



EUROPEAN UNION

**OSCE Warsaw Human Dimension Conference
6-17 October 2025**

**EU statement – Plenary session 3
Fundamental Freedoms I**

FINAL (574 words)

1. Democracy, human rights and the rule of law are at the core of the comprehensive concept of security.
2. Freedom of expression, media freedom and the safety of journalists are essential for fulfilling our OSCE commitments and international obligations in this field. They are central priorities for the EU internally and externally.
3. Civil society, journalists and other media actors are indispensable in holding participating States accountable. We are concerned by growing threats to journalists and other media actors aimed at silencing their work, both online and offline. Women journalists face heightened, gender-specific risks, resulting in extreme cases in self-censorship and withdrawal from the public sphere, threatening media diversity and pluralism.
4. The link between security and media freedom is starkly illustrated in situations of armed conflict, particularly in the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, where journalists and media actors continue to be at risk daily. Several credible and independent reports indicate that journalists have been killed, arbitrarily detained and subjected to torture and enforced disappearances. Perpetrators must and will be held accountable according to international law. We call on Russia to respect international law and to comply with its international commitments, including protecting journalists and media actors reporting from armed conflict, in accordance with IHL.

5. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, enabled by the Lukashenka regime, starkly reminds us that internal repression and external aggression go hand in hand. In Russia, authorities continue to increase the systematic repression by cracking down on independent media, journalists and media actors, and other critical voices.
6. In Belarus, we strongly condemn the persecution and intimidation campaigns against all segments of society, including independent journalists and media actors, among many others.
7. We share the concerns expressed by the RFoM about the situation in Georgia, where we have seen a deterioration of the situation for media and journalists, including arbitrary arrests and increasing repression. Notwithstanding the EU's ongoing commitment to Georgia's security, we are concerned regarding the worsening political and human rights situation in the country.
8. We also share the RFoM's concerns about the cases of Abzas Media, Toplum TV, Meydan TV and imprisoned journalists which show that pressure on journalists in Azerbaijan is increasing. We call on the country to uphold its international obligations, including with respect to human rights and to take immediate steps to ensure a safe and enabling environment for all journalists and media workers.
9. In Türkiye, particularly worrisome is the continued systemic lack of independence and the many restrictions on freedom of expression, media freedom and dissemination of information.
10. Media freedom and pluralism are a vital part of democracy and of the fundamental rights of citizens. Independent and pluralistic media are a key pillar in upholding the checks and balances that sustain democratic governance.

11. New measures are aiming to further strengthen media freedom in the EU. Such measures include the European Media Freedom Act which entered into force last year, and new rules to counter abusive lawsuits against public participation. This legal framework reflects the EU's commitment to fostering a free, diverse, and resilient media space vital for informed public debate and democratic accountability.

12. We encourage all participating States to take decisive action to respect, protect and fulfil the rights to freedom of expression, media freedom and the safety of journalists, to implement all OSCE commitments in this field, and to make use of the tools and expertise offered by the RFoM.

[Alignments]