



Ressort: Politik

Harlem Désir OSCE expressed his concern for journalists

Rome, 29.07.2019 [ENA]

The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Harlem Désir, expressed his concern today about a series of attacks against journalists and the impediment to media activities during an election-related demonstration on 27 July in Moscow.

According to various reports, on 27 July at least 15 media workers working or contributing to various media outlets, including Novaya Gazeta, RBK, the Associated Press, Meduza,

Komsomolskaya Pravda, Deutsche Welle, Mediazona, The Village, Wikinews and others, were assaulted, detained or had their equipment damaged by police while covering a public demonstration in Moscow. The Representative also noted that the Editor-in-Chief of the Dozhd news channel, Aleksandra Perepelova, was summoned and questioned by the Investigative Committee in relation to the media outlet's coverage of the rallies in the city.

“I deplore all incidents where media workers were harshly treated or were obstructed by law enforcement while covering Saturday's demonstrations in Moscow. The media plays an important watchdog role, and journalists should be guaranteed unhindered access to public events as well as safe working conditions

at all times, including while covering protests,” Désir said. “I call on the Russian authorities to investigate all incidents involving journalists.” The Representative recalled the OSCE Ministerial Council Decision on Safety of Journalists, adopted last December, “recognizing the crucial role of journalists in covering elections [...], expressing serious concern about threats and violent attacks that journalists can face in this regard”, and calling on participating States to publicly and unequivocally condemn such acts.

Last weekend, the anti-corruption blogger and leader of the "Russia of the Future" party Aleksey Navalny asked the crowd to continue to take to the streets, violating the law on the authorization of demonstrations and,

consequently, being arrested by the authorities.

In this context of growing polarization of public debate, Yelena Grigoryeva, a well-known activist for the rights of the LGBT community, was murdered in St. Petersburg. Although the investigation has just begun, various stab wounds, signs of strangulation and the threats suffered over the years lead to think that his

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killing is linked to political reasons.

The civil demand for greater protection of rights and the fight against corruption has also been strongly echoed thanks to economic stagnation and an unpopular pension reform.

According to AFP on July 27 “Reporters investigating Russian military intelligence have been targeted by highly sophisticated cyberattacks through their encrypted email accounts, with evidence suggesting Moscow was responsible, the email service provider ProtonMail and journalists said Saturday”.

The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media observes media developments in all 57 OSCE participating States. He provides early warning on violations of freedom of expression and media freedom and promotes full compliance with OSCE media freedom commitments.

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