

**RECOMMENDATIONS ON MEASURES TO COMBAT AND
ADDRESS THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF PROPAGANDA**
made at

Extinguishing the Flame of Propaganda with Media Freedom and Pluralism

*OSCE HDIM 2015 Side Event on September 22, 2015
Warsaw, Poland*

The following recommendations were made by panelists and participants at the side event “Extinguishing the Flame of Propaganda with Media Freedom and Pluralism.” The sponsors of the event have compiled this list of recommendations made during the event for the purposes of sharing the diverse array of recommendations and supporting ongoing efforts to combat and address the negative effects of propaganda. The recommendations here are not necessarily endorsed or supported by all of the panelists, participants, or cosponsors of the event.

Policy Responses

- Ensure media plurality and free media as an antidote to propaganda.
- Refrain from introducing new restrictions; existing laws can deal with extreme propaganda.
- Reform state media into genuine public service broadcasting.
- Include civil society in media regulation bodies to share the burden and pressure, as well as to include an additional perspective, push for transparency of media ownership, and encourage public-interest content and news in publicly- and privately-funded media.
- Establish early warning mechanisms to identify the emergence and growth of propaganda and propagandistic messages as a way to warn about the emergence of conflict.
- Engage with private sector actors, such as Internet companies, to encourage them to support civil society, authentic journalism, and independent media.
- Address the role of privately owned and controlled media in propaganda given their frequent role in generating and spreading propagandistic messages.
- Address the role of the Internet and Internet resources in generating and spreading propagandistic messages.
- Improve transparency of OSCE institutions and mechanisms to shine light on actors opposing efforts to improve implementation of OSCE freedom of expression and media freedom commitments, including the mandate of the Representative on Freedom of the Media, by, for example, opening meetings and events such as the Permanent Council to journalists and increasing the online streaming of OSCE events and meetings.
- Identify and implement ways to publicly and morally sanction journalists that engage in propaganda.
- Address cases of journalism being replaced by propagandistic messages through existing mechanisms and judicial proceedings in accordance with domestic and international law.
- Develop a definition of propaganda in conjunction with OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, the Council of Europe’s Special Rapporteur on Freedom of the Media, and the

UN's Special Rapporteur on Freedom of the Media to establish a consensus definition that appropriately balances security and human rights and can be used in legal proceedings.

- Given that propaganda coming from an individual country is often oriented towards internal and external consumption, consider all potential target audiences when designing and implementing measures to combat propaganda.
- Establish a funding mechanism to provide a critical mass of funding for these and other recommendations as well as to enable better coordination among donors.

Content

- Develop and support myth-busting initiatives and networks to confront and expose propaganda.
- Establish and support a Russian-language news agency to provide news content that complies with journalistic standards.
- Establish and support a Content Factory to encourage independent actors to produce, share and distribute high-quality non-news programming on television and online, with particular emphasis on content that reflects local issues and local lives.
- Establish a Multimedia Distribution Platform that ensures content generated by the news agency and Content Factory reaches the widest possible audience. The platform should consist of a pan-regional brand that fronts traditional, linear channel of television output across various platforms and content segments available for consumption on demand, and finally as a supporting mechanism to all these proposals.
- Support efforts to deconstruct conflict-oriented media discourse.
- Focus on the role of entertainment media such as films, television, and video games as vehicles for propaganda and propagandistic messages as well as opportunities to combat and address the negative effects of propaganda.

Support to Journalists and Media

- Develop, maintain, and constantly improve journalistic and media standards and ethics.
- Support independent media with financial and technical assistance, in particular analytical media, to narrow the gap between journalists and “microphone holders.”
- Establish a center for media excellence to serve as a focal point to collect and share information about resources available to journalists and media as well as market research.
- Support persecuted journalists with moral and material assistance to enable them to continue their work. In some cases, support should be careful and discrete so as to not further endanger journalists.
- Support independent national-level media operating in exile by host countries and the international community given its knowledge and understanding of the national context.

Education

- Invest in media literacy for citizens to make informed choices.
- Educate governments, civil society, the media, and the public about OSCE and other media freedom and freedom of expression commitments as well as journalistic ethics and standards.