

## TIPS FOR WRITING LETTERS TO THE MEDIA

### ***Starting your letter...***

- Try to respond to something already published (letter or an article) if you can, but don't be limited by that topic.

### ***Opening sentence could be...***

- *Congratulations to ... or I support/ agree with...*  
(Being positive is often rare in other writers)
- *I disagree with...* (Letter, columnist etc).  
Make one phrase on this theme then continue on the points you want to make.
- *Today, this week/month/year is about...* (Relevant to your main point).
- If not writing on a current news item, a 'punchy' opening maybe necessary.

### ***Content...***

- Short (about 200 words)
- Make 2-3 points only. Don't let the reader lose interest. Choose the punchiest points to make.
- Use short sentences, keeping your message clear. Grab the reader's attention. (Would you stop to read your letter?)
- Government policy: refer to the Minister / policy / Department. Chances are your letter may be forwarded to the Minister, increasing its impact.

### ***Ending...***

- Appeal to goodwill / previous policy / fair go / hand up etc.
- Conclude with a call to action (Government / UN / all of us) on the course you are advocating.
- Try a pun, neat phrase or twist on words to summarise your intentions and make your letter stand out.

### ***Remember...***

- Local papers are worth writing to also.
  - Include your address and daytime phone number (most publications will verify the authenticity of your letter before publishing it).
  - Don't be afraid to ring to check if your letter has been received.
  - Faxing or emailing is the preferred ways to send your letter.
- NB: If emailing, include your letter within the substance of the e-mail, NOT as an attachment.
- Don't give up looking for your letter too early.
  - When you get published, send a copy to RESULTS, your MP and the Minister and celebrate with your group!

*Each paper or magazine has a slightly different style.  
Practice and you will get published!*

***YOU CAN CREATE AND SHAPE THE PUBLIC DEBATE ON POVERTY!***