

PC.DEL/311/12
30 March 2012

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY KELIN,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 907th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

29 March 2012

**Regarding the report by the
OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media**

Mr. Chairperson,

We join in welcoming Ms. Dunja Mijatović, the distinguished Representative on Freedom of the Media, with whom the Russian Federation has been co-operating closely on a whole range of issues. We thank Ms. Mijatović for her informative report on her work during the current half-year period.

The institution of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media is in its own way unique. It represents an important instrument designed to assist participating States in developing free and independent mass media. We trust that the efforts to carry out the Office's mandate, which covers the entire OSCE area of responsibility, will be based on the principles of impartiality, objectivity and transparency.

We share the Representative's view that when we speak about freedom of the Internet we should also not forget the importance of combating terrorism, extremism and the dissemination of child pornography. Freedom of expression is not absolute. It is inadmissible to use it to the detriment of the interests of individual citizens or society as a whole.

Permit me a few words about another problem touched on in the Representative's report, namely the safety of journalists. We regard it as unacceptable when media representatives engaged in carrying out their professional duties are subjected to violence. Similar regrettable cases of this kind that still occur in the OSCE area must be actively combated.

Unfortunately, it did not prove possible during the Ministerial Council meeting in Vilnius to reach agreement on a single definition of the term "journalist". In that connection, we are surprised at the fact that Ms. Mijatović is clearly in a hurry to categorize the enormous number of bloggers and persons engaged in social networking as "journalists".

We are convinced that the Representative's task is not only to defend freedom of the press but also to encourage self-regulation on the part of the media. It is no secret that

journalists, in their quest for eye-catching stories, occasionally also resort to unlawful means of obtaining information in breach of the inviolability of private life. This aspect of the problem deserves the closest possible attention. It confirms the importance of advancing the cause of ethical standards in the journalistic milieu.

We are counting on the Representative to also pay proper attention to combating the dissemination through the media of aggressive nationalism, racism and other forms of intolerance in accordance with the decision of the Bucharest Ministerial Council meeting.

With regard to the concerns voiced by a number of colleagues regarding the investigations into the killing of Anna Politkovskaya and Gadzhimurat Kamalov, we have already provided the Permanent Council with exhaustive explanations regarding the measures being taken by the Russian authorities. At the same time, I would recall that we have not yet had a response to the question we raised as to the reasons for the introduction by the European Union of sanctions against the Syrian television channel “Cham Press” and the newspaper “Al-Watan”. We should also like to recall that we have not received explanations from our United States partners in response to our question, raised in December of last year, regarding progress in the cases of the journalists who perished in Iraq at the hands of American military personnel. Have the guilty parties been brought to justice?

In conclusion, we should like to wish Ms. Mijatović and her colleagues every success in their work, in which they can firmly count on the support and co-operation of the Russian Government.

Thank you for your attention.