

On the necessity to stop the attack on freedom of expression in Ukraine

The Council of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) Party convening in Sofia, Bulgaria, on 28 April 2018:

Taking into account:

- the increased pressure on the opposition and independent media before the local elections in Ukraine on 29 April 2018, and probable early parliamentary elections in autumn of 2018;
- the dismissal of 3,100 journalists from the National TV and radio company;
- the suppression of opposition television channels, for example, the channel "NewsOne" in April 2018, and threats to TV channel "ZIK" in January-March 2018;
- the increase in applications from journalists for political asylum in foreign countries in February;
- the famous journalist Savik Shuster has been banned from working in Ukraine and his "Shuster live" show and "3S" TV studio were prohibited;
- the un-investigated murder of prominent journalist Pavlo Sheremet;
- the continued pressure exerted on the media by the authorities through the initiation of criminal prosecutions, constant searches of the offices of the media, and of the homes of editors and journalists, including recent hostilities toward "Vesti", "Schemes" joint programme of Radio Liberty Ukraine;
- the impact of fiscal authorities on the media, and personal threats by government officials.

Condemns:

- the infringements on the right of freedom of speech and the rights of journalists;
- the persistent violation of international norms and principles and European standards in respect of freedom of speech.

Calls on:

- the European Commission to assess and continue monitoring the situation of the freedom of the press and the freedom of expression in Ukraine as a key prerequisite for a properly-functioning democracy to assure free and fair elections in 2019 and beyond.

Resolution:

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