

Canadian Delegation to the  
Organization for Security & Cooperation  
in Europe



Délégation du Canada auprès de  
l'Organisation pour la sécurité et la coopération  
en Europe

**DELEGATION OF CANADA TO THE OSCE  
STATEMENT ON FREEDOM OF THE MEDIA  
709<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL  
17 APRIL 2008**

This statement is made on behalf of Norway and Canada. Our delegations took note of the recent statements issued by the CiO's Representative on the Freedom of the Media, Mr. Miklos Haraszti, regarding the adoption of the new Press Act in Slovakia, and about the persecution of journalists in Azerbaijan.

The situations highlighted are indeed preoccupying and we call on the States concerned to address the issues raised by the Representative in light of their OSCE commitments and other international obligations.

We are also concerned that high-level governmental representatives of these two OSCE participating States have made statements seemingly aimed at undermining Mr. Haraszti.

The position of RFoM was created, like all OSCE institutions, to work for all participating States, and it is ours to support and protect. The RFoM can provide valuable assistance in helping participating States live up to their commitments and obligations.

As we have said before, the RFoM's mandate is quite a broad one, giving him the tools to work effectively so as to identify serious problems, bring them to light and seek to address them in a co-operative way with the state concerned. This is the mandate we have given him and we all should be supportive of his delivery of that mandate.

Attempts to question Mr. Haraszti's credibility and independence do a disservice to this organization and to its participating States, and to the pursuit of our common goals and objectives. We call on all participating States to fully collaborate with the RFoM.