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PERMANENT MISSION  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA  
TO THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND  
COOPERATION IN EUROPE

11<sup>th</sup> September 2018

Mdme. Moderator,

I wish to exercise the right of reply with regards to the intervention of Mr. Caruana Galizia, Journalist, delivered in the context of the Working Session 2, Freedom of the Media at HDIM 2018.

The Government of the Republic of Malta condemns, without reservations, the barbaric assault on journalist Mrs. Daphne Caruana Galizia. This murder represents a vile and horrific act on freedom of expression and the Government of Malta is committed to ensure that justice is served.

A number of international investigative agencies, most of them hailing from OSCE participating states, accepted the call of the Government of Malta following the murder and assisted in the investigations. These included FBI, Scotland Yard, Europol, and the Dutch Forensic Team.

Following intense police investigations, in collaboration with other foreign enforcement agencies such as Europol, three persons were arrested two months later, and charged with the murder of Mrs. Daphne Caruana Galizia. The relative criminal proceedings are still pending before the Courts of Law. Moreover, the case continues to be investigated with regard to the possible involvement of third parties.

We reiterate once again that Malta firmly abides by the values of freedom of expression. Everyone in Malta is allowed to speak his or her mind freely, whilst the courts guarantee protection to people who feel they have been wronged. Although the action behind this murder might be to silence a person, Malta's resolve to guarantee the freedom of expression will remain unabated to secure that people in Malta continue to enjoy this freedom.

Malta supports measures that promote the protection and safety of journalists, and commitment in this field is evidenced by the introduction of the Media and Defamation Act, which came into force in May 2018. This Act will continue to soundly improve our country's freedom of expression as well as strengthen the quality of the fabric of the rule of law at national level.

Finally let me thank ODIHR and the office of Representative Freedom of the Media for selecting this important topic for discussion at this forum.

Thank you Mdme. Moderator