

OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting
Warsaw, September 21, 2015

Working Session 1: Fundamental freedoms I, including:

- Address by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media
- Freedom of expression, free media and information

Intervention delivered by Ambassador Adam Bugajski, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Poland to the OSCE in Vienna

Mr. Moderator,

Poland fully aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union. In addition, let me make three remarks in my national capacity focusing on safety of journalists.

Firstly, we, as participating States, have a clear obligation to secure and protect safe environment for journalists carrying out their work - for the benefit of our societies. **Free and unimpeded access to information allows people to exercise their right to freedom of expression, allows them to make responsible and independent choices. As a matter of fact, such access empowers them as citizens.**

Journalists, those who collect and disseminate information to the public, are an indispensable part of our societies. They should not be intimidated, threatened or silenced. Journalists have to be protected in order to be able to practice their profession in a safe and secure environment. In this regard, we have to fulfil the OSCE media freedom-related commitments undertaken by our predecessors. We might also consider improving the current legislative framework concerning the protection of journalists.

Given misunderstanding related to freedom of expression, free media and information, it is worth reminding everyone that **commitments undertaken in the field of human dimension do not belong exclusively**

to the internal affairs of the country concerned, as reconfirmed in the 2010 Astana Declaration.

Secondly, **we need to profit more from the expertise of the institution of the Representative on Freedom of the Media** and ask for its assistance in solving concrete problems. I would like to stress that work done by Ms. Dunja Mijatovic is highly valued by Poland. I want to thank for her diligence in addressing challenges arising in the field of freedom of the media in the OSCE participating States, including in my country. The RFoM remarks, as we heard today, are often not pleasant for a given state, but it is part of the mandate of her Office to remind us about our obligations and commitments. And we need to respect it.

Thirdly, **Poland declares its intention and encourage other countries to work constructively and in a cooperative spirit with a view to adopting a decision on safety of journalists at the Ministerial Council in Belgrade**. We have to show political will to resolve a deadlock on this matter, which we have been experiencing for some time. We should adopt ambitious, yet realistic approach in order to reach a sound decision in December.

I thank you Mr. Moderator.