

Freedom of **Expression, Assembly**
and **Association**
and Women's rights
in Bosnia and Herzegovina

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RECRIMINALISATION OF DEFAMATION IN REPUBLIKA SRPSKA

- **Chilling effect on journalists and activists**
- **Resulting in censorship and self-censorship**
- **Deterrence of public accountability**

Geological Research Act Amendments in Republika Srpska

- **Exclusion of local communities** from decision-making processes
- Violation of BiH's obligations under the **Aarhus Convention** and the **European Charter on Local Self-Government**
- Undermining efforts to combat natural resource exploitation and suppresses **environmental activism**

Recommendations

1. Repeal amendments to the RS Criminal Code that criminalize **defamation** and ensure safe and enabling environment for independent journalists and human rights defenders
2. Amend Geological Research Act of Republika Srpska to restore local community participation and **comply with the Aarhus convention**

FOREIGN AGENT LAW vs FREEDOM of ASSEMBLY and ASSOCIATION in REPUBLIKA SRPSKA

Hostile environment for civil society activists and human rights defenders

Foreign Agent Law proposal impact on HR CSOs and Media:

- Many organizations shut down, others considering relocation
- Most independent media are registered as NGOs, further harmed by recriminalization of defamation

Recommendations

- 1. Refrain from adopting restrictive laws** such as the RS Law on Special Registry and Transparency of Nonprofit organizations („The Foreign Agent Law”)
- 2. Adopt the Law on Citizen Initiatives and Protection of Activists**
- 3. Adopt the Council of Ministers Strategy on development of enabling environment for civil society**

WOMEN'S RIGHTS
in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Recommendation

Fully align criminal codes and Laws against domestic violence and violence against women with the Istanbul Convention in both entities and Brčko District

Help us reaffirm that fundamental rights in
Bosnia and Herzegovina are not just principles
on paper

Thank you for your
attention

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