



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA TO THE UN,
OSCE AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN VIENNA

**Statement in response to the Report by the OSCE Representative
on Freedom of the Media, Teresa Ribeiro
Delivered by Permanent Representative of Latvia
Ambassador Katrīna Kaktiņa**

**1374 Meeting of the Permanent Council
Vienna, 19 Mai 2022**

Thank you, Mr Chairman!

Latvia fully aligns itself with the statement by the European Union, but I should like to take this opportunity to add some remarks in my national capacity.

We welcome the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Ms Teresa Ribeiro, to the Permanent Council and thank her for her regular report.

Freedom of the media, freedom of expression, media pluralism and the safety of journalists, especially female journalists, both online and offline remain among Latvia's top priorities, and we will continue to seek tirelessly to advance them, since they form the bedrock of democracy.

Over the last RFoM's reporting period we have seen another concept come to the forefront – independent media. Because when we speak about media freedom, that is what we mean. We do not mean neither disinformation, nor propaganda when we pledge to ensure media freedom.

Independent media are the ones building resilient societies.

Independent media are the drivers in fight against harmful disinformation and propaganda.

Independent media are the ones contributing enormously to the security of our states and societies.

Of course, the key lies in our ability to distinguish independent media from propaganda. That is the key to success in creating resilient societies and protecting them. In your report you have drawn the line: “propaganda for war, advocacy of hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostilities or violence demand a reaction”.

Disinformation is a security issue.

The story about media freedom and disinformation is the story about the two wolves - the one you feed will win.

The fight against disinformation and propaganda with legal means might be the last peaceful fight that comes before lethal weapons.

Therefore, that is a responsibility of democratic states to build resilient societies by creating environment for independent media and fighting disinformation and propaganda to prevent fights with guns.

Mr Chairman,

In conclusion let me once again commend the work of the Representative on Freedom of the Media. We will continue to engage closely with Ms. Ribeiro and her team in order to share and exchange our knowledge and best practices with other participating States.

Thank you, Mr Chairman!