

Reply of Albanian Authorities:

No cases of Police violence against journalist during the opposition protests in Albania

In all the protests cases, organized by the Albanian opposition since February 16-th 2019, till now, the Albanian State Police has reacted under the strategy "1 - 1 - 0", which means that the State Police always reacts one step backward; one level lower than that of violence and committing no victims.

The State Police never reacted violently, despite of the attacks of the protestors with Molotov bombs, their attacks against Police forces and the constitutional institutions, which seriously put in danger their lives.

In the cases when violence of the protestors have precipitated in creating extreme violent situations, as injuries of Police forces (16 injured only during the protest of May 11, 2019) inflaming or violating institutions, Police has been forced to use tear gas to scatter the protestors. This is an instrument widely used by European police to face violent crowds.

In some cases, the opposition, despite of the prior official announcement to the State Police, has deviated the protest venue, about which has asked permission, by posing difficulties to the management of the situation. For this reason, some journalists, reporting on the protests, were shortly affected by tear gas.

In no cases, State Police has exercised any violence against any journalists or their shooting teams. The State Police actions in the protests have been closely monitored by the international Partners' specialized Missions in Albania, which assist State Police.

Albania remains committed to defend and support media freedom, because it is our strong belief that a free and an independent media constitute a pillar for democracy, rule of law and country's over-all progress.