



Intervention by Bürgerbewegung Pax Europa

OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting

Working Session 6

Fundamental Freedoms I, including Address by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

Warsaw, September 22, 2016

Hate speech – The antithesis of freedom of expression

The Annotated Agenda asks “how the OSCE participating States can better implement their commitments on media freedom and freedom of expression while combating hate speech.” It is important to note that hate speech represents the antithesis of freedom of expression, because hate speech criminalizes speech. Not only is there no universally agreed definition of the term, the term “hate speech” is loosely worded and arbitrarily enforced. It points down the path to censorship.

The media should concern themselves with the reporting of the truth. When truth can constitute hate speech, as was admitted at a formal OSCE forum in May 2015, the media cannot square the circle of freedom of expression and combating hate speech. Therefore, the media should be supported in reporting truthfully within the legal limitations of freedom of expression.

Recommendations

- BPE recommends that participating States as well as the OSCE implement an official guideline that truth can never be hate speech.

- BPE recommends that the High Commissioner for Freedom of the Media be strengthened in her mandate to call for the abolition of the nexus of freedom of the media and hate speech. The media must be encouraged to report the truth, which is impossible when they are censored by threats of hate speech.