

13TH SOUTH CAUCASUS MEDIA CONFERENCE

Multi-faceted challenges to free media and freedom of expression

6-7 July 2016, Tbilisi, Georgia

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

- **SESSION I: Safety and security offline and online**



William Horsley is the International Director of the Centre for Freedom of the Media at the University of Sheffield in the United Kingdom as well as a consultant on issues of press freedom and democratic government. He is vice-president of the Association of European Journalists, which collaborates with other media freedom organisations and the Council of Europe to issue topical alerts on the online Platform for the Protection of Journalism and the Safety of Journalists.

Mr Horsley was a foreign correspondent for BBC TV and Radio based in Asia and Europe. He has written and reported extensively on issues of governmental power and the role of the media throughout his career of more than 30 years of international reporting and analysis. He is the author of the OSCE's Safety of Journalists Guidebook (2012 and 2014) as well as a number of in-depth reports on the state of media freedom in Europe for the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.



Arif Aliyev has been Chairman of the Yeni Nesil ("New Generation") union of journalists in Azerbaijan since 1995 and President of the Baku Press Club since 1998. Between 1983 and 1995 he worked as editor in chief and deputy of *Khazar* magazine, *Azadlig* newspaper and *Svoboda* newspaper. He has also served as the press secretary within the Presidential Administration for one year and Director of the Turan Information-Publishing Group for two years.

Mr Aliyev is the founder of the Press Council of Azerbaijan and journalism award "Key media." He has compiled and authored 14 books on journalism and often gives lectures on journalism.

- **SESSION II: Content regulation in conflict-affected regions: legal implications and professional standards**



Ljiljana Zurovac has been Executive Director of the Press Council, a self-regulatory body for print and on-line media, in Bosnia and Herzegovina since 2005. In this role, Ms Zurovac creates educational programs on media ethics and media freedom as well as media literacy programs for students of journalism, high-school students, citizens, political structures and members of the judiciary. She is a founding producer and editor of the radio show "Your Voice in Media", in cooperation with ten young journalists. The radio show has been broadcasted from radio stations all over the country. She also

regularly works as lecturer and consultant on media ethics and self-regulation, conflict resolution, and public relations.

Previously, Ms Zurovac was Program Director at the High College of Journalism for six years and worked as a radio and TV journalist for over 20 years. In 2016 she was President of the UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize.



Emir Powlakić is Head of Division for licensing, digitalization and broadcasting coordination at the Communications Regulatory Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina where he has worked since 1999 and is in charge of licensing for broadcasters, distributors and service providers of audiovisual content, freedom of expression, hate speech and copyright issues.

Mr Powlakić is also a permanent member of the working group on regulation and assisted in drafting the strategy on digital switchover at the DTT Forum in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

For many years, Mr Powlakić served as Bosnia and Herzegovina's representative to the Council of Europe's Steering Committee on the Media and New Communication Services. Since 2016 he has also served as Vice-chair of the Steering Committee on Media and Information Society. He is also one of the founders of B&H Internet Governance Forum, and occasionally represents Bosnia and Herzegovina as part of the European Platform of Regulatory Authorities.



Boris Navasardian has served as President of the Yerevan Press Club (YPC) since 1995. The YPC is the first professional association of journalists in Armenia and an NGO that unites journalists, publishers, media leaders and experts, irrespective of their political ideas. The YPC's mission is to support and develop independent and professional media, help strengthen democratic institutions and establish civil society in Armenia.

Since 2000, Mr Navasardian has also been the co-president of the International Association of Journalists "South Caucasus". Prior to 1995, he was Chief Editor of the Armenian newspaper *Zerkalo* and the Armenfax news agency. Throughout his extensive career, he has worked as a journalist for numerous media outlets.

Mr Navasardian has been in charge of dozens of projects on media and freedom of information issues, strengthening civil society, European and sub-regional integration and conflict resolution.

- **SESSION III: Traditional and new media**



Anton Merkurov is Vice-President of the Online Publishers Association in Russia. He also teaches at the Faculty of Journalism at Moscow State University and provides strategy consulting on media and communications for Russian & CIS markets. In the early 2000s he co-founded several IT related companies, including NetArt system integrator and RosInterCom internet provider. He also worked as a photographer for the company Amedia and the Fly-Nig photo agency and took part in the launching of *StrongMan* magazine.

From 2006-2009 Mr Merkurov worked at RosBusinessConsulting where he progressed from the position of Advertising Manager to Director of integration processes. He also played a role in the development of all social and communication services and was awarded best analyst in 2009.



Natia Kuprashvili has served as Chairperson of the Georgian Association of Regional Broadcasters (GARB) since 2009. GARB is an association of 20 independent broadcasters who support the sustainable development of regional broadcasting companies at the policy, network and organizational levels. A journalist by profession, she has 20 years of work experience. Between 2003 and 2010 she worked as editor at the Institute for War and Peace Reporting. She also led the Georgian-Abkhazian *Panorama* newspaper.

Since 2007 Ms Kuprashvili has worked as an associate professor at Tbilisi State University. She is a board member and coordinator of the Georgian National Platform, a union of non-profit local and international civil society organisations supporting the European integration process.

Ms Kuprashvili also coordinates the activities of the Media Advocacy Coalition, of which the Association of Regional Broadcasters is a member.