



Annotated Agenda

“New challenges to Freedom of Expression: Countering Online Abuse of Female Journalists”

17 September 2015

Bibliothek Saal

Hofburg

Background:

Female journalists and bloggers are disproportionately subjected to sexual threats and harassment on the Internet. This disturbing trend is generating significant concern among human rights organizations and media experts about the negative effect this gendered online abuse may have on free expression and free media.

It is crucial that female journalists be able to safely and effectively report on all issues of interest to society. Online abuse endangers media pluralism and democracy as a whole. Left unchecked, this abuse may result in self-censorship by female journalists and an overall lack of a female perspective online.

Online abuse must be dealt with within the existing human rights framework, in which governments have committed to protecting journalists' safety and putting an end to gender-based discrimination. However, effectively addressing this type of abuse may require a different approach, both in terms of efficient law enforcement and implementation of media policies and strategies.

Earlier this year the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Dunja Mijatovic, issued a communiqué calling on OSCE participating States to put online abuse of female journalists and bloggers high on the agenda. The communiqué also offered some preliminary recommendations (<http://www.osce.org/fom/139306>).

This expert meeting will engage stakeholders in an in-depth discussion about the challenges they face in dealing with such threats, and the strategies and solutions that can be adopted.

The objective of the meeting is also to collect best practices and draft a set of recommendations to assist both governments and the media industry in dealing with online abuse.

Participants will be representatives from the media and ICT industry, governments, academia, international organisations and civil society.

Sessions:

Panellists are asked to present their perspectives, identify key themes and raise critical issues for discussion in 6-8 minute presentations.

The presentations will be followed by discussion in which all participants are urged to share experiences while focusing on concrete recommendations.

08.30-09.15 Morning coffee and registration

09.15-09.30 Opening remarks

- Dunja Mijatović, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

09.30-11.00 Session 1 – Implications of Online Abuse on Freedom of Expression and Freedom of Media

- How does online abuse of female journalists differ from that of male journalists?
- How does online abuse impact female journalists' work, journalism and society in general?
- What are the implications of singling out female journalists when addressing digital safety challenges?

Panellists:

- Ambassador Miroslava Beham, OSCE Senior Adviser on Gender Issues
- Arzu Geybullayeva, Freelance Journalist
- Gavin Rees, Director, Dart Centre Europe
- Caroline Criado-Perez, Freelance Journalist

Moderator:

- Snjezana Milivojević, Professor, Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Belgrade

11.00-11.15 Coffee Break

11.15-12.45 Session 2 – Use of the Human Rights Framework to Counter Online Abuse of Female Journalists

- What are the legal commitments governments have to protect female journalists' safety online?
- How can these commitments be better implemented? What legal, practical and structural obstacles exist for efficient law enforcement?
- What is the role of international organisations in responding to online abuse of female journalists, and how can the different bodies better cooperate to achieve common goals?

Panellists:

- Judy Taing, Senior Programme Officer, Article 19
- Auðunn Atlason, Ambassador, The Permanent Mission of Iceland to the OSCE
- Caroline Hammarberg, Associate Expert, Section for Freedom of Expression, UNESCO
- Maja Fjaestad, State Secretary to the Minister for Strategic Development and Nordic Cooperation, Government of Sweden

Moderator:

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

12.45-14.00 Lunch

14.00-14.15 ‘You need to be gagged’: Female Writers Recount Internet Abuse – video from *The Guardian*

- Becky Gardiner, Senior Lecturer in Journalism, Goldsmiths University

14.15-16.15 Session 3: Media Policies and Strategies in Eliminating Online Abuse

- How can monitoring and moderation of online content be strengthened to eliminate threats and online abuse of female journalists and bloggers?
- How can media entities strengthen their internal policies and routines to support female journalists suffering online abuse?
- What role can traditional and new media organizations play in educating and improving its users’ abilities to contribute to a healthy and constructive online environment?

Panellists:

- Aidan White, Director, Ethical Journalism Network
- Sarah Jeong, Contributing Editor, Vice Motherboard
- Brittany Smith, EU Public Policy & Government Relations Analyst, Google Europe
- Alana Barton, Program Manager, International Women’s Media Foundation

Moderator:

- Barbara Trionfi, Director, International Press Institute

(Coffee break included)

16.15-16.45 Closing Remarks

- Dunja Mijatović, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

16.45-17.30 Closing Reception