



## **United States Mission to the OSCE**

### **On Safety of Journalists in Turkey**

As delivered by Chargé d’Affaires, a.i. Harry R. Kamian  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
June 6, 2019

The United States joins the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media in expressing concern over a series of attacks on journalists in Turkey. On May 25, OdaTV columnist and commentator Sabahattin Önkibar was beaten in front of his home in Ankara. On May 24, founder of the local daily Egemen Hakan Denizli was shot in the leg as he was leaving his home in Adana. Editor-in-Chief of the Guney Haberci news website Ergin Çevik was violently attacked in Antalya on May 20. Journalists İdris Özyol and Yavuz Selim Demirağ were physically assaulted in the same month. Police reportedly detained suspects in the cases of Önkibar, Çevik, and Demirağ, but all were later conditionally released. We urge that this worrying trend of violence against journalists in Turkey be addressed urgently.

Mr. Chair, violent attacks against critical or dissenting voices have a chilling effect on freedom of expression. In the 2018 Milan Ministerial decision, OSCE participating States noted with concern that a “climate of impunity prevails when violent attacks committed against journalists remain unpunished.” The decision called upon participating States to condemn violence against journalists.

Impunity for violence against journalists is unacceptable. We call upon Turkey to uphold OSCE principles and commitments related to the freedom of expression and media freedom, including on the safety of journalists.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.