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**Countries: US, Serbia, Montenegro**



“The fall is coming, so the good housewives would do better if they return to the kitchen” – this comment was made by a Serbian politician Branko Ruzic talking about his female political opponent. Public remarks like this one were recently discussed at Columbia University in New York City, where MDI’s Director of Development and Operations Marija Sajkas was a guest speaker together with Milka Tadic Mijovic, U.S. correspondent of Montenegrin independent weekly “Monitor”.

Graduate students taking Human Rights class at [School of International and Public Affairs - SIPA](#), were eager to get updated information about the media freedom in Serbia and Montenegro, and to learn more about the language of the media in the region. They were particularly interested in the connection between politicians, big businesses and members of the press, as well as about the way media reports about minorities.

“Serbian media has gone long way in reporting more inclusively about minorities”, said Sajkas, adding that the bigger problem nowadays is violence “both verbal and on the streets, and all of

that is reflected in the media” . She added that there are still members of Serbian society that are almost universally excluded, such as Roma population, members of LGBT community and after the recent incidents at the soccer match between Albania and Serbia, many were quick to return to the language of hate. She concluded by saying that the more education is clearly needed, and this is why MDI has open a sister organization focusing on the Balkans.

“Unlike during 90s, language of the media in Montenegro today is much kinder towards ethnic minority groups” said Milka Tadic Mijovic adding that because the media is tidily controlled by the governing structure, “hate speech is now directed towards a different minority group - political opponents.”

She added that she is “very pleasantly surprised” by the students’ level of knowledge about Montenegro and Serbia. “I see this as an encouraging sign” said Mrs. Tadic Mijovic, “Balkan is no longer a matter of focus of political elites, so it is good that we matter at least in Academia”.