



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA TO THE UN,  
OSCE AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN VIENNA

**Statement by Ambassador Bahtijors Hasans, Permanent Representative  
of the Republic of Latvia, delivered in response to the statement by the  
Delegation of the Russian Federation**

Permanent Council No 994,  
Vienna, 10 April 2014

Mr. Chairman,

First – as you all know - Latvia is a democratic country, where all fundamental freedoms and human rights, including freedom of expression, are guaranteed to everyone. Media pluralism flourishes in my country. Newspapers, TV, radio, web news portals, social media platforms are widely available and content is produced in Latvian, English, Russian. There is no censorship in Latvia. Any restrictions or limitations to any basic rights can be imposed only in accordance with the law and after careful consideration, whether they are necessary in a democratic society and are in accordance with Latvia's international obligations, including the European Convention on Human Rights.

On 3 April 2014, the National Electronic Mass Media Council of Latvia on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of April took a decision to restrict the broadcasting of Russia state owned TV channel *Rossiya RTR* in Latvia - temporarily, for a period of three months, in accordance with the provisions of the Electronic Mass Media Law.

This decision was made after careful examination of broadcasts of the *Rossiya RTR* in Latvia in the period between 2 and 17 March of this year. The Council concluded that Russia state TV's broadcasts repeatedly contained hate speech, incitement to war and military conflict, as well as ethnic and national hatred.

Mr. Chairman,

I am very surprised that the Russian Federation has not addressed these blatant violations of its state owned channel. I am even more astonished that the Russian Ambassador is defending this policy here.

I fully support the call of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media on all participating States to stop the information war, stop the manipulation with media and ensure safety of journalists.

Once again, please allow me to state that, restriction regarding broadcasting of Russia state TV channel *Rossiya RTR* in Latvia pursues a legitimate aim and fully meets the relevant international standards and OSCE commitments.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.