



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Vienna, 23 October 2015

Representative on Freedom of the Media

Transnational Threats Department

**To: All OSCE Delegations
Partners for Co-operation**

Subject: Outcomes and Recommendations from the expert workshop “Media Freedom and Responsibilities in the Context of Counter-Terrorism Policies” held on 7-8 October 2015 in Bucharest, Romania.

Please find attached Outcomes and Recommendations from the expert workshop “Media Freedom and Responsibilities in the Context of Counter-Terrorism Policies” held on 7-8 October 2015 in Bucharest, Romania.

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Outcomes and Recommendations from the OSCE Expert Workshop “Media Freedom and Responsibilities in the Context of Counter-Terrorism Policies”

7 - 8 October 2015, Bucharest

This non-binding document reflects the discussions during the expert workshop.

Executive Summary

A two-day expert workshop on “Media Freedom and Responsibilities in the Context of Counter-Terrorism Policies” was organized jointly by the Transnational Threats Department (TNTD) and the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFoM), in co-operation with the Serbian OSCE Chairmanship and OSCE Executive Structures and with the support of the Government of Romania. 98 experts from 21 participating States and Partners for Co-operation, international organizations, NGOs, academic and business circles participated in the workshop together with representatives from the OSCE Secretariat, OSCE Institutions and Field Operations.

It was the first event organized by the OSCE that brought together journalists, members of different structures dealing with the media as well as editors-in-chief from various newspapers alongside counter-terrorism experts and advisers to look at ways to improve the shared responsibility to protect media freedom while developing effective policies to counter the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes. Participants discussed how rapid technological progress and especially the expansion of the use of the Internet have changed the media environment and also argued that in the current tense environment of interests and narratives, the challenge is how to explore co-operation between media and governments in a way that ensures that counter-terrorism efforts do not erode freedom of the press. The challenge is to safeguard freedom of the media and free public access to information and at the same time combat terrorism. Particular focus was given to possible priority areas for enhancing co-operation among law enforcement, intelligence services and journalists in developing general guidelines and standards as well as creating different communication platforms for their interaction.

At the side event, the TNTD gave a presentation on the development of an e-learning module on countering the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes that promotes and develops

credible counter-narratives to violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism (VERLT).

Key findings from the discussions during the workshop:

To OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation:

- To facilitate capacity-building on media literacy and using effectively traditional and new media to empower civil society to create credible voices against VERLT;
- To invest in education and training programmes on media literacy and media relations in the context of countering terrorism, especially raising awareness on VERLT and terrorism in reporting on terrorist incidents;
- To establish mechanisms for co-operation and information sharing between the media and authorities dealing with counter-terrorism in advance, in a timely manner before the occurrence of a crisis. These mechanisms should be regularly updated and strengthened with experiences and lessons learned;
- To establish or re-activate points of contacts and points of access for accurate information in the organizations dealing with countering terrorism;
- To invest in more advanced and specialized training on media relations for counter-terrorism professionals on all levels;
- To constantly review and update legislation and other regulatory frameworks on various aspects of digital media such as copyrights and related rights of the contents, data protection and privacy issues, advertising, etc.;
- To encourage and promote the development of a freer space for the media and civil society to operate in and refrain from blocking, filtering and removing online content;
- To enhance public-private partnerships by encouraging interaction and experience sharing between governments, media companies and civil society;
- To improve national legislation pertaining to safer working conditions and safety guidelines of journalists;
- To ensure the protection of possible victims and their families.

To OSCE executive structures:

- To facilitate developing a code of conduct and conducting trainings for journalists with specific VERLT components. In this regard, co-operation and the sharing of information on

media standards and guidelines between the media and relevant national agencies could be enhanced;

- To further promote an exchange between journalists and grassroots organizations involved in VERLT and religious leaders;
- To strengthen journalists' capacities on the understanding of the root causes of terrorism and consequences of their media coverage, including through training on VERLT components, intolerance, and discrimination;
- To facilitate sharing of experience among governments, civil society, media and private sector stakeholders, including the ICT industry and marketing experts, on effective counter-narrative work and disseminate this expertise through capacity-building for credible voices within communities and civil society;
- To condemn clearly and with one voice VERLT and all acts of terrorism across all OSCE Executive Structures and Institutions;
- To promote media literacy across the OSCE region to help citizens make more informed choices about their sources of information;
- To raise media awareness and build the capacity of teachers, social workers, sports coaches, youth workers, local police and other frontline actors, to play a more proactive role in protecting children and young people from harmful content on the Internet and social media.