



..... International Press Service.....

Ressort: Politik

World Press Freedom Day 2021

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On 3 May 2021 - World Press Freedom Day 2021, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFoM), Teresa Ribeiro, launched a Communiqué on the freedom of journalists and media outlets to perform their journalistic duties abroad. World Press Freedom Day acts as a reminder to governments of the need to respect their commitment to press freedom and is also a day of reflection among media professionals about

issues of press freedom and professional ethics. Just as importantly, World Press Freedom Day is a day of support for media which are targets for the restraint, or abolition, of press freedom. It is also a day of remembrance for those journalists who lost their lives in the pursuit of a story.

The Communiqué by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFoM), Teresa Ribeiro elaborates on the longstanding commitments of all OSCE participating States to let media coming from, or having (financial) ties to parties in, other OSCE participating States do their work freely and safely. The communiqué also provides a set of recommendations on this issue.

The Representative on Freedom of the Media recommends that the OSCE participating States should live up to their many commitments regarding the freedom to perform journalistic duties abroad, also with a view of strengthening a climate of trust and co-operation within the OSCE region. The endeavour to promote more debate and open, diverse and dynamic media environment, also on issues that they deem “foreign” or “not correct” it’s crucial.

OSCE participating States should permit media workers and media outlets coming from, or having(financial) ties to parties in another participating State to enter the territory to be able to perform their journalistic work, including media that report or disseminate messages that the authorities

deem to be unwanted.

OSCE Member States have a commitment, as described in the 2018 OSCE MC Decision, that all political leaders, public officials and/or authorities should “refrain from intimidating, threatening or condoning – and to condemn unequivocally – violence against journalists”, including when it concerns media coming from, or having ties to parties in another participating State.

Usually journalists, media workers and media outlets are stigmatised, or labelled as “foreign agent” only because they report or disseminate messages that the authorities deem to be unwanted, and this is not tolerable.

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Recent years have shown a worrying number of cases where media coming from, or having (financial) ties, abroad were hindered in doing their work. These obstructive governmental practices vary from the placing extra administrative requirements on journalists with ties to parties in another country and creating unfavourable – and sometimes even hostile – environment towards these media, to imposing far-fetching (economic) sanctions, or even outright blocking or banning of such media workers and outlets. Though different in operation, these restrictive measures have the same detrimental effect: shrinking of media pluralism and security in the OSCE region and disruption of co-operation and friendly relations between nations.

“Media freedom is dependent on a vibrant and competitive media landscape, with a variety of voices. This includes freedom to perform journalistic duties abroad – something that is also considered crucial for strengthening a climate of trust and co-operation within the OSCE region,” said Ribeiro. “Since journalists and media outlets play a pivotal role in providing information that we all depend on in our democratic societies, it is paramount that they should be able to report, collect and disseminate information regardless of frontiers.”

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