



Minneapolis Chapter

Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

I am sad to say that, so far, this has been a very bad year for free media. The problem here is not so much Turkish style state censorship, rather a wall of discriminatory practices against new media.

Freedom of expression is being curtailed in many ways: Censoring or shutting down accounts on Twitter, Facebook, PayPal and YouTube, manipulating search algorithms, diminishing or cutting sources of funding, over-zealous application of copyright law, and more.

One recent example was when the mysterious American organization “Southern Poverty Law Center” published a list of supposed “Hate Group” web sites, but included many pro-Constitution and pro-freedom organizations, leading to a series of unjustified problems for them.

Worse yet, a German court recently convicted independent journalist Michael Sturtzenberger to 6 months of prison (suspended) for posting a

historical photo of a German officer meeting the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem. Germany should feel a particular obligation for freedom to document and discuss all horrors of the National Socialist regime.

Many aim to limit freedom of expression in OSCE Participating States. We call upon the OSCE to guide the states towards protecting freedom first, and to find legal mechanisms to counter those who seek to limit it.

ACT for America – Minneapolis, therefore, recommends:

- That copyright laws get amended with “Fair Use” clauses similar to the American one.
- That OSCE Participating States abstain from entering Facebook-style agreements to implement censorship.
- That OSCE establishes a working group to identify and counter censorship and discriminatory practices against new media.
- That the OSCE Freedom of Media representative clarifies that the truth can never constitute “Hate Speech”.

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