

# Checklist for organising Press Conferences

---

*This checklist is designed to highlight the main issues that should initially be taken into account when preparing a press conference.*

## Choosing a date

- Try to obtain as much information as possible about internal deadlines of the media you are targeting, and schedule your press conference accordingly
- In general, scheduling a press conference in the morning hours of a working day is preferable
- Try to avoid a date parallel to other events that are likely to attract considerable public interest

## Choosing and preparing a location:

- Make sure the location can be reached easily, and with little effort for journalists
- Locate your press conference at a meeting room of your organisation, at a conference venue, or in a hotel where you can talk without being disturbed by others
- Make your organisation/network visible (e.g. with a banner, roll-up, poster)
- Provide good signage so that journalists arriving late can still join
- Provide sufficient chairs for journalists
- The speakers of a press conference should sit around a table or use a lectern that microphones can be added to
- Ensure that the venue is accessible in case either one/more of the speakers or journalists is/are disabled

## Invitations

- Build a good list of contacts in advance, and try to use existing media directories
- In many countries it is acceptable to send out invitations by fax or email, about one week in advance
- Keep it short and simple (maximum one page), highlighting the date, time, duration (45 to 60 minutes) and location, and invite a well-known speaker if possible
- Include contact data at the end, and ask for feedback on planned attendance and accessibility requirements (are physical access, alternative formats and a sign language interpreter required? – if so, these must be provided)
- Follow up by telephone a few days before the press conference

## The press conference itself

- Have a moderator/facilitator to host the press conference
- Each speaker should prepare a short presentation or statement
- Communicate clear messages
- Align the whole programme around one key message, e.g. think of the headline that you would like to see the next day in the newspaper
- Keep input short and easy to understand
- Do not assume that journalists necessarily understand technical terminology
- Be prepared to answer critical questions regarding your topic or organisation
- Prepare written or printed information on the topic; you can add information on the speakers and organisation(s) involved (cf. a media kit)
- Invite journalists to ask questions