

Regional Seminar on Freedom of Information
An event of the Freedom of Information Advocates Network

ARTICLE 19, global campaign for free expression
Open Society Justice Initiative
Montenegrin Helsinki Committee

9th-10th September
Grand Avala Hotel, Mediteranska 2, SG-85310, Budva
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***DRAFT* Agenda**

1st Day

09.00 – 09.30: Arrival and Registration

09.30 – 10.30: Opening session

Chair: Slobodan Franovic, President Montenegrin Helsinki Committee

- Welcome remarks by ARTICLE 19, Justice Initiative, MHC
- Opening statement by Montenegrin President, Filip Vujanovic (tbc)
- Opening statement by OSCE Ambassador Maurizio Massari (tbc)

10.30 – 11.30: Development of a freedom of information regime – recent developments in Montenegro

Chair: A19/JI

- Presentation by government official on progress to adopt the law and plans for implementation, Mrs Kilibarda, Minister of Culture (tbc)
- Perspective of the joint civil society/government working group(tbc)

11.30 – 12.00 Coffee Break

- Presentation of the Helsinki Committee's survey of current laws and regulations which conflict with a freedom of information regime.
- Q/A and discussion

13.00 – 14.00 Lunch

14.00 – 15.30 Legitimate exemptions to the right of access to information

Chair: A19/JI

- Council of Europe Recommendation (2002) 2 on access to official documents
- Freedom of information and national security – an overview of international and regional trends. David Banisar, Privacy International
- Q/A and discussion

15.30 – 16.00: Coffee Break

16.00 – 17.30: Implementation of freedom of information laws – experiences of public bodies in the region

Chair: Kreshnik Berisha, Advocacy, Training and Resource Centre, Kosovo

- Tirana Municipality Citizen's Information Centre, Arbena Ahmetaj *20 mins*
- Sarajevo Municipality Information Centre, Zeljko Varunek, Deputy Mayor *20 mins*
- Presentation by a representative of the Bulgarian Supreme Administrative Court on their communications policy and compliance with the Bulgarian Access to Public Information Act (tbc) *20 mins*
- Q/A and discussion *30 mins*

2nd Day

09.30 – 11.00: Role of civil society and inter-governmental organisations in supporting freedom of information

Chair: Ioana Avadani, Center for Independent Journalism, Romania

- Monitoring freedom of information implementation. Helen Darbshire, OSJI and Klime Babunski, Pro Media, Macedonia. *30 mins*
- Training and capacity building for the public administration. ARTICLE 19, Marcos Mendiburu, CESI World Bank Institute and Centre for Development and Democratisation of Institutions, Albania *30 mins*
- Generating public awareness of the right to freedom of information. Kreshnik Berisha, ATRC, Kosovo (tbc). Acting as a grassroots ombudsman to promote the law. Gergana Jouleva, AIP, Bulgaria *30 mins*

11.00 – 11.30 Coffee break

11.30 – 13.00: Appeal mechanisms: strengths and weaknesses of the judicial and non-judicial approach.

- How has litigation advanced the interpretation and implementation of the Bulgarian Access to Public Information Act? Alexander Kashumov, Access to Information Programme. **30 mins**
- Experience of the Bosnian Ombudsman in resolving appeals against non-compliance with the Bosnian Freedom of Information Act. Mehmed Halilović, Deputy Ombudsman for the Media. **30 mins**
- Q/A and discussion. **30 mins**

11.00 – 11.30: Coffee Break

13.00 – 14.00 Lunch

14.00 – 15.30: Networking

- Presentation of the Freedom of Information Advocates network
- Free session for networking

15.30 – 17.00: Closing session

- Closing statement by Mr Miodrag Ilickovic, MP, Chair of the legislative Committee in the Montenegrin Parliament
- Closing remarks by A19, JI and MHC