Representative on Freedom of the Media: Declaration on Pluralism in the Media and the Internet

IRIS 2005-10:1/2

Christian Möller & Hanna Vuokko
Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Vienna

On 14 October 2005, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Miklos Haraszti, issued the “Declaration on Pluralism in the Media and the Internet” at this year's Central Asian Media Conference in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

The annual conference was organized under the auspices of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media and the OSCE Centre in Almaty.

For the seventh time, 150 participants from all five Central Asian countries - Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan - gathered to discuss developments in the region in the field of media. The participants included journalists and representatives of non-governmental media organizations, as well as officials, experts and foreign guests. As in previous years, the conference provided a unique opportunity for interaction, an exchange of views among the participants and a creation of new bonds between regional colleagues.

The two main topics this year were Pluralism in the Media and the Internet.

OSCE Media Representative Miklos Haraszti said that “specifically in Central Asia, the Internet has in the last couple of years become in some countries the last resort of pluralism and the only alternative source of pluralistic information compared to television and print press”. He added: “In all Central Asian countries it is becoming the future of pluralistic media. International organizations like the OSCE should engage more than ever in protection of freedom of the Internet”.

Furthermore, the debates during the Almaty Conference stressed that States should ease state secret and other laws that unnecessarily restrict access to information. States should adopt and implement comprehensive freedom of information laws which maximize media and public access to government-held information.

Also, the conference concluded that further efforts should be made towards decriminalization of offences concerning honour and dignity of individuals. The concepts of distinguishing between criticism of private and public figures should be introduced throughout punitive legislation in order to allow for vivid debate on public-interest issues.

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026

Almaty Declaration on Pluralism in the Media and the Internet issued during the annual Central Asian Media Conference of 13-14 October 2005

http://www.osce.org/documents/rfm/2005/10/16767_en.pdf

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026