



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF UKRAINE

As delivered by HE Mr Yuriy Vitrenko, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the
International Organisations in Vienna

1561 meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council

Agenda Item 2, “Report by the Representative on Freedom of the Media”
(23 April 2026)

Mr Chairperson,

Ukraine highly values the OSCE’s consistent efforts to safeguard media freedom and uphold the safety and independence of journalists, in line with our shared commitments.

We thank Ambassador Jan Braathu for his thorough report and for his continued attention to developments affecting media freedom across the OSCE region, including in the face of Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine.

Ambassador Braathu,

We welcome your focus on the structural challenges affecting media freedom, including the growing gap between OSCE commitments and their implementation, increasing pressure on independent journalism, and the growing impact of digital technologies on the information environment.

We also note the attention given in your report to the situation in Ukraine.

In this context, the information environment and the safety of journalists have become a critical and deeply affected dimension of Russia’s war.

Journalists in Ukraine continue to operate under constant threat of shelling, missile and drone attacks, while media infrastructure has been damaged or destroyed and newsrooms displaced. Despite these conditions, they continue to document the reality of the war, inform the public, and ensure that facts are not obscured.

Ukraine strongly supports the work of your Office in promoting the safety of journalists. We particularly welcome the pilot training on journalists’ safety, including mental health, which was held in Ukraine in February this year. Ukrainian journalists

continue to operate under extraordinary pressure. They face both physical risks and severe psychological strain. Addressing mental health as part of journalists' safety is therefore essential. We thank you for this important initiative and look forward to further projects in this area.

Mr Chairperson,

According to the Institute of Mass Information, the Russian Federation has committed **901 crimes against journalists** and media workers in Ukraine since February 2022. This includes the killing of **126 journalists**, **15** of whom died while performing their professional duties.

At least **26 Ukrainian journalists** remain **unlawfully detained by the Russian Federation**. They are held on fabricated charges and in conditions amounting to torture. We would appreciate your continued support, dear Jan, in efforts aimed at their release.

Media infrastructure also remains under attack. In March this year, Russia struck the **office of Suspilne Ukraine in Odesa**. We are grateful for the RFoM's prompt reaction, which once again underscored that **media facilities are civilian objects protected under international humanitarian law**.

The case of **Ukrainian journalist Viktoriya Roshchyna** remains unresolved. She died in Russian captivity in 2024, and Russia has failed to provide full and credible information about the circumstances of her death. We will continue to raise this case until full accountability is ensured.

Bringing accountability for abductions, unlawful detention, torture, and attacks on journalists must remain our shared responsibility.

Mr Chairperson,

Ukraine calls on the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media and participating States to:

increase support for Ukrainian media, journalist associations, and protection programmes, including in de-occupied territories;

intensify efforts to secure the release of all journalists unlawfully detained by the Russian Federation;

support the documentation and investigation of crimes against journalists to ensure accountability.

I thank you.