



THE MUN FACTORY

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UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

(U N H R C)

DELEGATE GUIDE

AGENDA

**Discussing Safeguarding the Rights of Journalists and Whistle-blowers
from State Repression and Developing Legal Mechanisms Against Arbitrary
Detention and Censorship**

30 – 31 OCTOBER & 1 NOVEMBER

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A note from The MUN Factory

This guide is a starting point, not a substitute for independent research. Delegates are expected to read the primary sources listed on the final page and to arrive with a grounded, country-accurate position.

02 About the UNHRC

Introduction

The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) is the principal inter-governmental body within the UN system responsible for promoting and protecting human rights around the globe. Established by the General Assembly through resolution 60/251 on 15 March 2006, it replaced the former Commission on Human Rights, which had been criticised for politicisation and inconsistent membership standards. The Council is based in Geneva and reports directly to the General Assembly.

Mandate

The Council's mandate is to strengthen the promotion and protection of human rights worldwide, address situations of human rights violations, and make recommendations on them. It is empowered to discuss thematic issues on all human rights, engage in dialogue with governments, and respond to human rights emergencies through special sessions.

Membership

The Council is composed of 47 Member States, elected by the General Assembly for staggered three-year terms through a direct and secret ballot. Seats are distributed geographically to ensure balanced representation:

Regional Group	Seats
African States	13
Asia-Pacific States	13
Latin American and Caribbean States (GRULAC)	8
Western European and Other States (WEOG)	7
Eastern European States	6

Members are expected to uphold the highest standards of human rights and are subject to review under the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) during their term. A Member State's membership can be suspended by a two-thirds majority of the General Assembly for committing gross and systematic human rights violations.

Functions and Responsibilities

- Conducting the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the human rights records of all 193 UN Member States on a periodic cycle.
- Appointing and receiving reports from Special Procedures — independent Special Rapporteurs, Working Groups, and Independent Experts on thematic and country mandates.
- Operating a confidential complaint procedure through which individuals and organisations can bring communications about consistent patterns of gross violations to the Council's attention.
- Convening regular sessions three times a year (in March, June, and September) and special sessions at the request of one-third of members to address urgent situations.
- Adopting resolutions, decisions, and Presidential Statements that shape international human rights standards and guide Member State conduct.

- Providing a platform for dialogue among states, National Human Rights Institutions, and civil society, including NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC.

Powers and Limitations

Unlike the Security Council, the Human Rights Council has no enforcement powers. Its resolutions are not legally binding and it cannot impose sanctions, authorise the use of force, or compel state compliance. Its influence instead rests on diplomatic pressure, public scrutiny, fact-finding, and moral authority. The Council relies heavily on cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), which provides expertise, secretariat support, and independent reporting. Because resolutions are adopted by vote or consensus among States with widely differing political systems, outcomes are frequently the product of negotiation and compromise rather than the strongest possible language.

Working Methods

- Regular sessions are held for a total of at least 10 weeks per year, divided across three main sessions.
- Resolutions may be adopted by consensus or by recorded vote; many resolutions on sensitive thematic issues, including the safety of journalists, have historically been adopted by consensus to maximise universality.
- The Council may establish Commissions of Inquiry or fact-finding missions to investigate specific situations.
- Civil society organisations, National Human Rights Institutions, and other stakeholders may deliver oral and written statements during sessions, subject to accreditation.

03 Understanding the Agenda

Definitions

- **Arbitrary detention** — deprivation of liberty that is imposed without legal basis, without due process, or in violation of internationally recognised rights, even if technically permitted under domestic law.
- **Whistle-blower** — an individual, often an insider such as a civil servant, employee, or contractor, who discloses information they reasonably believe reveals wrongdoing, corruption, or threats to public interest or safety.
- **Freedom of expression** — the right to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas of all kinds, protected under Article 19 of the UDHR and the ICCPR, subject only to narrow, legally prescribed restrictions.
- **Press freedom** — the ability of journalists and media outlets to gather, verify, and publish information without undue governmental interference, censorship, or fear of reprisal.
- **Censorship** — the suppression, restriction, or control of information, speech, or publication by a government or other authority, whether through law, technology, or informal pressure.

Scope of the Agenda

This agenda asks the Council to examine two interlinked problems and to propose remedies for both. The first is the pattern of state repression directed at journalists and whistle-blowers — killings, arbitrary detention, surveillance, and censorship. The second is the comparative absence of robust, harmonised legal mechanisms — domestically and internationally — capable of preventing such repression, protecting those at risk, and holding perpetrators accountable. Delegates are expected to address prevention, protection, and accountability together, rather than treating them as separate problems.

Importance of Press Freedom

A free press is widely recognised as a structural safeguard of democratic governance and public accountability: it enables citizens to access reliable information, exposes corruption and abuse of power, and underpins the right to freedom of opinion and expression guaranteed under Article 19 of the UDHR and ICCPR. Press freedom is also explicitly linked to Sustainable Development Goal 16 on peaceful, just, and inclusive institutions, with the killing of journalists tracked as SDG indicator 16.10.1.

Importance of Whistle-blowers

Whistle-blowers play an indispensable role in exposing corruption, human rights violations, environmental harm, financial fraud, and threats to public health and safety that would otherwise remain hidden. Because insiders often possess unique access to evidence of wrongdoing, protecting them from retaliation — dismissal, prosecution, harassment, or violence — is treated by anti-corruption instruments such as the UN Convention against Corruption as essential to effective governance and the rule of law.

Why the Issue Matters Today

- Two consecutive record years for journalist killings (2024 and 2025) signal that impunity, rather than isolated incidents, is the dominant global trend.
- The expansion of digital surveillance tools, including commercial spyware, has given states unprecedented capacity to monitor, identify, and pre-emptively target journalists and sources.

- Generative AI and algorithmic content moderation are creating new, less visible forms of censorship and disinformation that existing legal frameworks were not designed to address.
- Rising authoritarianism and the use of vague national-security, anti-terrorism, and 'fake news' laws have made legal harassment — rather than only physical violence — a primary tool of repression.
- Armed conflicts in Gaza, Ukraine, Sudan, and elsewhere have made frontline journalism significantly more lethal, exposing gaps in the protection owed to journalists under international humanitarian law.

04 Historical Background

Evolution of Press Freedom

Modern conceptions of press freedom trace back to Enlightenment-era declarations, including France's 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, which recognised free communication of ideas as one of the most precious rights. The twentieth century saw press freedom formalised as an international human right, most notably through Article 19 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 19 of the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Development of International Human Rights Law

Alongside the UDHR and ICCPR, instruments such as the Convention Against Torture (1984) and regional treaties (the European Convention on Human Rights, the American Convention on Human Rights, and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights) progressively built out protections against arbitrary detention, torture, and censorship. Civil society monitoring emerged in parallel: the Committee to Protect Journalists was founded in 1981 and Reporters Without Borders in 1985, both becoming central to independent global tracking of press freedom violations. UNESCO's 1991 Windhoek Declaration on press pluralism and independence later gave rise to World Press Freedom Day, marked annually on 3 May.

Rise of Digital Surveillance

The post-2001 expansion of state security powers, and the 2013 disclosures by former US intelligence contractor Edward Snowden regarding mass surveillance programmes, brought global attention to the scale of state monitoring capacity. More recently, the 2021 'Pegasus Project' investigation by an international media consortium revealed that commercial spyware had been used by multiple governments to target journalists, human rights defenders, and political figures, intensifying calls for regulation of surveillance technology.

Increasing Attacks on Journalists

Attacks on journalists have escalated in both conflict and peacetime settings over the past three decades, driving repeated action by international bodies. Notable cases delegates should be familiar with include the 2017 car-bomb assassination of Maltese investigative journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia, the 2018 killing of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi inside the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, and the 2018 imprisonment of Reuters journalists Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo in Myanmar for reporting on military abuses. Since 2022, Russia's invasion of Ukraine and, since October 2023, the war in Gaza have driven the deadliest years for journalists on record.

Timeline of Major Events

Year	Event
1789	France's Declaration of the Rights of Man recognises free expression.
1948	UDHR Article 19 establishes freedom of opinion and expression as a universal right.
1966	ICCPR Article 19 and Article 9 create binding obligations on expression and liberty.
1991	UNESCO's Windhoek Declaration; origin of World Press Freedom Day (3 May).
2006	UNHRC established by GA resolution 60/251, replacing the Commission on Human Rights.
2012	UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity adopted.

Year	Event
2013	GA resolution 68/163 declares 2 November the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists.
2013	Snowden disclosures expose the scale of state mass-surveillance programmes.
2017–2018	Killings of Daphne Caruana Galizia and Jamal Khashoggi draw global attention to state-linked violence against journalists.
2021	Pegasus Project reveals commercial spyware used against journalists worldwide.
2022–2025	Russia–Ukraine war and the Gaza war drive record annual journalist death tolls.
2025	HRC resolution 59/15 adds new language on SLAPPs, surveillance, and conflict-related risks to journalists.

05 Current Global Situation

The Numbers at a Glance

129 Journalists and media workers killed in 2025 — a second consecutive record year (CPJ)	330 Journalists imprisoned worldwide as of 1 Dec 2025 — the fifth straight year above 300 (CPJ)	313 Internet shutdowns recorded across 52 countries in 2025 — the highest since tracking began in 2016 (Access Now)
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Statistics on Attacks Against Journalists

According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, roughly two-thirds of journalists killed in 2025 died as a result of Israeli military action, the large majority of them Palestinian journalists reporting from Gaza; CPJ notes Israel has now killed more journalists than any government on record since the organisation began collecting data in 1992. Sudan, Ukraine, Mexico, and the Philippines also registered significant tolls, and CPJ documented a rising share of killings carried out by drone strikes. Beyond conflict zones, journalists investigating organised crime and corruption in countries such as Mexico continue to face targeted assassination.

Internet Shutdowns

The #KeepItOn coalition, led by Access Now, documented at least 313 deliberate internet shutdowns across 52 countries in 2025 — the highest annual figure since monitoring began in 2016, and an increase on 2024's previous record. Myanmar recorded the most shutdowns for a second consecutive year, while conflict remained the single largest trigger globally. The report also flagged a new tactic: the deliberate disruption of satellite-based internet connectivity in several countries.

Arbitrary Detention

CPJ's prison census recorded 330 journalists jailed as of 1 December 2025, extending a five-year run of totals above 300. More than a third of those imprisoned were serving sentences exceeding five years, and close to half had not been sentenced at all — some held without trial for over five years, in clear tension with the fair-trial guarantees required under international law.

Digital Censorship

Governments increasingly pair network shutdowns with targeted platform bans, content-takedown demands, and mandatory data-localisation rules that pressure technology companies into complicity with censorship. The proliferation of commercial surveillance spyware has additionally allowed states to identify sources and pre-empt reporting before publication, rather than merely punishing it afterward.

Recent Examples from Different Regions

- Middle East: Israeli military operations in Gaza have produced the highest concentration of journalist deaths in the last two years, per RSF; Saudi Arabia's press-freedom ranking fell further after the 2025 execution of journalist Turki al-Jasser.
- Europe: A near-25-year low in RSF's global press freedom score, with legal protections deteriorating in a majority of monitored states even outside conflict zones.

- Asia-Pacific: Myanmar remains the world leader in internet shutdowns; China continues to hold the largest number of imprisoned journalists globally.
- Latin America: Mexico continues to record the highest number of unresolved disappearances of journalists worldwide, alongside a wave of targeted killings tied to organised crime.
- Africa: The Sahel region has seen a sharp decline in press freedom amid armed group activity and military-led governments restricting independent reporting.

06 International Legal Framework

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)

Article 19 guarantees the right to freedom of opinion and expression, including the freedom to seek, receive, and impart information through any media. Article 9 prohibits arbitrary arrest, detention, or exile, forming the normative foundation for all subsequent instruments on this agenda.

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)

Article 19 makes freedom of expression a binding legal obligation for States Parties, permitting restrictions only where provided by law and necessary for respect of others' rights, national security, public order, or public health/morals — the so-called three-part test of legality, legitimacy, and necessity. Article 9 similarly binds States Parties to prohibit arbitrary detention and guarantee judicial review of any deprivation of liberty.

Convention Against Torture (1984)

Prohibits torture and cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment absolutely and without exception — directly relevant given documented patterns of ill-treatment of detained journalists and whistle-blowers in custody.

UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC)

Article 33 calls on States Parties to consider incorporating protective measures for individuals who report acts of corruption in good faith, forming one of the few binding international references to whistle-blower protection, though its language is framed as a recommendation rather than a strict obligation.

UNESCO Framework

UNESCO holds the UN's lead mandate on press freedom and safety of journalists, publishing a biennial Director-General report on the safety of journalists and the danger of impunity, coordinating World Press Freedom Day, and convening the UN Inter-Agency Meeting on the Safety of Journalists.

UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity

Adopted in 2012 and coordinated by UNESCO, the Plan of Action created the first system-wide UN framework to prevent attacks on journalists, protect those at risk, and prosecute perpetrators, and it established the UN Inter-Agency Network of Focal Points on the Safety of Journalists.

Sustainable Development Goals

SDG 16 commits states to promote peaceful, just, and inclusive institutions; indicator 16.10.1 specifically tracks verified cases of killing, kidnapping, enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention, and torture of journalists, associated media personnel, trade unionists, and human rights advocates, linking press freedom directly to the 2030 development agenda.

Delegate tip

None of these instruments create an enforceable, standalone international crime of 'attacking a journalist' or a binding global whistle-blower protection treaty — identifying and closing that gap is central to this agenda.

07 State Repression

This section outlines the principal mechanisms states use — sometimes overtly, sometimes through nominally lawful means — to silence journalists and whistle-blowers. Delegates should be able to identify which of these tactics their assigned country has been associated with, or has raised concerns about internationally.

Arbitrary Detention

The use of vague national-security, counter-terrorism, or 'anti-fake-news' laws to detain journalists and whistle-blowers without meeting the legality and necessity tests required under the ICCPR. The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention regularly issues opinions finding individual journalists' detentions unlawful.

Enforced Disappearances

Cases in which individuals are detained or abducted by, or with the acquiescence of, state agents, followed by a refusal to acknowledge the detention or disclose the person's fate — leaving journalists and their families outside the protection of the law entirely.

Torture and Ill-Treatment

Physical and psychological abuse of detained journalists and whistle-blowers, frequently used to coerce confessions, reveal sources, or punish reporting, in direct violation of the Convention Against Torture.

Mass Surveillance

The use of signals intelligence, telecommunications interception, and commercial spyware (such as the tools exposed by the 2021 Pegasus Project) to monitor journalists' communications, identify confidential sources, and anticipate publications before they occur.

Internet Shutdowns

Deliberate, state-ordered disruption of internet or mobile network access — often during protests, elections, or armed conflict — to prevent the reporting and circulation of information. 2025 saw a record number of such shutdowns worldwide.

Criminal Defamation

Laws that criminalise insult, defamation, or 'false information' with custodial sentences, used to prosecute journalists for legitimate reporting rather than through civil remedies proportionate to any reputational harm.

Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPPs)

Civil suits — often for defamation — brought not to seek a genuine legal remedy but to burden journalists and whistle-blowers with costly, protracted litigation designed to intimidate them into silence. The Human Rights Council specifically tasked OHCHR with a dedicated study on SLAPPs following its 2024 session, reflecting the growing recognition of legal harassment as a repression tactic distinct from physical violence.

08 Country & Regional Bloc Positions

Positions below are generalised starting points only. Delegates must verify their assigned country's specific record, statements, and voting history — blocs are rarely unanimous on this agenda.

P5 (China, France, Russia, UK, USA)

The P5 are deeply divided. France, the UK, and the US typically co-sponsor press-freedom resolutions and frame the issue around civil and political rights, though all three face domestic criticism over surveillance practices or treatment of journalists. China and Russia generally emphasise state sovereignty, 'information security', and non-interference in domestic affairs, and have historically resisted language they view as enabling external scrutiny of national media and internet governance.

European Union

A consistent advocate for strong, binding-style language on journalist safety and anti-SLAPP protections; the EU's 2024 European Media Freedom Act reflects a regional push toward harmonised legal safeguards that the bloc frequently promotes as a model internationally.

NATO

Not a human-rights body, but member states' security establishments increasingly frame disinformation and hostile information operations as security concerns, which intersects with — and sometimes complicates — press-freedom advocacy, particularly around wartime reporting restrictions.

BRICS

A heterogeneous bloc with no unified position: Brazil and South Africa have supported robust resolutions on journalist safety, while other members prioritise sovereignty-based language and are cautious about frameworks seen as Western-led.

African Union

Legacy of the 1991 Windhoek Declaration gives the region a strong normative foundation for press freedom, but implementation varies widely; several member states have faced criticism for shutdowns, detentions, or restrictive media laws even while supporting AU-level commitments to pluralism.

ASEAN

The bloc's foundational principle of non-interference generally limits collective action on individual members' domestic media laws; national approaches range from relatively open (Philippines, Indonesia) to highly restrictive (Myanmar, Vietnam).

Arab League

Positions vary considerably; several member states frame media regulation around national security and social stability, while others have faced sustained international criticism over high-profile cases involving journalists.

Latin America (GRULAC)

A region with strong civil-society press-freedom advocacy alongside high rates of journalist killings tied to organised crime and corruption reporting, notably in Mexico; several states have supported strengthened UN mechanisms partly in response to domestic pressure.

Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

Generally supportive of international protections but constrained by limited media infrastructure, capacity, and resources; often prioritise practical capacity-building support over new normative language.

09 Previous UN Actions

Important Human Rights Council Resolutions

Resolution	Year	Key Content
A/HRC/RES/33/2	2016	Safety of journalists; condemns impunity for attacks.
A/HRC/RES/39/6	2018	Reaffirms protections; addresses online safety of journalists.
A/HRC/RES/45/18	2020	Safety of journalists during and after conflict and public emergencies.
A/HRC/RES/50/15	2022	Requests OHCHR panel on digital/media literacy and expression.
A/HRC/RES/59/15	2025	Adds new language on SLAPPs, surveillance, and armed conflict; requests OHCHR study on national protection frameworks; adopted by consensus with over 70 co-sponsors.

General Assembly Resolutions

- A/RES/68/163 (2013) — declared 2 November the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists.
- A/RES/72/175 (2017) and A/RES/74/157 (2019) — successive resolutions on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity.
- A/RES/76/173 (2021) — reaffirms the safety of journalists agenda, including online safety.

Special Rapporteurs

The Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, a mandate held since 1993, is the principal independent expert on this agenda, issuing thematic and country reports and communications with individual governments regarding specific cases.

Universal Periodic Review

Press freedom and treatment of journalists and whistle-blowers feature prominently in UPR recommendations to states, providing a recurring, peer-driven mechanism for scrutiny even where a state is not the subject of a dedicated resolution.

UNESCO Initiatives

UNESCO's biennial Director-General report on the safety of journalists tracks killings and judicial follow-up worldwide; OHCHR figures cited in recent Council discussions put the impunity rate for journalist killings at roughly 85%, underscoring the scale of the accountability gap.

OHCHR Reports

OHCHR co-chairs the UN Network of Focal Points on the Safety of Journalists and has, pursuant to Council resolutions, convened expert panels and prepared studies on issues including SLAPPs, digital literacy, and — following the 2025 resolution — the effectiveness of national protection frameworks for journalists.

10 Questions a Resolution Should Address

A strong draft resolution answers concrete questions rather than restating the problem. Delegates should use the following as a checklist while drafting operative clauses.

1. Protecting journalists: What preventive measures — risk assessments, rapid-response mechanisms, protective escorts, or safe-haven arrangements — should states and the UN system establish for journalists working in high-risk environments, including armed conflict?
2. Whistle-blower protection laws: What minimum legal safeguards (protection from retaliation, confidentiality of identity, safe reporting channels) should states be encouraged or required to adopt, building on Article 33 of UNCAC?
3. Ending arbitrary detention: What review mechanisms — judicial oversight, time limits, access to counsel — can ensure detentions of journalists and whistle-blowers meet ICCPR standards, and how should the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention's role be strengthened?
4. Judicial independence: How can the resolution encourage impartial, timely investigation and prosecution of crimes against journalists, given that roughly 85% of killings remain unresolved?
5. International monitoring: Should a dedicated reporting or verification mechanism track state compliance, and how would it interact with existing OHCHR, UNESCO, and Special Rapporteur reporting lines?
6. Digital rights: What obligations should govern internet shutdowns, platform access, and content-blocking, particularly during elections, protests, or armed conflict?
7. Artificial intelligence and surveillance: What safeguards should regulate state and commercial use of surveillance technology, spyware, and AI-driven content moderation that affects journalists and sources?
8. Capacity building: What technical assistance, training, and resourcing should be offered to states — particularly SIDS and least-developed countries — to strengthen domestic protections?
9. International cooperation: How should states, regional bodies, civil society, and the private sector (including technology and telecommunications companies) coordinate to close existing accountability gaps?

Drafting tip

Operative clauses should specify who is responsible for an action, what that action is, and by when or through what mechanism it will be reviewed — vague calls to 'urge' or 'encourage' without a follow-up mechanism rarely produce change.

11 Delegate Research Guide

Use this checklist to build a complete, defensible country position before the conference begins.

Country Profile Checklist

- Current press freedom ranking and trend (RSF World Press Freedom Index).
- Number of journalists killed, imprisoned, or missing in the last five years (CPJ, RSF).
- Record on internet shutdowns or platform restrictions, if any (Access Now #KeepItOn).
- Existence and content of national whistle-blower protection legislation.
- Existence and use of criminal defamation, sedition, or 'fake news' laws.
- Country's stated position in past HRC or UNGA debates on this agenda.
- Any Special Rapporteur communications or Working Group on Arbitrary Detention opinions concerning the country.
- Outcomes and recommendations from the country's most recent Universal Periodic Review.

Statistics to Research

- RSF World Press Freedom Index score and rank (current and five-year trend).
- CPJ prison census figures for the country, if applicable.
- Internet shutdown frequency and duration, if applicable.
- Judicial outcomes / impunity rate for crimes against journalists domestically.

Domestic Laws

- Constitutional protections for freedom of expression and due process.
- Criminal procedure rules governing detention, bail, and judicial review.
- Media, cybercrime, anti-terrorism, or national-security laws that reference journalists or online expression.
- Whistle-blower protection statutes, and the government bodies responsible for enforcing them.

International Treaties Ratified

- ICCPR, and whether the country has accepted the Optional Protocol allowing individual complaints.
- Convention Against Torture, and its Optional Protocol.
- UN Convention Against Corruption.
- Relevant regional human rights conventions (European, American, or African systems).

NGOs Operating in the Country

- Local and international press-freedom or human-rights organisations active domestically.
- Any restrictions the country places on NGO registration, funding, or operation.

Key Stakeholders, Allies, and Opponents

- Key stakeholders: government ministries responsible for media/information, national human rights institutions, journalist unions, and telecom regulators.
- Possible allies: states with a similar press-freedom record, shared regional bloc positions, or aligned voting history.
- Possible opponents: states likely to resist proposed language on sovereignty, surveillance regulation, or binding monitoring mechanisms.

12 Glossary, Resources & Bibliography

Glossary

- **Arbitrary Detention** — deprivation of liberty without legal basis or due process, or otherwise inconsistent with international human rights guarantees.
- **Whistle-blower** — an individual who discloses information believed to reveal wrongdoing or a threat to the public interest.
- **Freedom of Expression** — the right to hold opinions and to seek, receive, and impart information without interference.
- **Press Freedom** — the ability of media to operate without undue governmental restriction or reprisal.
- **Censorship** — suppression or control of information or speech by an authority.
- **Due Process** — the legal requirement that the state respect all rights owed to a person, including fair notice, hearing, and judicial review.
- **Rule of Law** — the principle that all persons and institutions are accountable to laws that are publicly promulgated, equally enforced, and independently adjudicated.
- **Surveillance** — the monitoring of communications, movements, or behaviour, whether through physical, electronic, or digital means.
- **SLAPP** — Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation; litigation intended to intimidate or silence rather than to seek a genuine legal remedy.
- **Universal Jurisdiction** — the principle allowing states to prosecute certain grave crimes regardless of where they occurred or the nationality of those involved.

Official Resources

- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) — <https://www.ohchr.org>
- United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) — <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc>
- United Nations Treaty Collection — <https://treaties.un.org>
- UN Digital Library — <https://digitallibrary.un.org>
- UNESCO — Safety of Journalists programme — <https://www.unesco.org/en/safety-journalists>
- UN News — <https://news.un.org>
- Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) — <https://cpj.org>
- Reporters Without Borders (RSF) — <https://rsf.org>
- International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) — <https://www.ifj.org>
- Freedom House — <https://freedomhouse.org>
- Amnesty International — <https://www.amnesty.org>
- Human Rights Watch — <https://www.hrw.org>
- Access Now / #KeepItOn Coalition — <https://www.accessnow.org>

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- Human Rights Council resolutions on the safety of journalists (2016–2025 series) and related General Assembly resolutions.
- UNESCO Director-General biennial reports on the safety of journalists and the danger of impunity.
- OHCHR reports and statements to the Human Rights Council on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity.
- Committee to Protect Journalists, annual prison census and journalist-killings data.
- Reporters Without Borders, World Press Freedom Index (annual).
- Access Now and the #KeepItOn Coalition, annual reports on internet shutdowns.
- Academic journals and policy papers on press freedom, whistle-blower protection, and digital rights.

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This guide was prepared to support delegate preparation and committee research. Facts and figures were accurate at time of writing; delegates should verify the latest data before the conference, as statistics on this agenda are updated frequently.