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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE
REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA TO
THE INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS
VIENNA

Albanian Response to the 2019 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting

Session 2: Freedom of the Media

**As delivered by Ambassador, H.E. Mr. Igli Hasani,
to the HDIM, Warsaw
September 17, 2019**

Freedom of expression and freedom of the media remain a priority for the Albanian government. In relation to this, Albania appreciates the close and constructive cooperation with the RFoM Office during recent years. The work of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Halem Désir and his able team has been crucial in helping, supporting and advising Albanian institutions in improving legal basis, implementing our shared commitments and in promoting an open and free media in Albania.

Freedom of expression, media freedom, access to information and safety of journalists, are vital tools for an open, free and democratic society. As such, we are of the view that promoting media freedom is fundamental for all our countries, especially at times when harassment, intimidation and violence against journalists are becoming a great concern throughout the OSCE region and beyond.

It is imperative that together we undertake legitimate steps in addressing these challenges. In this regard, we see the role of RFoM as irreplaceable in tackling these concerns and problems and in assisting countries to commit to democratic principles.

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Albania will continue to preserve, protect and support media freedom as a prerequisite for the fulfilment of a wide range of fundamental rights and freedoms. In doing so, we fully support the mandate of the RFoM's Office in observing media developments and events in the OSCE area.

At the same time, we are conscious that policies in promoting quality journalism and positive steps taken to implement them should in no case undermine media freedom and editorial autonomy.

The growing developments of new media, technologies, internet use and the digital transformation offer new opportunities for freedom of expression, media diversification, thus contributing to the promotion of good governance, transparency and accountability.

Enhanced professionalism, better journalism and fact-checking efforts, transparency and higher accountability within media companies and digital intermediaries can contribute to (re)establishing trust and healthy relationships between media actors and audiences.

In concluding, we are of the view that ensuring the quality of journalism and the safety of journalists is fundamental in securing a more favourable environment for freedom of expression. As we prepare for the next year Albanian OSCE chairmanship, we will continue the efforts by previous Chairmanships in implementing our commitments in the Freedom of the Media.

Thank you.