

PODGORICA, 10 May 2024 – Teresa Ribeiro, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFoM), concluded her official visit to Montenegro. During her visit, Ribeiro engaged in constructive discussions with high-level officials, including President Jakov Milatović, Speaker of Parliament Andrija Mandić, Minister of Foreign Affairs Filip Ivanović, Minister of Culture and Media Tamara Vujović, Minister of Interior Danilo Šaranović and Supreme State Prosecutor Milorad Marković. The Representative also had productive exchanges with Director of the Agency for Electronic Media Sunčica Bakić, Ombudsperson of Montenegro Siniša Bjeković, and investigative journalist Olivera Lakić, as well as several other journalists and civil society representatives.



OSCE Representative for Freedom of the Media Teresa Ribeiro (left) with the President of Montenegro, Jakov Milatović (right) (OSCE)

PRESS RELEASE

OSCE Media Freedom Representative concludes regional Safety of Journalists event, discusses ongoing media freedom reforms during Montenegro visit

PODGORICA, 10 May 2024 – Teresa Ribeiro, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFoM), concluded her official visit to Montenegro. During her visit, Ribeiro engaged in constructive discussions with high-level officials, including President Jakov Milatović, Speaker of Parliament Andrija Mandić, Minister of Foreign Affairs Filip Ivanović, Minister of Culture and Media Tamara Vujović, Minister of Interior Danilo Šaranović and Supreme State Prosecutor Milorad Marković. The Representative also had productive exchanges with Director of the Agency for Electronic Media Sunčica Bakić, Ombudsperson of Montenegro Siniša Bjeković, and investigative journalist Olivera Lakić, as well as several other journalists and civil society representatives.

The discussions covered key topics, including ongoing media legislation and policy reforms. These include, *inter alia*, enhancing the financial sustainability of media outlets, ensuring editorial independence and functioning of the public service broadcaster and the media regulatory authority, protecting pluralism, promoting transparency of media ownership, and facilitating access to public information. The Representative commended the authorities for their attention to advancing media freedom in the country, and for ensuring an inclusive reform process. Moving forward, Ribeiro stressed the need to finalize the pending revision and adoption of several media laws in a timely manner, as well as to ensure their effective enforcement and implementation in line with international standards and OSCE media freedom commitments.

Ribeiro welcomed the continuous efforts of the media regulator to ensure a pluralistic and public interest media sector. Simultaneously, she recognized the necessity to further reinforce the regulator's competencies to fully fulfil its vital function in society.

The Representative also underlined to her interlocutors the importance of having a strong, independent and pluralistic public service broadcaster in the country, with well-functioning governing bodies that serve the public interest. "Such public service media form the backbone of a healthy media landscape and, hence, media freedom in the country," Representative Ribeiro said.

Safety of journalists was also a key topic on the agenda. While Ribeiro appreciates the authorities' efforts to strengthen legal protections for journalists and expedite institutional responses to recent cases of violence targeting journalists, she emphasized the necessity for more concerted action to thoroughly investigate and resolve longstanding cases without delay. These include the 2004 murder of Duško Jovanović, Editor-in-Chief of the daily newspaper Dan, and the 2018 gunattack on prominent investigative journalist Olivera Lakić.

"I am also very concerned about the current situation of Lakić, who is still under threat, but does not receive the same protection as before. The authorities should provide her with all the measures that are needed to guarantee her safety," Ribeiro said.

During her stay in Podgorica, the Representative also hosted the regional South-Eastern Europe Safety of Journalists event, titled "Beyond the Headlines: Protecting Journalists to Advance Media Freedom", which brought together journalists, media representatives, legal experts, and researchers from the South-Eastern Europe region. Following the official opening by the Representative, joined by Minister of Culture and Media of Montenegro Ms. Tamara Vujović, and by the Head of the OSCE Mission to Montenegro, Ambassador Dominique Waag, participants engaged in a series of interactive discussions and exchanges across different formats. These included a workshop on digital safety and a world café session showcasing good practices and initiatives for protecting journalists' safety online and offline. In addition to equipping journalists with valuable knowledge and tools in navigating today's challenging media landscape, the event provided an invaluable platform for collective unity and an opportunity to forge connections and cultivate networks.

"Recognizing the need for safety of journalists transcends mere professional obligation. We affirm its status as a cornerstone of democracy and human rights, including the unfettered expression of ideas – vital components for our common security," emphasized Ribeiro.

The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media observes media developments in all 57 OSCE participating States. She provides early warning on violations of freedom of expression and media freedom and promotes full compliance with OSCE media freedom commitments. Learn more at www.osce.org/fom, Twitter: [@OSCE_RFoM](https://twitter.com/OSCE_RFoM) and on www.facebook.com/osce.rfom.

For PDF attachments or links to sources of further information, please visit:

Contacts:

Adis Mustedanagic

Wallnerstrasse 6

1010 Vienna

Austria

Office: +43 1 51436 6821

Mobile: +43 699 10 44 6010

adis.mustedanagic@osce.org

Dane Koruga

Wallnerstrasse 6

1010 Vienna

Austria

Office: +43 1 514 36 6806

dane.koruga@osce.org

[forward to a friend](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

© 1995 - 2024 OSCE.