

Delegation of France

**STATEMENT BY
AMBASSADOR MAXIME LEFEBVRE, PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE OF FRANCE TO THE OSCE, AT THE 1060th
MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

18 June 2015

**In response to the report by Ms. Dunja Mijatović,
OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media**

Mr. Chairperson,

France fully endorses the statement made on behalf of the European Union.

I should like to make some comments on behalf of my country.

France thanks the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media for her vital work to protect and promote freedom of expression and of the media in the OSCE area. It is a daily struggle. Freedom of expression, opinion and information, which are essential principles of democracy, are attacked throughout the world.

France has not been spared. On 7 and 9 January this year it experienced horrific attacks on the magazine *Charlie Hebdo* and a kosher supermarket. This direct attack on freedom of expression provoked indignation and gave rise to massive mobilization in France and other countries. On behalf of France, I should like to say how much we were touched and reassured by this international support.

I should like to thank the Serbian OSCE Chairmanship for its help in the adoption on 15 January of the joint declaration by the Permanent Council condemning terrorism and recalling the fundamental nature of freedom of expression and the need to combat intolerance. Given the exceptional nature of the threat, it is essential that we respond in a united manner.

France recalls its determined commitment to freedom of the press and protection of journalists, who are a vital component of the fight for freedom of expression in France and throughout the world.

It reiterates its full support for the work of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media and her desire to pursue dialogue and co-operation on the main focuses of her mandate.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.