



Main Model United Nations Conference

Frankfurt am Main, Germany

17th Session

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Challenges of a Changing Global Order – Responding to Emerging Conflicts



BACKGROUND

GUIDE

PRESS

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Main Model United Nations Conference 2022

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1. Introduction

Honourable Delegates,

Thank you for joining us in the MainMUN press team! Together we will be responsible for documenting the MainMUN conference of 2022. Since the conference will take place online, this task will be especially interesting and vital. We will help the delegates to get a feeling of the discussions in all the other committees, the most exciting speeches and also the impact these have on our simulated world: in short, you will be front and center for all the watercooler moments of MainMUN 2022.

To make matters even more interesting, each of you will simulate a specific press agency, so while your task is to report on the happenings of MainMUN, you can do this “in-character”. Different aspects of our debates will be relevant for the three distinct press agencies and it will be interesting to see how your reports might differ.

To prepare you for tasks as press, we have written a short guide for you to give you an overview of what to expect.

Please tell us until March, 3rd which committees you would like to cover during the conference – you can find information on them on the MainMUN website. Try giving us two or three committees in order of preference.

Do you have any special press experience? Are you a master with a camera or amazing at photohop? Let us know and we’ll make sure to let you shine during the conference.

We look forward to meeting all of you! If you have any questions before or during the conference, we can confer via our Zoom or in our press channel on Ryver.

2. Press Agencies

At MainMUN 2022, we will simulate three distinctive press agencies:

- British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)
- Xinhua
- Al Jazeera

The following chapters give you a brief overview over these press agencies. In addition, you will need to research your allocated agency in more detail to properly represent it during the conference.

2.1. British Broadcasting Corporation

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) is the national broadcasting agency of the United Kingdom and provides a wide portfolio of news and entertainment. It is the oldest broadcaster and also the largest broadcaster (by employees) in the world and poses a significant cultural impact in many Western countries, especially English-speaking ones. As its status as a national agency implies, it is funded by a licence fee levied upon all British households. While many BBC programs focus on their British audience, its BBC World Service increases the agency's reach to 210 million non-British viewers a week in over 40 languages.

BBC's main press division is BBC News which airs via television and radio and also maintains an online presence. Its mandate is to provide "impartial news and information to help people understand and engage with the world around them".¹ Much criticism is levelled against the BBC, especially regarding their foreign reporting. However, these critics are often contradictory, with the BBC, for example, being accused of both having a pro-Israel and pro-Palestine bias.

2.2. Xinhua News Agency

Xinhua is the national broadcasting agency of the People's Republic of China. It is the largest of its kind in China and maintains the largest number of press correspondents worldwide. Xinhua has strong ties with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and is integrated on a state level. As such, the news agency can be described as the official state media organ and provides services for the CCP.

Under the China Xinhua News Network Corporation, Xinhua operates CNC World since 2010, a TV news network broadcasting in English. It can be reached in roughly 200 countries and aims to introduce China's perspective to an international audience. New forms of media are also in the repertoire of the agency, with their utilization of social media and targeted advertisements being noted, for example during the protests in Hong Kong 2019 or during the COVID-19 pandemic. Both

¹ BBC (2017): The Royal Charter. Online: <https://www.bbc.com/aboutthebbc/governance/charter>. Page 3.

in its domestic as well as international broadcasts, Xinhua provides news that are tailored to the CCP and their party line. Its goal is to promote a favourable view of China and its government.

2.3. Al Jazeera

Al Jazeera is a provider of news affiliated with the Qatari government. As one of the largest broadcasters in the Arabic world, Al Jazeera claims to reach 40 million viewers.² Its international reach is further increased by cooperation with Cable News Network (CNN) and the BBC, which includes the exchange of interview and news footage. Since 2006, Al Jazeera airs Al Jazeera English and aims to provide news on the Global South, the Arabic world, and the Middle East for an international audience. It is readily available in the form of livestreaming (via YouTube), but traditional ways of cable and satellite are also available. As such, it has an audience reach of roughly 130 million viewers in over 100 countries.

The reputation Al Jazeera enjoys is largely positive, especially regarding their English branch, although it has been noted that the Arabic and the English program differ in their tone.³ Many staff members have previously worked for Western corporations, such as the BBC and the American Broadcasting Company (ABC) and as previously mentioned, Al Jazeera is often used as a reference or cited in Western press coverage of the Arabic world. Having said that, especially the US government has levelled harsh criticism of Al Jazeera, accusing them of an anti-American and anti-Israel bias. Israel itself has issued a boycott in response to a 2008 incident involving favourable press coverage of Samir Kuntar who has been involved with the Palestine Liberation Front and the killing of four Israeli. As a counter point, then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has lauded Al Jazeera for providing genuine news.⁴

3. Press during MainMUN

3.1. Articles

With each of you assigned to one committee for the duration of the conference, you are expected to write at least one article daily outlining the progress that has been made in the committee. Keeping in mind that no one has time for or interest in reading detailed accounts of the speakers-time-setting, aim for short articles, outlining the substantive matters discussed in the debate! You can try and keep it concise with the use of bullet points and concentrate on what the committee has achieved during the day. What topics were hotly debated - which opinions were brought forward, which new allies have found each other?

² http://www.allied-media.com/aljazeera/al_jazeera_viewers_demographics.html

³ <https://ajrarchive.org/article.asp?id=5077>

⁴ https://www.huffpost.com/entry/hillary-clinton-calls-al-_n_830890

An article should have the appropriate structure of an academic essay, ideally. This means about 300-400 words. For each article, you should think of one key element for the essay, be it the sophisticated reaction to a problem, the underlying cause of a heated debate or something along these lines. Try to find three points, that elaborate on this main problem, and write a brief conclusion. Keep in mind that orthography and language should also be correct, before the article is published onto the site.

3.2. Interviews

We love a good interview! Whether it's an especially controversial delegate, a chair or another team member, an international delegate - make their voices heard!

Good preparation here is key. Since the conference will be online, many pitfalls regarding the technical aspects fall away. However, make sure beforehand that you can screen capture and record the audio of both you and the interviewee. Preparation of the questions is also vital. The interviewees also need to be chosen and instructed accordingly. "Proper length" in this case means not too long and not too short, while not digressing too much from it. Interviews should be around 2-5 minutes to keep them both short (so one can watch them during downtimes) and informational.

From a video perspective, getting interviews done is one of the simplest videos one could make, as it requires a minimum of editing. If interviewing in written form, be sure to write transcribe answers properly and to not fictionalise accounts given.

3.3. Crisis Information

As more information becomes known about the crisis, delegates will rely on the press team to keep on top of recent developments. The easiest method of doing this, is to publish written articles with the crisis updates and the delegates' reactions.

3.4. Photos/Videos

As the conference will be online, many motives for picture aren't available. However, we can be creative! If you have any ideas on how to capture the conference, let us know! If you have any drawing experience, maybe have a shot at imagining how the debate would look like in real life, like courtroom drawings?

Apart from that, normal screenshots are also encouraged. If you interview someone, please ask them for a quick snapshot, so it will be easier to recognise the interviewee if you do not record them on video anyway. Make sure that every media material you collect from participants is with the individual's consent.

The same limitations of photos apply to videos. But if you have any ideas, we'd gladly assist you in creating and distributing.

3.5. Other

Looking at the real broadcasts of your press agency might give you additional ideas for reporting.

If there is any other type of creative contribution you would like to make - be it drawing comics, preparing a podcast or comparing our chairs to Game of Thrones characters, you are more than welcome to do so. Being a member of the press team at MainMUN will enable you to explore projects of your own, and we look forward to hearing your ideas.

3.6. Gossip/Memes

A fun part of MUNs is the gossip between delegates and committees. You are welcome to report on any gossip brought towards you and can bring your own observations forward. Delegates will be able to submit their gossip via a google form as well. All gossip will be posted on a separate feed to not distract from the main news. The same goes for memes. We, at MainMUN absolutely love memes, so you are welcome to make your own and share them with the others. Be sure to filter out all gossip and memes that are disrespectful to any member of the MainMUN, as we do not tolerate any bullying or slander during the conference. When posting gossip you need to signal it in the Ryver news feed with [GOSSIP], memes should be marked with [MEME] in the “fun feed”

3.7. Briefing

This is a brief outline of how we picture the press team to function. However, you will also be briefed by the press team in the beginning and perhaps throughout the conference, where we will discuss the details and introduce the press team members guiding and supporting you. Make sure to always keep in touch with each other, so that duplicate content and clashes of press members in one area are avoided.

We are looking forward to meeting all of you and to have a great time documenting the MainMUN!

Kind regards,

The MainMUN Press Team