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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY
MR. ALEKSANDR VOLGAREV, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1519th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

8 May 2025

World Press Freedom Day

Mr. Chairperson,

On 3 May, the international community celebrated World Press Freedom Day, which was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in 1993. Every year, this day becomes increasingly sorrowful as it is overshadowed by the triumph of the darkest forms of information censorship and the professional bankruptcy of relevant international structures, including the OSCE, which have signed numerous commitments to protect media freedom and the safety of journalists.

Total information control in the West is taking on ever new refined forms and guises, while international commitments on freedom of expression, equal access to information, respect for journalists' rights and the promotion of media pluralism continue to be brazenly violated in order to serve the bloc-based military and political interests of many Western countries. The pathological hypocrisy that has long been a tradition of Western liberalism is particularly striking. This is clearly evident in the faux solicitude for reporters' rights and the double standards used in the assessment of press freedom.

In Ukraine, the entire information space and independent media have been subjected to a complete purge and replaced by the notorious "Telemarathon", which broadcasts the Zelenskyy regime's Russophobic propaganda around the clock. It is standard practice to ignore this, effectively encouraging the worst practices in the media.

The countries of the collective West themselves continue to systematically squeeze the Russian information presence out of their media space. Discriminatory campaigns against Russian journalists include expulsions, non-admission to events, stop lists, freezing of bank accounts, intimidation, defamation, pressure from intelligence services, criminal prosecution of undesirable journalists, fines and harassment. All these illegal actions are being carried out under the spurious pretext of protecting national security.

Here are just a few of the restrictions regarding Russian journalists in 2025. In February, the 16th EU sanctions package included the Eurasia Daily, NewsFront and SouthFront news agencies, the RuBaltic portal, the Lenta.ru online publication, the Zvezda television channel, Fondsk and the Strategic Culture Foundation. In April, similar repressive measures were introduced by the authorities of once neutral

Switzerland. On 21 February, the Telegram channel Sputnik Moldova was blocked at the behest of the authorities in Chişinău. On 21 March, the French media regulator Arcom decided in connection with the European Union's sanctions to ban Channel 5 and STS from broadcasting. The websites of seven Russian magazines have been blocked in Latvia since 23 March this year, in addition to dozens of others that had been closed earlier. The blocking of Russian resources on YouTube and Google continues.

We are once again obliged to recall that in recent months obstacles have been created to the work of journalists from the newspapers *Komsomolskaya Pravda* and *Izvestia* in France and of Gennady Melnik, correspondent of the Rossiya Segodnya news agency, in Greece. Denis Davydov, a journalist working for the All-Russia State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company (VGTRK) office in Belgrade, was detained at Bucharest airport and expelled from Romania. At the end of last year, the German authorities ordered Ivan Blagoy and Dmitry Volkov, Russian correspondents working for Channel One, to leave the country on spurious grounds. Among the most recent incidents is the detention in Romania of Chay Bowes, a correspondent for Russia Today who is an Irish citizen. He had travelled to Bucharest legally to carry out journalistic activities but was detained and deported. However, he was not allowed to photograph or copy the alleged grounds for his deportation.

Altogether the list of such restrictions imposed by the EU and NATO countries and other violations since 2022 is in the hundreds. However, the OSCE leadership has not bothered to respond to all these developments.

Mr. Chairperson,

The safety of journalists remains the most glaring issue. We would remind you that the Kyiv regime is hunting down representatives of the Russian media with ruthless zeal. Since the beginning of this year, correspondents Alexander Martemyanov, Anna Prokofieva, Alexander Fedorchak and Nikita Goldin, cameraman Andrey Panov and camera crew driver Alexander Sirkeli have been killed. Correspondents Maxim Romanenko, Mikhail Kevkhiev, Svetlana Larina, Isabella Liberman, Yuriy Sholmov and Mikhail Skuratov have been seriously wounded. The extremist website Myrotvorets is still publicly accessible. It consists of a "hit list" of reporters, public figures, journalists and, in general, anyone whom the Zelenskyy regime has labelled as ideological opponents.

The project Died for the Truth was launched in memory of all media workers who have written, spoken and showed the truth, defended freedom of speech, helped expose the actions of the Ukrainian regime, including the Western-sponsored coup in Kyiv and the bloody provocations in 2014, and who have given their lives in the line of duty. As part of this project, information about journalists who have died or been killed has been collected for the first time on the initiative of Donetsk, Zaporozhye and Kherson news agencies, the Lugansk Information Centre and Alexander Malkevich, a member of the Russian Presidential Council for Civil Society and Human Rights. Related material can be seen in the foyer at the entrance to this room. We request that it be brought to the closest attention of both the participating States and the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media.

Under international humanitarian law, journalists and media workers are civilians and must be protected at all times, and a deliberate attack on them is a war crime. We believe that the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media should strongly and unambiguously condemn such flagrant acts. Unfortunately, these commitments have not been properly fulfilled for many years.

Thank you for your attention.

**RIGHT OF REPLY BY
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Mr. Chairperson,

We do not understand why the EU delegation decided to raise a current issue with almost identical wording to the item put forward by us at today's meeting. This is strange, to say the least, despite the fact that we formulated it in a non-confrontational manner, unlike the practice of Western countries, which would have made it entirely possible for them to speak on the agenda item as proposed by us.

I will not comment on the accusations made against us, which, as usual, have no basis in reality. I shall be brief.

Unlike the European Union, and certainly not Ukraine, Russia adheres to the principle of freedom of speech, does not impose unreasonable restrictions on the media and is not afraid of other opinions. Contrary to the claim that Russia imposes restrictions on the activities of foreign journalists, foreign correspondents in our country, including those from States with unfriendly governments, are able to work in accordance with Russian law and carry out their professional activities. Journalists are issued with visas and accreditation, and are invited to official events. At the same time, in the event of unfriendly actions against representatives of Russian media outlets abroad, reciprocal measures will be taken targeting media workers from the respective countries in Russia.

Thank you for your attention.