



Rappresentanza Permanente d'Italia
OSCE

**ITALY'S STATEMENT AT THE WARSAW HUMAN DIMENSION CONFERENCE
PLENARY SESSION IV
Freedom of opinion and expression, media freedom; Safety of journalists**

Warsaw, 30 September 2022

Mr Chair,

in an increasingly complex information landscape where the Covid-19 have further aggravated the risk of a pandemic of non-verified, inaccurate and misleading information, the role of journalists and media workers in providing accurate and reliable information is as important as ever.

Media freedom and the right to freedom of opinion and expression are key elements of democratic governance and pluralistic and inclusive societies. All persons need to be fully informed to form opinions and meaningfully participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives. When media and journalists are silenced the consequences for human rights, democracy, the rule of law and development are worrying.

Yet journalists are under increasing pressure and attacks around the world, being subjected to threats, intimidation, violence, arbitrary detention and even disappearances or killings.

Against this backdrop, Italy reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the promotion and protection of freedom of information and media freedom, in all relevant multilateral fora, including the UN bodies and the Coalitions of which we are part, as well as in its bilateral relations.

Let me reassure you that we will continue to put media freedom and protection of journalists from attacks at the center of our attention also within other relevant organizations, as the OSCE and the Council of Europe.

Bearing in mind that in almost 90% of the cases where journalists were killed, the alleged perpetrators went unpunished, let me also stress that we will devolve through the Italian Development Cooperation a financial contribution to the Global Media Defence Fund, administered by UNESCO, aimed at bolstering journalists' legal protection and ending the spiral of violence and impunity.