

**Reply of the Ministry of Justice on the alert published on the Platform to Promote the Protection of Journalism and Safety of Journalists regarding the draft Criminal Code**

In the latest amendments of the draft law “On some additions and amendments to law no. 7895, dated 27.1.1995 “Criminal Code of the Republic of Albania”, as amended”, an amendment to Article 120, which regulates defamation, is foreseen, and journalists are included in the subjects protected by Articles 237 and 238 of the Criminal Code.

Also, the Ministry of Justice is conducting a broad public consultation process for the draft Criminal Code. Currently, the draft is published in the Electronic Registry for Public Notices and Consultations and in parallel, a series of roundtables are being organized with the participation of all interested actors. The text of the draft can be accessed in the following link:

<https://www.konsultimipublik.gov.al/Konsultime/Detaje/889>

At this stage, the draft of the new Criminal Code is in the process of evaluation and after the conclusion of the public consultation, all comments, suggestions and recommendations submitted by institutional actors, international partners and other stakeholders will be analyzed in a full, objective and transparent manner.

In addition to the above, proposals from media and civil society organizations will also be considered, with the aim of guaranteeing a legal framework in line with the Council of Europe standards, European best practices, as well as the principles that protect freedom of expression, safety and independence of journalists in the exercise of their profession.