

After receiving numerous complaints regarding the 99-euro registration fee for the upcoming Nuclear Security Summit (NSS), the BPV Board has taken up the issue with the Dutch Foreign Affairs Ministry (MinBuza) to voice our serious concerns. At the heart of the matter was the fact that journalists were required to pay the amount upon registration. If they declined, they would not be able to register. The organisers said it was to cover catering, work space and communication costs.

The Board however pointed out the insistence on the 99-euro payment as a pre-requisite for registration -- and access -- to cover an event of world importance ran contrary to the concepts of press freedom, in other words that journalists should be allowed to do their work without having to pay for access to do so.

Our concerns were shared by the Dutch Association of Journalists (NVJ) who backed us on this issue.

We are happy to state this afternoon, february 18th 2014, that MinBuza announced the fee will no longer be a pre-requisite for registration to the two-day event. Instead, they are now looking at introducing a voucher system, which means that every journalist will have a choice on whether or not to pay for services rendered.

The BPV Board would like voice our sincere appreciation to the Dutch Foreign Affairs Ministry for re-evaluating their position and we look forward to a very successful summit, which we are sure will showcase the best the Netherlands has to offer.

*Jan Hennop*

*President*

*Buitenlandse Pers Vereniging – Foreign Press Association*