

## **Guidelines for Preparing a Media Statement for YWAM teams**

In a crisis situation, please refer to the crisis guidelines. For these and other documents to assist you with public communications, please contact the International Chairman's Team at : [pressoffice@ywam.org](mailto:pressoffice@ywam.org)

The following guidelines will help you draft a press statement in response to many incidents, both positive and negative. Not all guidelines will apply in all situations.

Press statements should be prepared as much in advance of publication as possible. In a crisis, preparation of a statement, anticipating various outcomes, should be a matter of priority. A spokesperson to deliver the statement should be appointed and all staff who may have contact with the press (ie. whoever answers the phone, students, national office, etc.) should be informed of where to direct inquiries.

### **Drafting a Statement :**

Here are some general guidelines :

- be entirely accurate and make sure your facts are correct.
- be clear and concise as possible
- write in the third person unless you are speaking on behalf of yourself
- avoid jargon unless you define it clearly
- determine your key message and stick to it
- communicate in multiple languages where appropriate
- clearly indicate a source / spokesperson for follow up if you want it and make sure the source has anticipated questions and is prepared to deal with media
- check the spelling and grammar before you release it!

Drafting your statement:

#### **1) Briefly identify yourself and make clear who you are speaking on behalf of.**

If you are speaking on behalf of YWAM, define which part of YWAM. You may not speak above the position you have without authorization. In other words, you cannot speak on behalf of YWAM International unless you have the authority. Clarify if you are speaking for a nation, region, or particular centre or just on behalf of a certain individual or group. General statements about YWAM to help identify who we are and what we do can be taken from [ywam.org](http://ywam.org), or seek assistance from the press office.

In situations where you are speaking on behalf of an affiliate which is not directly associated with YWAM (ie. an NGO), make clear who the organization is and where they are located, and, where appropriate, how

they are legitimized (ie. “affiliated with the Evangelical Alliance/ working with the UN / overseen by <relevant government body>. Do not speak on behalf of another organization unless you are authorized to do so.

**2) Make your statement, concisely addressing the issue and keeping to your message. Answer the questions - what has happened? What led up to this event? What is your response / what do you expect will happen next?**

- Stick to the point – don’t digress – but make sure your statement has context.
- make your statement credible – give evidence to support your statement where appropriate, but keep it concise. This could include statements about your service record in the area, your good relationships with other credible groups, personal testimonies, etc.
- do not reference other YWAM or other ministries without their permission.
- Keep it clear and simple to avoid misinterpretation.

**3) Decide if you will answer questions, anticipate the questions and be prepared to answer them.**

Some useful responses to common questions...

“That’s a very important question, but even more important is...”

“Before I answer that question, I think I should say...”

“I don’t have the exact details, but what I can say is...”

Don’t be afraid to contradict or correct...

“You might say that, but in my experience...”

“No, that is not true. The truth is...”

Try not to say “no comment.” If you don’t have/can’t give information, say so, and explain why.