

Recommendations from the conference Free European Media European Solidarity Center Gdansk, Poland, 15th-16th February 2018

150 media stakeholders representing 25 organisations were gathered in Gdansk and contributed with number of recommendations for the way forward. Though it was not a decision-making forum, significantly the attendances informally supposed following steps to be taken by joining forces:

- Urge governments to release all jailed journalists and stop bringing journalists to court for doing their job. International organisations will for future trials in a cooperative way monitor if possible each of them and always represent the whole group;
- Demand national leaders to firmly and unconditionally defend and promote press freedom, safety of journalists and fight impunity by following the UN plan of action for safety and the issue of impunity;
- Promote Council of Europe's recommendation on protection of journalists, and to use the safety platform actively and to urge member states to reply and follow up by resolving the cases;
- Reach out to and engage citizens in promoting media freedom by telling the stories about the conflict between media and politics, mapping media freedom and by international advocacy;
- Take part in the campaigns on Media and Information Literacy as media and journalists are demanded as much as the academics regarding both developing and implementing;
- Be in dialogue with judges and train journalists, police and other actors together to get a better mutual understanding of the value of free media;
- Legal, financial and other practical help for journalists facing legal and other threats must continue to be provided by civil society organizations;
- Stop governments in using public advertisements to support selected media, and make sure that all public funding are followed by keeping the principle of arms' length;
- Document when media laws are abused;
- Support independent media in countries with a difficult environment and add capacity building projects.
- Make public service media sustainable and remember in parallel to support a pluralistic media landscape with private independent media and with more focus on both national, regional and local media;
- Respect journalists right to cover all sort of demonstrations and other events – also when critical to authorities;

- Defend investigative journalism;
- Give journalists media access to meet migrants and refugees and other groups of citizens in difficult situations;
- Continue the Council of Europe study on self-censorship and urge governments to be a part of the solution to do away with it.
- Fight fakes by quality journalism, media and information literacy and ethical standards, not new legislation
- Create an environment for social dialogue;
- Training in digital self-defense, solidarity encryption and ensure cross-border to share knowledge and development;
- Promote independent press councils in all European countries and urge for having both journalists, editors and representatives for the public on board.