

Dunja Mijatović

OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media



Dunja Mijatović of Bosnia and Herzegovina is the Representative on Freedom of the Media for the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the highest-ranking woman free-expression advocate in the world.

Mijatović was appointed in 2010 to protect and promote free media and free expression in the 57 countries of North America, Europe and Central Asia that comprise the OSCE. The mandate directs the Representative to provide an “early warning function and rapid response to serious non-compliance with regard to free media and freedom of expression.”

The core of her mandate is to assist the participating States in fulfilling commitments to media freedom. It’s her job to point out the shortcomings to government authorities when media freedom is obstructed. She has been an outspoken critic of censorship and media repression since Day One.

Advocating for safe working conditions for journalists is the top priority for the Representative.

Mijatović considers extending the ability of people and media to express themselves by modern technology to be one of the big goals of her tenure in office. She knows that privileges and rights accorded to traditional journalists should be available to those who work online.

Additional high-priority issues for the Representative include defending free expression in the age of security anxiety and ending criminal liability for defamation.

Mijatović’s first position in the free media arena came as one of the founders of the Communications Regulatory Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1998 when she helped create a legal, regulatory and policy framework for media in that complex, post-war society.

She was also involved in establishing a self-regulatory Press Council and the first Free Media Helpline in South East Europe.

In 2007 she was elected President of the European Platform of Regulatory Agencies, the largest media regulators network in the world.

She also chaired the Council of Europe's Group of Specialists on freedom of expression and information in times of crisis, during which its Committee of Ministers adopted a Declaration on the protection and promotion of investigative journalism and Guidelines on protecting freedom of expression and information in times of crisis.

Overall, for more than two decades Mijatović has worked on human rights, media law and regulation and institution building in states in transition, including ways to deal with hate speech.

During this time she acquired extensive experience in promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms through international dialogue and co-operation, media law and policy and Internet governance. She has in-depth knowledge of new technologies with the emphasis on digitalization, convergence and the Internet.

Mijatović has worked as a consultant on projects relating to media regulation and new technologies in Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. She holds a joint Master's degree in European Studies from the University of Bologna, the London School of Economics, the University of Sarajevo and Sussex University.

She has addressed conferences at venues across the vast OSCE region, including The Harriman Institute in New York City, Columbia University, The George Washington University and the European Parliament and the Council of Europe.

Mijatović has been awarded several prizes for her work, including the Médaille Charlemagne in 2015. The award recognizes a European personality who has made a unique contribution within the field of media, to the process of European unification and the development of a European identity.

She is also the recipient of the City of Geneva Press Emblem Campaign Award for 2015 for her work on the issue of the safety of journalists and media freedom in Ukraine during the crisis and her "exceptional personal commitment for the promotion of freedom of information in the whole region."

The International Peace Center in Sarajevo awarded her the Freedom prize in 2010 for her work and activities on the struggle for freedom, peace and development in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Europe and the world.

Mijatović was awarded the Dialogue of Cultures award for 2015 in Saint Petersburg by the Council of Mediacongress and the State Hermitage Museum.

Last year she was awarded the (Austrian) Concordia Press Club prize for 2015 for her personal dedication to press freedom issues.

Mijatović is Fluent English and German and has working knowledge of French and Russian. Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian is her mother tongue.