

Statement of the Parliament of Albania - 11 June 2021

In response to the concerns raised by the Union of Albanian Journalists and by the journalists accredited in the Parliament of Albania, on the new audio-video system installed in Parliament, the Secretary General of the Parliament, Mr. Genci Gjonçaj, upon recommendation of the Speaker of Parliament, Mr. Gramoz Ruçi, convened in an extended roundtable representatives of the Union of the Albanian Journalists, journalists and media representatives.

The meeting took place on June 11.

In this roundtable was discussed on the recent amendments of the Regulation of Mass media accreditation for the broadcasting of parliamentary committee meetings, following the installation of the new audio-video system.

The Secretary General of the Parliament informed participants on the reasons and the need to establish a new audio-video system, as the parliamentary committees since many years have had shortcomings in recording and documenting their meetings, due to the old technology. Considering the recommendations of the 2013-2014 European Commission Progress Reports on Albania, which highlighted the need to enhance transparency and involvement of civil society in the legislative process, as well as the improvement of public information on parliamentary activities and parliamentary documentation, it was assessed necessary to install the new audio-video system.

The establishment of the new system started in January 2018 and concluded in July 2019.

This system is based on the best practices on parliamentary audio-video systems of EU member countries, in particular on the model of the French and Portuguese parliaments.

The improvements to Parliament's Rules of Procedure and to the Mass Media Regulation, in essence do not add any new prohibition related to the spaces allowed for the mass media accredited staff, as compared to the previous regulation. The new audio-video system does not limit, on the contrary it increases transparency for the journalists and the public and it improves their work conditions.

The media representatives posed their concerns on the new amendments to the Mass Media Regulation and demanded the review of some paragraphs related to: allowing the physical presence of journalists in parliamentary committees; enabling them to have some video plans for certain minutes; allowing the use of mobile devices in the committees' rooms; not being accompanied by the security services and by the institution's press office; allowing journalists and media staff to move in the other environments, beyond those defined in the Regulation.

At the end of the meeting, the Secretary General thanked the journalists and assured them that their requests will be forwarded for review to the Speaker of Parliament and to the Bureau of the Parliament of Albania."