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Media Law Institute, Kyiv, Ukraine

www.medialaw.kiev.ua

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Under the Helsinki Final Act participating States should ensure conditions for the free work of media and journalists.

These principles work in stable democracies because there is no true and genuine democracy without freedom of speech and public discourse on the issues of public interest. But all these freedom of expression principles also imply the responsibility of a journalist and media in general to provide true, balanced, impartial and objective information e.g. media should deliver on their role in the democratic society.

But these FoE principles seem to have had No effect in the view of the last year since our previous meeting here in Warsaw in 2013. Propaganda of war, incitement to national, racial or religious hatred, hostility or violence - that's the real work of the state funded organizations which are called Russian media and which played significantly negative role in fuelling the conflict in my country.

Ukraine, Europe and all democratic countries faced this challenge of the new convergent media environment, where well-funded entities, wearing the mask of media, journalists or bloggers, could successfully construct virtual reality mixing some real pictures with the totally fake stories, such as about "clashes in Crimea" showing the picture from Kyiv and Not from Crimea or about a girl "killed by the Ukrainian army" and that girl has in fact died in an accident some 2 years ago.

Activities of such fake media pose a serious threat to the freedom of speech because the watchdogs of democracy suddenly transform into the "hot-dogs" of the authoritarian regime.

We therefore would like to urge international community to call propagandists as they are - propagandists and Not media workers. And we are convinced that propaganda tools should Not be entitled to the privileges and guarantees which are originally foreseen for the true media, I mean for those outlets and journalists who act in a good faith and deliver on their important role in the democratic society.

In this regard, we urge media community and the respective international organisations to publicly and openly condemn the propaganda widely practised by the Russian media representatives and to adequately respond to it, including denial or cancellation of membership in the professional journalist or media associations of those media workers who are deliberately violating professional and FoE standards.

We have heard here that Russian delegation is worried about some imagined Nazi in Ukraine? Well, we have some another concern to share with them, since closure of the Ukrainian media in Crimea and Donbass committed by the so called "green men" or "Russian soldiers who went on vacation to Ukraine" seems much more in style of the neo-Nazi policy. Just like the illegal annexation of

Crimea in itself and subsequent ungrounded persecution of Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar minorities in Crimea.

It is absolutely safe to eat Polish apples but it can actually be deadly dangerous to watch the Russian news.