



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe  
Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media



MINISTRY OF CULTURE  
OF THE REPUBLIC  
OF LITHUANIA

## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

### “Safety of Journalists – New Challenges and Responses”

3 July 2017, Vilnius

Freedom of expression and independent journalism are the cornerstones of every democratic society. Yet, we are witnessing a different reality. Journalists and media experts continue to face physical and verbal attacks and intimidations as a direct result of their professional activities. The scale of violence against journalists is stunning – since 1992, more than a thousand journalists have been killed worldwide. In some countries, conditions for media professionals are in constant deterioration – oppressive political pressure, arbitrary arrests and prosecutions, disinformation wars, terrorism and defamation legislation, journalists’ labelling as threats to national security, suffocating forms of official regulation have become commonplace for journalists working in the OSCE region. These illegitimate actions give rise to fear and insecurity among media professionals and have a chilling effect on freedom of expression in our societies. Therefore, the safety of journalists has to remain on top of the political agenda of the OSCE, as well as other international organizations.

**The purpose of this conference is to review the current situation and recent developments relating to the safety of journalists in the OSCE region, with a particular focus on identifying the new challenges and responses. The conference will also serve as a platform to take stock of the implementation of *Vilnius Recommendations on Safety of Journalists (2011)*<sup>1</sup> and to provide input for a new edition of the *OSCE Handbook on Safety of Journalists*, with the aim to assist the OSCE participating States in ensuring safe working conditions for journalists working in the OSCE region.**

The conference is jointly organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania, the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, and the Lithuanian Journalists Union.

The conference will take place at the *Martynas Mažvydas National Library* (5<sup>th</sup> floor, Gediminas av. 51, Vilnius). Working languages: English and Lithuanian.

#### PROGRAMME

14.30 – 15.00

**REGISTRATION AND WELCOME COFFEE**

15.00 – 15.45

**OPENING SESSION**

Welcoming remarks:

- **H.E. Linas LINKEVIČIUS**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania
- **Ms. Liana RUOKYTĖ-JONSSON**, Minister of Culture of Lithuania
- **Ambassador Christian STROHAL**, Special Representative of the Austrian OSCE Chairmanship-in-Office
- **Ambassador Sian MACLEOD**, Head of the United Kingdom Delegation to the OSCE in Vienna, Chair of the Human Dimension Committee
- **Mr. Dainius RADZEVIČIUS**, Chairman, Lithuanian Journalists Union

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<sup>1</sup> On 7-8 June 2011, Lithuania as the OSCE Chairmanship-in-Office hosted an international conference on Safety of Journalists in Vilnius. In co-operation with the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFoM), Lithuania promulgated the *Vilnius Recommendations on Safety of Journalists*, which emphasized the role of national governments and legislatures, law enforcement agencies and media in ensuring safe working conditions for journalists. As a follow-up to this conference, in 2011 the RFoM Office released the first edition the *OSCE Guidebook on Safety of Journalists* with practical recommendations for providing safe working conditions to journalists in the OSCE region, which was last updated in 2014.

**Introduction:** **Mr. Frane MAROEVIC**, Director, Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

15.45 – 17.00

**SESSION I: SAFETY OF JOURNALISTS AND MEDIA-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT – TAKING STOCK OF VILNIUS RECOMMENDATIONS**

- ❖ *Addressing impunity for crimes against journalists*
- ❖ *Safe working conditions for journalists and media outlets*

**Moderator:** **Mr. Marius LUKOŠIŪNAS**, UNESCO Programme Specialist (Section for Freedom of Expression)

Speakers:

- **Mr. Ricardo GUTIERREZ**, General Secretary, European Federation of Journalists
- **Mr. William HORSLEY**, International Director of the Centre for Freedom of the Media at the University of Sheffield (UK), Author of the OSCE *Guidebook on Safety of Journalists*
- **Mr. Rolandas BARYSAS**, Editor-in-Chief, “Verslo žinios“
- **Mr. Maxim TRUDOLYUBOV**, Editor-at-Large at “Vedomosti”, columnist at “The International New York Times”
- **Mr. Vaidotas BENIUŠIS**, Assistant Director, Baltic News Service (BNS)

17.00 – 17.15

**COFFEE BREAK**

17.15 – 18.45

**SESSION II: NEW CHALLENGES TO MEDIA FREEDOM**

- ❖ *Disinformation and propaganda*
- ❖ *Online journalism and social media, including safety of female journalists online*
- ❖ *Investigative journalism*

**Moderator:** **Ambassador Sian MACLEOD**, Head of the United Kingdom Delegation to the OSCE in Vienna, Chair of the Human Dimension Committee

Speakers:

- **Mr. Ruslan DEYNYCHENKO**, Co-Founder and Executive Director, StopFake project, Ukraine
- **Ms. Aistė ŽILINSKIENĖ**, President, Internet Media Association of Lithuania
- **Ms. Katie Morris**, Head of Europe and Central Asia programme, *Article 19*
- **Mr. Roman SHLEYNOV**, Regional Editor for Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP), Investigative Observer at “Novaya Gazeta”, Russia

18.45

**CLOSING SESSION**

- Rapporteur **Ms. Barbara TRIONFI**, Executive Director, International Press Institute, Austria
- **Mr. Frane MAROEVIC**, Director, Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

19.00

**RECEPTION**