15TH SOUTH CAUCASUS MEDIA CONFERENCE

Quality journalism for trustworthy and credible information

18-19 July 2018, Tbilisi, Georgia

Venue: Radisson Blu Iveria Hotel (Rose Revolution Square, 1)

AGENDA

Day 1: Wednesday, 18 July

09.30 – 10.00   **REGISTRATION**

10.00 – 10.30   **OPENING SESSION**

Welcoming remarks
- Harlem Désir, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media
- David Zalkaliani, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia
- George Tsereteli, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly
- Antonino Maggiore, First Counsellor, Head of OSCE Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy

10.30 – 11.45   **SESSION I: The digital transformation of the media industry and its effects on the practice and quality of journalism**

The impact of the media technologies of digitalization on society is universal. It has many facets, from the switchover from analogue to digital broadcasting, to the Internet, and new-media technologies. This technological transformation empowers multi-directional communication, where the audience is invited to participate and interact, and enables changes in news production as well as in news consumption. However, it also forces the industry, primarily the legacy media, to reconsider business models for ensuring economic sustainability.

In addition, the social network platforms and news aggregators have been playing an important role in today's news distribution. They influence freedom and development of media in many ways, including by bringing access to a much larger audience than was previously feasible, introducing new approaches in distribution of revenues, reshaping control over the context in which content is promoted, promoting interaction with audiences, and affecting quality of information.

This session aims to address such issues as:
- *new and changing business models of media and their sustainability;*
- *diversification of revenues (grants, advertising, subscription, crowdfunding, sponsored content) and related implications on media consumption;*

- *opportunities by new technologies for journalism practice – citizen journalism and user-generated content;*
- *readership feedback and its effects on credibility and promotion of news;*
- *benefits and disadvantages of distributing news on social media platforms.*

Moderator: Matthijs Berman, Principal Adviser, Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

Speakers:
- Olga Zakharova, Head, Expert Council of the Ukrainian Television Academy
- Anna Israyelyan, Editor, *Aravot* news website
- Elkhan Aleskerov, Deputy Editor, Trend News Agency
- George Gogua, Journalist and Multimedia Reporter, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) Georgian Service

11.45 – 12.15   **COFFEE BREAK**

12.15 – 13.30   **SESSION II: Quality of information in the age of "fake news" and disinformation**

Quality journalism can increase levels of political knowledge, participation, and engagement and can furthermore help reduce corruption and encourage elected officials to represent their constituents more effectively.

However, the current media environment in the OSCE region clearly shows that journalism has been greatly affected by such information disorders and challenges as violent political rhetoric, disinformation and propaganda, which may seriously undermine the public trust in media. It therefore becomes increasingly important, among other things, to enhance the capacity of media and journalists on investigative reporting, diversification, accountability, fact-checking and verification of information, to educate the public, and to promote media literacy.

This session aims to address such issues as:
- *disinformation and propaganda: challenges and opportunities for quality journalism;*
- *fact-checking initiatives;*
- *role of media in promoting media literacy.*

Moderator: Caroline Sutcliffe, Executive Director, Chai Khana regional media platform

Speakers:
- Sami Ozuslu, Head, Turkish Cypriot Journalists' Association
- Lusine Grigoryan, Media literacy expert, Media Initiatives Center
- Seymur Kazimov, Freelance journalist, Researcher on media development issues
- Tamar Kintsurashvili, Executive Director, Media Development Foundation

13.30 – 14.30   **LUNCH**

14.30 – 15.45   **SESSION III: Regulation and self-regulation in the digital era**

Adherence to recognized professional journalism standards and principles fosters editorial freedom, independence of media and pluralism, and contributes to the improvement of the quality of information. This process also goes hand-in-hand with

efforts to enhance media self-regulation and ethical journalism, both offline and online – important safeguards for media freedom and the social standing of journalism.

In recent years, some governments have moved to create or enhance state regulation to control information flows on the Internet and, sometimes, to censor online media content. There are efforts to regulate the work of social networks, compromise online anonymity, and define problematic information and speech in a broad manner without taking into account the digital nature of today's news media.

This session aims to address such issues as:
- *journalistic ethics and standards and its application on new media actors;*
- *self-regulation mechanisms and their recent practice;*
- *control over information, including on social media platforms: state interference, editorial responsibility and liability, and content moderation;*
- *application of traditional regulatory assumptions on new media and various media actors, and its effects on quality journalism.*

Moderator: Andrey Rikhter, Senior Adviser, Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

Speakers:
- Ludmila Andronic, Member, Media Self-Regulatory Organizations Network
- Ara Ghazaryan, media lawyer
- Aflatun Amashov, Chairman, Azerbaijan Press Council
- Mariam Gogosashvili, Media lawyer, Georgian Young Lawyers Association

15.45 – 16.15   **COFFEE BREAK**

16.15 – 18.00   **SESSION IV: Latest media freedom developments in the South Caucasus**

This session aims to discuss media freedom developments since the 2017 South Caucasus Media Conference, including legislative initiatives and framework, current case law, safety of journalists, media transparency, professional standards, and other pertinent issues and challenges to media freedom.

Moderator: Aidar Botagarov, Adviser, Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

Speakers:
Georgia
- Ivane Makharadze, Head, Audiovisual Media Services Regulation Department, Georgian National Communications Commission
- Mamuka Anguladze, Media Program Manager, Transparency International Georgia

Armenia
- Hovhannes Movsisyan, Director, Public Relations and Information Centre of the Government of Armenia
- Laura Baghdasaryan, Head, 'Region' research centre

Azerbaijan
- Hikmet Hajiyev, Spokesperson and Head of Press Service, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Azerbaijan
- Mehman Aliyev, Director, Turan News Agency

18.00 **RECEPTION** (at the Radisson Blu Iveria Hotel)
Hosted by the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

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Day 2: Thursday, 19 July

9.30 – 11.00 **SESSION V: Master class "Why to study your media audience, and how to do that?"**

Trainer: Evgeni Kulakov, Founder, MediaToolbox

Why is it important to know your internet users? How can they be defined and studied by their preferences? And how then to implement those findings into successful media product?
Accurate understanding of your media customers will allow you to create such a media product that will meet their needs and requirements.
At the master class you will familiarize yourself with the most important characteristics of internet audience, with the metrics to measure performance of e-media and with the management of e-media as an IT product.

11.00 – 11.15 **COFFEE BREAK** (Distribution of the conference's draft recommendations)

11.15 – 12.30 **SESSION VI: Workshop "Countering 'hate speech' and protecting freedom of expression"**

Presenter: Susan Coughtrie, Senior Programme Officer - Europe and Central Asia, ARTICLE 19

The workshop will reflect upon the international standards regarding 'hate speech' and present some practical steps that journalists can do to limit the spread of 'hate speech', as well as to provide support for initiatives such as 'counter speech' to tackle hate.
ARTICLE 19 will present its 'Hate Speech' Toolkit and provide examples and practical suggestions from its work in this area.

12.30 – 13.30 **CLOSING SESSION**

Moderator: Andrey Rikhter, Senior Adviser, Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

- Discussion on the draft recommendations from the conference
- Evaluation of the conference

Closing remarks
Harlem Désir, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

13.30 – 14.30 **LUNCH**