

DRAFT AGENDA

Protection of safety and integrity of journalists in the OSCE region

**Belgrade, Serbia
26-27 March 2015**

Violence against journalists continues to remain the most dangerous form of interference with the profession. Violence and threats of violence take numerous forms that are applied against media professionals in the OSCE region.

2015 started with the appalling terrorist attack on the satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo. Shortly after the tragic events which ignited very strong and clear public affirmations of the importance of preserving freedom of expression in the entire OSCE region, debates and proposals about restrictions on rights and freedoms are under discussions in several participating States.

Therefore, it is essential for the participating States of the OSCE to engage in a dialogue on the importance of a pluralistic environment for speech and media, and emphasize that the right to free media and free expression remains non- negotiable.

In addition to physical attacks against journalists, there are more established forms of impeding on media freedom, such as defamation and libel, taboo topics – like declaring certain events or personalities off limits for reporting – or outright framing of journalists with fabricated charges. The event will also address the importance of a legislative environment conducive to pluralistic and free speech.

The Serbian OSCE Chairmanship invites representatives of governments, media, legislators, academia and NGOs from the OSCE Participating States to examine and review the current situation of safety and integrity of journalists.

The event provides a forum to exchange information, share problems as well as good practices, to discover the principal necessities to reform related legislation and judicial instruments and to start formulation of recommendations for the governments as to how to improve protection and integrity of journalists in the OSCE area.

DAY 1, 26 MARCH 2015

9.00 – 9.30 Registration of participants

9.30-13.00 - Opening plenary session. Implementation of OSCE commitments on safety of journalists.

Venue: Serbia Hall

Safe working conditions for journalists have been at the forefront of OSCE commitments since 1975. The Helsinki Final Act set out to “improve the conditions under which journalists from one participating State exercise their profession in another participating State”, while the Vienna Follow-Up meeting in 1986 stated that participating States “will make further efforts to facilitate the freer and wider dissemination of information of all kinds, to encourage co-operation in the field of information and to improve the working conditions of journalists.” Six years later, in 1994, the

Budapest CSCE Summit stated that participating States “condemn all attacks on and harassment of journalists and will endeavour to hold those directly responsible for such attacks and harassment accountable.”

Finally, in 1997, when the office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media was established, participating States gave the RFOM a mandate to “address serious problems caused by, inter alia, obstruction of media activities and unfavourable working conditions for journalists”.

The session will examine the current level of implementation of the related OSCE commitments, recall the main international standards, and discuss existing good practices in and around the OSCE region.

Opening

- OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Serbia H.E. Mr. Ivica Dačić
- Minister of Culture and Information of Serbia, Mr. Ivan Tasovac
- OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Ms. Dunja Mijatović

Moderator:

- Head of Task Force OSCE Chairmanship of Serbia 2015, Ambassador Dejan Šahović

The Delegations of the OSCE participating States are invited to contribute to the debate on safety of journalists by addressing:

- Status of implementation of related OSCE commitments;
- International standards;
- Best practices on protection of safety and integrity of journalists

Due to time constraints the Delegations are kindly requested to limit their interventions to 5 minutes

- Statements by the Delegations

Moderator:

- Deputy Head of Permanent Mission of the Republic of Serbia to the OSCE and other international organisations, Ambassador Sanja Milinković

11.00-11.30: Coffee break

- Continued statements by the Delegations

13.00-14.00 – Lunch break

14.00-17.00 – Parallel session 1. Safety of journalists after Charlie Hebdo: challenges of violent attacks on the media
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Venue: Serbia Hall

Criminal attack against journalists and other media workers at Charlie Hebdo represented the worst single attack against journalists in the OSCE region since the establishment of the institution of the Representative on Freedom of the Media. Only few weeks later, another similar attack has taken place in Copenhagen. No matter how terrible and unprecedented these attacks were, they are only the most recent examples of a problem which we have been fighting for decades. Pressure, harassment and violence and murder aimed at preventing opinions and ideas from being expressed take place at a global level and within all the OSCE area. Sometimes they come from the public authorities, but others originate with terrorists and other criminals.

This sort of criminal action is not only aimed at silencing or punishing those directly attacked, but journalists in general by creating an overall climate of intimidation and insecurity.

The session will explore the impact that criminal actions aimed at journalists may have on their freedom and the performance of their activities.

Moderator:

William Horsley, UK Chairman of the Association of European Journalists, UK

Speakers:

Mikhail Fedotov, Presidential Adviser, Chairman of the Presidential Council for Civil Society and Human Rights

Alberto Spampinato, Director of Ossigeno per l'Informazione, Italy

Snježana Milivojević, Professor, Faculty of Political Sciences, Belgrade

15.30 – 16.00 Coffee break (Table Served)

14.00-17.00 – Parallel session 2. Safety of female journalists online.

Venue: Belgrade Hall

There are a growing number of reports from across the OSCE region and beyond about how female journalists and bloggers are singled out and fiercely attacked on social media, via tweets, Facebook posts and in comments to online articles and blogs. The panel will explore how threats and harassment online impact female journalists work and journalism in general. What immediate and long-term effects on media diversity are likely to be seen? The session will explore ways for immediate involvement of state authorities to improve the situation. It will be asked whether current legislation provides adequate protection against online abuse, and what practical, structural and legal obstacles exist for efficient law enforcement.

Moderator:

Alison Bethel McKenzie, Journalist and independent consultant, based in Vienna, Austria

Speaker:

Sejal Parmar, Assistant Professor of Law at the Department of Legal Studies and a core faculty member of the Center for Media, Data and Society at the School of Public Policy of the Central European University, Budapest, Hungary

15.30 – 16.00 Coffee break (Table Served)

***** Reception Following Afternoon Sessions**

DAY 2, 27 MARCH 2015

9.00-12.00 – Parallel session 3. Digital security and internet literacy for media and journalists

Venue: Serbia Hall

This session will focus on best practices in defending media outlets and journalists against hacker attacks, developing skills to use the best of technological means for protection of pluralistic and free speech in the digital environment.

Moderator:

Gordana Janković, Head of the Media Department, OSCE Mission to Serbia

Speakers:

Saša Mirković, State Secretary of the Ministry of Culture and Information of the Republic of Serbia, Serbia

Olof Ehrenkrona, Ambassador and former Senior Advisor to the Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs H.E Mr. Carl Bildt, Sweden

Djordje Krivokapić, SHARE Foundation Belgrade, Serbia

10.15-10.45 Coffee break

9.00-12.00 – Parallel session 4. Legal protection and integrity of journalists

Venue: Belgrade Hall

The session will focus on legislative requirements including constitutional guarantees for media freedom and the creation of media laws respectful of this parameter, with special attention to public service broadcasting statutes, provisions on protection of sources and on decriminalizing libel and defamation.

It will also address such patterns of corrupt, clientelistic relations that are interconnected and often welded into state policy and practice. - How media policy and media laws are developed; how their implementation is obstructed by undermining independence of media regulators; how media ownership and media finances are hidden from public and abused for particular private and political interests; how public service broadcasters are destabilized and captured by particular interests through governing and financing patterns; how journalists become professionally and economically corrupted and disabled from acting in the public interest; etcetera.

Even the practice of self-regulation remains obscured under the mound of corrupt relations between media and politics. And although self-regulation is currently the only free-speech friendly form of regulation, there is still no fully effective guaranteed mechanism for the protection of citizens' right to receive quality and credible information.

*This absence of efficient regulation to serve the public interest clearly demonstrates why the state must strengthen its active role in the protection of fundamental rights. Freedom of expression and freedom of the media are fundamental rights, so any attempt to leave the protection of these rights solely to media self-regulatory bodies is a privatisation of public interest (a shift from *res publica* to *res privata*).*

Speakers:

Brankica Petković, Peace Institute, Slovenia

Andrew Finkel, Platform24, Turkey

Borka Rudić, General Secretary BiH Journalists Association, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Andriy Shevchenko, Former Member of Ukrainian Parliament (2006-14), President of Center for Public Media, journalist, Ukraine

10.15-10.45 Coffee break

12.00-13.00 – Lunch break

13.00-15.00 – Plenary session. Impunity of violence against journalists
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Venue: Serbia Hall

This session will focus on impunity as one of biggest challenges to ensuring the protection of media workers. If not timely addressed, impunity further perpetuates the cycle of violence against journalists and creates a climate of intimidation. As a result, it may lead to self-censorship, thus curtailing free expression and free media and depriving society as a whole of information.

While in some cases impunity may be genuinely caused by a lack of evidence, very often there are indications that impunity is intentional due to lack of political will to prosecute.

Promoting the safety of journalists and fighting impunity must not be constrained to after-the-fact action only. Instead, it requires prevention mechanisms and actions to address some of the root causes of violence against journalists and of impunity. This implies the need to deal with issues such

as corruption, organized crime and an effective framework for the rule of law in order to respond to negative elements.

Moderator and Speaker:

Elisabeth Witchel, Founder of CPJ's Global Campaign Against Impunity, UK

Speakers:

Gulnara Akhundova, Programme Manager, ECCA department, International Media Support

Myroslava Gongadze, Founder of Georgiy Gongadze's Foundation, USA

Veran Matić, Editor-in-Chief of Serbian broadcaster B92, Head of Commission for the Investigation of Murders of Journalists, Serbia

15.00-15.30 – Closing remarks

Closing remarks:

- State Secretary of the Ministry of Culture and Information of the Republic of Serbia, Serbia, Saša Mirković
- Director of the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Andrey Rikhter
- Minister of Culture and Information of Serbia, Mr. Ivan Tasovac