

 Permanent Representation
of Austria to the Council of
Europe in Strasbourg

Strasbourg, 05 August 2021

Dear Director, 

With reference to your mail dated 2 July 2020 regarding alert No. 77/2020 “Journalist Nurettin Civandag Assaulted in Vienna after Filming Pro-Kurdish Demonstration”, published on the *Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists* website equally on 2 July 2020, I have the honor to transmit herewith the response by the Austrian authorities:

“General Remarks

Due to the increased number of complaints by journalists that the freedom of the press was violated during demonstrations, immediate measures have been taken by the Vienna Police Directorate (LPD Vienna) to increase their protection:

- First, media contact officers have been set up as the first point of contact for journalists after alleged restrictions, as well as for the initial recording of criminal offenses or administrative offenses. This measure has already proven very successful.
- Second, the on-going police evaluation of the situation includes possible tensions between demonstrators and present media representatives that could require action.
- Third, the LPD Vienna offers a de-escalation training tailored for journalists in order to increase safety by avoiding misunderstandings and threats.

To conclude, the Austrian police wishes to assure that they intervene immediately if dangerous attacks on journalists are perceived or when they are requested to stop them. The police provide first aid and take care of the criminal prosecution of the offense (reporting of reports, preservation of evidence, measures to investigate the accused and informing the victims about their rights in the proceedings).

Special Remarks

Concerning the Case „Journalist Nurettin Civandag Assaulted in Vienna after Filming Pro-Kurdish Demonstration“, the victim confirmed to the police – quoted and translated from the police records:

I have been present at the riots between the Turks and Kurds and have also reported on them. When I was standing at the corner of Favoritenstrasse and Pernerstorfergasse, I was suddenly surrounded by five men. They said to me that they disagree with an article that I wrote because, according to them, it was written against the Turks and for the Kurds. All of a sudden the men were attacking me, and I'm not exactly sure, but I think two of the five men hit me with their fists. I tried to defend myself as best I could and protect my face. Shortly afterwards, they ran away, got into a car, and drove away. I couldn't see any license plates. My head was injured in the incident and my teeth were knocked out.

Due to the victim's complaint, the police investigations led to the identification of four of the five attackers, and they have been reported for public prosecution.”

I should be grateful for your publishing this response on the Platform website.

Sincerely yours,



Gerhard JANDL

Ambassador, Permanent Representative

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