

COMOS POLICY FOR MEDIA REPORTING

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Proposed by:

Approved by:

1. INTRODUCTION:

Media coverage of the work and activities of COMOS and its staff can provide a valuable opportunity to promote the work of the organization. However, any contact between COMOS members and the media carries the risk that COMOS will be exposed to negative scrutiny or misrepresentation, perhaps unintentionally. This policy outlines the procedures to be followed by COMOS members when interacting with the media.

The media includes newspapers, magazines, journals, bulletins, newsletters, radio programs, television programs and electronic media such as online journals, online news websites including alternative news websites, weblogs, podcasts, electronic newsletters, electronic noticeboards and social media sites. It does not include the digital modes and for information on the approval process for posting to those, please refer to the Annexure 14

2. OBJECTIVE:

This policy is intended to provide a guide to member interaction with members of the media. This policy is designed to ensure that any comments made to the media are consistent, in accordance with the COMOS code of conduct and other policy, and do not breach any of the requirements.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the COMOS Rules and Regulations, Code of Conduct or any other applicable policies. Depending on the circumstances, non-compliance with this policy may constitute a breach of understanding and necessary disciplinary action may be initiated, if required.

This policy is applicable to all the members of COMOS who must comply with this policy. If anything in this policy is unclear, members are encouraged to contact the Secretary or President of COMOS.

3. POLICY GUIDELINES:

- i) Initiating media contact: Any proposals for initiating media contact should be discussed in advance between the Ex Com members and the President and Secretary shall be the official spokesperson for the organization.
- ii) Media releases or media statements on behalf of COMOS should not be issued without the knowledge of the members of Ex Com. or without prior authorization. They should only quote authorized spokespeople on behalf of the organization.
- iii) Media inquiries: Any media inquiry – whether seeking comment or information, or permission to take a photograph or produce an audio or video recording of COMOS should be directed to the President or the Secretary. Only the authorized and official spokesperson are responsible for liaising with the media to obtain details of their inquiry, provide an authorized response to the journalist, and, where appropriate, facilitate an interview with required member. For any subject expert enquiries, the President/Secretary in consultation with other Ex Com members will obtain approval as appropriate and advise other members if they have been authorized to speak to the media on such specific matter. Anyone authorized to provide media comment should follow the relevant protocols of official communication.
- iv) Only the President or the Secretary is authorized to make official comment to the media about sensitive or contentious issues, issues of a political nature, or issues relating to COMOS funding, organizational structure or management. With prior permission of the President or the Secretary in consultation with other Ex Com members any other member may also be authorized to speak to the media on his or her behalf in relation to any issue, if required.
- v) If an article or report appears in the media containing an inaccurate quote from a COMOS member or incorrect information about COMOS, the President or the Secretary will determine the appropriate response. If any other members become aware of any such errors they should bring them to the attention of the President or the Secretary who can further take appropriate response.
- vi) Members who give a presentation or paper in their capacity of a COMOS representative at a conference, seminar, public meeting or other event must have

the contents of the seminar paper/ presentation approved by the Ex Com before it is presented. This only applies to events where publicity via social or other media are expected and other cases where COMOS India is also a cohost/ sponsor or a institutional partner of the event. While for small events no approval is required, however, the code of conduct should be adhered to.

- vii) Approval of the President or the Secretary is required for publication of a paper in the capacity of the representative of COMOS (for example, on an external website other than the COMOS website, or in conference papers).
- viii) Members using their association with COMOS as part of their credentials must provide, at the bottom of the paper, a disclaimer that the views are those of the individuals and not of COMOS India.