

Opening 22: Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFOM)

The OSCE has a comprehensive approach to security that encompasses politico-military, economic and environmental, and human aspects. It therefore addresses a wide range of security-related concerns, including arms control, confidence- and security-building measures, human rights, national minorities, democratization, policing strategies, counter-terrorism and economic and environmental activities. All 57 participating States enjoy equal status, and decisions are taken by consensus on a politically, but not legally binding basis.

Free expression and free media are basic human rights. To ensure compliance with media-freedom commitments agreed upon by participating States, the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFoM) was established in December 1997. The function of the Representative is to observe relevant media developments in OSCE participating States with a view to providing early warning on violations of freedom of expression. The Representative concentrates on rapid response to serious non-compliance with OSCE principles and commitments by participating States. In case of serious problems caused, for instance, by obstruction of media activities and unfavourable working conditions for journalists, the Representative seeks direct contacts with the participating State and other parties involved, assesses the facts and contributes to the resolution of the issue. Another task is to assist participating States by advocating and promoting full compliance with OSCE principles and commitments regarding freedom of expression and free media. Assistance is typically provided in the form of legal analyses of legislation, organizing conferences and roundtables during which best practices are shared and promoted, preparing topical publications and guidebooks on media freedom matters and providing training seminars for media and government officials.

Tasks and responsibilities:

The JPO would be tasked with content work, in line with the early-warning nature of the mandate of the RFOM. The JPO would assist in particular with monitoring, researching, and drafting of briefing material for the RFOM – depending on media freedom developments, meetings and country visits. In addition, depending on the languages spoken, the JPO may be asked to support project officers on specific conferences that the Office organise with a broad range of project management and content production work.

1. Assists in designing methodology for more monitoring and evaluating the CAT work (meetings and on-line assignments):
 - Assisting with research and assessment of media freedom developments in view of suggestions for interventions to RFOM, including with necessary sound political sensitivity and adequate use of language;
2. Ensures the accurate gathering, structuring and flow of information, particularly in the spotting of relevant trends and developments for the quality:

- Assisting advisers with drafting of press releases, letters and other communications to participating States in case of non-compliance with OSCE media freedom commitments;
3. Under direct guidance of Senior Adviser, preparing briefing materials for the Representative ahead of his meetings, country visits and participation in events, including talking points, background notes and inputs for speeches; Conducting general research assignments;
 4. Taking notes and drafting summaries at formal and informal meetings, including meetings of the OSCE Permanent Council and relevant committees;
 5. Assisting with compilation and production of reports and publications, as required;
 6. May participate in visits and events conducted and organized by the Office;
 7. Provide support to project officers in preparation of events such as conferences and seminars;
 8. Performing other related duties as assigned.