



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on Media Freedom in Ukraine

As delivered by Ambassador Ian Kelly
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
September 16, 2010

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We share the concerns voiced by our EU colleagues and by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media about the safety of journalists and the need for vigilance by OSCE participating states to defend media professionals from violence and intimidation. We welcome President Yanukovich's assurances regarding the preservation of media freedom and the independence of journalists, and we encourage the government of Ukraine to make all efforts to protect media professionals. A free media sector is not only essential to preserving the important democratic gains that Ukraine has made; it can also be a highly valuable tool in the fight against corruption, which the government has made a priority.

Mr. Chairman, it is particularly appropriate that we focus on media freedom on this day, the tenth anniversary of the abduction and murder of courageous journalist Georgiy Gongadze. We hope that the Ukrainian authorities will continue to pursue all relevant information regarding this case and that there will be a full public hearing into those responsible for his murder. We look forward to further information as well regarding the August 11 disappearance of independent journalist Vasil Klymentyev.

Thank you, Mister Chairman.