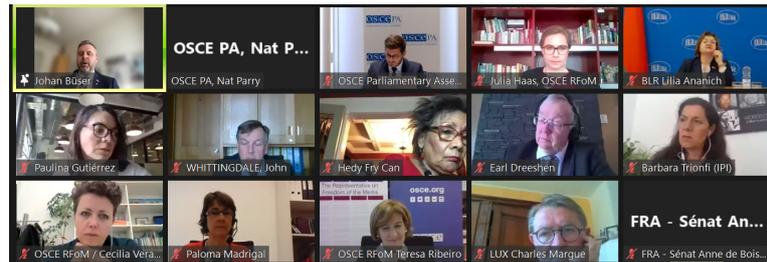


Joint OSCE PA-RFoM webinar promotes online safety for female journalists

More than 30 Members of Parliament took part in a web dialogue on “Safety of Female Journalists Online: The Role of Parliamentary Action” today, organized jointly by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media.

Together with experts, parliamentarians discussed existing challenges to the digital safety of women journalists and elaborated on the proposed actions presented in the Safety of Female Journalists Online (SOFJO) Resource Guide, underlining parliamentarians’ key role in addressing this issue. The event provided a platform to discuss how national parliaments can better ensure adequate, timely and effective prevention, protection and prosecution mechanisms and reinforce mobilizing action in that regard. OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media Teresa Ribeiro highlighted that online harassment of journalists often aims to deny women a public voice, leading to self-censorship or even women retreating from the public sphere. Parliamentarians, she stressed, have a crucial role in ensuring strong prevention and protection mechanisms for journalists.

OSCE PA Rapporteur of the OSCE PA Third Committee Johan Büser (Sweden) noted that parliamentarians should keep the topic high on their agendas as a threat to the journalists is threat to our democracies and common values. Noting that female journalists are at risk in many OSCE countries, Büser said that it is crucial for parliamentarians to focus on identifying best practices



to tackle this important issue.

Emphasizing the importance of taking practical steps towards protection of women journalists online, Hedy Fry, OSCE PA Special Representative on Gender Issues, pointed out that attacks on women journalists are attacks on democracy. Parliamentarians, she said, must do more to protect women journalists and freedom of the media.

Other speakers at the event included Barbara Trionfi, Executive Director, International Press Institute; Paulina Gutierrez, Legal Officer at ARTICLE 19; and the Rt. Hon. John Whittingdale, Head of the UK delegation to the OSCE PA, former Minister of State for Media and Data.

During the debate, experts and participants focused on main legal and policy concepts, initiatives and good practices pertaining to the safety of female journalists online, including those related to the safety of journalists in times of crises and conflicts.

OSCE PA mourns the loss of former Assembly President Ilkka Kanerva



Ilkka Kanerva at the OSCE PA Autumn Meeting, 5 October 2014, Geneva (Photo: Fabio Chironi)

The OSCE PA was saddened to learn that former Assembly President Ilkka Kanerva, a Finnish Member of Parliament, passed away on 14 April at the age of 74. Upon hearing the news, OSCE PA President Margareta Cederfelt and Secretary General Roberto Montella issued statements of condolences to Mr. Kanerva’s family and expressions of gratitude for his long-standing service to the Parliamentary Assembly.

“The OSCE family mourns the loss of our longtime colleague and friend, Ilkka Kanerva,” said Cederfelt. “He will always be remembered as strong supporter of interparliamentary dialogue, and of the role politicians can play at home and in international fora. His political skills, his knowledge and experience have been very valuable to our work and leave now a big void.”

“Ilkka was an inspiration for the parliamentarians and the people of his country and the whole OSCE region, for all those who believe in the power of parliamentary diplomacy, dialogue and democracy,” said Secretary General Montella. “He was an inspiration for me as well. Without him I wouldn’t be where I am today. He was more than a colleague; he was a dear and true friend. His legacy lives on in us.”

Kanerva served as President of the Assembly from July 2014 to July 2016. He was the first person to have served as both OSCE PA President and OSCE Chairperson-in-Office in the Organization’s history. He also served as Head of the Finnish Delegation to the OSCE PA, Vice-President (2013-2014), President Emeritus (2016-2020), and as Co-Chair of the OSCE PA’s Helsinki +40 Project. Kanerva attended 14 Annual Sessions, plus eight Autumn Meetings and 14 Winter Meetings. He served as leader of seven election observation missions and carried out numerous official visits to OSCE participating States in his different capacities in the Assembly. First elected to his national legislature in 1975, Kanerva was the longest serving member of the Finnish Parliament. He held a wide variety of posts in government and parliament, including Minister of Transport, Deputy Prime Minister, Chair of the Parliamentary Defence Committee, and Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Head of OSCE Presence in Albania visits International Secretariat

Ambassador Vincenzo Del Monaco, Head of the OSCE Presence in Albania, visited the OSCE PA’s headquarters in Copenhagen today for discussions with Secretary General Roberto Montella, Deputy Secretary General Gustavo Pallares and other members of the staff. The sides discussed challenges of the OSCE, including how to enhance co-operation between field operations and the PA, and shared information about the work of their respective offices.



Vincenzo Del Monaco and Roberto Montella in Copenhagen, 20 April 2022