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- [News](#)
- [Events](#)
- [Search](#)

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Press Release
27 July 2001

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OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Freimut Duve. (Photo OSCE)

Freimut Duve concerned over attack on journalists in Genoa

VIENNA, 27 July 2001 (OSCE) -- On 27 July, Freimut Duve, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, intervened with the Italian Foreign Minister Renato Ruggiero regarding actions by the Italian police against journalists over the past weekend during the G8 summit in Genoa, Italy. Without prejudicing the legal process and possible independent investigations into allegations of the use of excessive force by the police, Duve asked for clarifications on the following points:

- Why did several police officers try to misrepresent themselves as journalists?
- Why was a legally established alternative media centre run by Indymedia raided during the night, with police allegedly beating up and detaining several journalists, seizing photographs and video footage of earlier police actions?
- Why were several journalists assaulted by the police resulting in bodily harm, among them two British journalists: John Elliot and Mark Covell, who, according to BBC Radio 4, suffered a punctured lung, broken ribs and internal bleeding and is still recovering in a hospital?
- Why were those arrested denied counsel?
- Why were shouts by some journalists that they represent the media ignored by the police?

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"What happened in Genoa is very serious. A legitimate media centre is attacked by those who serve to uphold the law. As a result there are reporters who have been injured, detained, their work confiscated," wrote Freimut Duve in his letter to Foreign Minister Renato Ruggiero.

For further information please contact the office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, tel. + 43 1 512 21 45-0, Fax + 43 1 512 21 45-9.

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