

**PRESS RELEASE
PARLIAMENT OF SINGAPORE**

**SELECT COMMITTEE ON
DELIBERATE ONLINE FALSEHOODS – CAUSES, CONSEQUENCES AND
COUNTERMEASURES**

Chronology of correspondence with Reporters Without Borders

1. This press release is issued following the remarks made on Reporters Without Borders (also known as Reporters Sans Frontieres or RSF) by the Chairman of the Select Committee on Deliberate Online Falsehoods today (*See Annex A*).
2. On 9 March 2018 (Friday), the Select Committee decided to invite RSF to give oral evidence. On 13 March (Tuesday), Parliament Secretariat wrote to Mr Daniel Bastard, Head of RSF's Asia-Pacific desk, inviting him to give oral evidence on the afternoon of 23 March.
3. On the same day, Mr Bastard replied, saying that he was based in Paris and unable to appear physically. Parliament Secretariat then asked if RSF had an office in Singapore or Asia, from which it could send representatives to the hearings. Mr Bastard replied that the director of RSF's East Asia office in Taipei was not available to travel to Singapore on 23 March, and asked if a Skype session was possible.
4. On 14 March (Wednesday), Parliament Secretariat offered Mr Bastard the option of coming on any of the days set aside for public hearings (14, 15, 16, 22, 23, 27, 28, 29 March), and offered to fund his travel costs. Mr Bastard replied that he will consider coming for the 27-29 March sessions. He added that, "for organisational reasons, I need to get the approval from my hierarchy", and asked to get back by 20 March.
5. On 20 March (Tuesday), Mr Bastard replied: "Unfortunately I won't be able to come to Singapore this month, for organizational reasons. Since we are currently preparing our annual index, I need to be fully available at the office and the trip to Singapore will take too long." Parliament Secretariat then asked if Mr Bastard or a RSF representative familiar with its publications on Singapore would be able to give evidence via video-conference at any time between 20-29 March.
6. To date, no further communication has been received from RSF.

Office of the Clerk of Parliament
Singapore, 27 March 2018

Annex A - Chairman's Statement at the end of 27 March Hearing

1. Before we adjourn for the day I would like to place on the record the fact that this Committee had also unanimously decided to invite Reporters Without Borders (also known as Reporters Sans Frontieres or RSF) to give oral evidence at our public hearings.
2. RSF initially expressed interest in giving oral evidence, and proposed to attend this week's hearings. However, it eventually cited "organisational reasons" and declined to attend. I note that it has subsequently issued a statement doubting the sincerity of our invitation.
3. I have asked our Parliament Secretariat to release a chronology of the correspondence with RSF.
4. For the record, our invitation to RSF still stands. Should RSF change its mind and decide to give oral evidence, they are welcome to write to us.
