

# MEDIA FREEDOM

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## in Volatile Environments

### **ANNOTATED AGENDA**

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#### **INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND**

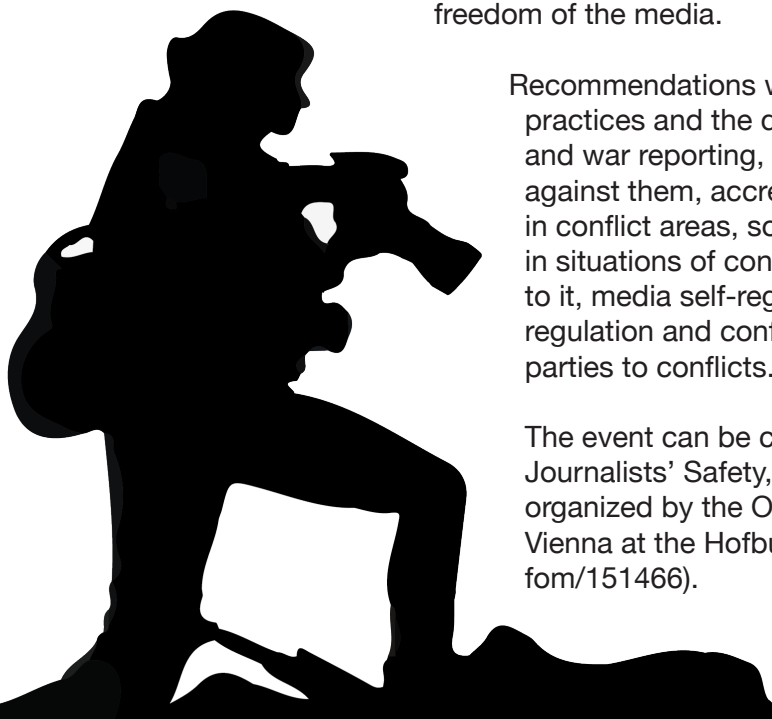
The crisis in and around Ukraine with its inherent problems for journalists' safety, continues to resonate a major media freedom and integrity crisis with broader effects spanning the entire OSCE region.

The Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media is once again bringing together experts to assist the media and authorities in Ukraine, as well as those throughout the region affected by the conflict, to overcome the most prevalent and problematic media issues related to establishing peace, co-operation and security.

Journalists and media experts will discuss the ways disinformation and propaganda effect the promotion of peace and processes of reconciliation and destroy the keystones of the journalism profession and democracy at large. The conference will also identify the most appropriate legal and policy responses in accordance with the OSCE standards on freedom of expression, including freedom of the media.

Recommendations will be brought up at the conference on best practices and the development of practical tools on issues of conflict and war reporting, the safety of journalists and impunity for crimes against them, accreditation of journalists and their access to information in conflict areas, so-called "fake news," disinformation and propaganda in situations of conflict, as well as media and digital literacy as a remedy to it, media self-regulation in times of conflict, more general media regulation and confidence building among journalists from different parties to conflicts.

The event can be considered a follow-up to the conference on Journalists' Safety, Media Freedom and Pluralism in Times of Conflict organized by the OSCE Freedom of the Media office that took place in Vienna at the Hofburg on 15-16 June 2015 (see <http://www.osce.org/fom/151466>).



# Day 1: Monday, 19 June



**08.15 – 09.15**

**REGISTRATION & COFFEE** (2nd floor, Neuer Saal)

**09.15 – 12.15**

**SESSION 1: OPENING PLENARY** (2nd floor, Neuer Saal)

*Opening remarks:*

- **Ambassador Florian Raunig**, Head of 2017 OSCE Austrian Chairmanship Task Force
- **Frane Maroevic**, Director, Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media
- **David Kaye**, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression

*Keynote speech:*

- **Kate Adie**, Journalist, BBC

*Statements by the Delegations:*

The Delegations of the OSCE participating States are invited to make remarks on issues related to the topic of the conference.

Moderator: **Matthijs Berman**, Principal Adviser to the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

**12.15 – 14.00**

**LUNCH** (2nd floor, Neuer Saal) & **SIDE EVENTS**

**14.00 – 15.30**

**SESSION 2: FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND “FAKE NEWS”**  
(2nd floor, Neuer Saal)

*In March 2017 the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, the Organization of American States Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information adopted a Joint Declaration on freedom of expression and “fake news”, disinformation and propaganda. They expressed concern that disinformation and propaganda are often designed and implemented so as to mislead a population, as well as to interfere with the public’s right to know and the right of individuals to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, protected under international legal guarantees of the rights to freedom of expression and to freely hold opinions.*

*At the same time, the special rapporteurs deplored attempts by some governments to suppress dissent and control public communications through such measures as repressive rules regarding the establishment and operation of media outlets and websites; interference in the operations of public and private media outlets, including denying accreditation to their journalists and politically-motivated prosecutions of journalists; unduly restrictive laws on content*

*dissemination; technical controls over digital technologies such as blocking, filtering, jamming and closing digital spaces; and efforts to “privatize” control measures by pressuring intermediaries to take action to restrict content.*

*This session will explore such questions as:*

- *What measures to promote media diversity should be taken by governments to address the issue of disinformation?*
- *What is the role of public service media, with its high standards of journalism, in addressing fake news and propaganda?*
- *How effective are the initiatives taken by the media to dispute fake news?*
- *Should state actors in all cases take care to ensure that they disseminate reliable and trustworthy information?*
- *What measures to promote equality, non-discrimination, inter-cultural understanding and other democratic values, including addressing the negative effects of disinformation and propaganda, are provided in the OSCE region?*
- *What measures to promote media and digital literacy are taken in the OSCE participating States?*
- *Should individuals be protected against liability for mere redistribution or promotion content of which they are not the author and which they have not modified?*
- *What are the conditions under which state-mandated blocking of websites can be justified?*
- *What is the liability of internet intermediaries for third-party content?*
- *Is there a dialogue between all stakeholders – including intermediaries, media outlets, civil society and academia – to develop initiatives for creating a better understanding of the impact of disinformation and propaganda on democracy, freedom of expression, journalism and civic space, as well as appropriate responses to these phenomena, taking place in the countries of the OSCE region?*

Moderator: **Sejal Parmar**, Senior Adviser, Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the media

Panellists:

- **Barbora Bukovska**, Senior Director for Law and Policy, Article 19
- **David Mikkelson**, Founder, Snopes.com
- **Natalia Ligachova**, Chief Editor, Detector Media
- **Dainius Radzevičius**, Chairman, Lithuanian Journalists Union

**15.30 – 16.00**

**COFFEE BREAK** (2nd floor, Neuer Saal)

**16.00 – 17.30**

**SESSION 3A: ACCREDITATION AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION IN CONFLICT AREAS** (5th floor, Room 533)

*In order to respect freedom of the media, accreditation of journalists should, in principle, be a mere administrative procedure, facilitating foreign journalists to work freely in a country, or allowing journalists in general to report on events where the presence of media requires a certain degree of control, e.g. for reasons of security or in order to accommodate for logistical questions.*

*Accreditation should be issued without interference by political authorities and it should not be misused to put pressure on journalists and limit their movement.*

*Some OSCE participating states have in the past refused accreditation to foreign journalists or access to certain areas, on grounds that have met with criticism by the OSCE Representative of Freedom of the Media, and have been condemned by national journalists' associations. The importance of the free flow of information goes beyond media freedom; in general, civilian populations suffer more in conflict zones when media are unable to work freely. The presence of journalists is a deterrent against war crimes and tends to protect civilians.*

*Access to information is a key element of freedom of the media, strengthening the ability of journalists to hold government and public institutions to account, which is essential in any open democracy. Except in some clearly defined cases, e.g. involving personal privacy or state security and national defence matters, all information received, produced and detained by public institutions should be accessible to citizens, including to journalists. Open access to information acts as a deterrent against wrongdoings such as corruption and fraud.*

*Within the OSCE participating States, legislation regarding access to information varies widely and access to information is unevenly granted throughout the OSCE area.*

*This session will explore such questions as:*

- *Which minimum requirements for accreditation procedures need to be fulfilled in order to respect OSCE obligations and commitments on freedom of the media?*
- *How to improve currently existing practices concerning accreditation procedures?*
- *Does legislation optimizing access to information lead to improved governance?*
- *Which lessons can be drawn from best practices concerning access to information?*

Moderator: **Matthijs Berman**, Principle Adviser, Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

Panellists:

- **Elena Sherstoboeva**, Associate Professor, Department of Media, National Research University, Higher School of Economics
- **Ashwin Raman**, War Reporter
- **Oksana Gavriyuk**, Head of Communications and Press, Ministry of Defence of Ukraine

### **SESSION 3B: MEDIA AND DIGITAL LITERACY AS A REMEDY TO DISINFORMATION AND MANIPULATION (2nd floor, Neuer Saal)**

*"Fake news," disinformation and propaganda regularly play a major role in building the political and social tensions which lead to the eruption of conflicts and in sustaining a conflict situation once it begins. This session examines the role of media and digital literacy in providing a policy response and remedy and response to the circulation of disinformation and propaganda in the context of*

conflict situations. It will aim to show how media and digital literacy can serve to promote the objectives of online safety and security, peace and reconciliation and democratic values. The session will identify the main approaches and strategies for the promotion of media and digital literacy, including education and awareness-raising initiatives, directed both at children and adults, including members of the traditional media. It will also highlight particular examples of good practices in demonstrating the value and benefits of media and digital literacy, from short, medium and long-term perspectives.

Moderator: **Tapio Varis**, UNESCO Chair in Global E-Learning, University of Tampere

Panellists:

- **Oksana Volosheniuk**, Manager of Media Education Program, Academy of Ukrainian Press
- **Marius Lukosiunas**, Programme Specialist, Communication and Information Sector, UNESCO
- **Djordje Krivokapic**, Associate Lecturer, Faculty of Organizational Sciences, University of Belgrade

**17.30 – 19.00**

**RECEPTION** (2nd floor, Vorsaal)

## DAY 2: TUESDAY, 20 JUNE



**9.15 – 10.45**

### **SESSION 4: SAFETY OF JOURNALISTS AND IMPUNITY FOR CRIMES AGAINST THEM** (2nd floor, Neuer Saal)

*Safe working conditions for journalists have long been at the forefront of OSCE commitments on media freedom. Over recent years the issue has become increasingly urgent for participating States because the scale of violence against journalists, including murder, attacks leading to serious injuries and cases of intimidation, has grown. With the start of the crisis in and around Ukraine, the safety of journalists and other members of the media remains one of the primary concerns.*


*Regrettably, a low rate of arrests and convictions of the perpetrators and masterminds of the crimes committed against journalists, has gradually allowed impunity to become commonplace in many countries.*

*This session will explore such questions as:*

- *What are the main threats faced by journalists, including in times of conflict?*
- *How to make the work of journalists and their media organizations safer?*
- *How to combat impunity for crimes against journalists?*

Moderator: **Barbara Trionfi**, Executive Director, International Press Institute

Panellists:

- **Sergiy Tomilenko**, Chairman, National Union of Journalists of Ukraine
  - **John Owen**, Professor of International Journalism, City University of London, and Chairman, Frontline Club
  - **Saša Leković**, President, Croatian Journalists' Association
  - **Erol Önderoglu**, Reporters Without Borders' Representative in Turkey
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**10.45 – 11.15**

**COFFEE BREAK** (2nd floor, Vorsaal)

**11.15 – 12.45**

**SESSION 5: MEDIA SELF REGULATION IN TIMES OF CONFLICT**  
(2nd floor, Neuer Saal)

*It is one of the perennial topics has recently gained renewed attention due to several initiatives by regional and national journalists' associations throughout the OSCE area. Accurate reporting faces challenges from the fast-paced international news industry, which frequently promotes stereotypes while local coverage tends to be partisan. With multi-dimensional issues involved, the probing nature of reporting, awareness of the divisive propaganda used by the parties to the conflict, conflict-sensitive vocabulary and attention to the deprivation of the people are just a few recommendations offered by such initiatives as European Federation of Journalists' Media Against Hate, and Intermedia and Johan Galtung's concept of 'peace journalism.'*

*This session will explore such questions as:*

- *As news media are notoriously driven by controversial news, can a war reporter resist the industry demand?*
- *Do constructive journalism or peace journalism abandon the axiom of news reporting, 'bearing witness' and advocate 'prescriptive journalism'?*
- *How do national media cope with the pressure to comply with the 'patriotic discourse', considering that during conflict communities become less tolerant of dissent, thus perceiving critical reporting from within as treason?*

Moderator: **Barbara Thomass**, Professor for International Comparison of Media Systems, Institute for Media Studies, Ruhr-University, Bochum, Germany

Panellists :

- **Inga Sikorskaya**, Director, School of Peacebuilding and Media Technologies in Central Asia
- **Diana Dutsyk**, Member, Independent Media Council
- **Bent Norby Bonde**, Director, Media Progress

**12.45 – 14.30**

**LUNCH** (2nd floor, Vorsaal) & **SIDE EVENTS**

**14.30 – 16.00**

**SESSION 6: CLOSING PLENARY** (2nd floor, Neuer Saal)

*International organizations and media NGOs and professionals have the opportunity to present their viewpoints on issues related to the topic of the conference.*

Moderator: **Matthijs Berman**, Principal Adviser to the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

*Closing remarks:*

- **Frane Maroevic**, Director, Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

**16.00 – 17.30**

**SIDE EVENTS**

