

Session: Media Freedom

Responsible leadership and media freedom - two key elements for democracy and diversity

During the workshop “Media Freedom” the participants developed different approaches to the meaning of responsible leadership in context of media. They pointed out that media institutions should be aware of their responsibility and the effects of their chosen agenda and words. Motivating people to participate is always a key issue to keep up or enhance democracy. The question if censorship can be legitimate was discussed vividly because more than half of the participants live in the Arab world and experience governmental censorship every day. Therefore they underlined the importance of the right of freedom of speech, implemented into the constitution, in order to guarantee a diverse world.

Recommendation 1:

Social Media has transformed media from monologue to dialogue and engages especially young people to participate in debates and social movements. It is a new way of providing and consuming information interactively. Recognizing the importance of this transformation process we recommend that the UNAOC should offer workshops to teach young leaders from transforming countries how to use social media effectively.

Recommendation 2:

Free access of information is a key element for high-quality media work and democracy. Being aware of that, we suggest that the UNAOC should help to establish a legal as well as an institutional framework for the availability and exchange of information. The UNAOC should encourage dialogue between governments and civil society through mutual decision-making and information systems. We recommend evaluating best practices and providing expertise to national states on this matter.