



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Journalists under attack: a threat to media freedom

12 April 2019, Vienna, Austria

Venue: Hofburg Congress Center on Heldenplatz, Ratsaal room (5th floor)

ANNOTATED AGENDA

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

Journalism remains a dangerous profession as violence and intimidation of media actors continue to take place throughout the OSCE region. In fulfilling their role as members of the media, journalists are regularly attacked, subjected to surveillance, stigmatized, abducted, interrogated, arbitrarily detained and/or imprisoned, and too many have been killed.

The deaths of these journalists, including the assassinations of Maltese journalist, writer, and anti-corruption activist Daphne Caruana Galizia in June 2017, Slovak investigative journalist Ján Kuciak in February 2018, Saudi Arabian journalist Jamal Khashoggi in October 2018, killing of five Capital Gazette staff in June 2018 and the terrorist attack against Charlie Hebdo journalists in January 2015, shocked the global media community, and serve as a sobering reminder of the risks faced by many media actors today.

The latest Regular Report of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFoM) to the Permanent Council, covering the period from July to November 2018, shows that, of the more than 170 interventions made by the RFoM during the reporting period, 53 were on issues relating to the safety of journalists, including 14 cases of physical violence, 2 shootings, 1 arson attack, and threats of physical violence.

In far too many cases investigations into violence or threats of violence against journalists and media outlets are slow, incomplete and end in the perpetrators or instigators never being brought to justice. In 2017 the Office of the RFoM conducted research on the number of journalists killed in the OSCE region in the last of 25 years. The results clearly show that impunity for the killing of journalists has been allowed to prevail, with the vast majority of crimes unsolved. Impunity is a key obstacle to ensuring journalists' safety, resulting in self-censorship and a chilling effect on the exercise of freedom of expression.

The issue of safety of journalists and impunity for crimes against them requires the continued and increased attention of all OSCE participating States. Continued violence and threats endanger the fundamental role of the press in democracies, and hinder the fulfilment of OSCE commitments. The

OSCE RFoM, Harlem Désir, therefore, considers this his first priority and integral to ensuring the true freedom of the media and freedom of expression.

In Milano in December 2018 the Ministerial Council adopted a landmark decision on Safety of Journalists.

The objective of this conference is to provide a forum for journalists who have been attacked, their family members and colleagues to discuss how the OSCE participating States can improve journalists' safety and fulfil their commitments on freedom of expression and freedom of the media, including the 2018 Ministerial Council Decision on the Safety of Journalists.

9:00 – 09:30 **REGISTRATION**

09:30 – 10:00 **OPENING REMARKS**

- Representative of the Slovak OSCE Chairmanship
- Harlem Désir, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFoM)

10:00 – 11:30 **CHALLENGES OF WORKING UNDER THREAT**

Threats to journalists' safety can also lead to self-censorship, restrict or deter media professionals' ability to legitimately gather and report information, or force them to leave the profession altogether.

Four thematic discussions will focus on the testimonies of journalists who have been victims of attacks, along with their relatives and colleagues, outline difficulties in continuing the work of journalism and offer ways to improve the situation.

Moderators: Nadezhda Azhgikhina, Vice-President of the European Federation of Journalists & Frane Maroevic, Director of the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

Discussion 1 – Continuing the work

- Matthew Caruana Galizia, Investigative Journalist and son of killed journalist Daphne Anne Caruana Galizia (Malta)
- Peter Bárdy, Chief Editor of killed journalist Ján Kuciak at Aktuality.sk, (Slovakia)
- Katya Gorchinskaya, Journalist/Media Manager and friend of killed journalist Pavel Sheremet (Ukraine)

Discussion 2 – The fight against impunity

- Svetlana Lukić, Editor-in-Chief of *Peščanik* online portal (Serbia)
- André Berthold/Ine Dippmann, journalists at regional public service media Mitteldeutscher Rundfunk (MDR) in Leipzig (Germany)
- Inga Sikorskaya, Director of the School of Peacemaking and Media Technology (Kyrgyzstan)

- Gevorg Ghazaryan, Freelance Journalist (Armenia)
- Saša Leković, Investigative Journalist and President of the Investigative Journalism Center (Croatia)

11:30 – 12:00

COFFEE BREAK

12:00 – 13:30

CHALLENGES OF WORKING UNDER THREAT (continued)

Moderators: Nadezhda Azhgikhina, Vice-President of the European Federation of Journalists & Frane Maroevic, Director of the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

Discussion 3 – Investigating under assault

- Lukpan Akhmedyarov, Chief Editor of Uralskaya Nedelya newspaper (Kazakhstan)
- Vladimir Kovačević, Journalist at BN TV (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
- Elif Akgül, Freelance Journalist (Turkey)
- Paolo Berizzi, Correspondent for *La Repubblica* newspaper (Italy)

Discussion 4 – Overcoming threats and self-censorship

- Tatyana Felgenhauer, Presenter at Ekho Moskvyy radio station (Russia)
- Pavel Dabravolski, Journalist for Naviny.by (Belarus)
- Leyla Mustafayeva, Journalist and wife of jailed journalist Afgan Mukhtarli (Azerbaijan)
- Olivera Lakić, Investigative Journalist for *Vijesti* newspaper (Montenegro)

13:30 – 15:00

LUNCH & SIDE EVENT

14.00-15.00: Side event “Turning Words into Deeds: Implementation of OSCE commitments on the Safety of Journalists,” organized by the Group of Friends on Safety of Journalists (Bibliotheksaal, Hofburg)

15:00 – 16:30

RESPONSIBILITIES, OBLIGATIONS AND FRAMEWORKS TO PROTECT JOURNALISTS AND FIGHT IMPUNITY

States have positive obligations in relation to freedom of expression and free media to ensure a favourable working environment for safe, inclusive and pluralistic public debates. However, there is still a staggering gap in addressing the safety of journalists, including due to a lack of adequate framework and practices aimed at preventing crimes against media actors, protecting them when needed, and prosecuting, in a timely manner, the perpetrators and masterminds of relevant illegal acts. While political commitments to protect media freedom, including those adopted in the OSCE framework, are imperative, they are only effective when backed up by strong political will, as well as by solid policies and practices to bolster the safety of media, and to establish comprehensive cooperation between States, international institutions and non-governmental organisations.

This session will explore the existing frameworks relevant to the safety of journalists, discuss challenges and opportunities regarding their implementation, as well as highlight positive practices.

Moderator: Joy Hyvarinen, Head of Advocacy, Index on Censorship

Speakers:

- Sergiy Tomilenko, President, National Union of Journalist of Ukraine
- Thomas Bruning, General Secretary, Dutch Association of Journalists
- Branko Stamenković, Deputy Republic Public Prosecutor, Head of the Special Prosecutor's Office for High-Tech Crime in Serbia, member of the Permanent Working Group on Journalists' Safety in Serbia
- Sarah Clarke, Head of Europe and Central Asia, ARTICLE 19
- Gulnara Akhundova, Head of Global Response Department, International Media Support

16:30 – 17:00

COFFEE BREAK

17:00 – 18:20

MONITORING AND ADDRESSING ATTACKS AND VIOLENCE AGAINST JOURNALISTS

Many national, international and local non-governmental organisations monitor the cases of violence against media actors. These efforts, which require investment of adequate time and resources, represent important mechanisms in identifying violations, patterns, causes and possible solutions, as well as in providing an analysis of the effectiveness of prevention, protection and prosecution measures undertaken by the States. Accessible databases, together with regular engagement between NGOs and law-enforcement bodies, are crucial for establishing good practices to respond efficiently and timely to attacks against journalists.

The OSCE Ministerial Council Decision on the Safety of Journalists, adopted by the participating States last December in Milan, highlights various contemporary challenges faced by media actors including, among other things, 10 recommendations for establishing or strengthening, where possible, national data collection, analysis and reporting on attacks and violence against journalists.

This session will explore such questions as:

- *What are available monitoring mechanisms and methodologies?*
- *How can such mechanisms be established and strengthened in accordance with the Ministerial Council Decision?*
- *How can such mechanisms help in combatting impunity?*

Moderator: Katharine Sarikakis, Professor, Chair of Media Governance, Media Organisation and Media Industries at the Department of Communication, University of Vienna

Speakers:

- Pauline Adès-Mével, Head of European Union & Balkan desk, Reporters Without Borders
- Tom Gibson, EU Representative and Advocacy Manager, Committee to Protect Journalists
- Saorla McCabe, Programme Specialist, Freedom of Expression and Media Development, UNESCO
- Matjaž Gruden, Director of Democratic Participation, Directorate General of Democracy, Council of Europe
- Ambassador Ulrika Funered, Permanent Representative of Sweden to the OSCE in Vienna, member of Group of Friends on safety of journalists

18:20 – 18:30

CONCLUSIONS

18:30 – 19:30

DRINKS RECEPTION