wandering.

This year's committee will find itself addressing the topic of censorship while considering its nuances and the implications found in the distributions of responsibility as the world becomes increasingly technologically dependent. This committee will also address a second topic of sexual education in an endeavor to lay out a foundation for the future with a focus on learning, awareness, and accessibility. With these in mind, I hope that having the option of two topics will not undermine the quality of debate and discussion for each topic. Furthermore, a critical characteristic of UNESCO is the organization's commitment to creating an opportunity for all delegates to have a voice, indicating the crucial necessity for collaboration and compromise.

I am excited to hear what you will bring to this committee and am looking forward to meeting all of you. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding the background guide, the procedures, or the structure of the committee.

Best Regards,
Dianne Chung, Head Chair

Modified Rules:

Traditionally, delegates in a specialized committee are expected to set the agenda before proceeding with any form of debate, caucuses, and the like. However, in order to quickly facilitate discussions, “Motion to Set the Agenda” will not be entertained at the beginning of this committee’s session. Instead, the flow of debate in each topic will proceed with the order as introduced in the background guide.

Secondly, in hopes of incorporating multiple viewpoints, Associated Members, Permanent Observers (ex: Holy See), and Representatives from the Intergovernmental Organizations of the UNESCO Committee will be in attendance. However, delegates representing these members will not receive voting rights in voting procedures of this committee as follows of the rules and procedures of the UNESCO Committee.

Lastly, although not part of this committee, various NGOs will be entering sessions to share their viewpoints regarding the aforementioned topics in the form of press releases. These press releases will serve to stimulate debate and encourage new perspectives to be considered throughout the committee. It is important that delegates not only come prepared to consider the positions of other countries, but to also

consider the diverse positions of international organizations.

Introduction

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), established in 1946, strives to fulfill its purpose of contributing to peace and security “by promoting collaboration among nations through education, science, and culture... without distinction of race, sex, language or religion” as declared by the UNESCO Constitution (Radsch).

**UNITED NATIONS**

Educational, Scientific, Cultural Organization

UNESCO is a specialized body of the United Nations structured to pursue interests that focus on programs, management, and development, which are achieved through the means of the Economic and Social Council in correspondence with the UN (Radsch).

This committee overview will be an introduction to the organization of UNESCO, emphasizing the topic given in committee. It is by no means a replacement for further research done by delegates and delegates are encouraged to keep their respective

countries' positions in mind throughout the guide.

History

Since its development in 1946, UNESCO has produced different international documents that highlight and emphasize the promotion of education, science, and culture. Delegates are encouraged to familiarize themselves with vital documents such as the *Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights* (1998) and the *Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice* (1978). UNESCO holds the role of promoting collaboration among member states to maintain and expand peace, law and order, and mutual respect within the fields of education, science, and culture. UNESCO works with member countries and developmental partners such as intergovernmental organizations and NGOs to promote the freedom of expression. Delegates should take note of entities such as the UNDP, SIDA, EU, UNPF, and more in order to coordinate and cooperate with each other, and set the standards on the given topics that are to be debated in committee (Safety).

UNESCO primarily relies on the General Conference or Executive Board to propose and address items on the agenda. The current priorities of UNESCO that this

committee session will focus is fostering the freedom of expression..

UNESCO relies on peaceful collaboration via sharing information between governing bodies, facilitating meetings between international, national, regional, and local entities, and developing international universal guidelines about education, freedom of expression, and respecting unity in globalization. Delegates should consider the above mentioned functions of UNESCO as a strategic framework when discussing new or existing programs that will continue to pursue an overarching objective of “economic stability, political security, and general well-being of the peoples of the world.”



Topic A: Promoting the Access to Information and Communication Technology within the Media and its Recipients

Introduction

The history of censorship goes back long before the birth of the internet and the printing press. In fact, the very act of suppressing information begins not with the existence of information distribution, but with the existence of people who understand how to utilize knowledge to their advantage. In the understanding that knowledge is power, censorship becomes a necessity in order to maintain any power gained from the advantage of having control over the distribution and utility of knowledge (Censorship).

The first recorded act of censorship occurred in 399 BC in which the Greek philosopher Socrates was severely punished for having violated the moral and political codes of the ancient time period. Although Socrates' behavior was deemed justified since his intention was to protect the general interest of the public, it is a matter of whose general interest the act of censorship was protecting that must be reconsidered. Similarly, the fight for freedom of expression has just as long and complicated a history as censorship.

Freedom of expression is defined as 'the clear indication and ability for the average person to think, act, and do with freedom'. However, there continues to be a struggle to gain permission to utilize that ability, which is often a result of social, economic, political, and cultural barriers (Censorship).



In the movement to fight against censorship, the fight for democracy is just as clear in the same struggle that continues on to today. American author and professor Isaac Asimov once said, "Anti-intellectualism has been a constant thread winding its way through our political and cultural life, nurtured by the false notion that democracy means that *'my ignorance is just as good as your knowledge'*" (Asimov). However, ignorance and knowledge - the awareness of certain rights and expectations in a democracy - cannot stand on the same ground and declare the same expectations for censorship because one is being censored of that intellect while the other has the intellect to do the censoring (Gounalakis).

Role and Framework of the IPDC

One of the primary frameworks through which the UNESCO committee functions to foster the freedom of expression is through the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC). The IPDC is the only forum in UNESCO that allows for the discussion of the development and improvement for the means of communication, especially in developing countries that lack such forms of technology. It is composed of 39 Member states (recent countries heavily involved in IPDC activities include Andorra, Bangladesh, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, India, Israel, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, and the United States of America), elected for a two-year period, that develop policy for communication improvement once every two years. Not only does the IPDC improve the means of communication, but it also improves the circumstances through which a country can grow its political and socioeconomic support for the freedom of a pluralistic media platform (Radsch).

The priorities of the IPDC are subject to, but are not limited to promoting journalists' safety, discouraging hate speech in the media and other social media platforms, supporting law reforms or developments

that allow for the freedom of expression and media pluralism, building managers of the media and journalists, and proceeding with media research or assessments.

With these priorities in mind, IPDC remains a unique entity in that the forum expands the discussion to an international audience with international identities and has a unique knowledge base within the fields of education, culture, science, and communication – all of which has more than 30 years of UNESCO research and assessment (Radsch).

Most recently, the IPDC concluded its 28th Council Session which launched the UN Plan of Action of the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity initiative. The plan started in South Sudan, Iraq, Nepal, and Pakistan, and is also currently being initiated in the countries of Jordan, Tunisia, Liberia, Honduras, Mexico, and Guatemala. Delegates are highly encouraged to read the UN Plan and to consider the document with their respective countries in mind. Furthermore, the IPDC developed the Media Development Indicators (MDIs) in 2008 in order to assess and address the different strengths and weaknesses of press freedom, media pluralism, and freedom of expression within different countries. The MDIs assessments have influenced policies and actions in more than 15 different countries. MDIs are now available in 9

different languages and continue to serve as a basis to build a common approach in developing communication technology in each individual country.

“To encourage the free flow of information, at international as well as national levels, to promote the wider and better balanced dissemination of information, without any obstacle to freedom of expression, and to strengthen communication capacities in the developing countries in order to increase their participation in the

communication process...”

– UNESCO General Conference Resolution 25C/104

Certain special initiatives organized by the IPDC include the Global Initiative for Excellence in Journalism Education and the Knowledge-Driven Media Development initiative, both of which strive to analyze and improve media projects that value the transparency of sharing information and value training and education in the field of journalism (Safety).



Changing World Trends in the Freedom of Expression and Media Development

A significant number of developed countries often take for granted the idea of freedom of the press, media pluralism, and the freedom of expression because these

ideas have been integrated into developed, Westernized societies for such a long time. However, there are many countries, both developed and underdeveloped, that don't have freedom of expression or have only recently begun to implement these ideas

and continue to struggle in improving free speech. Even when the government of a country states the guarantee of press freedom and the freedom of expression, there is no guarantee that these promises are actually carried out (Jansen).

However, with the development of new media platforms such as the Internet and social media, there is an increasing amount of opportunities and resources that can nurture freedom of press and the freedom of expression, and allow for better innovation, communication, and democracies. Unfortunately, censorship and similar restrictions continue to undermine the access to such resources or opportunities for “the free exchange of ideas and knowledge...the free flow of ideas by word and image” (Jansen). Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers.” Often times, the challenge can be found within the words, “regardless of frontiers”, which is an indication of the need for universal press freedom and the inclusive creation of ‘knowledge societies’(UNHRC).

The UN has also adopted the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966), which initiated stronger protections for the right to free expression for all citizens as stated in Article 19: “Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice.”

However, important international documents such as those adopted by the UN so far have only served as a declaration of vague goals and have many limitations that this committee should aim to address. Furthermore, certain countries like China, Comoros, Cuba, Nauru, Palau, and St. Lucia have not ratified the covenant, which means that the document ends up being non-binding protection of free speech (The).

The increased impact of new media also means that there is an increasing influence on the restrictions of press freedom or mass media communication. Restrictions then restrict the development of a nation, politically or socioeconomically, as confirmed by the UN in its MDIs (Media Development Indicators) analyses of the relationship between freedom of the press and the different dimensions of

development, poverty, governance, and peace. Increased freedom of the press in a country is correlated with positive influences on monetary poverty, access to commodities such as health and education, issues regarding violence or conflict, and improved government procedures. These positive influences stem from the foundation of the press as an intermediary between the ordinary citizen and the government; the press can communicate the public's needs, minimize conflict, create transparency, and keep governments accountable. Such qualities are imperative for the progress of the Millennium Development Goals and the development of more open and free societies across the globe (Radsch).

UNESCO has hosted two 'International Symposium on Freedom of Expression' events in the past in order to address the impacts on new media and the changing political and economic needs of freedom of the press. The second International Symposium on Freedom of Expression was held on January 26th, 2011 at UNESCO's Paris headquarters, which involved three main sessions addressing the Status of Press Freedom Worldwide, Freedom of Expression on the Internet, and Press Freedom and the Safety of Journalists (Safety).

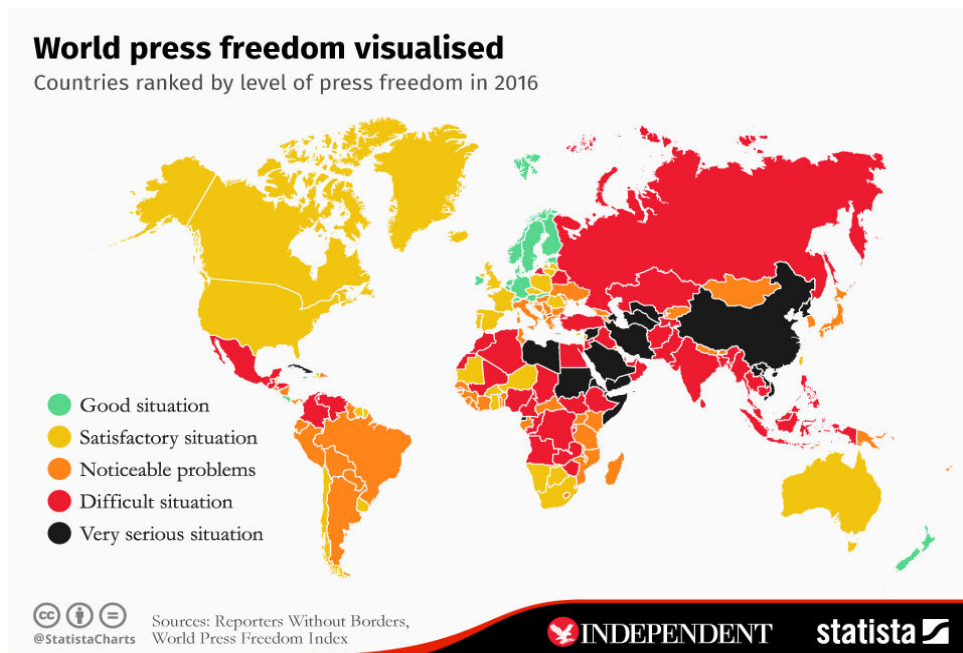
The first session 'Status of Press Freedom Worldwide' discussed the rights incorporated from the freedom of expression within the press and other forms of media. It was also an acknowledgement that any discussion of the status of media freedom must also address the circumstances that impact the media. Typically, there are two types of threats against freedom of the press: restrictions by the state and restrictions established by the growing commercialization and power of monopolistic media organizations. The monopolization of the media continues to be a growing threat that restricts the freedom of expression for monetary and capital gains. The challenge then is combatting the growing commodification of information exchange while promoting media pluralism to ensure diversity in all expressions of communication and an era of globalized and transparent media (Gounalakis).

The second session titled the Freedom of Expression on the Internet discussed the right to the freedom of expression on the internet while developing means to combat any attempts of censorship on the internet by a monopolistic media platform or the state. By refuting control from corporate interests, the internet can further improve its services as a free and democratic space of communication. And although the internet

remains unlimited in its potential for the free exchange of information to a global level, the technology can also serve as the most advanced form of surveillance, restriction, censorship, and the like due to the introduction of certain legal provisions and limitations (Censorship).

The third session 'Press Freedom and the Safety of Journalists' discussed the threat that corporate interests or the state hold against journalists and essentially the principles of the freedom of expression and information exchange. In 2010, 44 journalists were killed while more were persecuted for their work. While immediately stopping the threats against

journalists cannot be done in an easy manner, organizations like Reporters without Borders or the Committee to Protect Journalists create a global journalism community that can publish these types of incidents and hold perpetrators (i.e. governments) accountable. Another drawback to the dangerous threats against journalists is that it leads to self-censorship by the journalists due to the fear of constant danger. In such cases, a threat against the journalists' right to free press and expression will also be a threat against the ordinary citizens' right to access information and right to free expression (Safety).



UNESCO World Press Freedom Day celebrated its 23rd anniversary on May 3rd,

2016 with journalists highlighting a free, pluralistic, and independent press as established by the Windhoek Declaration, a

landmark documentation written up during 2013's World Press Freedom Day to fight for global press freedom. Hundreds of journalists are often killed internationally each year while many more suffer physical, reputational, emotional, and mental repercussions, all of whom are redeemed as "press freedom warriors" for making a substantial sacrifice in the name of free press and expression. Complete freedom of speech or media is existent nowhere in the world and only in the past half century has the idea of free expression or a free media gained momentum on a global scale (Safety).

Although censorship and press freedom have a long history together, the advent of the Internet has changed the dynamics of the relationship due to the easy and rapid distribution of knowledge. In a pre-digital era, information was often controlled to the point where little to none was free from government or corporate influence. For example, a case study in Egypt will be later discussed in how despite the media censorship that existed, bloggers prevailed, showing that there is little to none that completely stops the sharing of information in the digital era, which requires a whole new establishment of policies and boundaries at an international level rather than the regional or state level (Journalist).

Subtopic A: Press Freedom on All Media Platforms

Freedom of expression and freedom of the press is defined as the right to gather, transmit, and publish news anywhere with the premise that "understanding and cooperation among nations are impossible without an alert and sound world opinion". In order for the press to be considered "free", there needs to be a guarantee for independent and pluralistic media – independent from any governmental, political or economic control and pluralistic through the restriction of monopolistic media and the reflection of a globally diverse opinion (Jansen).

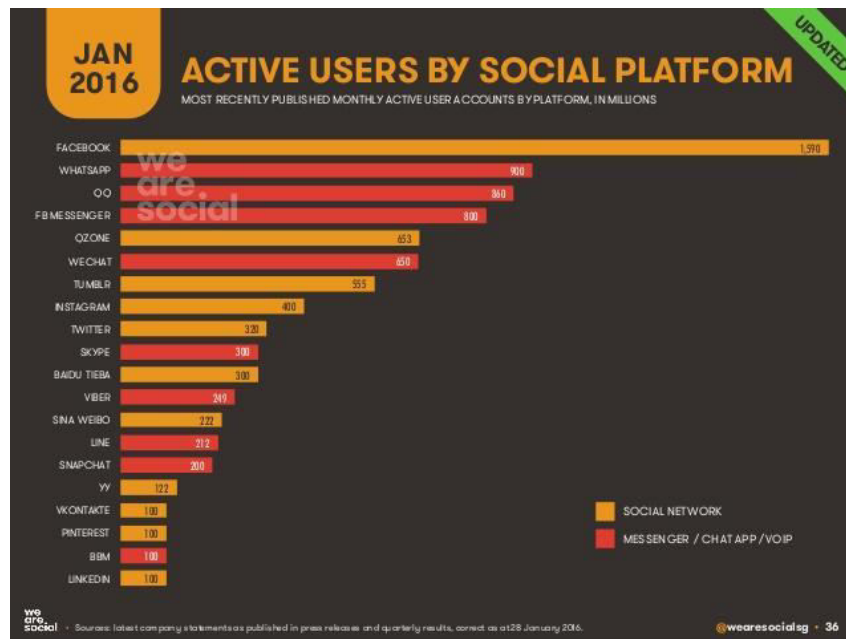
However, freedom of the press is never simply handed over by governments. There are forces of repression almost always at work in the struggle for truth and justice, especially in the past fifteen years. Luckily, recent positive breakthroughs made by the development of the internet is helping to overcome the monopolization of information by governmental forces and authoritarian regimes. This "new" form of media is simply becoming the main source of information, changing how we understand and interact in this interconnected world. Internet networks

are changing how goods and services are produced and distributed through internet shopping, how ideas are created and distributed through global accessibility to information, and how participation in civic life is approached through social activism on social media platforms and the like. Ideally, promises fulfilled by the diverse market of information, ideas, knowledge, and cultural products are embraced by the world's policymakers, but there are those who do not have access to the technology or who live in countries which have captured the medium for their own ends (Radsch).

It has been almost sixty years since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights articulated the right to free expression regardless of borders, but the disruptive quality of the Internet that has challenged established legal principles, regulatory regimes, and business models does not favor upholding this declaration in society. The globalization of the media often leads to legal and public policy confusion regarding intellectual property, national content laws, and consumer privacy laws. Part of the increase in policy confusion regarding global media and internet access are due to the repercussions of global terrorism. Many democratic countries often create easier access to data or networks without maintaining appropriate protections for

privacy. Meanwhile, authoritarian regimes such as Uzbekistan, Saudi Arabia, China, Egypt, and others are remaking the Internet into a tool of control and repression. Surveillance and censorship technology is not only being advanced, but also exported to equally-authoritarian countries (Censorship).

The success of the Internet came about due to general rhetoric and policies that emphasized openness, innovation, competition, and free expression in user control. However, it is incorrect to insist that the Internet is a public policy free zone. To say that "the internet interprets censorship as damage and routes around it" is a utopian vision as governments increasingly acknowledge how critical of an infrastructure the internet is for industry, interpersonal communications, and the government itself. With that said, it is important to remember that the internet is not a problem to be solved, but a unique and valuable resource that needs to be nurtured; it is not now, nor will it ever be a "finished" product. However, there is only one Internet and *it must remain global*. This quality is why all countries, big or small, developed or undeveloped, must engage in a dialogue to develop a separate set of standards for the Internet as a new media (Radsch).



With the increasing use of new media, it is critical to continue enabling old forms of media to prosper. TV, radio talk shows, the newspaper – media pluralism is critical to the process of empowerment. Empowerment is defined as the “social and political process that is the natural by-product of access to accurate, fair and unbiased information representing a plurality of opinions”. Empowerment is important for minorities and other marginalized communities in order to give them a voice and restricting oppression. Furthermore, it is not only important to maintain the multiple outlets in which the press distributes information and individuals access information, but having multiple outlets become useless and access becomes limited if only a handful of individuals control them. Thus, the role that

journalists play in society is central to the function of the community since media can help realize democratic and developmental rights only if it remains free, pluralistic, and independent. Press freedom is ultimately about limiting state power through social institutions such as old and new media while bearing the possibilities of journalism and its capabilities in empowering the public (The).



On the other hand, a degree of press freedom can exist without aspects of democracy, but a democracy cannot thrive without freedom of the press. It is often assumed that developing countries are undemocratic and that the word 'developing' can signify underdevelopment. However, there are problems behind these assumptions. First, it is inappropriate to treat developing countries as if they are all non-democracies that lack press freedom. Likewise, not all developed countries have equal measures of press freedom in both old and new media. Thus, it is just as wrong to assume that countries with a vast data of information have more value than the countries with limited information. The world is an integrated and interdependent system and not a collection of multiple entities at different stages. Many countries are often limited in their access to information because they are forced to compete against the floods of information commodities in other countries, and the floods of information commodities often lack the knowledge or language to consider the limited countries. What is essentially at stake is the principles behind the new ways journalism needs to be channeled in all countries (UNHRC).

Another overarching priority for the UN is achieving the Millennium Development

goals. Like democracy, the development agenda is important for poverty eradication, environmental sustainability, a respect for human rights, peace and reconciliation, and good governance. Such dialogue and action can only be achieved when the link between the free flow of information and sustainable development is acknowledged and established. Systematic barriers to information access prevents individuals from being able to have full political participation. Common barriers include low levels of education, lack of literacy, limited availability of information in local languages, and the lack of political will to make the information available. Countries need to undertake a transition from a country of secrecy to one of transparency, empowering the public by including them in the discussion. Openness also needs to be included amongst donors to the developmental process as aid is not effective if there is no transparency or access to information. Transparency also ensures that institutional entities and governments are also held accountable for their decisions in development, promoting an increasing partnership between the average citizen and decision-making powers (Jansen).

Subtopic B: Safety of Journalists



Over the past decade, there has been a dramatic escalation of violence against journalists and media professionals. More than 1000 media workers were killed, most of them being the victims of targeted killings. In many countries, they are detained, harassed, attacked, and murdered for their work. 2006 was the bloodiest year with over 150 different killings and hundreds of arrests, attacks, and/or threats against journalists and other media workers. Particularly dangerous environments such as conflict or post-conflict zones create the biggest risks for journalists trying to provide independent and reliable information that contribute to accountability, reconstruction, and reconciliation. However, it is vital to address the rising challenges to the safety of journalists and media that exist outside of armed conflicts. There is a need to address the everyday safety challenges that journalists face, including new forms of aggression that involve hostage-kidnapping. The everyday insecurities of media workers

impact press freedom and turning a blind eye means depriving the people of a fundamental right guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Safety).

Not only is a climate of fear being created amongst journalists, but it is being spurred amongst regular citizens as well. A climate of fear is what inhibits press freedom and leads to the erosion of free expression. Violence and the threat of physical intimidation as shown in these attacks calls for governments to provide more protection for journalists in conflict zones. Impunity exists when there is an absence of government action or political will to investigate the causes of such deaths and journalists are very much subject to such negligence and corruption within the work of the police and other legal bodies. As such, impunity remains one of the greater threats that continue to put journalists' lives at stake and continue to threaten press freedom in modern journalism (UNHRC).



Some governments choose to respond to such incompetence with dangerous alternatives such as training journalists in the use of firearms or supplying firearms to reporters. This is a solution that attempts to excuse the governments from addressing the webs of corruption that are often a cause of such violence that threatens journalists. Other governments are genuinely trapped in a cycle of corruption that is perpetuated by poverty or criminality. Impunity of journalists will only cease to exist once governments and legal bodies break free of corruption, citizens gain trust in laws created to protect them, and governments learn to put the people above short-term political gains (Safety).

The recent “war on terror” prevalent in democratic countries creates a culture of surveillance on citizens and particularly journalists, which leads to more threats

against press freedom. Reporters are increasingly criminalized for making vital information public when the information embarrasses their government. Thus, it becomes evident that not enough measures are put into place to protect legitimate, independent journalism from intrusive and chilling surveillance from the government. The fear and uncertainty that is perpetuated by impunity, governmental pressure, and a threat of violence then leads to self-censorship and undermine the legitimacy of independent professional journalism (UNHRC).

There is little within international humanitarian law that deals specifically with journalists or punishes perpetrators of violence against members of the press. Thus, such perpetrators are not deterred from targeting journalists or other media institutions. Even if there were to be international legal protections for the press, several legal issues would need to be addressed.

One question would be how to define a journalist. Some legal experts believe that journalists should have no more protection than ordinary citizens while others believe that special laws should be created for the people most targeted in times of conflict. This question is further complicated by the opportunity for the entire public to make

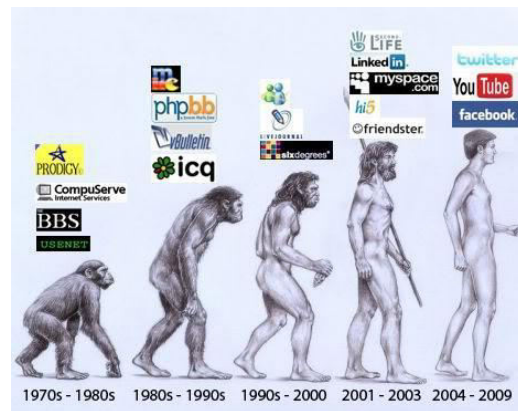
publishes through modern media such as blogging. It becomes necessary to distinguish professional reporters working for media organizations from self-taught citizen journalists on the Internet (Journalist).

With that said, it is also important to distinguish the status of journalists and media workers in dangerous armed conflicts from everyday journalists. In the past 10 years, 1000 media staff died worldwide with 1/4 dying in armed conflict. 167 media staff died in international armed conflict and 102 died in domestic conflicts such as civil war. The closer the members of the press work in the front lines of armed conflict or army camps, the more they are exposed to physical or psychological harm. Unfortunately, if the enemy attacks or kills media staff in action, it is considered as collateral damage rather than a violation of the laws of war. Media staff also face the common risk of explosive mines as well as the trauma of witnessing profound human suffering, injustice, and violence (UNHRC).

On the other hand, Internet as a new media has given birth to a generation of citizen journalists, changing journalism, politics, entertainment, education, and an infinite number of other topics. Reporters are no longer a special niche group of people and

can be found in regular citizen who have a news story to share with others. However, people in the new media age must address the old questions that traditional journalists have struggled with – how to create credibility, take responsibility, and sustainably influence (Censorship).

Subtopic C: Media and Development



Media outlets may be crucial to the exercise of freedom of expression as well as serve as a platform for democracy, but it is equally apparent that the media may sometimes reinforce the power of vested interests and perpetuate social inequalities by excluding marginalized voices. It may even promote conflict and social divisiveness. Thus, it is key to be concerned with how to nurture a media framework and practice that contributes to the overarching goals of cultural cohesion, government watchdog, democracy, and social advocacy. It is particularly concerning in new or restored democracies, where media outlets

have been warped or shattered by oppression, corruption, or the by-product consequences of war or under-development (Radsch).

An increasingly converged world of modern communications open new opportunities for citizens to exercise their right to freedom of expression, which facilitates independent journalism. Independent journalism is arguably a necessary, but not sufficient means of promoting human development, which can be achieved under the two conditions of widespread access to media and channels of mass communications that are free and independent of established interest. However, the advancement of such communications is often uneven within and between countries (The).

Thus, key words to take into consideration when measuring or facilitating media development are the words *independence* and *access*. It is not only important to consider the absence of restrictions, but the extent to which marginalized communities have access to these forms of media. Limited access may be a by-product of poverty or poor education which can be further perpetuated by language, gender, age, ethnicity, or urban-rural divides (Radsch).

Forms of investment are also crucial in media development, such as investment in human resources and infrastructure investment, which helps build the professional capacity of different media workers like journalists or media managers and the infrastructural capacity in means of communications like electricity supplies or broadcast receptions (Radsch).

Thus, there are five principles of media development that must be taken into consideration:

Principle 1: A system of regulation that protects and promotes freedom of expression and information, based on the international standards developed with participation from civil society.

Principle 2: Plurality and diversity of media with economic equity and ownership transparency across public, private, and community media outlets.

Principle 3: Media that serves as a platform for democratic discourse while reflecting the diversity of views and interests in society, including marginalized groups.

Principle 4: Institutions that support and build professional capacity, both vocational and academic, in media workers and

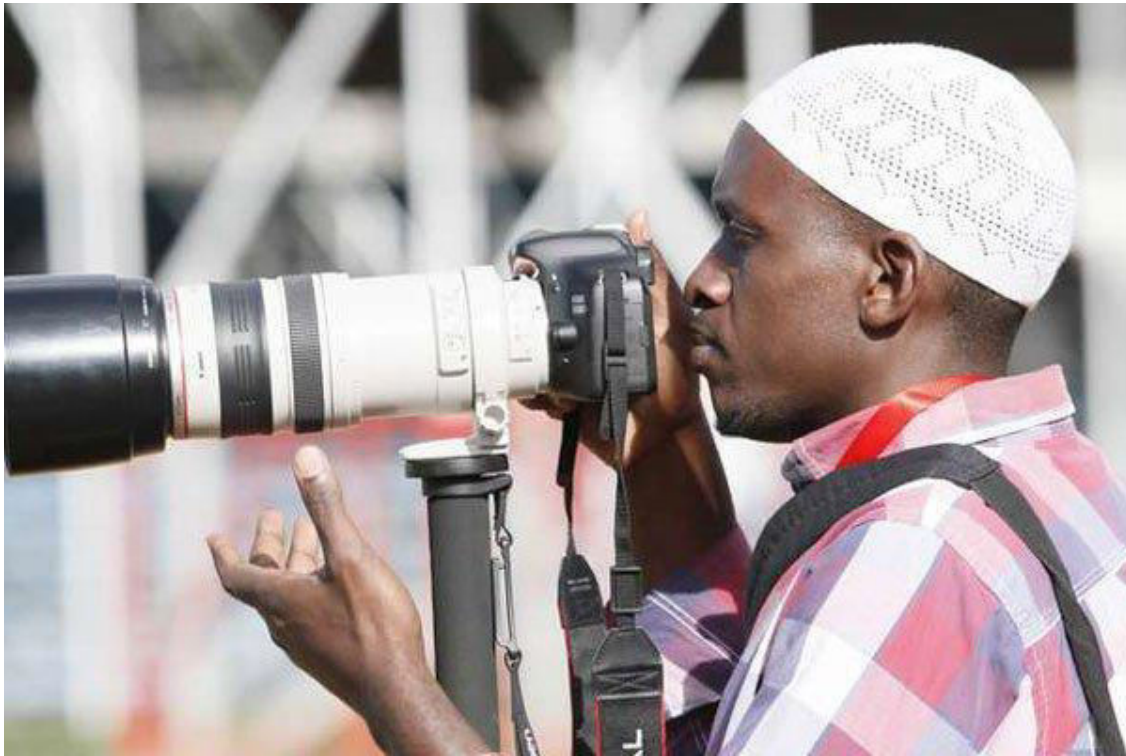
supported by professional associations and civil society organizations.

Principle 5: Media sectors that support an infrastructural capacity sufficient for efficient and effective use of technology to gather and distribute news and information.

Previous Actions

Previous actions that were taken by the UN in relation to the right to Freedom of Expression and the Safety of Journalists include the *UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity*. This plan of action was endorsed by the UN Chief Executive Board on 12 April 2012 and the plan was prepared during the 1st UN Inter-Agency Meeting on the issue. It was

convened by the Director General of UNESCO at the request of the IPDC and delegates are highly encouraged to look over this document and its aims to create a free and safe environment for journalists and media workers in both conflict and non-conflict situations. Other previous plans of actions and documents that I highly encourage delegates to look over include the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)*, *Access to Information and Empowerment of People (2008)*, and *Freedom of Connection – Freedom of Expression: The Changing Legal and Regulatory Ecology Shaping the Internet (Safety)*.



Case Study: Somalia

The media first emerged in Somalia, one of the world's poorest and least developed countries, during the era of colonialism. Britain had established rule over northern Somalis in 1948 and Italy had established rule over southern Somalia in 1952. There were two radio stations, one in English and the other in Italian – with only a small portion translate to Somali – and few newspapers in Arabic, English, and Italian. When the two parts of Somalia gained independence and united, the two radio stations were taken over by the Ministry of Information of the Somali Republic's first

civilian government. Unfortunately, finances and other weaknesses prevented the development of the media for nine years and most Somalis remained illiterate while the Somali language remained primitive (Radsch).

The civilian government was then overthrown in a military coup by Mohammed Siad Barre and everything, including the media, was placed under military control. The media was then repressed for another 21 years and the establishment of any kind of independent media was banned until the fall of the military government. The first independent newspaper subsequently made

its appearance and since 2000, 6 independent newspapers, 20 private radio stations, and 2 independent television broadcast stations began operating in Somalia. However, prolonged clan-based rivalries formed from the diaspora aftermath of a colonial era continue to endanger the life of both the average citizen and various media outlets. When online media made its appearance, there was a drastic increase in the number of aggressions made by individuals who feared the influential power of the Internet. Many top figures in Somali politics discount the new media and undermines its work and importance. They deem the Internet as a “forum of heresy” despite its benefits in local living standards and economic growth from competition between Internet service providers because of a large base of Somali users. Many politicians have hired monitors to watch internet activity that could affect their respective policy interests, infringing on the rights of online journalists to express themselves privately and professionally. Furthermore, online journalists have

problems receiving compensation for their work, making them more susceptible to corruption, fear, and dishonesty, limiting the overall professionalism and ethical standards of the press, print, online, and broadcast media alike (Radsch).

For new media to thrive and maintain their vital role of informing the public regarding news and public affairs, special development programs or standard need to be outlined, especially in countries going through transition or conflict.

As such, Somalia is in the throes of a bloody civil war. The central Somali government lost its grip on large sections of the country, leading to severe famine and collections of refugees. In a situation where access to impartial information is especially vital, journalists who try to do so are being censored, intimidated, and murdered by the different clans that dominate the country. In the first few months of 2016, six journalists were killed in Somalia (UNHRC).



Radio is the key source of information for people in Somalia while print media and television have a very limited reach. The key problem for the press in the country is that journalists have minimal training and are very poorly paid, which results in poor reporting skills and corruption. However, another key problem is the safety risk of being a journalist in the country. Journalists often witness their colleagues being murdered or threatened and are even threatened themselves, resulting in some journalists leaving the country altogether (Radsch).

Furthermore, the international community continues to treat the country as if it is solely a pariah state, a state that can only produce pirates. As such, it ignored the underlying causes of political, economic, and social turmoil in the different regions of the

country, which can only be called to attention by promoting independent journalism (Radsch).

Specific cases of attacks that are remembered amongst journalists and media professionals include:

- The death of Abdullahi Madkeer, who was murdered at an airport located in the town of Baidoa in 2003. 14 other causes of journalists being arrested, harassed, threatened, or unfairly expelled are also remembered in 2003.
- Journalist Abdullahi Yasin Jama was beaten up, threatened, and fired upon while reporting in a refugee camp in Magodishu. 16 other journalists were beaten, assaulted, banned, imprisoned, or censored in 2004 by warlords, administrations,

Islamic courts, and independent gangsters.

- Journalist Abdiqani Sheik Mohamed was gravely beaten and banned from working at Jowhar in the Middle Shabelle region.
- Two female journalists, Kate Peyton and Duniya Muhiyadin, were killed in Mogadishu during fighting among leaders for the transitional federal institutions in 2005. More than 15 journalists were also injured, beaten, or imprisoned, leading to a dramatic increase in self-censorship for survival.
- Swedish photo-journalist Martin Adler was shot and killed when he was covering a rally in Magadishu in support of the Islamic courts in 2006.
- Media staffer Maday Garas was killed as he was driving officials from Baidoa to Mogadishu in 2006. 30 other cases of attacks were also recorded, making it the most dangerous year for press freedom.
- Journalist Ali Mohammed Omar was killed in Baidoa by unknown gunmen.

Unfortunately, predators of press freedom have not been investigated, prosecuted, convicted, or punished, and they still continue to commit crimes against journalists without any fear of retribution –

making Somalis one of the worst countries in Africa to be a journalist (Radsch).

Case Study 2: Blogs as a Media Platform in Egypt



Egypt has approximately 6 million internet users in a country totaling 78 million, but the idea of a blog remains a relatively foreign concept in the country. The few that have heard of the use of blogs realized that blogs introduced young and fresh voices that were different from the material found in traditional media forms. However, much of the lack of usage of new media stems from the 40 percent illiteracy rate in the country along with harsh economic conditions. Both of these factors mean that access to media forms are quite limited and restricted. Furthermore, any support found for the new media stems from the intention of attracting foreign investment rather than achieving social development goals. There are fewer than 4000 Egyptian blogs but many bloggers were still able to attract significant attention by writing about

controversial issues, typically avoided and ignored by the traditional media (Journalist).

The recent presidential election in Egypt became the first national event to be captured by bloggers rather than by the traditional media. Blogs actually were the first window that allowed Egyptians to see the different political groups in the seats of the Egyptian Parliament as well as a medium to demonstrate against the changes that were taking place in the Egyptian government. For example, the Baha'is, a group of spiritual followers of the Egyptian, monotheistic religion that emphasizes spiritual unity of all mankind, filed a lawsuit against the government demanding that their religion be recognized in official documents. While the case was in court, many Egyptian blogs supported the rights of the Baha'is (Journalist).

Blogging has also given the Egyptian people a chance to discuss and defend secular thoughts, which are avoided in traditional media due to the cultural conservatism of Egyptian society. For example, gay women started blogs to reveal and discuss their sexual and gender orientation – a bold and explicit form of free speech never found before in an Egyptian media outlet. As a result, such blogs gained the attention of the international world and

shortly, Egyptian society began witnessing the emergence of diverse media outlets that threatened to break the traditional rules of language and style that often limit the mainstream media. Eventually, blogs became the original source of news that traditional media outlets in Egypt began to quote and reference (Journalist).

The boldness of blogs in publishing videos and explicit commentary is not without its own consequences for the citizen journalists. Egyptian bloggers constantly face the challenge of being undermined of their credibility by the traditional media, which is often fueled by the conservative values of the country. Another challenge that Egyptian bloggers also face is pressure from the state, which established various laws that threatened bloggers with jail time. Interior Minister Habib Al-Adly accused Egyptian bloggers of tarnishing the reputation of the Egyptian police and of endangering national security. Accusations such as these continue to risk the lives of bloggers as well as the platform of free expression on the media (UNHRC).

Thus, the government of Egypt is preparing a law for internet publishing, which is likely going to target bloggers and inhibit the freedom of the blogging platform. Many bloggers may lack professional or trained

language skills, documentation, and objectivity, qualities demanded of a journalist, yet they are nothing but courageous.

In Egypt, a journalist can be jailed for a “publishing crime”, but they have support from the journalist union. Bloggers, on the other hand, are left in the open without any kind of protection. Furthermore, the more controversial the issues that bloggers address, the greater dangers and retributions they face at the hands of the government (Journalist).

Research Questions

1. What is the role of media in addressing the imbalances we mentioned, and how can media exercise this role?
2. To what extent do the older media use new platforms to amplify the space and extend the impact of their journalism regarding press freedom?
3. Does new media make a difference to traditional media and to the wider political environment for generic press freedom?
4. Do governments, public bodies and administrations engage positively in implementing the law with necessary training and resources for officials? What are some provisions or laws made in individual countries and will they facilitate access to information?
5. Should international humanitarian law create a separate set of laws protecting the rights of journalists?
6. Which actions can be taken to reverse the trend of rising murders of journalists?
7. What can journalists and media institutions do to improve their own safety?
8. What is the role of press freedom organizations and UNESCO in combatting impunity and securing the safety of journalists?

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