



International Press Delegation

Journalist Guide

Introduction to the IPD

Honorable delegate,

It is our sincere pleasure to welcome you to the International Press Delegation! The IPD produces CIMUN's online publication, *The Chronicle*, and partners with CIMUN's TV news source, CNN, to cover every aspect of the conference. As press delegates, you will have access to all of the committees that CIMUN has to offer and are encouraged to watch debates, interview delegates and follow votes to cover breaking news.

At the core of the CIMUN philosophy is a strong focus on realism and innovation, with our primary goal being the accurate portrayal of the challenges faced by real-life diplomats and politicians. That includes having policy proposals debated in the public forum and working with the media to secure public support. The IPD plays a critical role by bringing together developments across committees and challenging other delegates to respond to crises in real time.

We look forward to helping you navigate this exciting learning environment. Please feel free to email us at ipd@cimun.org with questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Michael McCarthy, Deputy-Under-Secretary-General of Home Government - Media
Morgan Moll, Executive Editor of the IPD



Rules

First and foremost, IPD delegates must treat their fellow delegates, the CIMUN staff and leadership, faculty advisers, and other guests with respect. This committee provides its delegates with freedom to enter committee rooms and come and go as they work, but we will not tolerate disruptive behavior.

In addition to the rules in the CIMUN Delegate Guide, IPD Delegates agree to the following:

- 1. Maintain a quiet and respectful working and learning environment.** Please avoid disrupting committees by moving conversations and interviews into the hallway when possible. Delegates may work in hallways and public areas of the hotel if they wish as long as they maintain a quiet atmosphere. The freedom of IPD is a privilege that may be revoked.
- 2. Restrict use of laptops and phones for IPD work.** You are allowed to use a laptop, tablet, or smartphone to take notes, write stories, take photos/videos, access the web for research, images, social media, and communication tools for IPD, and to access our content management system WordPress to publish IPD stories. Please ensure that you are not using these devices inappropriately while committees are in session.
- 3. Attend IPD check-ins and editorial meetings.** IPD delegates are free to move to other committee rooms during committee sessions, but must attend check-ins announced by staff at the beginning of each session unless excused. If you are stuck in another committee room and not allowed to leave (e.g. during voting procedure), please notify the Sergeant-at-Arms (SA) so this can be communicated to IPD staff.

Publication and Beat Assignments

At CIMUN, all IPD delegates are assigned to represent a publication (e.g., Times of India) and cover a beat (e.g., Russia-Ukraine War). In some cases, we have assigned beats to publications that would naturally cover them, but not all beats and publications are aligned. IPD journalists should cover their beat in hard new stories for *The Chronicle* and represent their publication in any opinion or editorial articles they write.



Delegates are assigned the following beats to guide their research and story development:

Publication	Assigned Beat	Relevant Committees and Cabinets
Chicago Sun-Times	Chicago City Hall	Chicago City Council
Chicago Tribune	Chicago City Hall	Chicago City Council
The Dawn	Sino-Indian border dispute	Hist U.S., China, USSR and India cabinets
Ha'aretz	Gender Inequality	Hist UNGA, U.S. Senate, Presidential Commission on the Status of Women
The Hindu	U.S. Senate	Hist U.S. Senate
Izvestia	Decolonization	Hist UNGA, Hist UNSC
Jerusalem Post	Nuclear Proliferation	Hist UNGA, Hist UNSC
New York Times	Gender Inequality	Hist UNGA, U.S. Senate, Presidential Commission on the Status of Women
O Globo	The Cold War/Cuban Missile Crisis	Hist U.S., China, USSR and India cabinets
Pan African News Agency	Climate Change	UNGA
Times of India	Russia-Ukraine War	UNSC, U.S. cabinet
Washington Post	Technology and Artificial Intelligence	UNSC, UNGA, Tencent, X
Xinhua State News Agency	China's Economy and International Relations	Present Day China, Tencent

What is a Beat?

In news jargon, a beat is the topic or area a journalist covers on a day-to-day basis. A reporter on the crime beat, for example, might spend her day at the local courthouse attending hearings. She would probably have a few sources in the local police department and might listen to a police scanner to gather information. Other examples include city hall and politics, sports, health, and education.



Delegates may write two kinds of stories: non-opinion news stories or columns and opinion pieces that mimic the editorial views of that publication. While *The Chronicle* publishes hard news without bias, opinion stories are published under the name of the delegate's assigned outlet. Each paper's editorial board offers opinions on local and international policies. Delegates should research these stances and may choose to write opinionated editorial articles that represent these views. Just because an article is published as an opinion, the writer is not excused from fact-based reporting. Opinions should be backed by well-researched facts and structured in a format that offers arguments and confronts possible counter-arguments.

Delegates are free to write either type of story or a mix of hard news and opinion. There is no requirement to write a certain number of articles, but delegates can typically research and write an article over one or two committee sessions. Remember that your writing can impact the fast-moving debate at CIMUN, so it is best to turn your stories around quickly rather than spend time working on a masterpiece to unveil at the end of the conference.

To prepare, you should read stories on your assigned publication's website to familiarize yourself with their tone, the topics they cover, and their political leanings or biases. You should also read the background guide(s) relevant to your beat so you can hit the ground running at the conference.

Beats are meant to guide, not limit delegates. If you stumble upon a great source or an interesting development, by all means you are able to write about it, even if it does not fall within your beat. Beats are useful in helping the editors make sure every topic and committee gets coverage and providing delegates with background knowledge and a good starting point.

Pre-conference Assignment

In lieu of white/black/position papers, IPD delegates are asked to complete the following pre-conference assignment:

1. **Interview a delegate:** conduct an interview with another CIMUN delegate from your school about one of their committee's topics. *How do they approach the problem? What are they hoping to achieve?* You should avoid interviewing a close friend.
2. Then, complete one of two options:
 - a. **Write a Story** using quotes from your interview and facts from your background research. Your story should be 200-400 words, but only as long as it needs to be



to convey the message. Clarity and brevity are better than long-winded exposition.

- b. or **Record a video** of either your interview with the delegate or yourself reflecting on the interview in a Rapid Response-style video. The final video should be between 30 seconds and 1.5 minutes, in horizontal format. Do the best with what you have, such as using a phone to record and trim video.

 [How to record a Rapid Response | LEVEL UP TUTORIAL](#)

Submit your story or video via email as an attachment (Word document, PDF or video file) to ipd@cimun.org by 10 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 3, 2023. Please save Google Docs in Word or PDF format so we can avoid issues with access to Drive files.

Reporting and Writing 101

News articles are written for clarity, accuracy, and speed of comprehension. Stories are commonly written in **inverted pyramid** style, meaning each piece of information is given in order from most to least important, which facilitates skimming the most important information from the top.

This style utilizes short paragraphs of 1-3 sentences that present one basic idea or quote each. The first paragraph is one sentence known as the **lead** (also spelled lede). The most basic lead summarizes the most important facts of the story that the reader needs to know. The lead should contain at least the who, what, where and when of the story. The lead may also explain how and why if there is room, but these items can be included later in the story. Each subsequent paragraph builds on the information presented in the lead. If you are struggling to come up with a lead, it may mean you need more reporting, according to NPR's Hannah Bloch. "If your reporting is incomplete, that will often show up in a weak lead," she writes in her guide to writing good leads, linked in the Additional Resources section along with other tips.

Headlines also play an important role in helping readers decide what they want to read. Commonly people read only the headline and maybe the lead, so these are opportunities to draw the reader in to read the full story. Headlines should be succinct and eight words or less. They should accurately describe what happened without giving away all the information. Don't include new information in the headline that isn't in the story.

A story is only as good as its sources of information, which can be well-regarded news publications, government agencies, or non-governmental organizations (NGOs). **Interviews** with



people close to the story are great sources and quotes from delegates are expected in all of your stories for IPD. When conducting an interview, you should first establish some basic facts like the person's name and role. Do research ahead of time and come prepared with questions and ask your subject to confirm what you found in your research and expand on it. Don't limit yourself to prepared questions and think of what else to ask as you go. Let your subject speak. Often people will try to fill silences and that can be a way to get a longer answer to your question. You may find it helpful to record the audio of interviews so that you can quote your sources verbatim. At the very least you should take written notes of their exact words. Recording is good practice, but you must ask your subject(s) for consent prior to recording.

Note that interview subjects may ask you not to reveal their name along with the information they tell you, either "on background" or as an **anonymous source**. *The Chronicle* has a policy of not allowing anonymous sources without permission of the Executive Editor. We as journalists need to balance the protection of our sources with the importance of the information. We must have a very good reason to publish the information anonymous sources can provide, so it must not be available elsewhere and the revelation of this information must pose a threat to the source that necessitates protection of their identity. If a source asks for something to be "off the record" this means you cannot publish the information at all, even anonymously. Some anonymous sources do not want their identity or any information about their work to be revealed and some may allow "on background" conversations where you may quote or paraphrase what they tell you without using their name, but you may include their role, such as "according to a White House staffer with knowledge of the meeting." When you have identified yourself as a journalist, an interview is considered on the record and eligible to be published alongside the subject's name unless they request otherwise.

The Chronicle and many publications use the Associated Press Stylebook or **AP Style** for consistent formatting of story elements, numbers, abbreviations, and how terms are used. This helps publications pick up Associated Press stories originally published elsewhere with minimal editing needed to match their style. We use AP Style for consistency and clarity. Our Style Guide is included at the end of this document.

Include a **photo** to illustrate your story, whether your own taken at the conference or found online. Images are copyrighted works so please search for free-to-use images.¹ All delegates have provided a photo release, so photo/video of delegates in conference spaces is allowed.

We also welcome **audio and video** as elements of your story. If you record compelling video in committees, such as notable delegate speeches, you may submit video to be used by CNN with

¹ How to search for images you can (legally) use for free, <https://www.theverge.com/23308003/image-search-free-legal-use-how-to-wikimedia-creative-commons>.



Chicago International Model United Nations
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attribution to you. Please do not upload video directly in WordPress, we will discuss how video can be shared with CNN. Audio may take the form of one-on-one interviews with sources or a collection of quick sound bites from a variety of people, called a vox pop (from *vox populi* voice of the people). Vox pop audio is great for showing a variety of opinions or thoughts from several people. Unlike video, audio files may be directly uploaded to WordPress and embedded in stories. We will have digital audio recording devices available for delegate use.



Additional Resources

- **Purdue Online Writing Lab - Journalism and Journalistic Writing:**
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/subject_specific_writing/journalism_and_journalistic_writing/index.html
- **PBS NewsHour Student Reporting Labs:** <https://studentreportinglabs.org/tutorials/>
- **Help with Writing Leads**
 - **A good lead is everything — here's how to write one - NPR Training:**
<https://training.npr.org/2016/10/12/leads-are-hard-heres-how-to-write-a-good-one/>
 - **Six Rules for Writing a Straight News Lead:**
<https://drkblake.com/six-rules-for-writing-a-straight-news-lead/>



Style Guide

Press delegates are strongly encouraged to work on developing their own voice and style, but there are some consistency standards for *The Chronicle*. Editors will be making revisions to stories, which will include abiding by the style guide. The style guide is mostly based on AP Style, but delegates are encouraged to use the following guide:

Abbreviations & Acronyms

Use periods for 2-letter abbreviations, such as U.S. or U.N., and omit periods for abbreviations with three or more letters, such as CIA or NATO. Exceptions to this are: GA (General Assembly) and EU (European Union). Omit all periods in headlines.

If you are referencing organizations/institutions that are not committees or are not well known, use the full title first, with the abbreviation/acronym in parentheses. Once you have introduced readers to the unfamiliar abbreviation, you may use the abbreviation on second and subsequent references.

Direct Quotes

Direct quotes from delegates should be used, when possible, in all stories. Use the following format: “Quote,” Source, Title, said. For further explanation of how to identify sources, see the *Sources* section below.

Em Dash

Some writers use dashes, some don’t. If you are going to write with dashes, please use the “em” dash, without spaces.

E.g. News agencies use a variety of style guides—some even develop their own—when determining how to maintain consistency in their publications.

Sources

Avoid anonymous sources. We will make some exceptions, but ultimately, sourcing information is a foundational part of journalism. Identify sources by their country and committee. Also, avoid using the word “delegate” and delegate names to maintain realism. Stick to titles.

E.g. “We are looking forward to voting on resolution 2.1,” the Russian representative to the Security Council said.



Cite references to other publications plainly, without parenthesis or italics.

E.g. according to The New York Times

You must either quote the publication directly or paraphrase in your own words. Sloppy paraphrasing, even with a citation, is considered plagiarism.

Numbers

Spell out numbers that start a sentence or, ideally, move the numeral further into the sentence, except when the number is a year.

Spell out numbers one through nine (and first through ninth), but use numerals for 10 (10th) and above. There are several exceptions for things that are measured: a 3-year-old boy, a 9-0 decision, money, etc.

Money

Use numerals. E.g. 99 cents, \$206.50, \$20,000, \$5 million

Dates

Avoid relative terms like “today” or “last week” and use specific dates if possible. Spell out months for references such as “December 2017” and “this December,” but abbreviate the month if the specific day is mentioned. March to July are not abbreviated. E.g. Dec. 4 not December 4th.

Datelines (such as CHICAGO—) in stories are not necessary.

An Associated Press Stylebook will be available for editor and delegate reference.

Please source all information, and if you don’t know how to spell something, use a dictionary.

We recommend the Merriam-Webster dictionary (m-w.com).

Our editors will be copyediting all of the stories before they are published, but the integrity of The Chronicle is in the hands of everyone involved. If we publish lies, misspell words or use poor grammar, no one will read the paper. Delegates with questions or concerns should speak with an editor.