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

Statement of the Delegation of Albania,
In response to the PC report of Ms. Dunja Mijatovic, the OSCE Representative
on Freedom of the Media

As delivered by the Permanent Representative, Ambassador Spiro Koçi,
At the 974th meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council
28 November 2013

Thank you Mr. Chairperson,

Albania warmly welcomes Representative Mijatovic to the Permanent Council and thanks her for the comprehensive report and today's address, which were both stimulating. We wish to echo other delegations in extending our sincere congratulations to the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media on the 15th anniversary of its establishment.

Over the past decade and a half this unique institution has rigorously and independently monitored the media environment in the OSCE area, providing early warning on violations of freedom of expression on and offline. Thanks to its advocacy and expert support, the OSCE participating States have made strides in improving the relevant OSCE commitments and ensuring a free and pluralistic media environment. Indeed, we all have come a long way since the RFoM was first set up in the Copenhagen Ministerial Council.

Despite this progress, we share the concerns expressed by Representative Mijatovic over the deteriorating media environment across the OSCE area. Violence against journalist, blocking of, or bans on websites, blogs and publications, limitations restricting freedom of expression and access to information, to bring just a few examples, are worrisome trends occurring in the participating States of our Organization.

We also share the concerns and join the hope just expressed by the EU to adopt in Kyiv a decision that would further our commitments on the issue of protection of journalists.

To counter these challenges and ensure free, diverse and high-quality media, the Office of the RFoM should increase its vigilance and assistance to the participating States. It is therefore indispensable to land our unequivocal support to the mandate of the RFoM and enable the Office to perform its tasks by allocating adequate financial resources.

Mr. Chairperson,

From 18 to 21 September Albania had the pleasure to host the third South East Europe Media Conference organized by the Office of Representative Mijatovic with the support of the OSCE Presence in Albania. This event represented a good opportunity for media professionals to discuss media developments in the region and a number of media-related issues of common interest which were thoroughly highlighted in the PC report.

During her stay in Tirana Representative Mijatovic also met with representatives of the newly elected government, including the Prime Minister, and other political interlocutors to discuss the media environment in my country.

As the MFA of Albania stated in his opening remarks at this Conference, nowadays Albania has a vibrant media which remains at the forefront of modern developments in our country, with its dynamics and contribution to many aspects of life. However, our national media landscape is not immune from certain limitations concerning the public service broadcasting, the broadcast regulator and digitalization process. As Representative Mijatovic herself could notice, the Government of Albania is aware of these limitations and is fully committed to address them seriously and in an all-inclusive process. To this end, I wish to reiterate our readiness to closely cooperate with the OSCE RFoM and make best use of its extensive expertise in the abovementioned fields. Our relevant institutions have already got in touch with the Office of the Representative Mijatovic and look forward to our forthcoming cooperation.

In conclusion, I would like to thank once again representative Mijatovic and her team for their dedicated and professional work, and wish her Office every success in its future endeavors.

Thank you.