**Journalists Prevented from Covering PEN Event on Press Freedom**

May 7, 2015

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Observer

http://observer.com/2015/05/press-banned-from-pen-event-on-press-freedom/

As part of the PEN World Voices Festival, the international press freedom organization scheduled an event this afternoon titled, “Finding Security in Unsafe Passages: United Nations Event about Protecting Journalists’ Safety and Rights.” The panel, according to [PEN’s website](http://worldvoices.pen.org/event/2015/02/27/finding-security-unsafe-passages-united-nations-event-about-protecting-journalists%E2%80%99), will “delve into the wide range of risks journalists face every day. Experts will offer safety tips, share advice for protecting sources and copyrights in all types of media and address cybersecurity risks.”

But on the morning of the event, a spokeswoman for the festival, Kyla McMillan, notified the Observer that we had been denied entry. “The press is no longer able to attend this event,” said Ms. McMillan by email. “There has been an issue with press authorizations through U.N. security.”

**UPDATE 1**(12.47pm): Ms. McMillan elaborated in a second email and by phone: “Please accept my sincere apologies—the U.N. requires that all press visiting the headquarters, for any event, have an official U.N. press pass. Due to a miscommunication, we’ve not been able to secure this for you in time.” She added that her team was unaware of United Nations’ rules regarding media credentials and that a total of four journalists have been disinvited.

Karin Deutsch Karlekar, director of PEN’s Free Expression Programs, and one of the panelists at United Nations event, criticized the decision.

“One would think the more coverage for these types of issues would be better because these are really serious issues that journalists are facing,” Ms. Deutsch Karlekar said, “so discouraging journalists from covering the event just seems odd.”

**UPDATE 2**(1.05pm): Ms. Deutsch Karlekar added by email that “it seems that due to a snafu with these U.N. rules (that we were not aware of until late last night), it won’t be possible to add anyone else on to the list. I am really sorry, and as I said, it does seem extremely odd to be keeping press out of the event.”