



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT ON THE ATTACK ON JOURNALISTS IN INGUSHETIA 9 MARCH 2016

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the Permanent Council
Vienna, 10 March 2016

Thank you, Madam Chair,

Madam Chair, as I said in my previous statement today I would now like to come back to the attack on journalists and human rights defenders in Ingushetia yesterday.

I am speaking on behalf of Sweden and Norway.

Madam Chair,

Yesterday, a group of journalists and human rights defenders were brutally attacked in a minibus en route to Beslan from Grozny. The group, on a press tour organized by the Russian NGO Committee on Prevention of Torture, included Norwegian journalist Øystein Windstad and Swedish journalist Lena Maria Persson Löfgren, as well as Russian journalists Egor Skovoroda, Aleksandra Elagina, Mikhail Solunin and Anton Prusakov, and representatives of the Committee on prevention of Torture Ivan Zhyltsov and Ekaterina Vanslova. They were beaten up and robbed, and have sustained injuries. We thank Representative Mijatovic for speaking up on this matter.

This targeted attack is yet another example of the shrinking space for independent journalism and free voices in the Russian Federation. We are also concerned about renewed violence against the offices of the NGO, following the attack, as well as information about the group having been followed for several days preceding yesterday's events.

Regardless of the motives behind this attack, we call for a quick and thorough investigation and for all those responsible to be brought to justice. Impunity for this attack would further exacerbate the climate of fear and intimidation.

Thank you, Madam Chair