



GATORMUN XXIII

**Press Corps: The United Nations
Correspondents Association**

Background Guide

Bryce Ramos and Lillian Rodonich

Table of Contents

Rules of Procedure.....	2
Introduction to Committee.....	6
Committee Mechanics.....	7
A Guide to Good Journalism.....	8
How do I figure out what to write about?.....	8.
What do I even write?.....	8.
Okay, but how do I make it good?.....	8
But what about pictures and interviews?.....	9
Topics of Debate.....	10
Corporate Interests in Journalism.....	10
AI in Journalism.....	12
Questions to Consider.....	13
Positions.....	14

Press Corps: The United Nations Correspondents Association

Rules of Procedure

Quorum

A majority of voting members answering to the roll at each session shall constitute a quorum for that session. This means that half plus one of all voting members are present. Quorum will be assumed consistent unless questioned through a Point of Order. Delegates may request to be noted as "Present" or "Present and Voting."

Motion to Suspend the Rules for the Purpose of a Moderated Caucus

This motion must include three specifications

- Length of the Caucus
- Speaking Time
- Reason for the Caucus

During a moderated caucus, delegates will be called on to speak by the Committee Director. Delegates will raise their placards to be recognized. Delegates must maintain the same degree of decorum throughout a Moderated Caucus as in formal debate. This motion requires a simple majority to pass.

Motion to Suspend the Rules for the Purpose of an Unmoderated Caucus

This motion must include the length of the Caucus. During an unmoderated caucus, delegates may get up from their seats and talk amongst themselves. This motion requires a simple majority to pass. The length of an unmoderated caucus in a Crisis committee should not exceed fifteen minutes.

Motion to Suspend the Meeting

This motion is in order if there is a scheduled break in debate to be observed. (ie. Lunch!) This motion requires a simple majority vote. The Committee Director may refuse to entertain this motion at their discretion.

Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

This motion is in order at the end of the last committee session. It signifies the closing of the committee until next year's conference.

Points of Order

Points of Order will only be recognized for the following items:

- To recognize errors in voting, tabulation, or procedure
- To question relevance of debate to the current Topic
- To question a quorum.

A Point of Order may interrupt a speaker if necessary and it is to be used sparingly.

Press Corps: The United Nations Correspondents Association

Points of Inquiry

When there is no discussion on the floor, a delegate may direct a question to the Committee Director. Any question directed to another delegate may only be asked immediately after the delegate has finished speaking on a substantive matter. A delegate that declines to respond to a question after a formal speech forfeits any further questioning time.

Points of Personal Privilege

Points of personal privilege are used to request information or clarification and conduct all other business of the body except Motions or Points specifically mentioned in the Rules of Procedure. Please note: The Director may refuse to recognize Points of Order, Points of Inquiry or Points of Personal Privilege if the Committee Director believes the decorum and restraint inherent in the exercise has been violated, or if the point is deemed dilatory in nature.

Rights of Reply

At the Committee Director's discretion, any member nation or observer may be granted a Right of Reply to answer serious insults directed at the dignity of the delegate present. The Director has the ABSOLUTE AUTHORITY to accept or reject Rights of Reply, and the decision IS NOT SUBJECT TO APPEAL. Delegates who feel they are being treated unfairly may take their complaint to any member of the Secretariat.

Directives

Directives act as a replacement for Draft Resolutions when in Crisis committees, and are the actions that the body decides to take as a whole. Directives are not required to contain operative or preambulatory clauses. A directive should contain:

- The name(s) of the author(s)
- A title
- A number of signatories/sponsors signatures' necessary to
- introduce, determined by the Director

A simple majority vote is required to introduce a directive, and multiple directives may be introduced at once. Press releases produced on behalf of the body must also be voted on as Directives.

Friendly Amendments

Friendly Amendments are any changes to a formally introduced Directive that all Sponsors agree to in writing. The Committee Director must approve the Friendly Amendment and confirm each Sponsor's agreement both verbally and in writing.

Press Corps: The United Nations Correspondents Association

Unfriendly Amendments

Unfriendly Amendments are any substantive changes to a formally introduced Directive that are not agreed to by all of the Sponsors of the Directive. In order to introduce an Unfriendly Amendment, the Unfriendly Amendment must be the number equivalent to 1/3 of Quorum confirmed signatories. The Committee Director has the authority to discern between substantive and non-substantive Unfriendly amendment proposals.

Plagiarism

GatorMUN maintains a zero-tolerance policy in regards to plagiarism. Delegates found to have used the ideas of others without properly citing those individuals, organizations, or documents will have their credentials revoked for the duration of the GatorMUN conference. This is a very serious offense.

Crisis Notes

A crisis note is an action taken by an individual in a Crisis committee. Crisis notes do not need to be introduced or voted on, and should be given to the Crisis Staff by sending the notes to a designated pickup point in each room. A crisis note should both be addressed to crisis and have the delegate's position on both the inside and outside of the note.

Motion to Enter Voting Procedure

Once this motion passes, and the committee enters Voting Procedure, no occupants of the committee room may exit the Committee Room, and no individual may enter the Committee Room from the outside. A member of the Dias will secure all doors.

- No talking, passing notes, or communicating of any kind will be tolerated during voting procedures.
- Each Directive will be read to the body and voted upon in the order which they were introduced. Any Proposed Unfriendly Amendments to each Directive will be read to the body and voted upon before the main body of the Directive as a whole is put to a vote.
- Delegates who requested to be noted as "Present and Voting" are unable to abstain during voting procedure. Abstentions will not be counted in the tallying of a majority. For example, 5 yes votes, 4 no votes, and 7 abstentions means that the Directive passes.
- The Committee will adopt Directives and Unfriendly Amendments to Directives if these documents pass with a simple majority. Specialized committees should refer to their background-guides or Committee Directors for information concerning specific voting procedures.

Press Corps: The United Nations Correspondents Association

Roll Call Voting

A counted placard vote will be considered sufficient unless any delegate to the committee motions for a Roll Call Vote. If a Roll Call Vote is requested, the committee must comply. All delegates must vote: "For," "Against," "Abstain," or "Pass." During a Roll Call vote, any delegate who answers, "Pass," reserves his/her vote until the Committee Director has exhausted the Roll. However, once the Committee Director returns to "Passing" Delegates, they must vote: "For" or "Against."

Accepting by Acclamation

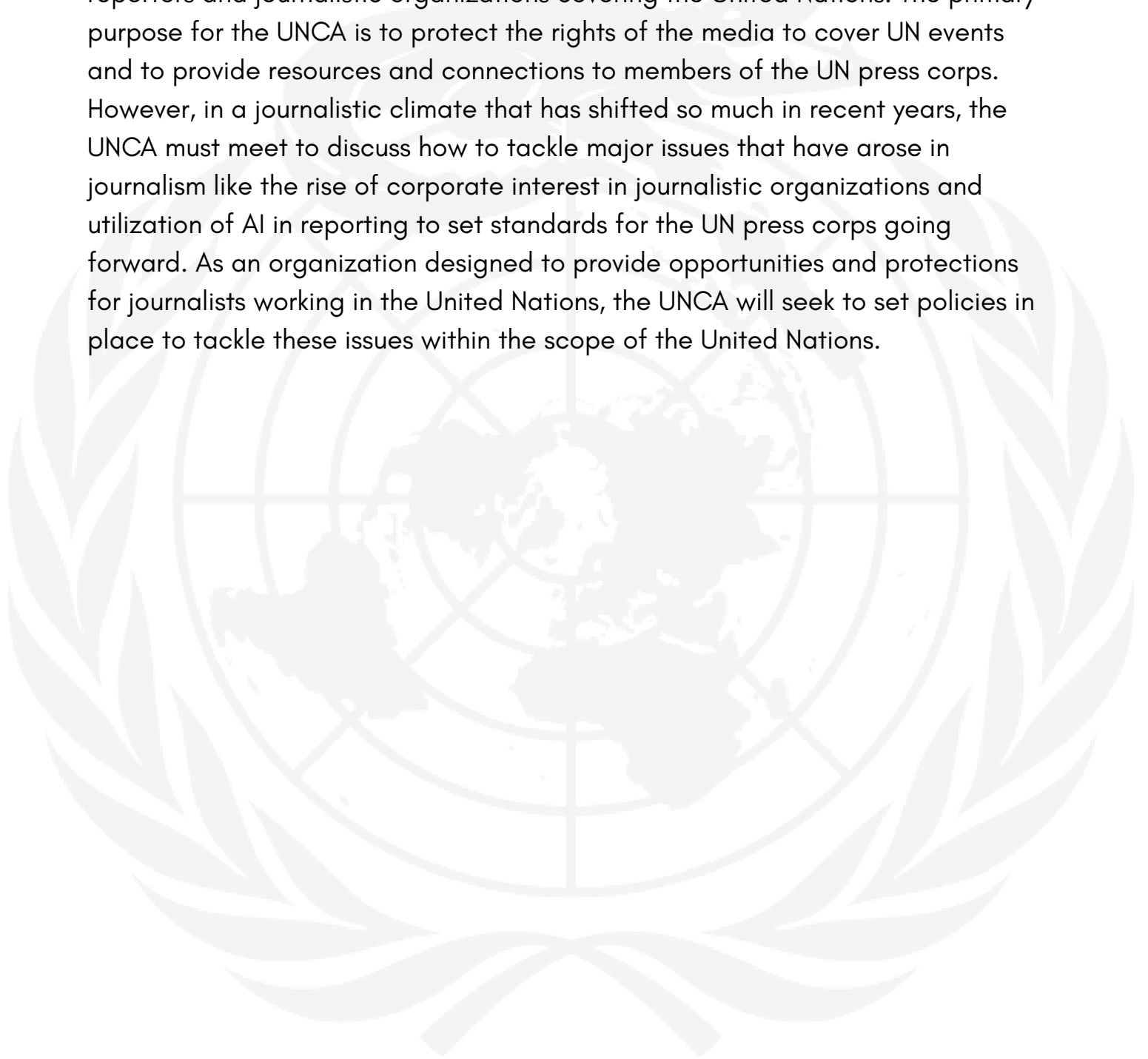
This motion may be stated when the Committee Director asks for points or motions. If a Roll Call Vote is requested, the motion to Accept by Acclamation is voided. If a delegate believes a Directive will pass without opposition, he or she may move to accept the Directive by acclamation. The motion passes unless a single delegate shows opposition. An abstention is not considered opposition. Should the motion fail, the committee will move directly into a Roll Call Vote.

Tech Policy

Technology will not be allowed throughout the course of the committee. Delegates are prohibited from using their technology inside the committee room. However, they are encouraged to do research before and during assigned breaks.

Introduction to Committee

The United Nations Correspondents Association (UNCA) is the organizing body for reporters and journalistic organizations covering the United Nations. The primary purpose for the UNCA is to protect the rights of the media to cover UN events and to provide resources and connections to members of the UN press corps. However, in a journalistic climate that has shifted so much in recent years, the UNCA must meet to discuss how to tackle major issues that have arose in journalism like the rise of corporate interest in journalistic organizations and utilization of AI in reporting to set standards for the UN press corps going forward. As an organization designed to provide opportunities and protections for journalists working in the United Nations, the UNCA will seek to set policies in place to tackle these issues within the scope of the United Nations.



Press Corps: The United Nations Correspondents Association

Committee Mechanics

This committee will have two different phases of mechanics with a session of directive-based debate and press corps reporting during the remaining scoring sessions.

For Session 1 on Friday, we will do directive-based (or crisis-style) debate. For those not as familiar with conventional Model UN mechanics, this will entail multiple rounds of moderated debate, unmoderated debate, and voting periods in which delegates will be asked to write directives that explore the issues described in this background guide and the wider world of journalism as a whole. There will be no crisis notes, but there may be crisis updates to allow for a continued flow of debate throughout the session.

For Sessions 2, 3, and 4 on Saturday, delegates will leave the committee room and venture into other committees across the conference to report upon committee proceedings. Delegates will be asked to submit pieces at the conclusion of each session to be graded in lieu of having in-room debate to evaluate your performance. You will be asked to submit a 150 piece after Session 2, a 250 word piece after Session 3, and a 400 word piece after Session 4. You may add in quotes from other delegates or images from the committee room as long as you have consent and permission to gather quotes or take pictures of the delegates in question, though these additional elements will not give any delegates an advantage nor a disadvantage in scoring.

Press Corps: The United Nations Correspondents Association

A Guide to Good Journalism

A significant part of this committee involves leaving our committee room and doing some actual journalism, so for those of you who may not be practiced in this particular skillset, here are a couple of tips to help you out.

How do I figure out what to write about?

Honestly, the best way to do this is by listening. People are always talking about something in a Model UN committee, whether it's a moderated caucus, an unmoderated caucus, or even in voting procedure. Everyone has something to say, so if you listen for long enough, you can find something worth writing about. The topic you choose to write about isn't important; the story you tell as a journalist is. You can write a great piece about anything, so find something you think you can write about and get to writing!

What do I even write?

Great question, theoretical question asker. The most reliable outline for making sure you fully tell the story you want to tell is by answering the journalism checklist of the 5 W's and an H: Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How. **Who** is being affected by the problem at hand, who is proposing solutions, and who is involved in implementing those solutions? **What** is the topic of discussion, what solutions are being talked about, and what is being used to apply those solutions? **When** did this problem start, when could we see a solution arise, and when could the solution be put into place? **Where** is the issue being seen, where are the solutions being created, and where are the solutions being applied? **Why** did this problem happen at all, why is this being discussed, and why is this solution going to work? **How** is this problem being discussed, how did this solution come to the forefront, and how could this be implemented if it passes? Not all of these versions of the questions apply in every single scenario, but as long as you tell the reader who, what, when, where, why, and how, you will have hit the essential parts of the story.

Okay, but how do I make it good?

Unfortunately, I cannot give you the magic formula that lets you write perfect articles every single time. I can't give you that because it doesn't exist. There is no "one size fits all" workflow that will give you great writing.

The way to write good pieces is to utilize your voice as a writer. Every single one of you is a unique person with a unique perspective and a unique way of talking, and therefore a unique way of writing. Get into your figurative writing bag, folks! You've learned about like 25 different literary devices in English class wondering when you're going to use them in the real world. Well, the time has come.

Press Corps: The United Nations Correspondents Association

But what about pictures and interviews?

At the end of the day, this is about your journalism, not whoever can find the best web source or who can find the perfect picture, so no sourcing images or text from the internet. However, you're more than welcome to take your own pictures and do your own interviews of delegates in committee. That being said, this does come with caveats. You **MUST** get permission from everyone involved **AND** the dias if you want to take a picture or conduct interviews. **DO NOT** just go up to people expecting them to give you the quote or the picture you want. Images and interviews will not affect scoring, so please practice common courtesy and respect the wishes of your fellow delegates.



Press Corps: The United Nations Correspondents Association

Topics of Debate

Corporate Interests in Journalism

For most of the history of the industry, newspapers and other journalistic organizations have been able to exist in a self-sufficient manner, financing their reporting through the sale of said reporting, whether that came in the form of newspapers, magazines, radio programs, TV channel packages, or other publications. Even small towns were able to maintain a team of journalists through the publishing of a combination of newswire reporting from larger entities like the Associated Press and local news that their reporters covered. However, in an era dominated by the Internet, access to information has become vastly more democratized, leading to most reporting being available to end users for free. While some of the largest organizations have been able to sustain their operations to some degree by creating digital paywalls and by maximizing advertising on their websites, most journalistic organizations are unable to maintain a level of traffic that allows them to leverage those monetization mechanisms. As such, journalistic orgs of all sizes have relied on takeovers by private equity firms, deep pocketed individuals, and other financial organizations to provide the monetary means to maintain their operation.

Unfortunately, financial takeovers have been far from fruitful. We will use the US as a case study as the American journalism network is the most studied with respect to the effects of private equity, but the actual effects of this have been seen globally and will become more and more prominent outside of the US in the coming years and decades. In 2005, only 5% of the newspaper industry was held by private equity. That number skyrocketed to 23% by 2019, with Wall Street investment as a whole reaching nearly half of the industry by that same time, according to the 2022 research paper "LOCAL JOURNALISM UNDER PRIVATE EQUITY OWNERSHIP" by Ewens et al. While that paper did find that private equity was more capable of halting shutdowns and increasing subscription revenue, these often come with a slashing of journalists and other workers and an increased emphasis on national reporting that can be pushed to larger audiences and the publishing of newswire reporting.

That being said, private equity firms aren't the only groups buying into journalism. There has been a boom in consolidated conglomerates, collecting copious reporting brands and corporations. Consider the likes of Hearst Communications, one of the US' largest media conglomerates with interests across newspapers, magazines, and television production. Other examples include News Corp, which not only owns the Wall Street Journal and the New York Post, but is operated by the Murdoch Family, which also operates the Fox Corporation with their various television holdings, and Vox Media Group, a media conglomerate focused on digital-first brands like Vox, The Verge, and New York Magazine. These conglomerates are able to split costs across companies and therefore be able to spend more resources on reporting, but it also limits the variety of reporting that is served to the public, even less local reporting, and creates potential for corporate interest to bias the reporting being published.

Press Corps: The United Nations Correspondents Association

That last point is especially poignant in the current media environment where political polarization has led to biased reporting in order to cater to newly formed audiences. A recent example was seen during the 2024 election cycle with the Washington Post, one of the newspapers of record in the US, where new owner Jeff Bezos instituted an edict for not only the Washington Post's planned presidential endorsement to be pulled from publishing, but the mandate to limit editorial content to be based primarily around the pillars of free speech and personal liberties, drawing an ideological line in the sand that will limit the viewpoints and perspectives that readers will be exposed to. Pushes like these that explicitly or implicitly tilt publications into specific directions create an environment where diversity of viewpoints and backgrounds, something which was once a major positive for newsrooms of these larger publications that allowed for a greater breadth of coverage, has been pushed aside in favor of focusing in on finding the journalists that share the specific viewpoint of the publication.

This era of private equity investment and media conglomerates in journalism has made the search for profits a larger goal for those leading the journalistic entities as return on investment for corporate shareholders looms over the agencies responsible for reporting the news. As previously described, the shift to digital has made the old system of simply selling physical newspapers to sustain the business largely antiquated. However, digital subscriptions and ad revenue are oftentimes not enough to balance out the growing costs of running a reporting business and the growing appetite for shareholder profits, which has led to the rise of branded content. Branded content is a type of content that is funded by advertisers to present their product in a way that fits their brand while not taking the form of a traditional advertisement. For instance, this can take the form of an article describing five ways to spice up a Hamburger Helper or a video reviewing various Dyson vacuums in a positive light. Branded content has become more prevalent across the industry in recent years as a way to provide additional revenue for these newspapers, but it also pulls internal resources away from independent reporting while muddying the ethical waters for these companies because if any company can just pay to get a piece of content from a respected journalistic brand that makes them look good, then it puts into question whether any piece of content can be truly trusted to be unbiased, which is a major issue for professional journalists.

The growth of corporate investment into journalism has been matched with independent journalists going direct to consumers with their reporting, either leaving traditional publications or even skipping them entirely to do so. Independent journalists often lack the resources and connections that come with working for a larger institution, but the lack of pressure to produce specific content or to write through a specific lens has allowed for more unique journalism to occur. Through sites like Substack and Patreon, journalists are able to financially benefit from their work and social media platforms like X (formerly known as Twitter), Instagram, and Youtube allow for journalists to directly cultivate audiences, allowing them to potentially amass more money and a broader reach than most journalists at traditional publications. However, it is difficult for an independent reporter to get their start without the help of a traditional publication, so independent journalism is still very dependent upon the increasingly corporate news industry to produce and develop new journalists.

Press Corps: The United Nations Correspondents Association

AI in Journalism

Recent years have seen exponential growth in the usage and capabilities of artificial intelligence across all industries and walks of life, but journalism has been one of the industries that has seen the most public shift as a result of AI. Specifically, the growth of large language models (LLMs) like GPT from OpenAI, Claude from Anthropic, and Gemini from Google have made text generation tools vastly cheaper to access and utilize for individuals and organizations alike. LLMs function by feeding a machine learning model a very large sample of texts (often those already accessible natively on the Internet) to learn natural patterns of language. These LLMs then output a generated body of text based on the prompt provided by the user by predicting the next word in the sentence over and over until a complete answer is found. All LLMs follow this same general functional process, however each model is fine-tuned on different aspects of the dataset to more accurately answer prompts in that style or topic or even adapt a particular tone or style of writing within their outputs.

The new generations of LLMs that have come out since 2020 have become capable of writing prose that is at least readable. As a result, many have seen LLMs as a way to produce prose without the cost of hiring a human to actually write. This has led to a series of publications, including respected newspapers like the Miami Herald and the Los Angeles Times, utilizing AI to write entire pieces that have been published. This development has led to an rapid development of concerns for the future of journalism as a profession as AI writing becomes much easier to utilize for the organizations that employ journalists and writers. While roles for journalists will continue to exist in the near future for more complex tasks involving the collection and synthesis of entirely new events and ideas, many positions have become at much higher risk for cuts than expected.

In addition to the concerns for journalists that generative AI like LLMs pose, it also poses issues for consumers of journalism. As a function of how LLMs work, their writing does not actually create new ideas. Instead, they create an answer out of the text that they have access to, which often means that LLMs are just repackaging writing that already exists. As AI writing gets published more and more, this could adversely impact the quality of the AI writing itself as the LLMs end up getting trained on writing that LLMs themselves wrote. Another glaring concern comes from the fact that there is no way for LLMs to “fact check” any of the data that they are trained on, meaning that they are prone to outputting misleading or false information, so wider usage of AI in writing could ultimately work to further the spread of misinformation in a media ecosystem where misinformation is already a major concern.

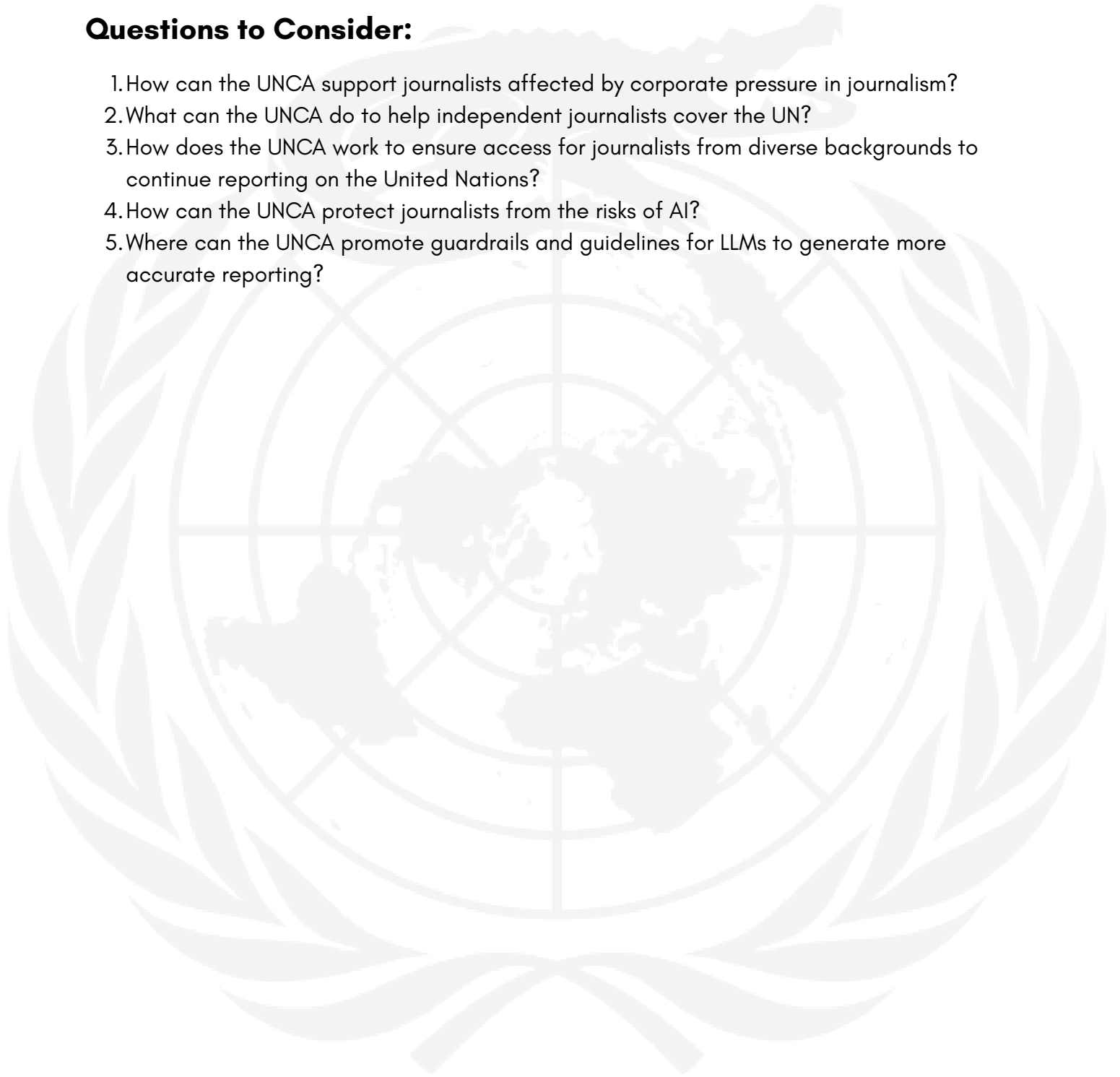
However, AI companies do hold some power over how their LLMs function. For one, limiting their dataset to filter out things like misinformation is a possibility, but a smaller dataset only makes for a less effective LLM. They could also utilize model fine-tuning in order to ensure more effective communication of ideas for accuracy and clarity, but model fine-tuning is still an imperfect science at this point in time.

Press Corps: The United Nations Correspondents Association

Even smaller changes like the addition of AI text disclaimers could be implemented, but even those ultimately rely on the company to not hide that information since AI written articles are often written under AI generated pseudonyms and identities to make the content more palatable to the general audience.

Questions to Consider:

1. How can the UNCA support journalists affected by corporate pressure in journalism?
2. What can the UNCA do to help independent journalists cover the UN?
3. How does the UNCA work to ensure access for journalists from diverse backgrounds to continue reporting on the United Nations?
4. How can the UNCA protect journalists from the risks of AI?
5. Where can the UNCA promote guardrails and guidelines for LLMs to generate more accurate reporting?



Press Corps: The United Nations Correspondents Association

Positions

Additional Notes

All positions correspond to either primarily English language or bilingual (including English) publications, so there should be minimal need for translation during the research process. All writing in committee should be done in English regardless of your position.



Time Magazine (USA)
The Moscow Times (Russia)
Xinhua (China)
Excelsior (Mexico)
The Bogota Post (Colombia) The National Post (Canada)
The Tehran Times (Iran)
Folha (Brazil)
The Hindu (India)
Handelsblatt (Germany)
The Asahi Shimbun (Japan)
The Citizen (South Africa)
Daily Sabah (Turkey)
Vestkusten (Sweden)
La Razon (Spain)
Sydney Herald (Australia)
Algemeen Dagblad (Netherlands)
Little Saigon News (Vietnam)
Buenos Aires Herald (Argentina)
Vanguard News (Nigeria)
Al-Ahram (Egypt)
Bangkok Post (Thailand)
Jakarta Post (Indonesia)
Bolivian Express (Bolivia)
Manila Bulletin (Philippines)
BBC (UK)
Portugal News (Portugal)
Le Monde (France)
Santiago Times (Chile)
Al Haraka (Morocco)