



[Hotel Marriott Courtyard Tbilisi](#)
(4 Freedom Square, Tbilisi)

AGENDA

Day 1: Wednesday, 9 October

09.00 – 09.30 REGISTRATION OF PARTICIPANTS

09.30 – 10.00 OPENING SESSION (Grand Ballroom, 1st floor)

Welcoming remarks:

- **Harlem Désir**, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media
- **Tamar Chugoshvili**, First Deputy Chairperson of the Parliament of Georgia

Moderator: Kristin Olson, Principal Adviser to the Representative on Freedom of the Media

10.00 – 11.30 SESSION I: News creation, quality of information and distribution of media in the age of digital reporting

Digital technologies have made significant contributions to expanding global communications and the possibility for people everywhere to access information and ideas, and to speak and be heard. The dynamic growth of the number of users and unprecedented opportunities for creating and distributing content, along with the problems that arise in the context of digital technologies, including disinformation and "fake news", have raised the discussion about the role of new media, as well as the relationships between internet intermediaries, media actors and consumers in this environment.

This digital transformation has also forced the media industry to reconsider existing approaches for creating and distributing news and shaping control over the context in which content is promoted, and the business models for ensuring economic sustainability.

This session aims to discuss media developments in the region related to digital transformation with a focus on: realities and future opportunities for news creation and distribution, including new media projects and initiatives; fact-checking, disinformation and "fake news"; changing business models of media and their sustainability; and the role of social media platforms in news distribution, including the associated challenges and opportunities.

Moderator: Dominik K. Cagara, Co-founder of Open Caucasus Media portal

Speakers:

- **Tore Bergsaker**, Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Faktisk.no fact-checking platform, Norway
- **Adil Jalilov**, Director of MediaNet International Centre for Journalism / Factcheck.kz, Kazakhstan
- **Maria Titizian**, Founder and Editor-in-Chief of EVN Report media platform, Armenia
- **Daniel Ioannisyan**, Co-founder of Fip.am Fact Investigating Platform, Armenia
- **Nino Narimanishvili**, Editor-in-Chief of MediaChecker.ge fact-checking platform, Georgia
- **Anina Tepnadze**, CEO of On.ge news portal, Georgia
- **Leyla Mustafayeva**, Editor-in-Chief of Faktyoxla.info fact-checking platform, Azerbaijan
- **Giorgi Gvimradze**, Director of news and current affairs, Georgian Public Broadcaster

11.30 – 12.00 GROUP PHOTO / COFFEE BREAK

12.00 – 13.30

SESSION II: Safety of journalists offline and online in times of political change

OSCE participating States have positive obligations in relation to freedom of expression and free media to ensure a favourable working environment for safe, inclusive and pluralistic public debates. However, there is still a staggering gap in addressing the safety of journalists and other media actors, including due to the lack of an adequate framework or practices aimed at preventing crimes against them, protecting them when needed, and prosecuting, in a timely manner, the perpetrators and masterminds of relevant illegal acts. Political commitments to protect media freedom are only effective when backed up by strong political will, as well as by solid policies and practices to bolster journalists' safety.

The OSCE Ministerial Council Decision on the Safety of Journalists, adopted by the participating States in December 2018 in Milan, highlights various contemporary challenges faced by media actors and provides recommendations for establishing or strengthening, where possible, national data collection, analysis, and reporting on attacks and violence against journalists.

This session aims to address issues related to: threats and restrictions faced by journalists in the region, including legal challenges and their implication for safety of media workers; existing frameworks and initiatives relevant to addressing the safety of journalists and the effectiveness of their implementation; safety of female journalists online: nature of offences and measures to counter the related offences; available monitoring mechanisms and methodologies, national data collection, and the ways they can be established and strengthened.

Moderator: Nadezhda Azhgikhina, Executive Director of PEN Moscow

Special guest speaker: H.E. George Tsereteli, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

Speakers:

- **Johann Bihl**, Head of Eastern Europe and Central Asia Division, Reporters Without Borders
- **Arzu Geybullayeva**, Freelance journalist, Azerbaijan/Turkey
- **Ashot Melikyan**, Chairman of Committee to Protect Freedom of Expression, Armenia
- **Nino Robakidze**, Eurasia Center Manager of SAFE Initiative, IREX Georgia
- **Mehman Huseynov**, Blogger and Chair of Institute for Reporters' Freedom and Safety, Azerbaijan

13.30 – 15.00

LUNCH (Brasserie Restaurant, ground floor)

15.00 – 16.30

SESSION III: Regulatory environment for media freedom and media pluralism

The OSCE participating States have undertaken a number of commitments and international obligations related to freedom of expression and media freedom, including with regard to respecting, promoting and protecting the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas regardless of frontiers. To this end, they have adopted various laws and developed policies and practices pertaining to media freedom and media pluralism.

This session aims to address the effectiveness of a regulatory framework that guarantees freedom of the media, including in such areas as: access to information; protection and confidentiality of journalistic sources; independence of public service media; protection of media regulators against interference, and guarantees for their independence and objectivity; regulation of online media.

Moderator: Andrey Rikhter, Senior Adviser to the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

Speakers:

- **Joanna Szymanska**, Programme Officer for Europe and Central Asia, Article 19
- **Ara Ghazaryan**, Head of Rule of Law NGO, Armenia
- **Giorgi Gotsiridze**, Head of the legal team, Georgian Young Lawyers Association, Georgia
- **Samed Rahimli**, Media lawyer, Azerbaijan
- **Aflatun Amashov**, Chairman of Azerbaijan Press Council, Member of the Milli Mejlis of the Republic of Azerbaijan
- **Narek Minasyan**, Head of the Foreign Policy Service, "Public Relations and Information Center" State Non-Commercial Organization of Staff of the Prime Minister of Armenia
- **Sozar Subari**, Adviser to the Prime Minister of Georgia

17.00

RECEPTION (Pre-Function Area of Grand Ballroom, 1st floor)

09.30 – 11.00 SESSION IV: Overview of media freedom developments in the region

This session aims to discuss media freedom developments since the 2018 South Caucasus Media Conference, including current case law, legislative initiatives, and other pertinent issues and challenges to media freedom.

Moderator: **Aidar Botagarov**, Adviser to the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

Speakers:

- **Shushan Doydoyan**, Founder of Freedom of Information Centre of Armenia, media lawyer and journalism professor at Yerevan State University, Armenia
- **Ekaterine Basilaia**, Lecturer and Researcher at Tbilisi State University, co-author of Media Sustainability Index for Georgia and country research consultant for Media Influence Matrix, Georgia
- **Elchin Shikhlinskiy**, Director and Editor-in-Chief of Ayna-Zerkalo online newspaper, Azerbaijan
- **Serob Bejanyan**, Head of the Media and Public Diplomacy Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia
- **Kamran Hasanov**, Head Adviser of the Public and Political Affairs Department, Administration of President of the Republic of Azerbaijan
- **Ivane Makharadze**, Head of the Audiovisual Media Service Regulation Department, Georgian National Communications Commission

11.00 – 11.30 COFFEE BREAK

11.30 – 12.30 CLOSING SESSION

Moderator: **Aidar Botagarov**, Adviser to the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

- Session reports by rapporteurs:
 - Session I: **Lika Antadze**, Director of Chai Khana media platform
 - Session II: **Parvana Bayramova**, journalist, Turan News Agency
 - Session III: **Boris Navasardian**, President, Yerevan Press Club
- Discussion of the draft recommendations from the conference
- Evaluation of the conference

Closing remarks: **Harlem Désir**, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

12.30 – 14.00 LUNCH (Brasserie Restaurant, ground floor)