



## Statement

Representatives of Ukrainian and Russian journalism organizations who gathered at a roundtable at the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media are once again expressing their concern in connection to the continued captivity of Luhansk journalist Maria Varfolomeyeva. More than a year ago she was arrested by representatives of the self-proclaimed Luhansk People's Republic. The International Federation of Journalists, the European Federation of Journalists and participants in the dialogue previously spoke out in her defense in 2015.

The previous joint statement by Ukrainian and Russian journalism organizations, statements by the International Federation of Journalists and the European Federation of Journalists, as well as demands expressed by other international journalism organizations have yielded no success. We have to stress that taking a journalist prisoner is a violation of Geneva Conventions and entails criminal liability.

We express the hope that all interested parties will demonstrate enough common sense to abandon the thoughtless persistence in holding our colleague captive.

We are convinced that journalists should not become hostages of political and military conflicts and subject to imprisonment for professional activities.

Vienna, 11 February 2016