



Statement of Ambassador Kristín A. Árnadóttir, Permanent Representative of Iceland, at the 1340th Permanent Council Meeting, Vienna, 21 October 2021.

Thank you Madam Chair / Mr. Chair.

While my delegation aligns itself with the EU statement, I would like to add a few remarks in my national capacity.

We applaud the Nobel Peace Prize 2021 and the recipients Maria Ressa and Dmitry Muratov.

This Nobel Peace Prize is a declaration of support for journalism, including investigative journalism, all over the world. Unfortunately, many journalists and other media workers constantly face the risk of endangering their own lives. Freedom of expression and media freedom is vital to the effective functioning of free and open societies and is essential to the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Factual, investigative and critical journalism is a vital tool of democracy and to protect the public against disinformation, conspiracy theories and human rights violations.

Both Maria Ressa and Dmitry Muratov have dedicated their lives to freedom of speech and defending democratic values.

Maria Ressa's tireless work as a journalist carrying out vital investigative reporting brought her to face legal challenges and proceedings but have brought hope, not only to the people of the Philippines, but around the globe. During Iceland's membership at the Human Rights Council Iceland led efforts on the

human rights situation in the Philippines and called for an end to extrajudicial executions, harassment of journalists and human rights activists.

Dmitry Muratov, a relentlessly campaigning journalist, has stood up for press freedom and freedom of speech in Russia for decades, under increasingly challenging conditions. We are pleased that his fight and commitment to freedom of speech has been recognized by the Nobel Committee.

Human rights are a fundamental part of Iceland's foreign policy. Human rights defenders and journalists risk their lives and liberties each day bringing injustices to our attention for an open and democratic debate. Our duty is to continue to promote and protect the human rights and freedom of all.

Thank you Madam Chair / Mr. Chair.