

CONCEPT NOTE

4th Shusha Global Media Forum themed

The Mission of the Media in Promoting Peace: **Restoring Truth and Rebuilding Trust**

Shusha, Azerbaijan

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

In today's rapidly digitalizing information environment, the media's mission and growing responsibility in uncovering the truth, promoting peace, and restoring trust are decisive in many situations. At a time when current conflicts, information wars, and disinformation are widely prevalent, when harmful content and attempts at emotional manipulation are rapidly increasing, and when confrontations are deepening across global and regional agendas, the media, as one of the most essential instruments of modern diplomacy, directly influences the shaping of public as well as international opinion and the promotion of a culture of peace.

In the modern system of international relations, the concept of peace is not limited solely to the cessation of conflicts; it also encompasses the building of trust and the establishment of sustained dialogue among societies. The responsible, ethical, and public-interest-oriented media, which has become one of the key institutional pillars in this process, operates today within the boundless digital dialogue shaped by globalization not only as a means of transmitting information but also as an indispensable contributor to strengthening the power of public diplomacy, reinforcing mutual trust, and restoring truth by promoting a healthy exchange of information.

The 4th Shusha Global Media Forum, to be held under the theme "The Mission of the Media in Promoting Peace: Restoring Truth and Rebuilding Trust", will serve as a platform for discussion and joint action for officials, media and civil society, state and business representatives, defenders of media freedom, representatives of international organizations, and media experts from various countries. The Forum will address topics, such as the role of media in peacebuilding, opportunities for cross-border media dialogue and public discourse, the media's responsibility in shaping narratives, the effectiveness of coordinated responses to disinformation, and ethical frameworks in the age of artificial intelligence.

Emphasizing the importance of a responsible approach in the media, the Forum supports the gradual restoration of eroded trust among societies, contributes to ensuring digital solidarity and peace, and fosters the establishment and strengthening of mutual cooperation in this direction.

TOPICS OF THE FORUM'S PANEL AND ONE-ON-ONE DISCUSSIONS:

Panel Discussions:

- Peacebuilding and Public Discourse Through the Media Lens
- From Destruction to Renewal: Urban Narratives and Media Responsibility
- The Role of Media Diplomacy and Media Literacy in Rebuilding Trust

One-on-One Discussions:

- The Impact of Disinformation on Peace: Coordinated Media Responses
- Social Media and Ethical Frameworks in the Age of Artificial Intelligence
- Cross-Border Media Dialogue and Solidarity in the Digital Environment

PANEL DISCUSSION 1

Peacebuilding and Public Discourse Through the Media Lens

Globalization and the rapid development of digital technologies have not only transformed the nature of international relations but also created new perspectives in political decision-making. As a result, through the media, traditional diplomatic relations have acquired a multifaceted character encompassing public diplomacy, strategic communication, and cross-border information exchange. In the modern era, the formation of public opinion is a vital component of the peacebuilding process, and in this regard, the media plays a key role as an influential platform that determines the direction of the public discourse. From the media's perspective, peacebuilding requires public discourse to be built on constructive and humanistic principles. Thus, by acquiring a new mission, the media becomes a strategic instrument that guides public discourse and contributes to peacebuilding strengthening of mutual cooperation in this direction.

PANEL DISCUSSION 2

From Destruction to Renewal: Urban Narratives and Media Responsibility

Post-conflict and post-crisis urban reconstruction is not limited to the implementation of infrastructure projects; urban planning policies and the presentation of architectural heritage to society play a decisive role in social and cultural rebuilding. In this context, by conveying urban development narratives objectively and responsibly, the media becomes a strategic instrument facilitating trust-based public engagement in the restoration process. The transition from devastation to revival does not only involve technical and economic aspects; it is a complex process encompassing the stages of social, cultural, and psychological recovery as well. In the urban development agenda, the professional and ethical stance of the media contributes to the formation of balanced and inclusive narratives, strengthens active participation of society in reconstruction, and enables the revitalization of cities to be grounded in public trust.

PANEL DISCUSSION 3

The Role of Media Diplomacy and Media Literacy in Rebuilding Trust

Transparent, responsible, and ethical media makes a significant contribution to reducing tensions in international relations, deepening mutual understanding, and establishing sustained dialogue. In this context, two key and complementary directions emerge as central to the process of restoring trust: media diplomacy and media literacy. While media diplomacy functions as a communicative tool that strengthens mutual understanding and international dialogue, media literacy serves as a fundamental mechanism enabling society to analyze this dialogue accurately and remain resilient within the information environment. Against the backdrop of institutional cooperation, the strengthening of normative frameworks, and continuous awareness policies, the coordinated development of these two mechanisms can be regarded as a key condition for restoring trust and ensuring its long-term preservation.

ONE-ON-ONE DISCUSSION 1

The Impact of Disinformation on Peace: Coordinated Media Responses

In the modern media ecosystem, the diversification of information types and the proliferation of sources create conditions for the rapid spread of disinformation, which in turn poses serious threats to development and global stability. The negative impact of disinformation on various social processes has become increasingly evident in recent years, including the erosion of trust, deepening of conflicts, and the rise of manipulative practices, among others. False or distorted information, particularly during conflict and post-conflict periods when information sensitivity is high, can seriously undermine public perception, trust, and peace initiatives. In this context, strengthening fact-checking mechanisms, prioritizing reference to reliable sources, preventing the dissemination of dubious information, and providing coordinated responses based on institutional collaboration can make a significant contribution to fostering a responsible and professional media environment that promotes peace.

ONE-ON-ONE DISCUSSION 2

Social Media and Ethical Frameworks in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

Amid the rapid and intensive development of artificial intelligence technologies, social media users' ability to create and share content has expanded, yet the readiness of such platforms to address new challenges in the field of AI remains one of the fundamental questions. The application of artificial intelligence in various directions in social networks, which reach broad audiences and serve as primary platforms for communication and information exchange among people, has raised a number of ethical issues. The rapid growth of the volume of information, the spread of deceptive and misleading content, and the complexity of algorithms and parameters further underscore that establishing ethical frameworks based on transparency, privacy, and accountability is not only a legal but also a societal necessity to ensure the security of the digital environment.

ONE-ON-ONE DISCUSSION 3

Cross-Border Media Dialogue and Solidarity in the Digital Environment

The borderless nature of the digital information environment has transformed the media into a leading communication tool in conducting global, multilateral, and complex dialogue and negotiations. In this context, cross-border media dialogue plays a crucial role in strengthening mutual understanding among diverse societies, dismantling stereotypes, promoting solidarity based on shared values, and reinforcing peace and stability. Social media platforms, online news portals, and global communication networks connect audiences in different countries directly and continuously, enabling the formation of such dialogue at the institutional level. Under conditions where the information flows spreading through digital platforms are intensifying, it is imperative to discuss practical and normative approaches to strengthening cross-border media dialogue, promoting solidarity in the digital environment, and establishing sustainable communication mechanisms grounded in trust.