



## **Main Model United Nations Conference**

Frankfurt am Main, Germany

18<sup>th</sup> Session

2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> of March 2023

**SDGs – Leave No One Behind**

# **BACKGROUND**

# **GUIDE**

# **PRESS**

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*Main Model United Nations Conference 2023*

[www.mainmun.de](http://www.mainmun.de)

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# 1. Word of Welcome

Honourable Delegates,

Thank you for joining us in the MainMUN press team! Together we will be responsible for documenting the MainMUN conference of 2023 and providing attendees with an overview of what is happening. 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 centre for all the watercooler moments of MainMUN 2023.

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 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 to give you an overview of what to expect.

Please tell us by February 23<sup>rd</sup> which committees you would like to cover during the conference – you can find them on the MainMUN website. Try giving us two or three committees in order of preference. Please consider the interests of your press agency while making your choice.

Do you have any exceptional press experience? Are you a master with a camera or excellent at photoshop? Let us know and to let you shine during the conference. We will have a selection of technical equipment on site and will support you with your ideas on informing the delegates via different media channels.

We look forward to meeting all of you! If you have questions before our conference, do not hesitate to contact us via email or our Press channel on Ryver. If you have any questions during the conference, we can confer in our shared press room or our press channel on Ryver.

## **2. General Rules and Guidelines**

To ensure smooth conference proceedings and a diplomatic atmosphere, certain rules must be followed and kept in mind.

### **2.1. Decorum**

The most important rule is to respect the conference and its people. Please stay in diplomatic conduct and be respectful to delegates and chairs by addressing them with “honourable chair/distinguished delegate” or any other honorific form of address. Decorum further means not disturbing the committee sessions. If you enter a committee while a delegate is giving a speech, it is polite to wait by the door and only walk to your seat when the delegate has finished his or her speech. Also, please do not interrupt the chair or any delegate during a speech, as it is impolite and undiplomatic.

### **2.2. Dress Code: Western Business Attire**

To preserve the dignity of the conference, all journalists are obliged to dress in an appropriate and similar manner. The dress code at MainMUN is western business attire.

### **2.3. Press Coordinators**

In your designated role as a news agency representative, you are mostly free to move around without a specific schedule. You are also allowed to work in multiple places. However, it is expected to regularly report to your press coordinator and check into the press room. Your editors-in-chief are there to help you keep in character and to publish your news items. They will also make sure you stay in character and use your bias accordingly. They will furthermore proofread your news items. You need to know that your editors-in-chief are not biased but impartial. If you have any questions during the conference or feel mistreated, bring them to the attention of your editors-in-chief. They are your contact person and are there to oversee your work in general and help you improve it. Requests and advice by the press coordinators should not be ignored but at least answered.

### **2.4. Sovereign States**

Bear in mind that every delegate represents a sovereign state and is therefore under no obligation to talk to you or give interviews if they do not want to. A delegate may thus refuse or ignore you at any

time. As a journalist, you are free to report on these refusals in a press statement or article.

## **2.5. Bias**

Just as delegates do not have to explain if they refuse to talk to you, you do not have to give a reason if you do not want to speak to a specific country. As a news agency representative, you should embrace your role bias and act accordingly. This means researching your writing style, political views and overall goals. Please bear in mind to act on this bias solely regarding delegates representing a country or other news agencies while playing their role. Never act on this bias against a participant personally.

## **2.6. Motion to Exclude the Public**

The delegates of any committee may bring in the motion to exclude the public at any time. If that motion passes, the public (consisting of journalists, NGO representatives and observer states) has to leave the committee room at once. You may rejoin this committee after 30 minutes. During this time, you are free to visit the other committees, or return to your workplace and write articles, press releases or prepare interviews. You may, of course, write about your exclusion if you feel it was unwarranted.

## **2.7. Chairs Authority**

In addition to the motion to exclude the public, the chair may ask a journalist to leave a committee if the chairperson feels you have misbehaved rudely or disturbed the session in some other way. The chair will inform you about the length of this exclusion and its reason. Please bear in mind that the chair has the right to do so, and you will have to leave the room. If you feel the chair has excluded you wrongly, you may approach the chair later during a break or unmoderated caucus. You may also send him a note stating your reasoning, or you can always talk to your editors-in-chief.

## **2.8. Unmoderated Caucus**

As the representative of a news agency, you are not allowed to give speeches in the committee during formal session. Next to official breaks, the unmoderated caucus is the perfect time to conduct interviews, talk to delegates directly and lobby for your cause. For more detailed information about the different motions for delegates and how they can shape the sessions, please read the MainMUN Rules of Procedure.

## 2.9. Working Paper and Draft Resolutions

During the conference, the goal of the delegates in their committees is to produce a resolution to their topic and crisis. These final documents result from working papers and draft resolutions, which the delegates work on during the four days of the conference. As a journalist, you may ask for access to these documents from delegates. It is a good idea to get access to as many working papers as possible, so you can compare the work of all committees and see countries' positions and goals. You may, of course, comment on these documents in a press release or article or conduct interviews about the working paper. All this work has to be done with appropriate bias.

## 2.10. Pictures and Personal Rights

Taking pictures is always a possibility. You are allowed to take photographs during the formal session, during the informal session, during breaks and also during socials. Make sure you only disturb the session a little by walking around constantly or being too close to the delegates, or you might get excluded from the committee.

## 3. Press Agencies

At MainMUN 2023, we will simulate three distinctive press agencies:

- Al Jazeera
- Washington Post
- China News Service

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

### 3.1. 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.<sup>1</sup> Its international reach is further increased by cooperation with Cable News Network (CNN) and the BBC, which includes the exchange of interviews and news footage. Since 2006, Al Jazeera has aired 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

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1 [http://www.allied-media.com/aljazeera/al\\_jazeera\\_viewers\\_demographics.html](http://www.allied-media.com/aljazeera/al_jazeera_viewers_demographics.html)

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.

Al Jazeera's reputation is mainly positive, especially regarding its English branch, although it has been noted that the Arabic and the English program differ in their tone.<sup>2</sup> Many staff members have previously worked for Western corporations, such as the BBC and the American Broadcasting Company (ABC). As previously mentioned, Al Jazeera is often referenced or cited in Western press coverage of the Arabic world. 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.<sup>3</sup>

### **3.2. Washington Post**

The Washington Post is an American daily newspaper based in Washington DC. The Washington Post was founded by a Democrat in 1877. Even today it is said to have a slight left bias.<sup>4</sup> Among the first journalists to write for the Washington Post were Joseph Pulitzer, whom the Pulitzer Prize was named after and the later president Theodore Roosevelt.<sup>5</sup> Since the 1930s, the Washington Post has assigned itself "Seven Principles for the Conduct of a Newspaper", committing itself to neutrality, to a readership of all ages and notably the coverage of events worldwide.<sup>6</sup>

According to the Washington Post<sup>7</sup> nearly 65 million unique visitors visited their site in May 2022, thus surpassing several leading American newspapers but not reaching the numbers of CNN or the New York Times. The Washington Post has won 47 Pulitzer Prizes and employs around 800 journalists. One of the Pulitzer Prizes was earned on the coverage of the riot at the US Capitol.<sup>8</sup>

Today, the news provider is owned by the founder of Amazon Jeff Bezos since 2013. In 2022 it is expected to lose money due to a loss in paid subscriptions and digital ad revenue.<sup>9</sup>

### **3.3. China News Service**

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

3 [https://www.huffpost.com/entry/hillary-clinton-calls-al-\\_n\\_830890](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/hillary-clinton-calls-al-_n_830890)

4 <https://www.allsides.com/news-source/washington-post-media-bias>

5 <https://www.washingtonpost.com/company-history/>

6 <https://www.washingtonpost.com/about-the-post/>

7 <https://www.washingtonpost.com/pr/2022/06/23/nearly-65-million-people-visited-washington-post-site-may-2022/>

8 <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/30/business/media/washington-post-jeff-bezos-revenue.html>

9 Ibid.

The China News Service (CNS) is a state-owned news provider based in Beijing. It is one of two state-owned news agencies in China, the other, the bigger one being the Xinhua News agency. Both publish official government standpoints and are thus widely quoted. CNS was founded in October 1952 and is now run directly by the United Front Work Department of the Chinese Communist Party.<sup>10</sup> Its predecessor was the International News Agency, which was founded in 1938. CNS pioneered an online presence in Asia by publishing its website in 1995 in Hong Kong. CNS employs around 1000 journalists and entertains around 20 outbound stations.<sup>11</sup>

Interestingly, CNS runs a multi-platform approach and is present on many different social platforms, especially prominent on mobile platforms such as Weibo or WeChat<sup>12</sup>. According to them, their “all-media communication matrix with websites, apps and social media accounts” reaches 400 million users. They claim to be the “Most Socially Attractive Website”. China News Weekly is published in seven languages. Their official English website claims to provide first-hand insights into Chinese life.<sup>13</sup>

Like other state-run media agencies CNS is often criticised for being subject to censorship by the Chinese government.

## 4. Press during MainMUN

### 4.1. 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 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 keep it concise with bullet points and concentrate on what the committee has achieved during the day. What were topics hotly debated - which opinions were brought forward, and which new allies have found each other?

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: 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 on the site. Therefore, check your spelling via online tools like Grammarly.

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10 <https://www.chinanews.com.cn/common/footer/aboutus.shtml>

11 <http://www.ecns.cn/aboutus.shtml>

12 <https://china.ahk.de/market-info/chinas-media-landscape>

13 <http://www.ecns.cn/aboutus.shtml>



## **4.2. Breaking News**

As the crisis events develop in all committees during the conference, report on significant developments. These breaking news pieces should be kept relatively short, and have exciting headline. State what is happening where, who is responsible and why. If you do not have all the facts, you may of course interpret and speculate within your role as a respective news agency journalist. Bias, within the scope of your role, is a suitable means to put blame or suspicion on a country or delegate. Breaking news should be the most frequent pieces you write. In interaction with the delegation of your home country, you can even release breaking news without a crisis to draw attention to another delegation, committee or NGO.

## **4.3. Interviews**

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

Good preparation here is key. Make sure to familiarise yourself with your technical equipment and possibilities. How noisy is the background? Will it be outside or inside? If you want to film it, make sure to either check whether our on-site studio is available or look for a quiet spot at the event location where you can conduct your interview undisturbed. Your phone will probably already allow you to make good quality recordings and videos – if you check your circumstances (light, background noise, ...).

Preparation of the questions is also vital. The interviewees also need to be chosen and instructed accordingly. “Proper length” 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 most uncomplicated videos, as it requires a minimum of editing. If interviewing in written form, be sure to write and transcribe answers properly and not to fictionalise the accounts given.

## **4.4. 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 is publishing written articles about the crisis updates and the delegates’ reactions.

## **4.5. Photos/Videos**

A picture says more than a thousand words – you should include as many pictures as possible. Breaking news does not necessarily need to be enhanced by a picture, but articles and interviews should. If you need a specific picture taken, for example, one of a specific delegate, tell your editor, and we will send a photographer or a camera with you.

Suppose you have experience with shooting videos or are simply eager to try it. In that case you are welcome to prepare short clips of the conference, be it interviews with conference participants or informational videos. While editing is optional, a high-quality standard is always appreciated, and we try our best to cater to these wishes. If a recap video is planned by one of the press members, one could always collect the material and edit it at home, or you can write the treatment (the plan of how the video should work). We are here to support you as best as we can with that.

## **4.6. Podcasts**

Podcasts come in all shapes and sizes. That is good news for you, because you have lots of room to be creative and make something, you are excited about. Some podcasts are long — sometimes an hour or more. Others are less than 10 minutes. Some podcasts are about news. Some feature people having conversations. During the conference, you can record interviews with delegates and cut them into a podcast along with your article. You can also invite them to our media station and record with our press coordinators. Alternatively, you can get together with other journalists from your newspaper and talk about committee developments.

## **4.7. Other**

Looking at the actual 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 - 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 your own projects, and we look forward to hearing your ideas.

## **4.8. 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 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”.

#### **4.9. Briefing**

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

We are also there for you to support you in case of any technical questions.