

PC.DEL/640/11
24 June 2011

ENGLISH
Original: GERMAN

Delegation of Switzerland

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF SWITZERLAND AT THE MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

23 June 2011

**Regarding the presentation of the report by Ms. Dunja Mijatović,
OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media**

Mr. Chairperson,

Switzerland is grateful for the presentation of the report by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, which provides an impressive country-specific and activity-related overview of the wide-ranging and important engagement of the past three months. We encourage all participating States to cultivate dialogue with the Representative. This is profitable for both sides.

We should also like to thank the Lithuanian Chairmanship, which has recognized the increasing importance of freedom of the media and made it one of its priorities. This prioritization is correct and necessary and, as we heard yesterday, the continuity will be kept up and the subject will remain on the OSCE agenda under the Irish Chairmanship.

I should like to touch briefly on four points:

1. Freedom of opinion, information and the media are the real foundations of a democratic State. The exercise of these basic freedoms is increasingly defined through the use of new methods and platforms known collectively as “new media”. As the Representative’s report has shown, Internet access and use are prerequisites for membership of and participation in today’s information society;
2. The free expression of opinion, regardless of the technologies selected, is primarily a right that the individual demands of the State. There is, however, also a responsibility on the part of the State towards private individuals to create a suitable legal and regulatory framework for the operation and use of these new media without restricting freedom of opinion, information and the media on the part of the individual or media diversity within the State. We are all aware that this is a delicate issue;
3. Switzerland is looking forward to the forthcoming Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting on the Promotion of Pluralism in the New Media. In the run-up to the Ministerial Council meeting in Vilnius, this will offer the participants an opportunity to examine the

study on Internet regulation commissioned by the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media along with the Guidebook to the Digital Switchover;

4. Lastly, Switzerland welcomes the detailed Vilnius Recommendations on Safety of Journalists of 8 June 2011, which mark a great step towards a Ministerial Council decision on this subject.

In conclusion, Switzerland congratulates the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media on her tireless efforts in co-ordination with her colleagues in other international and regional organizations, particularly with respect to the Joint Budapest Declaration on Freedom of Expression and the Internet.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.