

CLEIMUN20

“Diplomacy in a Challenging Global Environment”

A Research Report

COMMITTEE: Human Rights Commission

QUESTION OF: The Freedom of the Press Regarding International Journalists

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Information and Background

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 19 states, “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers”. This rule seems simple in context, but when introduced into the modern age of technology, the question of how much freedom of expression is publically allowed is called upon. Specifically, to what the press is allowed to cover international politics.

Suppression of the Press

The simple idea is that the independent press is able to cover whatever topics they want without retribution. However, many countries have begun taking more aggressive tactics towards journalistic individuals who cover topics that leave country leaders in a bad light. For example, prominent Azerbaijani journalist and IWPR contributor, Afgan Mukhtarli, was apprehended in Tbilisi square by Azerbaijani authorities. He was put on trial for fabricated crimes of illegal

border crossing, smuggling and violently resisting arrest. Putting his in prison for 6 years. This after he had written many articles that upended Azerbaijani governmental strategies, such as an article covering an unsanctioned peaceful protest in Baku, and was forced to flee into exile. In countries around the world, the press is not given complete freedom to cover political topics. The question for this topic is whether the countries are correct to delegate what can and can not be published for political reasons, or the press still holds their freedom of expression in the Universal Declaration of Human rights.

Cambodian Action

Some nations, most famously Cambodia, have combatted this growing question of international press freedoms by simply removing all press freedoms altogether. The Cambodian government completely controls every news outlet and sanctions what journalists can produce. Although this move does violate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, but as of now, the UN has done nothing to stop it. This practice has made Cambodia popular enough to host the 16th Asian Media Summit in June, 2019. Leading to the belief that many other Asian nations will follow in Cambodia's footsteps.

Current Power of the Press with the Rise of Technology

While some nations have complete control over their press, on a wider scale, the press still has the complete freedom outlined for them in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. They have the ability to commentate on the successes and failures of their government with consequence. This power has only grown with the mass distribution of technology. Now with the

spread of internet, crisis can be seen by many nations. This has granted the presspower to instantly spread news on their nations, allowing for people around the world to keep up to date and informed. But it has also allowed for instant distribution of news that a government may not like, and can no longer stop.

Past Efforts To Solve This Problem

Outside of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights there have been very few public efforts to stop this issue. A 1945 resolution founded the United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which has worked around the globe to help facilitate international free press. While also training and supporting international journalists. There has also been major partnerships with the electronic clearing-house and alert network, IFEX, grouping 500 member organizations in 130 countries. IFEX facilitates the sharing of information about press freedom and the efficiency of reactions to cases of violations.

Possible Solutions

There are multiple solutions that could be used to solve this issue. All of which depend on the perspective of the country that you as a delegate are representing. It is very important to remember that the issue at hand directly correlates with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and how far its terminology expands. The importance of this issue is to see how much protection the UDHR should grant for international journalists. You, as a delegate, must cast aside you personal beliefs and take a stand on how much freedom the UDHR allows in correlation with your representative country. Some delegates will find their nation believes in

direct wording of the UDHR, and will want to pass resolutions that uphold the rights of international journalists. Thus calling for greater support for UNESCO and education for journalists. Other nations with stricter governmental agendas will have delegates who call for greater control of international journalists. Believing that each nation has the ability to choose what information is given.

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