



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

PC.DEL/476/18
20 April 2018

ENGLISH only

Statement on Freedom of Expression in Russia

As delivered by Ambassador Ihor Prokopchuk,
Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the 1182nd meeting of the Permanent Council,
19 April 2018

Mr. Chairman,

The delegation of Ukraine aligned itself with the statement of the European Union which we fully support. We would now make some remarks in the national capacity.

The significant restrictions of freedom of expression in the Russian Federation, state pressure on independent media and their representatives, the climate of impunity for attacks on journalists are matters of deep concern. Although these concerns have been regularly raised in the Permanent Council, they have been largely left without a meaningful reaction from the Russian authorities.

Among numerous cases of attacks on journalists in Russia, including the one mentioned today, we wish to draw attention to a case of now two years ago. On 9 March 2016, a group of Russian and foreign journalists together with human rights defenders was brutally attacked and beaten on their way from Ingushetia to Chechnya. Their minibus was burned down. This case had been repeatedly raised in the Permanent Council by individual delegations and the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, but meaningful update from the Russian delegation was missing. As two years have passed since the attack in question, in view of the current issue raised today and also the current issue of the last Permanent Council on violation of the rights of human rights defenders in the Russian Federation, we would like to request an update of the Russian delegation on the state of investigation into the case and whether the perpetrators of this cruel attack have been brought to justice.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.