Clinton MUNC III 2026

UNESCO

Committee: UNESCO

Topic: Censorship in media

Chairs: Ava Ayala & Abby Chen

Committee Type: General Assembly (GA)

Date: December 6th, 2025

Director: Angelina Foler & Ava Ayala

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Conference Policies

Our committee asks that AI is not used in the creation of position papers or speeches. We want to see your authentic work! Our committee will have no devices in the morning until resolution writing in the afternoon.

Letter from the Chairs and Director

Hi!

I am Abby Chen, and I will be your Chair for the CMUNC 3 UNESCO committee.

I am a senior at Clinton, and I have been here since 6th grade. I've enjoyed being on my school's Model UN team my entire time in high school. Initially, I was looking for a way to put myself out there and strengthen my public speaking skills, but I've grown to love talking to other delegates at conferences and enjoying crazy crisis committees. I hope you all feel comfortable making speeches or pushing yourself a little more in our committee–even if it's your first conference! This is my first time chairing. I've spent the last Clinton MUNCs backroom directing and being a backroom member, so I'm really looking forward to this committee! Through MUN, I've had the chance to visit the UN, meet other high schoolers from around the world, and as I go into my last committee at our conference, I'm excited to see what you will all bring.

At Clinton, I take Global Politics, and as someone who was always interested in STEM, I've enjoyed learning about the intersection of technology, equality, and human rights, and I look forward to exploring this with you all at this conference! Unpacking the social and political layer of science and technology has opened my eyes to the complexities and nuances of monitoring the growth of technology and speech online, and I am grateful to have the chance to explore this at CMUNC.

Outside of school, I'm involved in Asian American Pacific Islander advocacy work, and I do work involving environmental education as well! I don't have a favorite show, but right now I am watching 30 Rock, and I love Grey's Anatomy. I love writing for my school newspaper (The Clinton Post) and making reels and podcasts–I really enjoy the digital humanities and how media is a tool for advocacy (something you all can explore in this committee). Storytelling is something I think is an extremely powerful tool, and something that can be obstructed by censorship so I'm excited to see how you address this conflict!

See you in committee!
Abby Chen
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Hi everyone!

I am Ava Ayala, your Co-Chair/Director for the UNESCO committee on media censorship.

I am a senior at the Clinton School and have attended this institute since the ninth grade. I have been involved in Model UN for all four years, and I've formed a special bond with the General Assembly (GA) committees. That was the first one I started with, and it taught me the rules of Model UN. I deeply appreciate its formality and how it directly simulates actual United Nations conferences. This is my second time being at the front of the committee and I am eager to hear all of your speeches and see how you all navigate this committee. This will be Clinton's third year hosting a Model UN conference, and I am grateful that you will all be part of this historical event with us.

Abby, Angelina, and I are taking the IB Diploma and a higher-level Global Politics course. Once I began the class, I instantly began relating it to Model UN, especially when I first learned about actors, individuals, or entities with the authority and will to influence global processes such as involvement in moderated causes and resolution-making. I also connected definitions like power, the ability to shape or direct behaviors or outcomes, with my relationships with delegates, observing how some had greater control and more significant involvement in the committee.

A fun fact about me is that I am a serial binge-watcher, but never a completer. I started Breaking Bad in 10th grade, and I am still halfway done with Season 5. I began watching Gossip Girl last year and didn't make it past Season 2, along with My Life With the Walter Boys, The Summer I Turned Pretty, and Never Have I Ever, and now I started watching One Tree Hill during the Summer, and I am still on Season 1. Maybe this means I get distracted easily, or that there are so many great options to choose from, but regardless, I doubt I am going to finish any of these shows.

Anyways, I can't wait to see you all in committee!
Ava Ayala
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I am Angelina Foler, and I will be your Director for the Clinton 2026 UNESCO general assembly. I am a junior at Clinton in the IB Diploma Program, where I am currently taking HL biology, global politics, and film. I love learning about the world and how it works, especially in Global Politics, and the reasoning behind countries' behavior. I have been in Model UN since my first semester of freshman year and have fallen in love with it ever since then. It was my older sister, who is now in college, who pushed me to join, and I am so grateful she did. In my three years being a part of the Clinton Model UN community, I have met people from not only all around New York City but all around the world, collaborating and debating with them about global issues that affect all of us. Model UN helps me expand my worldview, seek out different perspectives, collaborate with others, and improve my speaking and thinking skills as a student. This then inspired me to take on more leadership roles in my academic life, such as being a member of an animal rescue club, co-captain of debate, working with the 92nd through a summer camp program, and running my own babysitting business for three years now.

Some fun facts about me are: I did ballet for 10 years at Joffrey, I performed in the Nutcracker multiple times, I used to be a competitive figure skater, I have been rock climbing since I was seven years old, and my favorite TV show is Supernatural (if you have not watched it, I highly recommend it). I am also very passionate about censorship because history must be documented and remembered so we do not repeat it. In the present, a lot of historical events are being covered and happening in the media, especially social media, which is important that the truth behind events is recorded for historical purposes. It is also my first time being a director of a committee, so I am very excited to see you all at Clinton MUN!

See you soon!
Angelina Foler
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Background on UNESCO

The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was founded on November 16th, 1945, directly after World War II, to create long-lasting peace and collaboration between countries through scientific discoveries and advancements, the protection of cultural heritage, accessible education globally, and effective communication between countries. Along with the creation of UNESCO as a United Nations organ, there was also the establishment of UNESCO's headquarters in Paris, France, in 1958, which became a major setting for international conferences, public events, and official UNESCO meetings. The committee is led by its Director General, Mr.Khaled El-Enany, who is an Egyptologist and former minister and was appointed for a four-year term in November 2025. In UNESCO, every member gets one vote for every policy and resolution that UNESCO tries to pass, which happens every two years, in addition to the approval of the programme and budget and the appointment of the executive board and director general. The executive board has 58 members who are elected during UNESCO's General Conference, and so is the Director-General, who requires a secret ballot. The board is responsible for preparing the agenda for the general conference that happens every two years, reviewing budgets, programme proposals, and overseeing how policies are being implemented between conferences. Today, all 194 members of UNESCO have contributed to the significant and successful progress toward UNESCO's main objectives.

The purpose of UNESCO within the United Nations is to promote media development, the safe flow of information, and to protect the freedom of expression. UNESCO's goal for better communication globally is what drives efforts to defend freedom of the press, support independent media, and protect journalists in unsafe environments. In 2012, UNESCO endorsed and promoted the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, which was a framework to help safeguard journalists worldwide and to help ensure that there were consequences for the crimes against journalists. This framework was the first coordinated effort globally to address the threats against media outlets and journalists and the impunity or lack of justice for the crimes against journalists. Part of this framework included the creation of the Global Media Defense Fund, which is run by UNESCO to provide legal support and emergency aid to media outlets and journalists who are being threatened. Another initiative UNESCO has implemented is the Observatory of Killed Journalists, which was created on November 2nd, 2018, to help combat high rates of violence against journalists and media workers. It is a digital database that documents and tracks journalists' killings globally, as well as exposing impunity rates in different parts of the world. Raising awareness of the violence against media workers, so that these actions are held accountable and highlight the risks media workers have to take every day.

Since the implementation of the Plan of Action and other UNESCO programs, UNESCO has trained over 23,000 judges, lawyers, and prosecutors on global human rights standards, freedom of the press and expression, and the safety of media workers and journalists. The training of

these judicial actors is supposed to help ensure that when violence against journalists occurs, they can be investigated and prosecuted properly, which will have a long-term effect on the worldwide rates of impunity and ensure that crimes against journalists get the attention and justice they deserve. Through providing media outlets and journalists with legal support and emergency aid to those who have been threatened and faced impunity. As of 2025, the Global Media Defense Fund has funded 170 projects that have benefited thousands of journalists, media workers, lawyers, and helped hundreds of media organizations. In addition to providing emergency support and funds to support media

organizations in places like Sudan, Ukraine, Afghanistan, and Haiti. UNESCO has implemented specific programs under the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists focused on protecting women journalists, especially women in digital media who face even more risks of impunity and threats to their safety. UNESCO's training, emergency funding, and legal aid have helped protect journalists worldwide and to protect the freedom of expression and press globally. UNESCO overall helps create a safe environment where journalism and media outlets can be protected against threats and crimes of impunity can be held accountable, and highlights the importance of the freedom of expression and the role the media plays in spreading information globally.

Overview of Topic

Censorship of the press and media refers to the limitations imposed by a government or an institution on the public's ability to access and disseminate information and express themselves.

This encompasses the repression of the press, obstruction of social media platforms, the imposition of legal penalties on journalists and users, and internet shutdowns.

Although regimes that prioritize censorship underline it as a means of ensuring public safety, preventing the spread of false information, or maintaining national security, this conflicts with the basic human rights of freedom of expression and press freedom. In contemporary society, both authoritarian and democratic governments are adopting measures that limit digital expression, contributing to the decline of internet freedom and press independence globally.

Subtopic A: Internet Shutdowns & Social Media Blocking

Nepal is a country located in southern Asia between China and India, and is not considered a developing country by the United Nations. In 2008, the monarchy of Nepal was abolished and became a federal democratic republic, which followed an interim constitution until September 20th, 2015, when a new permanent constitution was adopted. Although a new government and a new constitution were established, Nepal experienced decades of political instability due to frequent changes in government and loss of public trust. Over time, the tension between the people and Nepal's government grew, with scandals like the Air ofre 2017, where Nepal purchased two A330 jets, losing $10.4 million. Youth employment is only at 20 percent. Nepal has changed its government 13 times since 2008. The economic hardships and widespread corruption in Nepal's government led to unrest. To cope, the people of Nepal used social media to express their frustration, entertainment, and communication. Social media gave a voice to people outside the government, especially the youth, who used social media to expose corruption, inequality, and the elite privileges that politicians' kids received. Social media became a core part of daily life, which was threatened by government restrictions, making it more difficult for people to use social media as a way to participate politically, socially, and economically. Creating even more unrest and public frustration, which would boil over.

On September 4th, 2025, the government of Nepal issued a nationwide ban on 26 different social media platforms, including TikTok, X, Facebook, and YouTube. Before the ban, Nepal's Ministry of Communications and Information Technology demanded that social media companies register with the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology within 3 months. This policy was part of Nepal's 2023 directive on regulating the use of social media. The purpose of this was to enforce accountability for hate speech, misinformation, and fraud on

social media. So Nepal could enforce self-regulation mechanisms through legislation. Social media companies refused to comply with Nepal's directive. This resulted in a temporary ban on social media platforms until they cooperated. Nepal argued that the ban was necessary to protect public safety on social media. However, it faced global backlash from the majority of people in Nepal, media groups, and social movements. Arguing that this ban violated people's freedom of speech, expression, and press, and limited people's access to outside information, makes the ban seem more like censorship than regulation. People relied on social media for communication, education, advertising, and expression of political beliefs, causing tensions to rise more and finally boil over.

Without social media for the youth to express their frustrations with the government, the ban triggered nationwide outrage and backlash among Nepal's population, especially among the Youth community. Four days after the initial ban on September 4th, 2025, thousands of Gen Z took to the streets, protesting in major cities and Nepal's capital, Kathmandu. The protesters demand that access to social media be restored, corruption be stopped, and the elite privileges that politicians and their families received be removed. The protests across the nation quickly became dangerous, especially when protesters attempted to storm Nepal's parliament. Security forces responded to the protesters by tear-gassing them, beating them with batons, and shooting them with rubber bullets and water cannons. An estimated 400 people were severely injured, including protesters as well as police officers, and 19 protesters were killed in the violence. Drawing the attention of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Turk, who stated, "several deeply worrying allegations of unnecessary or disproportionate use of force by security forces." On September 9th, 2025, Nepal's prime minister K.P. Sharma Oli resigned because of public pressure and escalating protests across Nepal; for instance, protesters stormed and set fire to the parliament building. In addition to the Prime Minister's resignation, the ban on social media platforms was lifted. Three days later, on September 12th, 2025, a new interim government was established, with the appointment of former Chief Justice Sushila Karki as the new interim prime minister of Nepal. Highlighting the importance of social media as a form of expression and press in present-day society, the censorship of social media is not just a regulation but a violation of people's rights to speech, expression, and free press. Censorship is a way to oppress and restrict the expression and access to information. Illustrating how regulations on social media often violate people's rights and compromise people's ability to access specific information and participate on media platforms.

Subtopic B: Media Censorship and Journalist Safety in China

A major case study to observe is censorship in China. For instance, observing the Uyghur Genocide which includes the killing and kidnapping of Uyghurs, a minority muslim ethnic group in the XinJiang region of China, many journalists and citizens are not permitted to share their experiences with the media. Several journalists have reported citizens refusing to talk to them out

of fear of punishment from the Chinese government–making rights violations even harder to address in vulnerable populations.

For instance, in 2018 37 journalists were arrested, threatening freedom of speech through arrests and libel lawsuits which also forces journalists to self censor out of fear.[1] This emphasizes the role of law and judges in media censorship and maintaining rights and justice. Moreover, Facebook and Instagram as well as many other social media or online platforms are inaccessible in China–which is known as the Great Firewall. This is often an attempt to suppress opinions and perspectives that challenge the authority and control of the Chinese government to prevent the rise of dissident voices. International attention to censorship issues grew, as tensions with Google censorship increased and a Chinese activist who was jailed was awarded the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize.[2]

While the Chinese government says in Article 35 of their constitution that they protect the freedom of association, procession, demonstration, press, and assembly, loopholes are present in other articles such as Article 40 saying that this does not hold true if it threatens the state–China–or Article 4 saying this does not hold if it destroys unit of nationalities. Moreover, freedom of speech and press does not hold if it exposes state secrets. Some claim they balance a line of knowing they need freedom of press, the pressures of the international community, with fear of losing control and authority.

In May of 2010 they issued a white paper requiring foreign organization and individuals to abide by Chinese law too, citing "internet sovereignty". Internet companies in China are also currently required to sign "the 'Public Pledge on Self-Regulation and Professional Ethics for China Internet Industry'".[3] Since Xi JinPing became president in 2013, media censorship has only increased. According to the French group Reporters Without Borders, China is "176 out of 180 countries in its 2016 worldwide index of press freedom".[4] In China the most powerful monitoring body is the Communist Party's Central Propaganda Department (CPD), "which coordinates with General Administration of Press and Publication and State Administration of Radio, Film, and Television to ensure content promotes party doctrine".[5]

This case study is increasingly pressing to address as media censorship intensifies in China–and one we hope will allow delegates to consider the rights violations and tensions with media censorship in our committee session.

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[1] Beina Xu and Eleanor Albert, "Media Censorship in China," Council on Foreign Relations, February 17, 2017, https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/media-censorship-china.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid.

Subtopic C:

Past Actions/Potential Resolutions

Censorship often must be addressed on a case by case basis, the UN's bodies such as UN Human Rights have taken actions such as releasing a June 2020 statement calling on China to protect fundamental human rights such as freedom of expression–which relates to the case study in China. They emphasized the need to address this in the Uyghur region of China as well.[6] While not legally binding or a treaty, this pressure can urge China to maintain rights and justice in order to avoid international scrutiny and is a potentially way to encourage states or countries to implement changes. However, despite this action censorship continues to be a pressing issue in China, especially in the Uyghur region where frequent kidnappings of Uyghurs who protest or share their experience online occur. While not an action taken by UNESCO, this could provide an idea of actions UNESCO could take that wouldn't include treaties or international agreements.

Moreover, UNESCO has also taken several actions to monitor the safety of journalists as well as censorship within the last few decades. For instance, the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity was signed in 2012 to initiate a multi-stakeholder global strategy to improve the safety of journalists. It emphasizes the need for prevention, protection, and prosecution–and the need for consequences. This arose as a response to the 2010 UNESCO's Intergovernmental Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC).[7] This focuses on a coalition based approach to achieve six goals: "raising awareness; standard setting and policy making; monitoring and reporting; capacity-building and research."[8] Capacity building may be a newer concept, but emphasizes teaching skills or workshops so that people have the capacity to implement change. "Training materials and best practices" are part of the resources they provide "to help improve journalists' skills and knowledge on international standards for freedom of expression, investigative journalism and reporting on conflicts" and part of their capacity building initiative.[9] According to UNESCO's website "One key aspect of UNESCO's work is first and foremost to report and publicly condemn all cases of killing of journalists," emphasizing the importance of raising awareness as an aspect of their plan.

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[6] "UN Human Rights Experts Urge China to Allow Them 'Full Access' | UN News," UN News, June 10, 2022, https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/06/1120172.

[7] United Nations, "Safety of Journalists," https://www.un.org/en/safety-journalists.

[8] Ibid.

[9] UNESCO, "Threats to Freedom of Press: Violence, Disinformation & Censorship | UNESCO," UNESCO, May 30, 2022, https://www.unesco.org/en/threats-freedom-press-violence-disinformation-censorship.

In 2022, over 50 countries renewed their commitment to the plan for its 10 year anniversary emphasizing this is still a prominent and pressing issue even a decade later. They committed to addressing media freedom, media pluralism, the safety of journalists, and also considered how women journalists are affected differently by tensions with journalists–something to consider through this committee while viewing this issue through a feminist lens.[10] In order to respond to increasing numbers of threats to women journalists,UNESCO, "has published a research paper aimed at associations, politicians and governments: *The Chilling*. It seeks to promote discussion about effective legislative and organizational initiatives that are designed to protect women journalists".[11]

Many journalists have libel lawsuits and face threats and online harassment. Caruana Galizia, a journalist who died after a bomb was detonated in our car, had several libel lawsuits out at the time of her death. Moreover, Nobel Peace Prize Recipient Maria Ressa faced several lawsuits before being found guilty of libel in the Philippines in 2020. As a result, she faced harassment before being found guilty. Therefore, prosecutors play an important role in monitoring and protecting the rights of journalists and protecting against harassment, as well as protecting freedom of speech. Therefore, UNESCO has trained over 23,000 judicial officials in an attempt to capacity build and make sure they are equipped to handle conflicts with journalists.

Moreover, in response to widespread misinformation during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Knight Center for Journalism at the University of Texas Austin in collaboration with UNESCO and WHO, launched an online course, " how to empower journalists, communication workers and content creators countering the phenomenon of disinformation related to the pandemic".[12]

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[10] Ibid.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid.

Regional Positions

North America:

In the United States, freedom of the press is protected under the 1st Amendment in the Bill of Rights. Albeit, this doesn't stop platforms or employers from setting their own rules over speech, leading to recent debates over online content moderation, restrictions on journalists, and misinformation. With political debates treating this as a matter of national security. Furthermore, hostility from political leaders is not new in the United States, and the country has a history of censorship. For instance, tensions between presidents and the press, and reporters giving up their Pentagon press badges due to changes in reporting rules. Past instances of targeting foreign media or of military action against media outlets, and laws like the Espionage Act of 1917, have been used to restrict speech during wartime.

Mexico is one of the most dangerous countries for the press. Violence from drug lords and organized crime forces many reporters to self-censor because voicing corruption or trafficking investigations would most likely result in their deaths. This pattern has persisted in 2024 and 2025, with around 6 to 8 journalists being killed every year as a direct consequence of their work. Moreover, journalists are also negatively labeled by government officials, weakening their protection and allowing for continued imputiny.

In Canada, controversial bills, such as Bill C-11 and Bill C-18, which are about regulating online content and digital news distribution, have given rise to the concern of governmental interference. Bill C-11, dubbed the Online Streaming Act, allows government regulatory authority over online streaming and content promotion. Bill C-18, the Online News Act, creates rules for digital platforms to negotiate compensation with Canadian news outlets. This has led to worries that this bill might limit independent creators' freedom of expression online.

Under Nicaragua's diarchy, the Ortega-Murillo regime has erased the majority of the independent media in the state. The government has implemented harsh policies, one of which is the Cybercrimes Law, that criminalize journalism, seize properties, and drives journalists into exile. The regime furthered this by denaturalizing the exiled journalists and thus rendering them stateless to stop reporting.

Representatives from North America should recognize "hate speech," and while it is censored in the United States, its impact to incite violence, as well as its ability to undermine social cohesion and inclusion, makes it difficult to regulate.

Asia:

China runs one of the most extensive media censorship systems in the world, dubbed the 'Great Firewall.' It includes content filtering, blocking, and monitoring operations conducted through in-depth inspection and keyword filtering to censor internet traffic in real time, blocking access

to lots of foreign news sites, social media (like Facebook and X), and politically sensitive information.

Nepal recently made global headlines after the government decided to ban 26 social media platforms, including popular international outlets such as Facebook, X, Instagram, and YouTube, in September 2025. The justification for the ban was that the companies did not follow local regulatory requirements, such as registering with the government, a regulation the local authorities assert is mandatory for accountability and misinformation control. The government has prohibited access to the major communication channels, which has raised issues regarding the borderline between necessary regulations and information control.

In India and Pakistan, both nations are progressively resorting to more online censorship to regulate internet content, arguing in support of national security. India ranks first globally in the number of internet shutdowns and the usage of its Information Technology (IT) Act and new Telecommunications Act for content removal orders and blocking websites critical to the government, media, and opposing voices. Pakistan, on the other hand, is employing foreign-made systems for surveillance, like the Web Monitoring System (WMS 2.0), and laws that govern the limits on social media platforms (like previous bans on X/Twitter and YouTube) and allow for content filtration are considered anti-state rhetoric. Both countries are using censorship for platform takedowns.

Censorship in Myanmar has been getting worse since the military coup in 2021, and it has become one of the worst places in the world for journalists. The military government has imposed a digital dictatorship with different aspects, like internet shutdowns, which are both frequent and widespread, and social media and VPNs being blocked, to silence the opposition and cover up the human rights violations. The regime not only conducted blackouts but also took the licenses of the media, implemented laws like the Cybersecurity Law, and performed arrests and detentions of thousands of journalists, some of whom were even killed, with the latter charged with terrorism or incitement. Indonesia, one of the Southeast Asian countries, has also employed internet shutdowns during protests to curtail misinformation spread.

North Korea has the most extreme censorship worldwide. The majority of the population is not allowed to use the global internet at all and can only use a controlled national intranet called Kwangmyong, which has only government-approved material. Foreign media, social media, and any information that is not sanctioned by the government are completely off-limits and under constant surveillance, with harsh punishments, including imprisonment, for anyone who is caught using or sharing content that is viewed as opposing the regime.

Middle East:
Censorship of the internet in the Middle East is a deep-seated and ongoing problem, with the

prime states involved in media restriction being the governments of Iran, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Egypt, which are employing measures such as internet filtering and media monitoring to manage the political and social interactions closely. Because of long-standing political repression, many Middle Eastern states use internet censorship and surveillance to suppress dissent, control public opinion, and maintain regime stability over time. Through obstructing large parts of the internet, governments can create public opinion favorable to them when they speak about security, morality, or anti-state concerns. The massive internet filtering and surveillance are enforced by hard laws against cybercrime and media that allow even the most drastic measures against dissent in cyberspace by jailing activists and journalists. The information space is so narrow that self-censorship is the norm among the majority, who live in fear of being severely punished by law for speaking against the government or discussing sensitive issues like human rights and sectarian tensions.

Africa:

Ethiopia's government is notorious for online censorship, using prolonged internet and communications shutdowns to control information during conflicts and political unrest, notably in the Tigray, Amhara, and Oromia regions. The state has banned numerous international platforms like YouTube, and all international internet connections are centralized through the state-owned telecom, allowing the government to cut off service at will. Beyond blackouts, the government suppresses online journalists through arbitrary detention, intimidation, and the use of vague laws like the Hate Speech and Disinformation Proclamation, forcing reporters into silence or exile.

Press freedom is highly protected by the constitution and the law in both Nigeria and South Africa. However, the political and unstable security situations still cause some pressure. In Nigeria, for example, the government has taken advantage of its power by imposing temporary and highly-publicized bans on social media platforms (like the ban on Twitter in 2021) and by applying security-related laws to intimidate or prosecute reporters. South Africa, on the other hand, usually has a free press, albeit journalists and media houses still have to deal with government pressure and also face online threats and disinformation campaigns, which make them very alert in order to protect their independent reporting.

Europe:

Western Europe has a pronounced commitment to freedom of the press, with Norway leading the world, ranked number 1 on the list of press freedom indices from the *World Press Freedom Index*, that place Norway at the top for press freedom, legal protections, and independent media. In Western Europe, the region's censorship strategy is about controlling internet platforms to prevent infliction of harm. In the United Kingdom (UK) and France, laws like the UK's Online Safety Act require social media firms to remove illegal content, hate speech, and also tackle risks connected with misinformation. To a similar extent, Switzerland, with its strict constitutional

regulations against censorship, employs laws for the penalization of incitement to racial hatred and has had public arguments about the application of financial secrecy laws, which may put journalists at risk of being prosecuted for working on leaks concerning bank information.

Guiding Questions

1. What interventions are most effective in combating disinformation without resorting to censorship?
2. When and why do governments impose internet shutdowns, and what are their consequences?
3. How does censorship contribute to a global erosion of trust in both online information and democratic processes?
4. To what extent is censorship justified by governments as a necessary tool for public safety?
5. What interventions are the most effective in protecting media outlets and journalists from government censorship and impunity?

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