

Issue Analysis

- Freedom of the Press - *Sessions 1-8*

Introduction

- Freedom of the press is an issue that is raised fairly often within the context of the Universal Periodic Review.
- A total of 18 States posed advance questions on the issue while 48 States made recommendations.
- Out of 3533 advance questions from session 1 to 8, 173 questions concerned freedom of the press.
- Out of 12385 recommendations in total, 346 focused on freedom of the press.
- In order to facilitate further analysis of this issue, a division has been made between questions and recommendations that concern the general situation of freedom of the press, questions and recommendations about national legislation and questions and recommendations that concern the protection of journalists. These categories are not mutually exclusive.

Analysis

Situation of freedom of the press

- This category contains all questions and recommendations that relate to the generic situation of freedom of the press; including general measures to be taken by the State in order to ensure the plurality of the media, the independence of the media, election coverage, etc.
- Out of 173 questions posed on freedom of the press, 103 of these focused on the general situation of freedom of the press.
- Out of 346 recommendations on freedom of the press, 135 recommendations focused on the general situation of freedom of the press.
- Questions and recommendations include, for example “Which concrete measures do the Kyrgyz authorities intend to take in order to ensure a free and diversified press?” and “Reconsider its decision and permit broadcasting by non-Azeri outlets on FM frequencies”.

Top 4 States posing advance written questions on this issue

1. Sweden (22 questions)
2. United Kingdom (19 questions)
3. Czech Republic (11 questions)
4. Denmark (10 questions)

Top 4 States making recommendations on this issue

1. Canada (21 recommendations)
2. France (13 recommendations)
3. Norway (11 recommendations)
4. United States (10 recommendations)

National legislation concerning freedom of the press

- This category contains all questions and recommendations that relate to reforms of national legislations concerning freedom of the press. It includes amendments to relevant laws which have been accomplished or are envisaged by the State, conforming national laws to international standards, the status of bills currently under review by Parliaments and the decriminalization of press offences; but it does not include question and recommendations about the application of national laws.
- Out of 173 advance written questions, 46 focused on national legislation concerning freedom of the press.
- Out of 346 recommendations on freedom of the press, 100 recommendations focused on national legislation concerning freedom of the press.
- Questions and recommendations include, for example, “can the Government of Afghanistan provide an update as to the status of its new Media Law and advise Afghans and the international community as to when it anticipates passage of the law?” or “consider amendments to legislation to facilitate the registration of independent media and to guarantee its freedom”.

Top 4 States posing advance written questions on this issue

1. United Kingdom (9 questions)
2. Netherlands (8 questions)
3. Sweden (6 questions)
4. Norway (4 questions)

Top 4 States making recommendations on this issue

1. Canada, Netherlands and United States (10 recommendations)
2. United Kingdom (8 recommendations)
3. Ireland (6 recommendations)
4. Sweden (5 recommendations)

The protection of journalists

- This category contains all questions and recommendations that relate to the measures to be taken for the protection of journalists in order to allow them to perform their work, even when their opinions differ from those of the Government. This also includes ensuring investigation and prosecution of attacks and threats against journalists.
- Out of 173 advance written questions, 70 focused on the protection of journalists.
- Out of 346 recommendations on freedom of the press, 181 recommendations focused on the protection of journalists to perform their work.
- Questions and recommendations include, for example, “Could you please provide details of the Kyrgyz Government’s investigations into the incidents of violence and harassment against journalists in the run-up to and since the July 2009 Presidential elections?” or “Investigate all attacks on journalists and members of the opposition, and take appropriate measures to fight against impunity for such crimes”.

Top 4 States posing advance written questions on this issue

1. United Kingdom (15 questions)

2. Denmark (10 questions)
3. Czech Republic and Norway (9 questions each)
4. Sweden (8 questions)

Top 4 States making recommendations on this issue

1. Norway (34 recommendations)
2. Canada (26 recommendations)
3. United States (12 recommendations)
4. Czech Republic, France and Switzerland (11 recommendations)