

Topic: Freedom of the Press and Reporter Safety (General Assembly)

Role: Republic of Germany

Billions of people around the world want to be informed of what is happening with their government, problems their nations are facing, foreign relations, and much more. This makes it all the more important to protect the press and ensure that the right information is shared with the public. It is also imperative that reporters can share this news without being threatened so that they will continue to share information. Having this communication has several important benefits. Not only can good reporting help spread necessary messages and keep citizens in the know about government functions or needs, but it can also keep governments accountable and help prevent abuse of power. In countries with freedom of speech, reporter safety is necessary to uphold democracy. At the moment, 150 nations have freedom of expression as a right, and it should be a goal to increase that number going forward.

Germany has become known for strong constitutional guarantees regarding this issue, and freedom of speech and freedom of the press are inalienable human rights. Reporters may express ideas in speech, writing, and pictures. This has made Germany a very safe place for journalists, with no one being incarcerated, killed, or found missing in the past year. Of the 180 nations on Reporters Without Borders' press freedom index, we are currently ranked 13th. However, we have had minor issues with violence in the past five years. Some of the countries that struggle most with the safety and freedom of reporters are in the Middle East and Northern Africa. Places like China and Vietnam have also struggled with this, most likely because they do not have freedom of speech. Internationally, Germany has been increasingly active in working towards a solution to this problem. In 2012, Germany agreed to the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of

Journalists. They also, along with France, hold a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council. In 2015, the European Centre for Press and Media Freedom was founded in Germany. Germany hopes that more steps can be taken in this direction going forward.

Germany hopes that this committee can come to an agreement on how to better this situation. One way to work towards a solution is to work with governments and hold them accountable for the mistreatment of reporters or excessive censorship. Governments also have the ability to fight extremist groups who have been known to commit violence against journalists. Judicially, it should be a goal to get other countries to adopt freedom of speech, as this would lift many restrictions on political reporting and prevent penalties. Allowing reporters to share useful information with the public is crucial to a government's relationship with its people and the ability to solve problems. A free and safe press can better our world in countless ways.