



**Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting**

**THE FUNCTIONING OF DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS IN  
TIMES OF CRISIS**

**16–17 May 2022  
Vienna**

**FINAL REPORT**



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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The second Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting (SHDM) of 2022, organized by the Polish 2022 OSCE Chairmanship with the support of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (ODIHR), was held on the topic of the “Functioning of Democratic Institutions in Times of Crisis”. The SHDM served as a platform to recall human rights obligations and OSCE commitments pertaining to the inclusiveness and accountability of national and local institutions, the right to freedom of association and media freedom, as well as to discuss the opportunities to ensure stronger democratic institutions in times of crisis and challenges in this regard. During the event, the participants shared good practices of online functioning of parliaments, and discussed the trends and challenges in legislation and practice affecting the work of associations and human rights defenders and the crucial role of the media in crisis times where access to reliable information and quality media becomes even more vital.

Two hundred eighty individuals registered to participate in the meeting and 225 participants, (93 men, 131 women, 1 undeclared) attended the meeting, including 127 representatives of 52 participating States (pSs), 7 representatives of 4 international organizations, 54 representatives of 42 civil society organizations (CSOs), as well as 37 representatives of OSCE institutions, National Human Rights Institutions and other participants.

In addition to the main programme, 5 participating organizations, including 3 CSOs, organized side events at the SHDM, providing an opportunity for participants to discuss issues that have not been fully covered during the working sessions.

## 2. SYNOPSIS OF THE SESSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### OPENING SESSION

*Opening remarks:*

**Mr. Artur Dmochowski**, Special Envoy of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office

**Mr. Matteo Meccaci**, Director, OSCE/ODIHR

**Ms. Teresa Ribeiro**, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

*Keynote address:*

**Ms. Veronika Bílková**, Member, European Commission for Democracy through Law, Venice Commission of the Council of Europe

During the opening session, the speakers emphasised that human rights and democratic principles must continue to be the bedrock of societies across the OSCE region even as the Russian Federation’s military attack in Ukraine is creating unprecedented challenges to democratic institutions across the region.

Speaking on behalf of the OSCE Chair-in-Office, Polish Foreign Minister, H.E. Mr. Zbigniew Rau, Mr. Dmochowski, Special Envoy of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, stressed the enormous scale of egregious violation of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, resulting from the unprovoked Russian aggression against Ukraine. The Special Envoy explained that it is against this background that the Polish OSCE Chairpersonship proposed to discuss the role of fundamental freedoms, such as freedom of expression and of association, and the functioning of democratic institutions in the times of crisis.

The Director of ODIHR highlighted the importance of civic engagement as the biggest commitment any individual can make to our societies. Director Mecacci stressed that while such engagements should be treasured, we are, unfortunately, seeing restrictions on freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and access to information which are undermining the work of civil society and even expose human rights defenders to intimidation and persecution.

Emphasizing the role of independent, free and pluralistic media as indispensable part of democratic societies, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media stressed that more media freedom is needed, not less. Ms. Ribeiro pointed to the current unprecedented regress in media freedom and a severe clamp down on independent reporting across the entire OSCE region, while at the same time, professional journalism is relied on more than ever to provide fact-based information and unbiased reporting on evolving crisis situations.

The keynote speaker, Ms. Bílková, Member of the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe, recalled the major crises since the start of the new millennium - terrorist attacks in 2001, financial speculations in 2008, the rise of the so called Islamic State in 2014, the pandemic of Covid-19 in 2020 and the act of aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine in 2022. Ms. Bílková noted that while triggered by different causes, these crises have all brought about extensive restrictions of human rights and shifts in the separation of powers and produced debates about the adequacy of our normative framework and the efficiency of our institutions, especially in times of crises.

Discussing the temporary restrictions which States may impose in times of crisis, the keynote speaker presented principles that should govern the situations of crisis and that should help minimize the impact of such situations on human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The speaker emphasized that one of the most important of such principles – in addition to necessity, proportionality and temporariness – is the principle of effective scrutiny, as any measures adopted in times of crises must be subject to a systematic and comprehensive control.

Ms. Bílková further discussed that such control is conventionally exercised by three main categories of actors which should complement rather than rival each other: i.) various official national actors, in particular national parliaments, ii.) media, human rights defenders, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and various other entities belonging to what is usually described as the civil society, and iii.) actors operating at the international level, including international organizations which can help prevent crises, for instance by promoting political and humanitarian dialogue, as the OSCE does within its human dimension. International actors can also help by responding to crises, by monitoring the situation in a particular country, collecting evidence about alleged violations of international law or even prosecuting individuals responsible for such violations. The expert mission on Ukraine established under the OSCE Moscow Mechanism earlier this year, is a good example of such an initiative.

The speaker concluded her keynote remarks by emphasizing the joint responsibility of all relevant actors to ensure that normative standards enshrined in constitutions, treaties or political commitments, are upheld even in times of crises and the important role the pSs have in

supporting these actors through political, material and other means, encouraging their involvement in crisis prevention and crisis management, ensuring coordination among them and paying attention to their conclusions and outcomes, making sure that those do not merely remain on paper.



*Keynote speaker, Ms. Veronika Bilková, Member of the European Commission for Democracy through Law, Venice Commission of the Council of Europe, speaking at the SHDM Opening Session on 16 May 2022.*

## **SESSION I: ROLE OF NATIONAL AND LOCAL INSTITUTIONS AS GUARDIANS OF DEMOCRACY IN TIMES OF CRISIS**

*Introducers:*

**Ms. Margareta Cederfelt**, President, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (PA)

**Mr. Andy Williamson**, Senior Researcher, Centre for Innovation in Parliament, Inter-Parliamentary Union

**Mr. Yuriy Bova**, Mayor of Trostyanets

*Moderator:* Mr. Konstantine Vardzelashvili, Head, Democratization Department, OSCE/ODIHR

During the first session the introducers provided a thorough overview of the effect that crisis and military conflict have on the functioning of parliaments and local institutions. Speakers

reflected on the work of parliaments during such situations, analysing experiences and promising practices.

Ms. Cederfelt attached great importance to the functioning of national parliaments during crisis when parliaments are most challenged, but also most needed and highlighted that OSCE PA members agreed to ensure the functioning of legislative bodies to the highest extent possible in times of pandemic. She noted that since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic and the unprovoked invasion of Ukraine by Russia, we are working in a constant crisis mode, in which our values and democracies are challenged. She emphasized however that the OSCE needs to hold on to its fundamental values and never give them away, pointing out that while political landscape has changed several times since the adoption of the Helsinki Final Act, its principals remain highly valuable and needed. She stated that there is a need for dialogue, to meet and negotiate, to take the broader security perspective into account and build resilience, and added that Russia's war is a result of lack of respect for common security rules.

Referring to international law obligations, Ms. Cederfelt reminded participants that any derogation of civil liberties and human rights must be limited only to emergencies that threaten the life of the nation, be proportionate in relation to the situation, consistent with other legal obligations and not discriminate in any way. She added that no circumstances justify torture.

Ms. Cederfeld stated that failure to maintain the work of legislators during crisis risks turning any crisis into a larger risk for democracy, as restricting parliaments' core functions, such as passing laws and budgets, representing constituencies and overseeing governments, could lead to erosion of public trust in institutions.

OSCE PA President concluded by pointing out that it is important to recognize that focusing only on national institutions is insufficient, as many crisis are fundamentally cross-border in nature. International organizations, like OSCE, are therefore just as important today as they were during the cold war. Ms. Cederfeld also said that while it is important that Russia's war against Ukraine is high on the agenda, as it breaks all OSCE values, it is also important to focus not only on the crisis in front of our eyes, but also to look ahead to challenges such as climate change. She expressed hope that the SHDM and conversations to follow can strengthen democratic institutions and prepare us for future challenges.

Mr. Williamson provided an important reminder of representative and oversight functions of parliaments in times of crisis. Mr. Williamson emphasized the importance of allowing new working practices and innovations to occur, including through digitalization, providing good examples from the OSCE region and beyond, including cases of parliaments adopting regulations to create effective oversight mechanisms and developing various models of online or hybrid parliamentary procedure during the pandemic.

Mayor Bova informed of the unprecedented and unforeseen challenges faced by local institutions due to the war and conduct of Russian forces in Ukraine, including disruption in communication, challenges in the provision of food, healthcare, clean water, electricity and other services, as well as in efforts to ensure evacuation of civilians. Mr Bova also expressed gratitude to countries helping Ukraine by providing humanitarian and other assistance.

Mr Bova highlighted reports of civilian casualties, atrocities and other human rights violations in Ukraine, including arbitrary detention and kidnapping of local officials, civil society activists and journalists and underlined that the responsibility for atrocities and violations lies not only with the Russian authorities, but also with individual soldiers committing them.

Introducers also noted the importance of ensuring parliamentary transparency and accessibility for the public, reviewing interesting examples from the United Kingdom and Norway, as well as emphasized the need for inclusive political culture and meaningful parliamentary debates – an aspect also highlighted by some of the meeting participants taking the floor during the discussion.

Delegations of several pSs emphasized the many different challenges hindering proper functioning of democratic institutions, such as pandemics, geopolitical developments, as well as the Russian Federation's military attack on Ukraine, climate change, corruption, migration, cybersecurity, trafficking in human beings and low turnout of voters in elections. A number of speakers mentioned the need for a forward-looking approach to tackle those challenges in non-crisis times.

Several CSO representatives focused on the issue of a recovery strategy for Ukraine, in particular, concerning educational facilities, emphasizing the need to consult CSOs while dealing with community problems and highlighting their readiness to assist local authorities. Also highlighted was the lack of evacuation possibilities for people with disabilities and the need to focus on issues of vulnerable groups to avoid humanitarian crisis.

***Recommendations for the OSCE pSs:***

- To pass legislation that will ensure parliaments can be responsive and prepared for any crisis.
- To take on board lessons from other parliaments in regard to strengthening resilience and proactively retaining and adapting efficiencies that have been realised.
- To take a parliament-wide view of new technologies through a digital strategy, rather than seeing technology as a background function or silo.
- To develop flexible working policies for parliamentary staff so that they can work from anywhere, facilitating better work-life balance for staff and the opportunity for hard-to-find skills to be filled from different locations.
- To accept vulnerable refugees with disabilities, addressing their various needs and providing inclusive arrangements.
- To retain in-person functioning of parliaments.

***Recommendation for the international community and the OSCE institutions:***

- To invest in education infrastructure in Ukraine.

## SESSION II: IMPORTANCE OF FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION IN THE OSCE REGION

*Introducers:*

**Mr. Peter Pomerantsev**, Senior Fellow, Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF) Agora Institute, John Hopkins University

**Ms. Katerina Hadzi-Miceva Evans**, Executive Director, European Center for Not-for-Profit Law, Member of OSCE/ODIHR Panel of Experts on Freedom of Assembly and Association

**Mr. Pavel Sapelko**, Lawyer, Viasna

*Moderator:* Ms. Julia Gebhard, Acting Chief of the Legislative Support Unit, Democratization Department, OSCE/ODIHR

During the second session, the discussions primarily focused on the exercise of the right to freedom of association and worrying legislative trends and practices to restrict freedom of association and curb dissenting voices, further exacerbated in times of crisis.

The first introducer, Mr. Pomerantsev, reiterated the key values that the OSCE stands for, from an historical perspective, emphasizing strong connections between human rights and security. Going back to the Helsinki Accords, Mr. Pomerantsev emphasized the fundamental role of human rights defenders, non-governmental organizations, dissidents and civil society in general and stated that any arrests or attacks against such actors and freedom of the media jeopardizes the fundamental values of the OSCE.

Ms. Hadzi-Miceva Evans presented the status of freedom of association across the world, noting that globally, it is estimated that 89% of the world's population faces some forms of restrictions on civil society. She provided an overview of key challenges faced by associations, ranging from burdensome administrative and registration requirements, various restrictions on activities, on access to financing, especially funding from abroad, limitations on the use of social media and surveillance of communications, to harassment, attacks, arrests and even killings of human rights defenders and civil society representatives. She noted that such restrictions are often introduced under the justification of countering terrorism or for the purpose of responding to the Covid-19 pandemic.

She also highlighted lessons learned on how to respect and facilitate the exercise of the right to freedom of association in times of crisis: first by having states continue to register associations even in times of crisis, ensuring that foreigners may also continue their activities in another country if they had to flee their country of origin; second by allowing associations to operate online; third, by facilitating or at least not limiting cross-border funding; and fourth, by creating spaces or platforms for consultation with civil society to respond to the crisis.

The third introducer Mr. Sapelko provided an overview of the suppression on civil society in Belarus following the 2020 elections, with the many criminal cases brought against human rights defenders; the high number of liquidations of associations, journalists' organizations and environmental groups; the searches of premises and confiscations of property, without any effective remedy before a court; and repercussions against lawyers intervening to defend civil society representatives.



During the discussion that followed, civil society representatives stressed CSOs are facing repression, noting that certain restrictions are often exacerbated during crises or conflicts. These include criminal persecution and use of counter-terrorist or so-called “extremist” legislation declaring certain CSOs illegal. Some participants emphasized the crucial role of CSOs in a conflict setting as they provide support with regard to immediate humanitarian needs, housing and other basic services to those most in need.

Further, a number of participants raised concerns about the crackdown on the right to freedom of association in many pSs through the use of so called “foreign agents” legislation. Such legislation may restrict the activities of target NGOs, media or commercial entities, as well as individual civil society representatives and human rights defenders. Highly restrictive nature of such legislation was also mentioned as concern, as relatively minor violations may lead to severe sanctions, such as dissolution of associations and imprisonment of their members.

Several participants mentioned the worrying trend of government-organized organisations which increasingly influence the civic space, and the persecution of NGOs and human rights defenders raising critical voices against the government, even if they are abroad. Some civil society representatives also mentioned the specific challenge with administrative hurdles, including the opening of bank accounts, for civil society activists who left their country because of ongoing conflict. The challenges faced by associations representing minorities and marginalized communities were also raised.

#### ***Recommendations for the OSCE pSs:***

- To elaborate clear standards preventing the use of counter-terrorism/ “extremism” legislation or transparency requirements to repress CSOs.
- To take action whenever there are attacks against individual human rights defenders and their organizations.
- To allow CSOs which fled their own countries to be recognized as CSOs in countries other than their countries of origin and facilitate their setting-up, operation and activities.

#### ***Recommendations for the international community and the OSCE:***

- To conduct targeted monitoring of the situation of CSOs, human rights defenders, political prisoners and of violations of the rights to freedom of association and freedom of expression, fair trial standards, and the rights of lawyers and others who support them.
- To avoid interaction and co-operation with GONGOs.
- To continue documenting violations of international humanitarian and human rights law while supporting those persons who need to seek refuge outside of conflict-affected areas, in close consultation with affected communities.
- To provide support and protection to CSOs and human rights defenders who relocated to other countries and assist them, as appropriate, in continuing their operation and activities.

## **SESSION III: TIMES OF CRISIS: WHY WE NEED MORE MEDIA FREEDOM, NOT LESS**

*Introducers:*

**Ms. Natalia Gumenyuk**, Journalist, Founder of Public Interest Journalism Lab

**Ms. Nadezhda Prusenkova**, Deputy Editor, Novaya Gazeta

**Mr. Stephen J. A. Ward**, Media Ethics Expert, Lecturer, University of British Columbia

*Moderator:* Mr. Ton van den Brandt, Senior Adviser, Office of the OSCE Office for the Freedom of Media, OSCE/RFOM

The first introducer, Ms. Gumenyuk shared her own experience of reporting under war conditions. She described the current harsh situation faced by journalists in Ukraine and the difficulties in continuing their journalistic activities despite not having access to certain territories and despite personal experiences of relocation, loss or looting of their houses, and detention. Around 9,000 foreign and national journalists have come to Ukraine to report since the beginning of the war, many of whom being deprived of access to occupied and unsafe areas, or are suffering from a lack of technical or protective equipment. Together with the support of several international organizations, she and other journalists have launched a project to document on human rights violations and war crimes. Ms. Gumenyuk underlined the importance of journalism in times of war: citizens need to be informed about ongoing places of fighting and safe places to go to. This serves the community and helps to save lives. Ms. Gumenyuk stated that where the media are not present, the worst atrocities happen – with no one left to witness and to document the facts on the ground.

Recalling recent media closures and creation of new heavy legal constraints over the dissemination of false information or discrediting the armed forces in the Russian Federation, the second introducer, Ms. Prusenkova underlined that the process of undermining independent media in the country is not necessarily a short-term one, but rather longer-term. She mentioned the example of the Russian media law that allows the state authorities to label and discredit a media outlet as being a ‘foreign agent’. She also stressed the fact that with war-related regulation over “fake news” and “discrediting the armed forces” there is hardly any independent information left, leaving the public only with official information and governmental press releases. Many of her colleagues have had to relocate abroad in order to pursue remotely their journalistic duties, while many others have completely stopped their journalistic activities. At the same time, Ms. Prusenkova mentioned that in order to reach independent, non-state-controlled contents the audience needs a Virtual Private Network (VPN).

The third introducer, Mr. Stephen J. A. Ward offered a broader, theoretical approach to the discussion, emphasizing that media today have a role to play in countering neo-fascism, tribal politics, and disinformation. For the media to offer so-called macro-resistance alternatives to toxic media, Mr. Ward claimed that internal, professional debates on journalistic ethics could not solve media freedom issues. He therefore presented three different dimensions to improve the overall situation: evaluation, education, reform. Evaluation means detoxing the public sphere and is about bringing together all segments of society to improve story tracking and fact checking. Education is about developing media literacy at school, at an early age, in order for

the youth to make critical use of media. That is something that cannot wait until people reach university. Reform is about changing the structure of media's accountability; with ethics as one of the main criteria of professional journalism. Mr. Ward highlighted the need for a public participatory approach, involving both citizens and journalists, who should be meeting and discussing the aforementioned issues on a regular basis.

During the discussion, several participants acknowledged and described the threats that journalists face when reporting in time of crisis, ranging from the lack of access to the area they want to report on to physical dangers, such as abduction, torture and killing. In areas of conflict, the blocking of access to reliable sources of information, as well as the prosecution of citizen journalists are particularly detrimental for getting unbiased, objective, fact-based understanding of the ongoing crisis. Whereas reporting in times of crisis needs extra-protection of journalists by state authorities, some participants complained about increasing state pressures.

Various participants pointed to the impact of crisis on digital media, stating that disinformation amplifies in times of crisis. Several participants mentioned the issues of de-platforming of critical reports and content moderation on the grounds of 'disinformation' in connection to the issue of transparency and accountability. The discussions also focused on the notion of online censorship, including the targeting of telecom infrastructures, cyberattacks, the blocking of media or Internet shutdowns by state authorities. In this perspective, several participants said that both technical tools and international mechanisms engaging global platforms and tech companies were required to bypass measures restricting the free flow of information.

Some participants underlined the increased need of journalists for financial, administrative and technical support in times of crisis. They mentioned the need for protective equipment as a necessary pre-condition for relative safety when reporting from war-torn areas. Some also referred to the situation of journalists who had to flee their country to live in exile. Having more difficulties to report remotely on their country or having to cope with less financial resources, facilitating visa issuance and providing accommodation might help to solve some of the challenges that exiled journalists face.

#### ***Recommendations for the OSCE pSs:***

- To drop all criminal charges against journalists, including citizen journalists, who are being prosecuted just for doing their journalistic work.
- To fully implement their OSCE commitments pertaining to safety of journalists, access to, and free flow of, information.
- To facilitate the issuance of visa for media workers to relocate when they face obstructions to freedom of speech and freedom of the media.
- To support journalists in exile with administrative, financial and technical aid such as offering relocation for media workers or providing offices in order for them to continue their journalistic activities.
- To recognize that engaging in algorithmic censorship, removing online publications and de-platforming constitute a form of censorship and an obstruction to the access to, and free flow of, information.

#### ***Recommendations for the OSCE institutions and field operations:***

- To provide more result-oriented plans with concrete tasks to reform and ensure in an efficient manner freedom of the media in the OSCE pSs.

- To create and implement effective mechanisms to guarantee the safety of journalists and to provide them with sufficient technical and economic resources to report on the frontlines.
- To document and report on all the ongoing violations of media freedom in the pSs.

***Recommendations for international organizations, civil society, and other actors:***

- To create effective international mechanisms to respond to media violations in authoritarian regimes.
- To provide financial support to war-affected media.
- International organizations must ensure a better co-ordination in order to provide fair distribution of support (housing, equipment, etc.) to media in every region of a crisis-affected country.
- International organizations should help journalists to evacuate from risky and hazardous places.
- Global platforms and online social media must be engaged in the fight against disinformation.

## **CLOSING SESSION**

*Closing remarks:*

**Ms. Kateryna Ryabiko**, First Deputy Director, OSCE/ODIHR

**Mr. Marcin Czapliński**, Deputy Permanent Representative of Poland to the OSCE

In her concluding remarks, ODIHR's First Deputy Director reflected on the 2<sup>nd</sup> SHDM as an opportunity to review relevant OSCE commitments, during which participants contributed to the discussion from their various perspectives. She noted, that crises periods cannot be considered in isolation, as institutions resilient in the pre-crisis are more conducive to effective functioning during the crises. To this end, the adherence to the international standards and OSCE commitments were highlighted. Ms. Ryabiko underscored the need for an inclusive approach to decision-making, including the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, which—as the name implies—must be implemented during times of peace as a way to work toward sustainable security.

The First Deputy Director also stressed that as was the case for this year's 1<sup>st</sup> SHDM, discussions have taken place while the Russian Federation's military attack in Ukraine continued. In this regard, she noted that the OSCE region is facing one of the most serious crises in the history of the organization as impacts continue to be felt in Ukraine itself, in neighbouring countries and beyond. She concluded that it is therefore of utmost importance to remain resilient and to continue supporting democratic institutions in the region, working hand in hand with international partners and national authorities - the only available antidote to prevent the backsliding in times of crises, better prepare democratic institutions for future challenges and effective operation during non-crisis periods.

In his closing remarks, the Deputy Permanent Representative Czapliński reminded participants that the unprovoked Russian military aggression against Ukraine represents the most pressing challenge to security in the OSCE area in the history of the OSCE and one that continues to

threaten the stability in the region, claims new victims every day and has a tragic impact on human rights and fundamental freedoms. He reiterated, however, that current developments show how useful and needed OSCE's comprehensive concept of security is. Mr. Czapliński recalled that respect of human rights is not an internal issue of any state, on the contrary, violation of this right in one country can have a dire effect on the security of the whole of OSCE region. Therefore, to ensure that the discussions in the SHDM forum are both meaningful and relevant, the Polish Chairmanship decided to address the issue of democratic institutions in times of crisis at the 2<sup>nd</sup> SHDM.

Mr. Czapliński noted that a great part of the discussion during the 2<sup>nd</sup> SHDM focused on Ukraine, for obvious reasons and stressed that violations of Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law, which were discussed at the 1<sup>st</sup> SHDM, contradict all commitments undertaken by pSs. Referring to some of such violations - abductions of mayors and public figures, crackdown of media freedom, suppression of civic activity, CSOs and any critical voices, considering journalists as war targets - he concluded that we cannot turn a blind eye to this dire situation and announced that the human centered perspective will continue to guide the Polish CiO, also in future meetings organized by the CiO.

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## ANNEX I: AGENDA



### Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting on the Functioning of Democratic Institutions in Times of Crisis

16-17 May 2022  
(Vienna)

#### Day 1

13.00 – 14.00

#### OPENING SESSION

*Opening remarks:*

**Mr. Artur Dmochowski**, Special Envoy of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office

**Mr. Matteo Meccaci**, Director, OSCE/ODIHR

**Ms. Teresa Ribeiro**, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

*Keynote addresses:*

**Ms. Veronika Bílková**, Member, European Commission for Democracy through Law, Venice Commission of the Council of Europe

*Technical information:* Ms. Kateryna Ryabiko, First Deputy Director, OSCE/ODIHR

14.00 – 16.00

#### SESSION I: Role of national and local institutions as guardians of democracy in times of crisis

*Introducers:*

**Ms. Margareta Cederfelt**, President, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

**Mr. Andy Williamson**, Senior Researcher, Centre for Innovation in Parliament, Inter-Parliamentary Union

**Mr. Yuriy Bova**, Mayor of Trostyanets

*Moderator:* Mr. Konstantine Vardzelashvili Head, Democratization Department, OSCE/ODIHR

[16.30 – 17.30 – side event]

## **Day 2**

[9.00 – 10.00 – side events]

10.30 – 12.30      **SESSION II: Importance of freedom of association in the OSCE region**

*Introducers:*

**Mr. Peter Pomerantsev**, Senior Fellow, SNF Agora Institute, Johns Hopkins University

**Ms. Katerina Hadzi-Miceva Evans**, Executive Director, European Center for Not-for-Profit Law, Member of OSCE/ODIHR Panel of Experts on Freedom of Assembly and Association

**Mr. Pavel Sapelko**, Lawyer, Viasna

*Moderator:* Ms. Julia Gebhard, Acting Chief of the Legislative Support Unit, Democratization Department, OSCE/ODIHR

12:30 – 14:30      Luncheon offered by the Polish OSCE Chairmanship

[13.15 – 14.15 – side events]

14.30 – 16.30      **SESSION III: Times of crisis: why we need more media freedom, not less**

*Introducers:*

**Ms. Nataliya Gumenyuk**, Journalist, Founder of Public Interest Journalism Lab

**Ms. Nadezhda Prusenkova**, Deputy Editor, Novaya Gazeta

**Mr. Stephen J. A. Ward**, Media Ethics Expert, Lecturer, University of British Columbia

*Moderator:* Mr. Ton van den Brandt, Senior Adviser, Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media RFOM

16.30 – 17.30      **CLOSING SESSION**

*Rapports from the working sessions*

*Comments from the floor*

*Closing remarks:*

**Ms. Kateryna Ryabiko**, First Deputy Director, OSCE/ODIHR

**Mr. Marcin Czapliński**, Deputy Permanent Representative of Poland to the OSCE

17.30                      Closing of the meeting

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## **ANNEX II: LIST OF SIDE EVENTS: Topics and Conveners**

### **Covering War under Threat: Perspectives on Reporting about Ukraine**

Permanent Representation of France to the OSCE, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Lithuania to the International Organizations in Vienna, Permanent Delegation of Sweden to the OSCE

### **The Functioning of Courts in Times of Crisis**

OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

### **NGO Cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe during International Crises**

Pantarey Foundation

### **Crackdown of Russian Civil Society during the Armed Conflict**

Convenor: Human Rights Center "Memorial"

### **Five Human Rights Issues during Russia's Aggression against Ukraine: The Position of the "Tribunal for Putin" Initiative**

Center for Civil Liberties

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## **ANNEX III: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION: Speakers, Introducers and Moderators**

### *Opening remarks:*

**Mr. Artur Dmochowski** is Special Envoy of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office. He studied at the Jagiellonian University, University of Maryland and the Monterey Institute of International Studies in California. In the 1980s he was active in the Polish underground Solidarity movement, arrested and detained several times. He started working at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1993. In the 1990s' served as a field officer in the CSCE Mission in Georgia and the OSCE Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina. From 2000 to 2006 he was minister-counsellor at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Rome, in 2015-16 the spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and later at the Diplomatic Academy. Since 2018 he has served as the Polish ambassador to Montenegro. Beside diplomacy, he worked in the media as an editor and journalist, created a television channel TVP Historia and was the head of the Polish Press Agency. Author of several books on history and international relations.

**Mr. Matteo Mecacci** is Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), since December 2020. Prior to that he spent 7 years as President of the International Campaign for Tibet. He headed the OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission to Georgia in 2013 and was a Member of the Italian Parliament, Foreign Affairs Committee and of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly from 2008– 2013. From 2000 to 2008 he was Representative to the United Nations in New York of “No Peace Without Justice” and the “Transnational Radical Party”. He holds a JD in International Law at the University of Florence.

**Ms. Teresa Ribeiro** is the fifth OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media. She has vast political, diplomatic, human rights and media experience. Prior to this position, she was Secretary of State of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Portugal, while serving as President of the National Commission for Human Rights. She was also Secretary of State for European Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Portugal and Deputy Secretary General at the Union for the Mediterranean.

Throughout her career, Ms. Ribeiro held different positions in media, both in Portugal and in multilateral organizations, including as President of the Institute of the Media of Portugal, President of the Steering Committee on Mass Media of the Council of Europe, and Co-founder and first elected President of the Executive Board of Obercom – Media Observatory.

### *Keynote speaker:*

**Ms. Veronika Bílková** is a Member of the Council of Europe's European Commission for Democracy through Law, Venice Commission. Ms. Bílková also serves as Head of the Centre for International Law at the Institute of International Relations, Prague, and as an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Law of the Charles University in Prague. She is a member of the Management Board of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency.

She is also Vice-President of the European Society of International Law and the chair of the Czech Committee for Human Rights of Older Persons. She was member of the expert mission on Ukraine established within the OSCE Moscow Mechanism in spring 2022.

Ms. Bílková's fields of research include the use of force, international humanitarian law, international human rights law and the fight against terrorism. She has published extensively in Czech, English and French.

*Session I:*

**Ms. Margareta Cederfelt** is President of the OSCE PA. Before being elected as President in 2021, Ms Cederfelt served at the PA as its Vice-President and as Rapporteur of the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security. From February 2020 to July 2021 she also served as Acting Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Migration.

With extensive experience in election observation, she has actively worked to defend democratic values, the rule of law, peace and security in the OSCE region. She has been a member of the Swedish Parliament since 1999 and has been a member of Sweden's Delegation to the OSCE PA since 2010. In the Swedish Parliament, she serves on the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on European Affairs.

**Mr. Andy Williamson** is Senior Researcher at the Inter-Parliamentary Union's Centre for Innovation in Parliament, where he authored three latest World e-Parliament Reports, and an international expert in civic participation, digital innovation and parliaments. Mr Williamson is also a consulting expert to the Council of Europe and the United Nations Development Programme. Previously, he was Deputy Chair of the New Zealand Government's Digital Strategy Advisory Group, Director of Digital Democracy at the Hansard Society, a Visiting Fellow at the University of Manchester and a member of the Open Government Partnership's Civil Society Steering Committee in the United Kingdom. He holds a PhD in Information Science, focusing on civic participation and digital democracy, from Monash University, Australia.

**Mr. Yuriy Bova** is Mayor of Trostyanets, Ukraine, elected to this office six times in a row between 2005 and 2020. Before his public service, he founded and headed the private enterprise "Mercury".

*Session II:*

**Mr. Peter Pomerantsev** is Senior Fellow, SNF Agora Institute, John Hopkins University, and a former Fellow at the Institute of Global Affairs at the London School of Economics where he ran the Arena Initiative, dedicated to investigating the roots of disinformation and what to do about them. He has testified on the challenges of information war to the US House Foreign Affairs Committee, US Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the UK Parliament Defense Select Committee. He is a Contributing Editor and columnist at the American Interest. Mr. Pomerantsev's first book, *Nothing is True and Everything is Possible*, won the 2016 Royal Society of Literature Ondaatje Prize, was nominated for the Samuel Johnson, Guardian First Book, Pushkin House and Gordon Burns Prizes. It is translated into over a dozen languages.

**Ms. Hadzi-Miceva Evans** is Executive Director at the European Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ECNL), and Member of OSCE/ODIHR Panel of Experts on Freedom of Assembly and Association a human rights legal expert, who for over 20 years works with organisations, movements, authorities and philanthropists to protect civic freedoms. As the Executive Director of the ECNL since 2012, she leads the only regional organisation in Europe focused entirely on law and policy that affect civil society. She has helped empower partners to defend

their spaces and freedoms through designing innovative tools to monitor civil society laws, and researching trends and good practices to guide reforms. Ms. Evans engages with the European Union, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and the United Nations Human Rights Council and works to strengthen international standards to safeguard freedoms. She is a member of the Council of Europe Expert Council on NGO Law.

**Mr. Pavel Sapelko** is a lawyer at the Human Rights Center "Viasna" in Belarus since 2011 and a member of its temporary governing body since 2021. He works as a lawyer since 1995, and has defended in criminal cases prominent politicians and activists from Belarus. He is the author of a number of reports and studies on the state of affairs in places of detention in Belarus, on elections, on the observance of fair justice standards and the right not to be subjected to torture and other prohibited types of treatment, as well as on the possibilities of exercising the right to freedom of opinion and association. In 2012, he was awarded the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE) Human Rights Award. Mr. Sapelko graduated from the Belarusian State University with a degree in Law in 1993.

### *Session III:*

**Ms. Nataliya Gumenyuk** is a Ukrainian journalist, author, documentary filmmaker specializing in foreign affairs and conflict reporting. She is the founder and CEO of the Public Interest Journalism Lab. Ms. Gumenyuk is the author of several documentaries and books, including *The Lost Island: Tales From The Occupied Crimea*, and *the Maidan Tahrir*. Since the start of the Russian military attack on Ukraine, she writes regularly for *The Guardian*, *The Washington Post*, *The Rolling Stone*, *Die Zeit* and also provides commentaries for CNN, MSNBC, Sky News, *The New York Times*, *Democracy Now*, *Time Radio*, *BBC Radio*, *ABC Australia*, *ITV*, and other international outlets. Ms. Gumenyuk was the co-founder and for 5 years head of independent *Hromadske TV*, and is currently serving as its Board member. Ms. Gumenyuk is a Member of the Council for Freedom for Speech under the President of Ukraine.

**Ms. Nadezhda Prusenkova** is a Deputy Editor at *Novaya Gazeta*, where she has previously, after taking in internship in 1999, worked as a court correspondent, member of the editorial board, the executive editor of the print version and the head of the press department. She graduated from *Lomonosov Moscow State University*, Faculty of Journalism.

**Mr. Stephen J. A. Ward** is an internationally recognized author, media ethicist and historian of ideas whose research is on the ethics of global, digital media, the rise of extreme media, and its impact on democracy. He is professor emeritus and Distinguished Lecturer on Ethics at the University of British Columbia (UBC), Canada. He has written and edited 10 books on media ethics, including the award-winning *Radical Media Ethics* and *The Invention of Journalism Ethics*. He is editor-in-chief of *The Handbook of Global Media Ethics* featuring 70 chapters by scholars and journalists around the world. A former war reporter, he is a founding director of the Center for Journalism Ethics at the University of Wisconsin, co-founder of the UBC School of Journalism in Vancouver, and former director of the *Turnbull Media Center* at the University of Oregon in Portland. He has won the President's Award for lifetime contribution to journalism from the Canadian Association of Journalists.

*Closing Session:*

**Ms. Kateryna Ryabiko** is First Deputy Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). Previously, she served with the US Agency for International Development, Freedom House, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs and other public and private entities, leading projects and teams, as well as providing technical assistance and policy advice. On top of her strong project management skills in international settings, she possesses expertise in the fields of democracy, human rights and elections. Kateryna's work has been recognized by multiple awards, including for outstanding achievements in promoting democratic development and her leadership in guiding democracy assistance efforts. She holds an MPA from the State University of New York at Binghamton, is a Stanford University Draper Hills Fellow for Democracy, Development and the Rule of Law, and graduated from the Stanford's University Leadership Academy for Development.

**Mr. Marcin Czapliński** is Deputy Permanent Representative, 2022 Polish OSCE Chairmanship. Mr. Czapliński has been a member of the Polish diplomatic service since 1993. His previous posts at the Polish Ministry for Foreign Affairs include: Deputy Director of the Department of European Policy, Head of Unit for South East Europe (SEE) and EU Enlargement, National Coordinator for Central European Initiative and Visegrad Cooperation, political officer at the Polish Embassy in Zagreb, Croatia and desk officer for the countries of the former Yugoslavia. He also served as Head of the SEE Unit at the OSCE Secretariat in Vienna and as a Senior Political Adviser and Head of Area Team at the Office of OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities in the Hague. Mr. Czapliński holds a master degree in international relations and law, as well as a Ph.D. from the Faculty of Law at Tilburg University. He has lectured on South-Eastern Europe, the OSCE, conflict prevention, security policy and minority rights at a number of professional institutions across Europe.

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