



**Permanent Mission of Ukraine**  
to the International  
Organizations in Vienna

**Statement in Response to the Report by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, H.E. Ambassador Jan Braathu**

As for delivery by Ambassador Yurii Vitrenko, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna, to the 1517<sup>th</sup> meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council  
10 April 2025

**Mr. Chairperson,**

Ukraine joins the Finnish Chairpersonship in welcoming Ambassador Jan Braathu to the Permanent Council in his new capacity as the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media.

**Dear Ambassador Braathu,**

We thank you for presenting the first Regular Report, which provides an analytical overview of the main challenges to media freedom across the OSCE region.

I would like to reiterate Ukraine's full support for the activities of the RFoM Office aimed at ensuring safe environment for journalists, promoting media freedom and fostering media literacy.

We believe the RFoM Office should continue its efforts to identify effective tools to address censorship and counter disinformation and propaganda that directly threaten national security, territorial integrity, democratic processes and public safety in the participating States.

We stand firm on the principle that there can be no media freedom unless the safety of journalists is guaranteed, and they can report without fear of reprisal.

Regrettably, since 2014, Ukrainian media infrastructure, journalists and media workers have been under constant attack in retaliation for their reporting on the war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by the Russian Federation.

More than 112 Ukrainian and foreign journalists have been detained or taken hostage by Russian forces since the beginning of the Russian aggression followed by its full-scale invasion.

According to the Institute of Mass Information, since the beginning of the full-scale invasion alone, Russia has committed more than 829 crimes against journalists and media in Ukraine. 102 journalists have been killed.

Among the latest victims are Ukrainian journalist and editor Tetiana Kulyk, who was killed in her house in the Kyiv region in a deadly drone attack launched by Russian forces on the night of 26 February,

Viktoria Roshchyna, well-known for her reports about the situation in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, who died last September during her transfer to Moscow from pre-trial detention centre No. 2 in Taganrog,

and Starlight Media projects producer, Yurii Kirpik, who was killed on 13 March 2025.

The reports of the OSCE Moscow Mechanism, the interim reports of the ODIHR, the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine and other international monitoring mechanisms confirm that journalists are among the thousands of Ukrainian civilians arbitrarily detained by Russia.

At least 33 journalists and other media workers remain among the Ukrainian political prisoners in Russian captivity.

Oleksiy Bessarabov, Dmytro Shtyblikov Dmytro Khyliuk, Iryna Danylovych, Vladyslav Yesypenko Iryna Levchenko, Seyran Saliyev, Ernes Ametov, Aziz Azizov, Rustem Osmanov, Osman Arifmemetov, Remzi Bekirov, Anastasia Hlukhovska.

These and many more journalists have been handed down long-term sentences on falsified charges and are being held in Russian captivity in inhuman conditions under immense physical and psychological pressure that in most cases amounts to torture.

The recent investigation by Slidstvo.Info [*a Ukrainian investigative project based in Kyiv*] into what happened to 27-year-old Viktoriya Roshchyna in Russian detention is a reminder of the horrific consequences of war for journalists.

Unlike Viktoriya Roshchyna, all other illegally detained journalists, as long as they are still alive, have a chance of being released.

Let me reiterate the critical importance for the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media to maintain close attention to the cases of Ukrainian and foreign journalists being targeted, held hostage and subjected to violence amidst Russia's war of aggression, and to use all available instruments in accordance with the entrusted mandate to address these grave violations.

### **Esteemed colleagues,**

Russia struggles to suppress freedom of speech and destroy media infrastructure across Ukraine.

The aggressor state tries to achieve this goal by launching missile attacks on TV towers, as happened in previous years in Kyiv, Kharkiv, Rivne and Sumy regions, despite those being considered civilian objects.

Last year in Kharkiv, one of Europe's largest printing houses Factor-Druk was hit by another Russian missile attack that claimed seven lives and left 20 people injured.

Hitting buildings housing the editorial offices of the state enterprise "Multimedia Platform of Foreign Broadcasting of Ukraine" by the ballistic missile attack on Kyiv on 6 April 2025 adds to the list of Russia's war crimes.

The Russian missile strike on 6 April destroyed the new FREEDOM TV newsroom, TV channel, which is part of the state enterprise "Multimedia Platform of Foreign Broadcasting of Ukraine" and is aimed at Russian-speaking viewers outside of Ukraine.

It is an effective tool for destroying Russian propaganda and a source of truthful information for Russian-speaking viewers abroad about what is happening in Ukraine, which is defending itself against the external aggression.

It is worth noting that this was the second attack on the facilities after they were relocated, following an earlier missile attack on 12 February, and another attempt by Russia to silence and limit independent media coverage of its war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Ukraine.

Such brutal attacks should be thoroughly investigated and receive a strong reaction from the international community.

In this regard, we would like to reiterate our gratitude to you, Ambassador Braathu, for your prompt and principled response condemning Russia's targeted attacks on media infrastructure in violation of international humanitarian law and OSCE commitments.

Ukraine counts on further strong reaction and condemnation from the RFoM of Russia's attempts to dismantle independent media, eliminate freedom of speech and crack down on anyone who speaks out against its illegal war against Ukraine and occupation of parts of territories of the independent states.

**Mr. Representative,**

Ukraine has always enjoyed well-established co-operation with the institution that you will lead for the next three years. We remain ready to continue constructive dialogue on a wide range of issues related to ensuring media freedom and the safety of journalists throughout the OSCE area.

We wish you, Ambassador Braathu, and your able team every success in all your future important endeavours.

**I thank you, Mr. Chairperson.**