



Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting

ON MEDIA FREEDOM AND GENDER EQUALITY

**8-9 March 2021
(online)**

FINAL REPORT



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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The first Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting of 2021, organized by the Swedish OSCE Chairpersonship, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFoM), OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), was on “Media Freedom and Gender Equality”. The meeting was held online on International Women’s Day, 8th and 9th of March 2021. The SHDM served as a platform to recall human rights obligations and OSCE commitments pertaining to media freedom and gender equality, to assess the implementation progress made by participating States and to discuss the challenges and opportunities to ensure stronger respect and more effective implementation thereof. During the event, participants shared their experiences from across the OSCE region and discussed trends and challenges in legislation and in practice, in particular on the impact of new technologies on the exercise of the right of freedom of expression and media freedom as well as on gender equality, the role of the media in the successful implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, and the safety of female journalists online.

The meeting brought together 368 participants (210 women, 154 men, 4 not disclosed), including 133 representatives from 54 participating States, 126 representatives of 108 civil society organizations, 13 participants from international organizations, 5 representatives from National Human Rights Institutions (NHRI) as well as 32 participants from OSCE institutions (RFoM, ODIHR, HCNM, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly).

The meeting was organized around three working sessions:

- Session I: Gender equality and the right to freedom of expression, including the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds through any media;
- Session II: The role of the media in the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda;
- Session III: Safety of female journalists online.

II. SYNOPSIS OF THE SESSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section summarizes the discussions which took place during the opening session, the three thematic sessions and the closing session, and presents recommendations made by introducers and participants. The recommendations were directed towards a variety of actors, including OSCE participating States, OSCE institutions and field operations, civil society organizations and tech companies. While these recommendations have no official status and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the OSCE, they serve as useful indicators of how participating States can effectively meet their OSCE commitments pertaining to media freedom and gender equality, as well as what follow-up activities could be implemented.

OPENING SESSION

Opening remarks:

Ms. Ann Linde, Chairperson-in-Office, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sweden

Mr. Matteo Mecacci, Director, OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)

Ms. Teresa Ribeiro, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFoM)

Keynote address:

Ms. Courtney Radsch, Advocacy Director, Committee to Protect Journalists

Summary of opening and keynote remarks:

During the opening session, all speakers emphasized that media freedom and gender equality mutually reinforce one another. The Swedish Foreign Minister, **Ms Ann Linde**, opened the conference by emphasizing that upholding the broad concept of security, which includes media freedom and gender equality, is a key priority for the 2021 Swedish OSCE Chairpersonship. She reminded about the core commitments of OSCE participating States on the protection and promotion of the right to freedom of expression and opinion, and media freedom. While reiterating the importance of independent media and the establishment of accountable State systems to safeguard human rights and fundamental freedoms, Ms Linde also underlined the importance of gender equality to ensure that women are equally represented in media companies and organizations and as news sources. Emphasizing the need to address hate speech online, Ms Linde raised concerns about the safety of female journalists. Highlighting the Safety of Female Journalists (#SOFJO) Resource Guide as a concrete tool to help States to live by their commitments, Ms Linde underscored that the RFoM has a strong and unique mandate to assist the participating States in abiding by their commitments to freedom of expression and free media.

In his opening address, **Mr Matteo Mecacci**, Director of ODIHR, reminded that media freedom, human rights and democracy are intrinsically interlinked and that the lack of progress in one of these rights has an immediate impact on the others. He called to be vigilant, as the loss of pluralism and shrinking space for civil society are the first indicators of democratic backsliding. Mr Mecacci raised concerns that some countries in the OSCE region shift away from the principles of liberal democracy and push back against women's human rights and gender equality. He expressed concerns about the lack of access to digital technologies for women in some participating States due to limited opportunities and resources, as well as to non-inclusive digital literacy based on out-dated education or assumptions about the role of women in society. He reiterated that the gender gap is particularly concerning in emergency situations as it affects women's rights and possibilities to access services, especially women from vulnerable groups such as minorities, women with disability or from rural areas. Concluding, Mr Mecacci called on the participating States to communicate through a variety of media to ensure that information is accessible to all, especially during a public crisis.

In her opening speech, the Representative on Freedom of the Media, **Ms Teresa Ribeiro**, emphasized that democracy, security, and sustainable progress build on universal human rights for all, and that

equal opportunities are a prerequisite to the enjoyment of human rights. She highlighted that the inclusion of women's voices and their visible participation in public discourse is a precondition for pluralistic media and freedom of the media. Ms Ribeiro reiterated that a whole-of-society approach is needed in order to advance media freedom and gender equality. She raised concerns about the significant gender digital divide, and existing inequalities regarding access to technology and the internet, which decreases women's opportunities to participate in public discourse on equal terms. Moreover, Ms Ribeiro underlined that without gender-sensitive and human rights-friendly algorithms and AI, there is a risk of hampering equality and even of perpetuating discrimination. In closing, the RFoM called for a multi-stakeholder approach and increased focus on media and digital literacy, the overall digital empowerment and combatting online harassment to make sure that technology is an enabler and not a barrier to freedom of expression.

Following the three introductory remarks, the opening session concluded with a keynote address by **Ms Courtney Radsch**, Advocacy Director at the Committee to Protect Journalists. Ms Radsch reminded all participants that media freedom cannot be realized without strong rights, media independence, pluralism and safety, all of which must be considered from the perspective of gender equality and with an analytical lens informed by gender. She stressed the need to urgently address the risks women journalist face, such as online violence and sexual harassment. Ms Radsch reiterated that since the adoption of the OSCE Ministerial Council Decision on the Safety of Journalists in 2018, a record number of journalists have been imprisoned, about 10 % of which were women. The keynote speaker also underlined increasing industrialization of disinformation and online harassment, driven by political actors seeking to silence, delegitimize and undermine the credibility of journalists, particularly women. In addition, Ms Radsch noted, patriarchal norms continue to construct visible and invisible barriers for women in news, deliberately silencing them in some cases and ignoring or disregarding them in others. Ms Radsch also expressed concerns about the fact that women are underrepresented as news sources and in coverage of any conflict, even though women journalists might have additional access compared to male journalists, which becomes very important in highly patriarchal or gender-segregated contexts. In closing, Ms Radsch called to increase the visibility of women as protagonists and experts in the media.

SESSION I: Gender Equality and the Right to Freedom of Expression, Including the Freedom to Seek, Receive and Impart Information and Ideas of All Kinds Through Any Media

Introducers:

Ms. Melody Patry, Advocacy Director, Access Now

Mr. Goran Miletic, Director for Europa and MENA, Civil Rights Defenders

Moderator:

Ms. Julia Haas, Assistant Project Officer, Office of RFoM

In her introductory remarks, **Ms Melody Patry** emphasized the dual nature of the digital space, which on one hand creates opportunities for underrepresented and marginalized groups and communities, and on the other hand is prone to societal flaws, potentially even amplifying discrimination and inequalities. In this context, Ms Patry referred to harassment, spying malware, and gender bias. In

order to ensure freedom of expression for all, she stressed the importance of preventing bias from being coded into technology, addressing the gender divide and providing a universal and affordable internet for all. To achieve this, the introducer emphasized the need for more research, pluralistic workforces and human rights by design, as well as digital literacy for all. Ms Patry concluded by highlighting the need to enable a more inclusive information landscape, and the importance of gender-responsive funding, especially in times of crisis.

The second introducer, **Mr Goran Miletic**, presented his experience from the Western Balkans, highlighting that the main challenge is ensuring the full implementation of international human rights standards, including freedom of expression. Underlying that in most countries of the region there are comprehensive gender equality and media freedom legislation and policies in place, he identified the considerable implementation gap as key concern. Mr Miletic referred to the interconnection between patriarchal structures and limited access for women to freedom of expression online. In closing, he emphasized the need for increased capacities of relevant institutions and law enforcement, comprehensive and disaggregated data collection and equal access to education and training for all of society.

Building on the narrative that technology can either bridge or further the gap of gender equality, participants called upon OSCE participating States to reinforce women's rights to express their views and ensure access to information. In the course of the discussions, participants urged to reaffirm the value of freedom of expression by counteracting censorship across the OSCE region. It was recognized that gender equality and media freedom challenges exist across the entire OSCE region, and that women's ability to exercise their freedom of expression online is a precondition for their participation in public life, as well as for media plurality and democracy. In this context, representatives stressed the need to ensure that women and men, boys and girls are free to express their ideas and pursue their chosen educational and professional paths without constraints of stereotypical gender roles.

Participants also echoed concerns about the digital gender divide raised by the introducers and reiterated that gender inequality often is a root cause for unequal access to the internet, which in turn deepens gender inequality. As long as not all women have the necessary resources and tools available, participants assessed, their voices will remain marginalized. Therefore, participants noted, governments should address any negative feedback loop. Moreover, some participants raised concerns about intersectional aspects that should be taken addressed, in particular the specific challenges for women from religious minorities and refugees, as well as for minority media and civil society organizations.

During the discussion, participants also acknowledged that media has a big impact on the values of society, including gender issues and that the media can be key channels for changing attitudes. Several participants shared good practice examples to provide inspiration, such as national strategies to enable equal opportunities, and to include minority perspectives.

Participants underlined that co-ordination between different actors is crucial to tackle challenges effectively, and that both media freedom and gender equality lie at the core of OSCE's pursuit to advance human rights and enable sustainable security for all.

Introducers and participants made the following specific recommendations in Session I:

Recommendations for the OSCE participating States:

- OSCE participating States should implement all OSCE human dimension commitments in order to ensure media freedom and advance gender equality;
- OSCE participating States should acknowledge that technology is not gender neutral, and that there is a need for more awareness, based on solid data and research;
- OSCE participating States should support and finance research and the collection of reliable and disaggregated data to increase the understanding of issues of gender equality and media freedom, with a focus on digital spaces;
- OSCE participating States should improve legislation to include a gender perspective in all policies and to ensure that policies on gender equality and the media include the online perspective; at the same time, States should ensure that legislative initiatives do not further enable discrimination;
- OSCE participating States should increase efforts for capacity-building activities, education and trainings, including for law enforcement;
- OSCE participating States should address the existing gender digital divide, including by promoting digital and information literacy to all;
- OSCE participating States should adopt a multi-stakeholder approach and closely co-operate with civil society organizations to overcome social-cultural barriers to internet access in particular for women, including women from disadvantaged groups, such as (social) norms that give a low priority to women's education and that impose conservative roles upon them;
- OSCE participating States should adopt and implement the Council of Europe Convention on Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) and have a zero tolerance policy for violence against women, including women journalists;
- OSCE participating States should diversify their workforce and participation at all levels, increase women participation in leadership positions, and promote participation and representation of women in media.

Recommendations for the OSCE institutions and field operations:

- OSCE institutions and field operations should ensure that the gender perspective is reflected in their work on democracy and freedom of expression in order to protect fundamental rights for all.

SESSION II: The Role of the Media in the Implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda

Introducers:

Ms. Malin Palm, Gender Advisor, International Media Support

Ms. Nino Dalakishvili, Journalist, VOA Georgian Service

Moderator:

Ms. Amarsanaa Darisuren, Senior Advisor on Gender Issues, OSCE Secretariat

The first introducer, **Ms Malin Palm**, emphasized the key role of free and independent media in advancing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. She noted that practising ethical, gender and conflict-sensitive journalism improves the understanding of the root causes of any conflict and the different sides involved, as well as to identify possible solutions, which is key to success in mediation and reconciliation. Ms Palm raised awareness of the fact that women are underrepresented both as news sources and as journalists covering conflicts. In her remarks, she provided various examples of National Action Plans (NAP) on the implementation of the UNSCR1325 that mention the role of the media, such as the NAP of Lebanon that highlights the media's role in promoting a fair portrayal of men and women and helps eradicating gender stereotypes. Additional examples provided were the NAPs of Gambia and Senegal that state that media should engage in early warning reporting, including with a gender perspective and with the participation of women journalists, and the NAP of South Sudan, which promotes women's full and equal participation in media organizations, trainings and regulatory boards and aims to increase the safety for women covering conflicts. From the OSCE region, Ms Palm highlighted the NAP of Serbia, which establishes that the public should be informed about the NAP's implementation through the media to enable independent monitoring.

Ms Nino Dalakishvili, the second introducer, underlined the crucial role of the media in reconciliation, and referred to concrete examples of two unresolved territorial disputes between Georgia and the Russian Federation, and the consequences they have on the civilian population living on both sides. In this context, she raised concerns about the limited access for journalists to disputed areas and the challenges this causes to fulfil journalistic roles. Ms. Dalakishvili stressed the important role journalists can play to share stories regarding the impact of the conflict situation in particular on women and girls. Highlighting the will of civilians from both sides to communicate with each other, she also expressed concerns about the lack of common platforms and tools that would allow them to do so. As women remain the most vulnerable group to human rights violations, Ms Dalakishvili emphasized the importance of reporting the stories of human suffering, as well as of acts of kindness from both sides of any border and any conflict.

In the subsequent discussion, participants drew attention to various attacks against media freedom across the OSCE region. In this context, gender discrimination, hate speech and legal prosecution of journalists covering conflicts, in particular women journalists, were noted as worrisome. Throughout the discussion, participants highlighted the important role of the media in raising awareness of the negative impact of conflict on the lives and rights of women and girls. Participants underlined the need for trainings and providing journalists with a set of skills to talk to victims of conflict in a sensitive way, to avoid stigmatization. They promoted the importance of offering information that informs the public and that can support them. In this regard, participants underlined the importance of research and analyses about the role women play in the media and communication, as well as security policy.

Participants underlined the role of the internet in increasing opportunities for seeking, receiving and imparting information. At the same time, participants noted the role of technology in amplifying hatred, including in the context of conflicts and racism. In this context, the poor application of human rights standards online and lack of prosecution for online racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim offences was highlighted as particularly concerning. Participants emphasized the importance of public funding of media and civil society organizations as a part of the implementation of NAPs for Women, Peace and Security.

Further discussion elaborated on particular challenges for minority media, such as underfunding and hate speech. Participants noted that minority media is particularly vulnerable to pressure from authorities, including through legal prosecutions and censorship attempts. A number of participants expressed concern about the lack of access to media for minorities in some participating States.

Finally, participants shared examples of good practices. For instance, aiming to reinforce strategic communication on the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, Italy works with the media, civil society and academic community to improve the quality and quantity of information, to raise awareness and provide more information, and to develop a gender-sensitive communication strategy. As another example, Spain informed about their observatory that studies the representation of women in the media and provides concrete data on how it develops over time. In addition, Spain also informed about national campaigns for equality, which led to a hotline for women facing gender-based violence.

Introducers and participants made the following specific recommendations in Session II:

Recommendations for the OSCE participating States:

- OSCE participating States should ensure media freedom and independence in line with international standards, and guarantee the protection of journalists, for all, online and offline;
- OSCE participating States should include the role of media in National Action Plans on the implementation of UNSCR 1325;
- OSCE participating States should guarantee access to information for all, and provide unhindered access to report on both sides of a conflict;
- OSCE participating States should include gender and conflict-sensitive journalism in curricula of state journalism education, and encourage the media to use peaceful language, avoid hate speech and discrimination;
- OSCE participating States should strengthen mechanisms for identifying hate speech in the media, including on online and on social media platforms, as well as appropriate responses thereto;
- OSCE participating States should promote media codes of ethics as well as media regulatory bodies to uphold professional standards and limit hatred in the media;
- OSCE participating States should ensure that journalists can carry out their functions of informing public opinion and conveying information without threats, including by addressing impunity;
- OSCE participating States should recognize the crucial role of media in achieving peace, a secure environment and gender equality and breaking gender stereotypes;
- OSCE participating States should ensure that relevant national legislation address racist, xenophobic, anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim offences committed online and implement measures to contain discrimination against minorities and violations of their rights to freedom of expression.

Recommendations for the OSCE institutions and field operations:

- OSCE institutions and field operations should promote the independence of regulatory authorities in line with international standards.

SESSION III: Safety of Female Journalists Online

Introducers:

Mr. Guy Berger, Director for Freedom of Expression and Media Development, UNESCO

Ms. Jessikka Aro, Journalist, YLE

Moderator:

Mr. Antonius Van Den Brandt, Senior Adviser, Office of RFoM

Sharing her own experiences, the first introducer, **Ms Jessikka Aro**, described the extent of online harassment she was subjected to as result of her journalistic work. The online attacks particularly stemmed from her investigations into information warfare and social media propaganda, as well as into online trolls and how they influence people's opinions, attitudes and behaviour. Ms Aro informed about an online smear campaign originating in the Russian Federation that accused her of allegedly serving as a foreign agent of the United States of America and NATO. Moreover, she reported on the sharing of her private contact information online, which led to an avalanche of hateful messages, and threatening phone calls. The introducer informed about how the campaign eventually spread into the social media of her home country, Finland. In overcoming such online smear campaigns, Ms Aro underlined the importance of legal protection of journalists by the State and State authorities. Only then, she stressed, can journalists do their job freely and fulfilment of the rights of citizens to freedom of speech can be ensured.

The second introducer, **Mr Guy Berger**, underlined the importance of a gender-sensitive approach to the safety of journalists. He introduced the recent study by UNESCO and the International Center For Journalists (ICFJ) which found links between offline and online attacks in one out of five cases. Moreover, the study results reveal self-censorship as a result of fear of offline and online attacks, and that only one in ten women journalists reported online attacks to the police. Stressing the importance of research, as well as paying attention to the intersection of sexism with other forms of discrimination, Mr Berger stressed the need to collect national data to understand the extent of the problem and what measures can be put in place. He also provided examples of the use of big data, such as natural language processing techniques which can help identifying online harassment, misogynistic and sexist abuse, and rape threats. He stressed that gender-based online attacks against journalists are regularly highly orchestrated and encouraged internet intermediaries, esp. social media platforms, to use their capacities to identify and prevent such harassment. Mr Berger concluded by commending the RFoM on the #SOFJO Resource Guide, which provides concrete actions to tackle the online safety of women journalists. While referring to the broad range of relevant stakeholders such as governments, the media, civil society and internet intermediaries, he particularly underlined the importance of actions by national executive structures, such as the establishment of the National Action Plans with specific attention to the safety of female journalists.

During the discussion, participants reiterated that online violence targeting women is a barrier to their participation in public life, and that verbal attacks are multiplying in digital communications, in particular against female journalists. Moreover, participants highlighted, narratives of gendered violence from State actors are particularly worrisome. It was assessed that digital violence is enabled in a climate in which women are shut out from or underrepresented in positions of power. Participants highlighted that this type of violence aims to negate women's equality, freedom of expression and

their ability to participate in public life and democratic debate. A number of participants noted that the ongoing pandemic further intensified aggressive sentiments against journalists.

Some participants linked the rise of online violence to the rise of right-wing populism that often demonizes the media and spreads misogynistic narratives and reinforcement of strict gender stereotypes, and noted that right-wing platforms are regularly used for coordinated sexual harassment campaigns. Discussions also focused on the duty of the State to enable media freedom, with pluralism as a core element.

Various participants, including representatives from the OSCE Group of Friends on Safety of Journalists, highlighted RFoM's work in the field of countering online harassment of female journalist, and particularly welcomed the recently launched #SOFJO Resource Guide, underlining the importance of a timely implementation of the proposed actions.

Several participants from participating States shared best practices, such as specialised units at public prosecutors' offices to investigate and prosecute crimes with an online nexus. The tightening of anti-stalking laws, for example, was mentioned as measure to also protect women journalists. Moreover, participants stressed, the fight against impunity for crimes committed against journalists plays a key role to ensure journalists' safety, as highlighted in the 2018 Ministerial Council Decision on the Safety of Journalists. In addition to State examples, participants also shared initiatives from civil society, often with the assistance of public funds. For instance, participants informed, scholarships for targeted journalists from crisis regions were created to strengthen resilience in the digital space. Other examples highlighted were tailored training lessons for female journalists and media outlets on preventing and responding to online and offline harassment, and web-based guidelines on what to do when targeted by online hate and threats.

Introducers and participants made the following specific recommendations in Session III:

Recommendations for the OSCE participating States:

- OSCE participating States should fully implement OSCE commitments pertaining to the safety of journalists;
- OSCE participating States should recognise that online harassment and abuse against women journalists constitute a direct attack on media freedom and freedom of expression;
- OSCE participating States should implement the actions as proposed in the #SOFJO Resource Guide and make use of guidance and assistance provided by the RFoM;
- OSCE participating States, in particular law enforcement authorities and the judiciary, should recognize online harassment of journalists as a threat to their individual safety, and ensure that cases of online harassment are systematically investigated and prosecuted to address impunity;
- OSCE participating States should create national committees for the safety of journalists including representatives from the justice department, police and journalist associations to verify that all threats are properly investigated;
- OSCE participating States should strengthen their legislation and judicial systems to counter online harassment of journalists, and be gender-responsive in all policies;
- OSCE participating States should publicly condemn online harassment against women journalists;

- OSCE participating States should promote education in digital security, in particular for those who face risks online, such as women journalists;
- OSCE participating States should promote data collection, in particular when content is removed because it was identified as harmful/illegal and when speech is restricted online;
- OSCE participating States should support international mechanisms, including the creation of a UN Special Representative for the Safety of Journalists.

Recommendations for the OSCE institutions and field operations:

- OSCE institutions and field operations should gather data on the link between anti-gender populist movements and online violence.

Recommendations for civil society, international organizations and other actors:

- Media outlets should introduce safety protocols and trainings on countering harassment, as well as guidance on how to file complaints to the police;
- Tech companies should identify smear campaigns against journalist orchestrated through coordinated inauthentic behaviour and improve reporting mechanisms;
- Tech companies should respect international human rights standards and better protect their users.

CLOSING SESSION

Closing remarks:

Mr. Jürgen Heissel, Director, Office of RFOM

Ms. Katarzyna Gardapkhadze, First Deputy Director, ODIHR

Mr. Tobias Lorentzson, Deputy Permanent Representative, 2021 Swedish OSCE Chairpersonship

The meeting concluded with brief reports by the working session moderators, who summarized the main points and key recommendations from the discussions during the sessions. The meeting was then closed with concluding remarks by representatives of the Swedish Chairpersonship, the RFoM Office and ODIHR.

The Director of the Office of the RFoM, **Mr Jürgen Heissel**, underlined that the sessions showed there is still much to be done to achieve equal opportunities and equal access to human rights. Mr Heissel reiterated that gender equality and freedom of expression are interlinked and that the inclusion of female voices and women's participation in public discourse is a precondition for media pluralism. He emphasized the importance of adding a gender and human rights perspective to combating inequality and discrimination online. At the same time, he stressed that pluralistic and independent media can contribute to the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, including by giving a voice to marginalized groups and involving women in all stages of peacebuilding and sustainable conflict resolution. In closing, Mr Heissel reminded that all participating States committed themselves to add a gender perspective to the safety of journalists and encouraged them to implement the proposed actions highlighted in the #SOFJO Resource Guide.

Ms Katarzyna Gardapkhadze, the First Deputy Director of ODIHR, emphasized that women who report on crisis and conflict risk their safety and well-being in order to enable the society to receive accurate and timely information. Ms Gardapkhadze reiterated that if women journalists' work is affected by online abuse, this significantly affects the information women provide, which in turn shapes how society views the world. At the same time, she emphasized that the narrative on gender equality is still highly dominated on the victimization of women and is not balanced enough with a recognition of women's resilience, responsibilities and achievements. In closing, Ms Gardapkhadze stressed that there should be a stronger focus on women's achievement and creating a vision of what should be.

The Deputy Permanent Representative of the 2021 Swedish OSCE Chairpersonship, **Mr Tobias Lorentzson**, expressed his appreciation of the ODIHR and the RFoM for organizing the event and the Programme for Gender Issues for their support. Thanking all speakers and participants for sharing their experiences and knowledge, he highlighted the useful advice on how human rights can be further promoted when mainstreaming gender in all parts of all actors' work. Mr Lorentzson concluded that comprehensive security can only be achieved if all actors of the society are included and encouraged to ensure the implementation of commitments on media freedom for everyone.

ANNEX 1: AGENDA



Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting on Media Freedom and Gender Equality

8-9 March 2021
(Online)

AGENDA

Day 1

15.00 – 16.00

OPENING SESSION

Opening remarks:

Ms. Ann Linde, Chairperson-in-Office, Minister for Foreign Affairs,
Sweden
(recorded)

Mr. Matteo Mecacci, Director, OSCE Office for Democratic
Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR)

Ms. Teresa Ribeiro, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media
(RFOM)

Introductory address:

Ms. Courtney Radsch, Advocacy Director, Committee to Protect
Journalists

Technical information: Ms. Katarzyna Gardapkhadze, First Deputy Director,
OSCE/ODIHR

16.00 – 18.00

SESSION I: Gender Equality and the Right to Freedom of Expression, Including the Freedom to Seek, Receive and Impart Information and Ideas of All Kinds Through Any Media

Introducers:

Ms. Melody Patry, Advocacy Director, Access Now

Mr. Goran Miletic, Director for Europa and MENA, Civil Rights
Defenders

Moderator: Ms. Julia Haas, Assistant Project Officer, Office of RFOM

[18.00 – 19.00 Side event]

Day 2

[9.00 – 10.00 Side event]

10.30 – 12.30 **SESSION II: The Role of the Media in the Implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda**

Introducers:

Ms. Malin Palm, Gender Advisor, International Media Support

Ms. Nino Dalakishvili, Journalist, VOA Georgian Service

Moderator: Ms. Amarsanaa Darisuren, Senior Gender Advisor,
OSCE Secretariat

[13.00 – 14.00 Side event]

14.30 – 16.30 **SESSION III: Safety of Female Journalists Online**

Introducers:

Mr. Guy Berger, Director for Freedom of Expression and Media
Development, UNESCO

Ms. Jessikka Aro, Journalist, YLE

Moderator: Mr. Antonius Van Den Brandt, Senior Adviser, Office of RFOM

16.30 – 17.30 **CLOSING SESSION**

Rapports from the working sessions

Comments from the floor

Closing remarks:

Mr. Jürgen Heissel, Director, Office of RFOM

Ms. Katarzyna Gardapkhadze, First Deputy Director,
OSCE/ODIHR

Mr. Tobias Lorentzson, Deputy Permanent Representative, 2021
Swedish OSCE Chairpersonship

17.30 Closing of the meeting

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ANNEX II: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION: Speakers, Introducers and Moderators

Opening remarks:

Ms. Ann Linde is Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden. She has held that office since September 2019. Prior to that, Ms Linde served as Minister for European Union Affairs and Trade, and from 2014 to 2016 she was State Secretary at Ministry for Home Affairs. From 2013 to 2014, she served as Head of the International Unit for the Party of European Socialists (PES), based in Brussels. She was the International Secretary of the Swedish Social Democratic Party from 2000 to 2013.

In the 1980s, she worked for several non-governmental organisations and during the 1990s she was working at the Swedish Government Offices, holding both political and non-political positions.

Among her numerous assignments she has served as a board member of the Olof Palme International Centre and the Anna Lindh Memorial Fund. Ms Linde has a bachelor's degree in political science, sociology and economics from Stockholm University.

Mr. Matteo Mecacci (Italy) has been Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) since December 2020. Prior to that he spent 7 years as President of the International Campaign for Tibet. He headed the OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission to Georgia in 2013 and was a Member of the Italian Parliament, Foreign Affairs Committee and of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly from 2008– 2013. From 2000 to 2008 he was Representative to the United Nations in New York of “No Peace Without Justice” and the “Transnational Radical Party”. He holds a JD in International Law at the University of Florence.

Ms. Teresa Ribeiro, of Portugal, is the fifth OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media. She has vast political, diplomatic, human rights and media experience. Prior to this position, she was Secretary of State of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Portugal, while serving as President of the National Commission for Human Rights. She was also Secretary of State for European Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Portugal and Deputy Secretary General at the Union for the Mediterranean.

Throughout her career, Teresa Ribeiro has held different positions in media, both in Portugal and in multilateral organizations, such as President of the Institute of the Media of Portugal, President of the Steering Committee on Mass Media of the Council of Europe, and Co-founder and first elected President of the Executive Board of Obercom – Media Observatory.

Keynote speaker:

Dr. Courtney Radsch is the advocacy director at the Committee to Protect Journalists, where she leads campaigns to get journalists released from prison, pursue justice for their murders and combat online harassment. She is a veteran journalist who worked in the Middle East and U.S., author of the book *Cyberactivism and Citizen Journalism in Egypt: Digital Dissidence and Political Chance*, and frequent commentator on global press freedom and journalist safety issues. She has led media assessments and advocacy missions and media assessments to more than a dozen *countries*.

Session I:

Ms. Melody Patry is Advocacy Director at Access Now, and leads on global advocacy, communications, and campaigns. She works closely with the Policy and Tech teams to develop strategies and partnerships needed to protect the internet and those who use it. Previously, she was head of advocacy at the free speech organization Index on Censorship, where she worked with human rights defenders, government officials, and in coalitions such as the Global Network Initiative, the Civic Solidarity Platform, and Don't Spy on Us. Before that, she worked with Cairo-based grassroots organizations on campaigns addressing women's rights issues, and acted as a political advisor for the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations.

Mr. Goran Miletic is Director for Europe and MENA (Middle East & North Africa) at Civil Rights Defenders. His work includes cooperating and providing capacity for human rights organizations, in particular in the Western Balkans and Turkey, and drafting and lobbying for the adoption of inclusive anti-discrimination legislation. He conducts numerous human rights training sessions and lectures, including on human rights related legislation and practices in the region. Before working with CRD, he worked for the Humanitarian Law Centre focusing on minority rights, including Roma, as well as advocacy and representation before courts. He also worked on various shadow reports in the implementation of UN and Council of Europe conventions, and works with the European Commission and Council of Europe on Sexual Orientation Law and NGO Law respectively. Since 2020, he is also Deputy Global Programme Director at Civil Rights Defenders

Ms. Julia Haas (moderator), Assistant Project Officer, Office of RFoM, is an international law and human rights expert. In her work, she has focused on international relations, the intersection of technology and human rights, and the prevention of marginalization. She particularly focuses on policy research and development in the field of internet governance and digital participation, implementing the project on the impact of artificial intelligence on freedom of expression and working on digital safety of women journalists at the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media. Previously, she worked as legal officer and human rights adviser at the Austrian Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs. She is counselor at the Vienna Forum for Democracy and Human Rights. Julia Haas holds a Master's degree in Law from the University of Vienna (summa cum laude), an Information and Media Law LLM and is a PhD candidate on the impact of digital innovations on media freedom.

Session II:

Ms. Malin Palm is a gender expert with extensive experience in the various aspects of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, ranging from National Action Plan development and security sector reform to support to civil society and women's organizing in conflict and post-conflict contexts. She is currently an advisor on gender equality at the Danish NGO International Media Support, where she is involved in finding innovative ways of increasing implementation of UNSCR 1325 through the media. She is also a consultant on Women, Peace and Security for the OSCE Secretariat's Programme for Gender Issues. Prior to that, she has worked on conflict related gender-based violence for the EU in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and for Swedish NGO Kvinna till Kvinna in the Western Balkans and South Caucasus.

Ms. Nino Dalakishvili works in Georgia as a journalists at VOA Stringer since 2009. The main topics covered by her during the reporting is about territorial conflicts, current political issues, human rights, gender, and women's rights. She holds a bachelor's degree in journalism and a master's degree in International Relations. Previously, she has been working at the Georgian Public Defender's Office as a representative of the Ombudsperson; as a media consultant in civil society; and as a correspondent and media holder in central and regional media. She has a wealth of experience in civic activism, including being the organizer and co-organizer of several large-scale campaigns, including "We Choose Progress."

Ms. Amarsanaa Darisuren (moderator), is the Senior Advisor on Gender Issues at the Secretariat of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) since March 2017. She has over 20 years work experience in promoting gender equality at national, regional and international levels. Having worked on a broad range of gender issues, she served in managerial, advisory and expert capacities with focus on mainstreaming gender equality in sustainable development, in law and policy reform and in developing practical strategies for elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, combatting gender based violence, economic and political empowerment of disadvantaged groups of women; and promoting women, peace and security agenda.

Prior to joining the OSCE, Ms. Darisuren worked for the UN Women where she implemented and managed large scale programmes on the implementation of Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, provided technical advice to governments, inter-governmental bodies, supported advocacy of civil society organizations and facilitated multi-stakeholder dialogues. As a trainer and facilitator, she specializes in capacity development of government and civil society actors. Ms. Darisuren has served for various UN agencies such as OHCHR, UNFPA, UNDP, UN funds and worked with national and international NGOs.

Session III:

Mr. Guy Berger is Director for Freedom of Expression and Media Development at UNESCO. He is responsible for the Organization's global work on press freedom, safety of journalists, internet freedom, media pluralism and independence, gender and media, media and information literacy, and journalism education. Before joining UNESCO, he headed the School of Journalism and Media Studies at Rhodes University in South Africa. He has also worked in both press and television and had a long-running column on the The Mail & Guardian website. Besides that, he was the deputy chair of the South African National Editor's Forum. He holds a Doctorate in Philosophy, from Rhodes University, has published extensively, and has won several awards.

Ms. Jessikka Aro is an award-winning investigative reporter with the Finnish Broadcasting Company YLE. She specializes in extremism and information warfare. In 2014, she started to investigate social media troll techniques and influence on public debates. Due to her work, she became the target of a severe and ongoing international propaganda and online harassment and abuse campaign. In 2018, the Helsinki District Court convicted three persons for sustained defamation against her. She is also lobbying for better legislation to counter hybrid threats and protect citizens from state-sponsored online security threats.

Ton van den Brandt (moderator) is Senior Adviser at the OSCE Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media. He holds university degrees in Dutch law, in International Law (Cum Laude) and in Journalism (With Merit). Van den Brandt worked as a journalist for a national newspaper and a weekly magazine, and is the awarded author of two journalistic books. Van den Brandt continued his career as ad interim legal adviser with the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and with the Netherlands Red Cross, before taking up a position as senior political adviser with Amnesty International. He chaired the Dutch branch of the International Commission of Jurists and was a member of the Supervisory Board of the Netherlands Helsinki Committee. Before moving to the OSCE, he led and managed the Communications Department of the Amsterdam District Court of Law.

Closing remarks:

Mr. Juergen Heissel is Director of the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the media. He has two decades of experience in the Austrian Foreign Service, covering human rights and security policy issues. He has been working in multilateral settings with organizations including the UN, the OSCE and the Council of Europe. His posting prior to RFOM was with the Permanent Mission of Austria to the OSCE, where in 2017 he was the coordinator of the Human Dimension during the Austrian OSCE Chairmanship.

Ms. Katarzyna Gardapkhadze is the First Deputy Director of ODIHR, where she oversees activities of the Election, Democratization, Human Rights, Tolerance and Non-Discrimination, and Roma and Sinti programmes. Prior to her current appointment in August 2016, she was the Head of ODIHR's Human Rights Department. Ms. Gardapkhadze is an expert in strategic planning and change management, conflict resolution and mediation, with a thematic expertise in human and children rights and gender equality. She has more than 20 years of professional experience from Poland, the United States, Western Balkans, the South Caucasus and Central Asia. In 2003–2011, Ms. Gardapkhadze led conflict resolution, human rights and child/social welfare reform programs in the South Caucasus, also advising similar programs in Central Asia. In 2000–2002, she managed initiatives focused on human rights, minorities and inter-ethnic dialogue in Western Balkans. Fluent in Polish, English and Russian, Ms. Gardapkhadze holds a Master's Degree in social sciences.

Mr. Tobias Lorentzson, Ambassador, has over 16 years of experience in the Swedish diplomatic service and served as Deputy Head of Mission and Head of Political Section at the Embassy of Sweden in Moscow. Prior to that he was Desk Officer for Belarus, Armenia and Azerbaijan at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Stockholm, served as First Secretary at the Swedish Mission to the UN in Geneva and as Second Secretary at Swedish Embassy in Guatemala. He holds a Master in International Relations, Sciences Po, Paris.