



Représentation Permanente du Monténégro auprès du Conseil de l'Europe

Permanent Representation of Montenegro to the Council of Europe

Stalna misija Crne Gore pri Savjetu Evrope

18, Allée Spach, 67000 Strasbourg, France

Tel. +33 3 88 36 85 65, fax. 03 88 35 07 24, e-mail: coe@mfa.gov.me

No 287/2015

Strasbourg, 16 November 2015

Dear Mr Gruden,

Please find enclosed document prepared by the Ministry of Interior of the Government of Montenegro as the answer to the claim against Montenegro made on 27 October 2015 by the European Federation of Journalists and International Federation of Journalists, through the Council of Europe Platform, to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists.

Sincerely yours,



Mr. Matjaž Gruden
Director
Directorate for Policy Planning
The Council of Europe



The answer made by the Ministry of Interior of Montenegro on the occasion of the alarm posed at the Council of Europe platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists

The Ministry of Interior of Montenegro, on the occasion of the alarm submitted to the Council of Europe Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists against Montenegro, would like to make certain clarifications regarding rather inaccurate claims posed, and would like to support its rationale by the following:

Previous to the protests that took place on 24 October 2015, the Ministry of Interior has provided elaborate information on the relevant legislation and presented circumstances in which the Ministry would enforce actions in order to protect the key state institutions. For these purposes, it has been issued and disseminated a detailed media plan of the media appearances of the highest officials of the Government, Interior Ministry and the Police Directorate.

Moreover, the Ministry of Interior has established the contact points for communication to the diplomates, representatives of the international organizations and the media in order to provide precise, accurate and reliable information.

In order to enable the press to operate in free and safe manner, all media representatives were provided with high visibility neon yellow safety vests during the protests, to be easily noticed thus making sure that the conditions were met for them to do their job properly. By doing so, it has been confirmed once again that the high level of sensitivity exists for ensuring the freedom of expression and meeting the prerequisites necessary for journalists and media houses to conduct their regular activities.

The incident described at the Platform for the protection of journalists of the Council of Europe could not be perceived as an act of violence against journalists or an action enforced to disenable them to report freely, when taking into consideration circumstances in which it occurred.

Upon the disruption of the protest in front of the Parliament, a group of around 30 journalists headed to the street of Stanko Dragojević, seeking the shelter from the teargas. The said location stands in direct proximity of the Foreign Ministry and the Government of Montenegro. The same path was taken by a group of hooligans among whom there were some who had previously attacked the police, so teargas was applied targeting the said group of perpetrators and not the journalists and the camera crews.

During the week following the protest, a lively debate concerning this very incident took place in various media, in which none of the journalists present at the incident, denied the presence of the afore mentioned group of hooligans in their vicinity.

The Ministry of Interior of Montenegro stays fully at the disposal in case the additional questions are raised.