

Fair Observer^o

Contributor Guidelines

We invite you to publish your perspective, share your story and shape the global conversation. We welcome content in all forms — articles, podcasts, videos, photo essays, infographics and interactive features.

We categorize content into the following types:

- [360°](#) series is our signature feature where you get context and insights from around the world. The context article explains the background of the issue and its importance. Other pieces present a plurality of perspectives on the same issue.
- [Quick Reads](#) comprises reflections and ruminations on issues facing humanity in 600 to 1,000 words.
- [Insight](#) refers to articles on various topics of 1,000 to 2,000 words.
- [In-Depth](#) provides an examination of an issue in detail or an extensive overview of recent developments and contains more than 2,000 words.
- [The Interview](#), as per its name, is a conversation with public figures and experts, including statesmen, business executives and thought leaders in various fields.
- [My Voice](#) is where we feature vlogs from contributors on a range of issues.
- [Videos](#) feature stories produced by contributors and third parties.
- [Podcasts](#) feature third-party and in-house audio productions.
- [Interactive](#) is our in-house feature that creatively combines different media formats — text, images, audio and video.

CONTENT

360°

1. Our signature feature is commissioned by the Fair Observer team **only**, although we are open to suggestions from contributors and readers.

2. 360° series provide a diversity of views from around the world on a given topic.
3. Please find examples below:
 - a. [Celebrity Culture: Famous For Being Famous](#)
 - b. [To Brexit or Not to Brexit?](#)
 - c. [Water is the Essence of Life](#)
 - d. [Climate Change: A Clear and Present Danger](#)
 - e. [How do you Define Extremism?](#)

Quick Reads

1. Ideally, quick read articles should be between 600 and 1,000 words.
2. They are meant to be reflections or ruminations on politics, economics, culture, society, technology or anything else.
3. Please find examples below:
 - a. [Can Japan Maintain Its Economic Fortunes?](#)
 - b. [The Right Green New Deal](#)
 - c. [South Sudan Turns Three: Gaza, Obama and South Africa](#)
 - d. [A Birthday Wish From Gaza](#)
 - e. [America: Lost Child of the Enlightenment](#)

Insight

1. Insight pieces must be around 1,000 to 2,000 words.
2. They should offer clear perspectives and insights.
3. Please find examples below:
 - a. [Iran Has Learned How to Play Trump](#)
 - b. [The Military Writes the Rules in Thailand's Election](#)
 - c. [The Death of One Man Is a Tragedy](#)
 - d. [What Modern-Day Demagogues Stole from Ancient Greece](#)
 - e. [D-Day at 75: Is It Time to Reconsider Britain's "Special Relationship" with the US?](#)

In-Depth

1. These are meant to be a deep dive into an issue and are more than 2,000 words.
2. Remember, only substantive issues deserve an in-depth examination.

3. Please find examples below:

- a. [Mark Zuckerberg Is More Dangerous than Donald Trump](#)
- b. [Australia's Own Brand of Radical Populism](#)
- c. [Without Fundamental Reforms to the Education System, Indians Will Not Innovate](#)
- d. [The US Policy against Iran Is Strategically Illogical](#)
- e. [Burning Man and Auroville: Understanding the Human Condition](#)

The Interview

1. An interview must be an enriching conversation with insightful questions and thoughtful answers from someone with meaningful things to say.
2. The interviewer must write an introduction of around 300 words that explains the context of the conversation and the issues it covers.
3. You must ensure that the interviewee(s) or someone authorized on their behalf fills out the [contributor registration form](#) and sends their photo(s) as per instructions on the form.

My Voice

As a digital media platform, we feature vlogs from contributors on a range of issues in the My Voice section. As the title suggests, the video is your point of view on an issue you care about. When you film video, make sure you keep the following points in mind:

1. Look at the camera, not off it, so that you are speaking to the viewer.
2. Make sure the sound is good so that your audience can hear you. Shoot in a quiet place and preferably use an external microphone.
3. Pay attention to lighting so that people can see you. Note that the light should be in front of you and not behind.
4. Use a professional camcorder, DSLR camera, webcam, tablet or even a smartphone.
5. Place the camera, tablet or smartphone on a tripod if possible. Remember, a selfie stick can also do the trick.
6. Watch this [video](#) to learn how to record using a smartphone.
7. Tackle one question per submission.

8. Express your perspective succinctly, lucidly and logically.
9. Do so in around two to three minutes. In case you run over, do not exceed five minutes.
10. Upload your video on YouTube or Vimeo. You can also send us your raw video footage for editing.
11. Click [here](#) for examples.

Videos

So far, we have largely featured third-party videos. Now, we are open to video stories produced by contributors and third parties. Please keep the following points in mind:

1. Shoot compelling stories on issues of importance.
2. Ensure that the quality is decent in terms of sound, footage, structure and flow. In brief, the viewer must want to watch it.
3. Upload the video to YouTube or Vimeo and we will review it. Alternatively, you can send us your finished footage for review.
4. Click [here](#) for examples.

Podcasts

We feature podcasts from around the world. If you have a podcast in mind, reach out to us and we will consider featuring you on our platform. Please keep the following points in mind:

1. Make sure that you have high-quality sound.
2. Have a compelling theme and tell a good story.
3. Ensure you have structure and flow.
4. Click [here](#) for examples.

Interactive

This is an in-house feature that creatively combines all media formats — text, images, audio and video. The goal is to tell a story and tell it well in a modern form of journalism, using some of the latest tools available. We welcome ideas from you for this feature.

Click [here](#) for examples.

WRITING TIPS

Please find below some tips to help you write articles that will stimulate discussion, provoke thought and elevate discourse.

Title and Article Summary

Your title should ideally be up to 10 words max. It should incorporate active words. It should also refer to the important issue, region or topic it covers. A punchy phrase is NOT enough.

Each article must begin with a one-sentence summary that uses the active voice. Think of this sentence as a trailer. Do not say “an analysis” or “commentary” — tell us the fundamental point of your article.

Examples of Good Titles

1. Trump Is Wrong to Think He Can Force Iran to Its Knees
2. Africa’s Deepening Battle with Big Tobacco
3. US Move on Reproductive Rights Sets Dangerous Precedent
4. Democracy Faces a Global Crisis
5. Are Humans and Machines at War?

Examples of Good Article Summaries

1. The next steps by the likes of China and Russia toward segmentation of the internet, and the way private companies respond, will make or break the World Wide Web.
2. Ideas of the Enlightenment that led to the creation of America have been set aside for celebrities, cheerleaders and consumerism.
3. Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea could dwarf everything the world has seen in Somalia.
4. Tax-free havens threaten the world economy and hurt the poor, causing much damage to Africa.
5. Revulsion for corruption and nepotism makes Indians vote for a leader with humble roots despite his poor track record and authoritarian tendencies.

Style Guidelines

1. Please avoid colloquial language, such as “and don’t even get me started on his speech.”
2. Develop arguments and adduce evidence. Mere iteration of facts or bald assertions will not suffice. In particular, avoid endless regurgitation of facts without flow or structure. Say something original on the subject.
3. Remember, Fair Observer is a digital media platform with a reputation for high-quality content. Your opinions and arguments must be well organized and carefully constructed.
4. Please state facts clearly. If you make an inference, ensure that it follows the fact.
5. Certain facts that may appear obvious to you will be unknown to others. So explanations and transitions are critical.
6. Remember, some readers will not have the same knowledge of the issue as you do. So please be clear, simple and accessible.
7. Back up your arguments by using secondary sources. Ideally, hyperlink the source of your citation or the evidence for a fact. If you do not know how to use hyperlinks, provide the website links in brackets in the same sentence. Remember, we do not publish footnotes or endnotes at the end of the article.

General Principles

1. Be thrifty. Make every word count. Remember, less is more.
2. Be clear. Watch out for too many long sentences. This is a sure way to lose readers.
3. Avoid clichés. Metaphors lose their impact if they are too familiar. Be inventive.
4. Please limit the use of rhetorical questions. Instead, make your point succinctly.
5. Please remember that the content is read by an international audience. You must be accessible to readers in other countries.
6. Refer to historical, economic or social context as applicable. Provide dates, formal titles and explain events.
7. Keep a “big picture” perspective. Remember not to get buried in minutiae or technical details. At the same time, bear in mind that evidence and statistics are important to present a point.

8. Try to make connections between seemingly disparate elements and offer insightful explanations. For instance: “One can see that a similar budget crisis occurred in (19XY) in (Country A) after sustained deficits, and was resolved by slashing wasteful spending.”
9. If possible, anticipate what is likely to happen in the near future. For example: “It is expected that policymakers will continue with the economic stimulus.”
10. Opinion is welcome, but it should make a point or convey a message. Your opinion must not overwhelm either the context or the facts of the article.

Grammar and Punctuation

1. Use quotation marks, not inverted commas.
2. Use one space after a period.
3. Capitalize organizations, institutions and geographical places.
4. Avoid italics except for unfamiliar foreign words.
5. Dashes: Use the em dash with spaces on either side. For example: Things have changed a lot in the last year — mainly for the better.

REVIEW PROCESS

During the review process, we focus on the following five points:

1. Grammar
2. Length
3. Clarity
4. Accuracy
5. Adherence to our house style

Editing

We review all submitted content as part of a three-stage process:

1. Review of content
2. Review of language
3. Final review by the Editorial Board

CONTRIBUTOR AGREEMENT

You agree to:

1. Be available to our editors to answer any questions, requests for clarifications or sources, as well as fact checks about your submission.
2. Abide by the editors' decisions. We may amend headlines and create sub-headings, so that your submission is compliant with Fair Observer's style.

We request that:

1. Your article should preferably not have been published before. We will occasionally consider republication. In that case, please make sure you have the right to republish the piece.
2. You provide hyperlinks to your secondary sources so that your assertions can be verified. For us, accuracy is essential. We see fact-checking as sacred in the era of fake news.

We get more submissions than we can publish, so please be patient. By submitting content, you cede to us the right to edit it, have the final say on edits and, in some cases, not to publish the piece.

Rights to Your Work

All articles, multimedia content and other materials, creations, works of authorship and inventions submitted by you will be your sole property, but you grant us a perpetual, irrevocable, worldwide right and license to use, copy, reproduce, adapt, publish and distribute the content in any form. Full details are available in our full [Contributor Agreement](#).

Anonymous Publication

If you are at risk for expressing certain views under your real name, write to us at submissions@fairobserver.com. Please state that you wish to write under a pseudonym or an alias and provide an explanation of your particular situation. Your information will not be disclosed to a third party without your prior consent, unless we are legally required to do so.