



PERMANENT REPRESENTATION  
OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC  
TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE  
IN STRASBOURG

Strasbourg, 10 May 2017  
Ref.: 032486/2017FRSM1

Dear Mr Gruden,

Following your message of 13 April 2017 informing us on the alert with regard to the Slovak Republic that has been submitted to the Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists by the partner organization, please find enclosed the official response of the Slovak authorities in respect of the submitted alert.

I would be very grateful if you could provide for uploading of the response by the Slovak authorities to the Platform and its distribution to the partner organization.

Yours sincerely,

Marcela Hanusová  
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

Enc.:  
Official response

Mr Matjaž Gruden  
Director  
Directorate of Policy Planning  
Secretariat General  
Council of Europe  
Strasbourg

**Official response of the Government of the Slovak Republic to the alert submitted to the Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists on 13 April 2017 entitled „ Pressure by Prime Minister on Public Broadcaster over Coverage“**

The Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic respects the freedom of the media in Slovakia. We would like to emphasize that the Slovak Republic is placed just next to Germany in the ranking of media freedom perception and has overtaken countries such as the United Kingdom or the United States as well as other states of the V4 group. The Government has never intervened in the freedom of the media in the same way as it has happened in Hungary or Poland and therefore it has the right to raise objections to the level of professionalism of some of them.

The Prime Minister is convinced that the media coverage of the public service broadcasting Slovak television does not fulfill its public character; it is one-sidedly politically oriented and does not provide information about decisions and concrete steps of the Government aiming at improving lives of citizens in Slovakia. As a current example to be mentioned is the situation when public television RTVS did not inform about the press conference of the Prime Minister on the results of Eurostat that had showed historically the best figures in terms of debt reduction. In the same way, it ignored the proposal of the Vice-President of the European Commission Maroš Šefčovič who had offered the public television the discussion on new European pillar of social rights. The citizens of the Slovak Republic did thus not have the opportunity to get to know from the public media that Slovakia had lately taken significant steps in the social field and in the area of unemployment and that we belong among countries in the EU in which the social scissors are the least open.

Given the very good position of the Slovak Republic in the ranking of countries in terms of perception of the freedom of the media, in terms of non-interference of power to the economic integrity of the media, the Prime Minister is convinced that dialogue with the media must be open and mutually sincere. The media thus gets feedback on the level of its professionalism. The Prime Minister is convinced that the core of healthy development in the society is a critical dialogue and therefore also the other side –the media - must endure the criticism.