

STATEMENT BY THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF SLOVAKIA TO  
THE OSCE  
AT THE MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL OF THE OSCE  
2 JULY 2009

Mr. Chairman,

Let me join the previous speakers and thank Mr. Haraszti for his report and also for his positive expressions concerning the Law on the State Language approved by Slovakia few days ago. Slovakia fully supports the statement made by Sweden on behalf of the European Union and welcomes the lively debate about freedom of the media in the OSCE area, which is very important one.

Following the concerns expressed by the United States in its statement relating Slovakia let me accurate the information presented. It is connected with former Minister of Justice of the Slovak Republic Štefan Harabin who has sent a letter with a proposal of an extrajudicial settlement to three publishing houses and one radio station. It was a private activity of Mr. Harabin, not the one in his capacity of the Minister. The letter was made public by the media.

A reason for the proposal is demonstrably untrue information concerning Mr. Harabin personally that was published by the respective media. He has faced a continuous deceptive campaign, based on no evidence and with the aim to impair his good reputation. Former Minister Harabin, currently a Chairman of the Supreme Court of Slovakia, is a Law Judge and his judicial decisions have never been called into question. Untrue information harms him as a judge, person and a father of a family.

Aim of his proposal is a discussion and agreement. Mr. Harabin has already publicly declared that the money can be sent directly to the account of the Children Oncology. He is not interested in his personal enrichment.

Mr. Chairman,

There are no grey zones for law in Slovakia and fundamental freedoms are respected for everyone. This includes also freedom of the media. Deliberate spread of deceptive and untrue information concerning any person is not freedom of the media, but an unlawful act. Mr. Harabin as a private person demands judicial protection of his reputation under the Civil Code as an equal citizen of the Slovak Republic.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.