

21<sup>ST</sup> CENTRAL ASIA MEDIA CONFERENCE

# MEDIA FREEDOM AND PLURALISM IN TIMES OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

osce  
The Representative on  
Freedom of the Media

17-18  
JULY BISHKEK

#CAMC2019



[Damas International Hotel](#)  
(Zhumabek 107, Bishkek)

## ANNOTATED AGENDA

### INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

Over the last 20 years, the Central Asia Media Conference (CAMC), organized by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, has been and continues to be a unique event for the exchange of information and experiences on media freedom developments among all five countries in the region.

The main theme of this year's edition will be media freedom and pluralism in times of digital transformation. The discussion will include conditions for establishing an open and secure Internet nationally and throughout the OSCE region, as well as media for minorities and self-regulation.

Recalling the OSCE 2018 Ministerial Decision on Safety of Journalists, which acknowledges that journalism and technology are evolving and that this contributes to the public debate, while it may also expand the range

of risks that undermine the safety of journalists, the conference will focus on various aspects of digital transformation of the media, from access to the Internet to vulnerability of journalists.

The conference will gather over 100 participants from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, as well as Mongolia, representing the public authorities, media, journalists' associations, civil society and academia, to exchange views and best practices on the issue.

The event will offer plenary sessions, parallel working groups for an in-depth discussion of relevant issues, as well as side events to showcase media projects prepared and implemented in the region. The working languages will be English and Russian with simultaneous interpretation.

### 09.00 – 09.30 REGISTRATION OF PARTICIPANTS

#### 09.30 – 10.00 OPENING SESSION (Diamond hall, 1<sup>st</sup> floor)

##### Welcoming remarks

- **Harlem Désir**, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media
- **Nuran Niyazaliev**, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan
- **Azamat Zhamankulov**, Minister of Culture, Information and Tourism of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan
- **Ambassador Pierre von Arx**, Head of the OSCE Programme Office in Bishkek

##### Moderator:

- **Elena Cherniavska**, Senior Adviser, Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

#### 10.00 – 11.15 SESSION I: Impact of digital development on media pluralism

*The new and still-evolving media ecosystem is much more complex than anything we have seen before. Internet, social media and mobile telephony have enabled growing numbers of people to express themselves and reach (potentially) the whole connected world with their individual messages.*

*New technologies are driving the creation of new forms of media, the way people interact with media (instant mobile access) and how they are inter-mixing different channels of communication (TV, radio, internet, press, blogs, social media). New technology brings about new forms of content distribution and content sharing, to support and enhance quality journalism against the pressure of dwindling resources.*

*The public is aware of the benefits that new media technologies have brought to media pluralism and media freedom: many new forms of journalism and media services have emerged. The Internet also opens opportunities and lowers barriers of entry for new media organisations and individuals.*

*Yet, despite an abundance of available sources and opinions, consumers view the quality of the media as lower than in the pre-digital era: citizens find material from non-traditional sources, including social media, less trustworthy and less rigorously checked than on traditional media. New business models are called for to finance quality media in the future.*

*This session will focus on possibilities and challenges for the media arising from global digital distribution platforms, protection of the public interest, and access to an open, stable and affordable internet for public and media alike.*

##### Moderators:

- **Ambassador Bakyt Dzhusupov**, Permanent Representative of Kyrgyzstan to the OSCE and other international organizations in Vienna
- **Elena Cherniavska**, Senior Adviser, Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

##### Keynote speaker:

- **Timothy Karr**, Senior Director of Strategy and Communications, Free Press

##### Panellists:

- **Michael Oghia**, Advocacy & Engagement Manager, Global Forum for Media Development
- **Bota Ayazbayeva**, Programs Director, Soros Foundation Kazakhstan
- **Bokhadir Sultanov**, Head of the Information Security Department, Ministry for Development of Information Technologies and Communications of the Republic of Uzbekistan
- **Nurzhigit Kadyrbekov**, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Culture, Information and Tourism, Kyrgyzstan
- **Arslan Charyyev**, Executive Secretary, Foreign Policy and Diplomacy of Turkmenistan magazine

**11.45 – 13.00 SESSION II: The regulation of the online media and the protection of freedom of expression**

*Many governments are considering imposing regulation on online content and social media platforms, often blamed for facilitating illegal conduct, enabling abuse and manipulating democratic processes. There is a trend in legislation of many countries to impose fines, blocking access to websites, and imposing liability on internet intermediaries for failing to limit the distribution of harmful content.*

*As Internet platforms in general have become central players and facilitators of online speech, their own Terms of Service have become the rules on freedom of expression on these platforms. These rules have a clear impact on the way freedom of expression is exercised in the online world.*

*It is essential to protect public interest from attacks, corporate interests, or norms which are unilateral. A secure and open internet needs an order based on rules and the rule of law to survive.*

*This session will look at the different models of online regulation and discuss ways to include international human rights standards in any such model.*

**Moderator:**

- **Pierre François Docquir**, Head of Media Freedom, ARTICLE 19

**Keynote speaker:**

- **Charles Bradley**, Executive Director, Global Partners Digital, United Kingdom

**Panellists:**

- **Gulmira Birzhanova**, Lawyer, Legal Media Center, Kazakhstan
- **Marat Torobekov**, Lawyer, Civil Initiative on Internet Policy, Kyrgyzstan
- **Nikita Makarenko**, Columnist, Gazeta.uz, Uzbekistan
- **Naranjargal Khashkhuu**, President and Board Chairman, Globe International NGO, Mongolia
- **Suhrob Pulotov**, Head of legal team, National Association of Independent Mass-Media in Tajikistan

**13.45 – 14.30 SIDE EVENTS**

**Side event 1: Trends in freedom of expression in Central Asia**

**Room:** Diamond hall (1<sup>st</sup> floor)

**Organizer:** School of Peacemaking and Media Technology in Central Asia

**Presenters:**

- **Sergei Naumov**, Expert
- **Alina Amilayeva**, Programme Assistant

**Language:** Russian

*The side event will showcase the presentation of the latest report by the School of Peacemaking and Media Technologies about regional trends in the freedom of the media. The speaker will focus on the three following aspects: country rankings conducted on the 1 to 5 points basis; the trends which challenge quality journalism (legislation, including a broad interpretation of incitement of hatred, countering extremism, a high level of hate speech and propaganda, censorship and introduction of user*

**Side event 2: Reporting on refugees – the Charter of Rome project**

**Room:** Progress hall (12<sup>th</sup> floor)

**Organizer:** UNHCR

**Presenters:**

- **Vitalina Kyrlyovska**, Regional Protection Officer at the UNHCR Regional Representation in Central Asia

**Language:** English

*Prompted by UNHCR, in 2008, the Italian National Council of the Order of Journalists and the National Federation of the Italian Press signed the Charter of Rome. The Charter is a code of conduct for journalists on migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and victims of human trafficking that promotes an accurate and balanced representation of the migration phenomenon and related issues. Three years later, in 2011, media representatives – together with a network of 14 civil society organizations – founded the Charter of Rome*

content in professional journalism). The speaker will talk on the role of the media in countering the negative trends and perspectives of user content for professional journalism.

Association aimed at promoting and monitoring the implementation of the Charter by the media. Media monitoring and training, the dissemination of useful content through the website and newsletter are examples of the Association's efforts.

## 14.30 – 15.15 GROUP DISCUSSIONS

### Working group 1: Plurality of voices: minority media in Central Asia

Ways of preserving and reflecting the complex and pluralist societies in Central Asia, and helping media to evolve while avoiding harmful or illegal content will be discussed in the working group.

**Room:** Diamond hall (1<sup>st</sup> floor)

**Moderator:**

- **Inga Sikorskaya**, Director, School of Peacemaking and Media Technology in Central Asia

**Rapporteur:**

- **Begaiym Adzhikeeva**, Project Coordinator, Institute for War & Peace Reporting

### Working group 2: Self-regulation for online media

The calls for increased regulation of social media platforms, a tendency to consider online platforms publishers, but also the need to sustain freedom of expression and freedom of the media standards point to the necessity of introducing an effective self-regulatory system for the online media, as the least restrictive and the best instrument for the promotion of ethical standards in the digital environment.

**Room:** Progress hall (12<sup>th</sup> floor)

**Moderator:**

- **TBD**

**Rapporteur:**

- **Diana Okremova**, Director, Legal Media Center

## 15.15 – 15.45 COFFEE BREAK (1<sup>st</sup> floor)

## 15.45 – 16.30 GROUP DISCUSSIONS (continued)

### Working group 1 (continued): Plurality of voices: minority media in Central Asia

**Room:** Diamond hall (1<sup>st</sup> floor)

### Working group 2 (continued): Self-regulation for online media

**Room:** Progress hall (12<sup>th</sup> floor)

## 16.30 – 18.00 SESSION III: Overview of media freedom developments in the region (Diamond hall)

This session aims to discuss media freedom developments in the Central Asia region and in Mongolia, including current legislation and, if applicable, individual cases of legal issues facing media outlets and journalists, which may have a chilling effect on freedom of the media

**Moderator:**

- **Elena Cherniavska**, Senior Adviser, Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

**Panellists:**

- **Tamara Kaleyeva**, President, International Foundation for Protection of Freedom of Speech Adil Soz, Kazakhstan
- **Nazik Chekirova**, Business Adviser, Internews in Kyrgyzstan
- **Zebo Tadjibaeva**, Executive Director, Asia Plus news agency, Tajikistan

**Q&A, comments from the audience**

## 18.30 RECEPTION (D-Bar, 13<sup>th</sup> floor) Hosted by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media



### 09.15 – 10.30 **SESSION III (continued): Overview of media freedom developments in the region** (Diamond hall)

*This session aims to discuss media freedom developments in the Central Asia region and in Mongolia, including current legislation and, if applicable, individual cases of legal issues facing media outlets and journalists, which may have a chilling effect on freedom of the media.*

#### **Moderator:**

- **Elena Cherniavska**, Senior Adviser, Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

#### **Panellists:**

- **Ruslan Myatiev**, Editor, Alternative Turkmenistan News
- **Kerim Jumayev**, Journalist, Turkmenportal.com, Turkmenistan
- **Sergey Ejkov**, Chief Editor, UzMetronom.com independent Internet newspaper, Uzbekistan
- **Lyutsiya Zaynullina**, Leading Specialist, Media Development Department, Information and Mass Communications Agency under the Administration of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan
- **Narantua Dangaasuren**, Board Member, Media Council of Mongolia

#### **Q&A, comments from the audience**

### 10.30 – 11.00 **COFFEE BREAK (1<sup>st</sup> floor)**

### 11.00 – 12.30 **CLOSING SESSION**

- Reports from working groups discussions
- Discussion of the draft recommendations from the conference
- Evaluation of the conference

#### **Closing remarks**

**Harlem Désir**, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

### 12.30 – 13.30 **LUNCH (gallery above Diamond hall)**

### 13.30 – 14.15 **SIDE EVENTS**

#### **Side event 3: Data analysis for journalism**

**Room:** Diamond hall (1<sup>st</sup> floor)

**Organizer:** Zima Group of Developers / Kloop Media

#### **Presenters:**

- Nikolai Pikhota, Developer, Zima
- Anna Kapushenko, Editor, Kloop Media

**Language:** Russian

*N. Pikhota will present a project by a group of developers which collected all available declarations by civil servants to develop an easy to use and effective tool for journalists and activists who are engaged in public monitoring (declarator.politmer.kg.)*

*A. Kapushenko will present her recent story on labour migrants from Kyrgyzstan and talk about the development of data journalism in Kyrgyzstan.*

#### **Side event 4: Presentation of the research findings on news consumption patterns through new media**

**Room:** Progress hall (12<sup>th</sup> floor)

**Organizer:** Institute for War & Peace Reporting

#### **Presenter:**

- Jazgul Ibraimova, Research Coordinator

**Language:** Russian

*The Institute for War and Peace Reporting conducted a research on identifying patterns of news consumption through new media in four Central Asian countries - Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. The research results demonstrate the information consumption path of the Central Asia residents, what platforms they prefer, what language the news materials are available in, how much the consumption*

*channels have changed, how popular alternative messaging platforms are (WhatsApp, Telegram or Facebook Messenger), and the level of information sources' credibility.*