

## **Alert No. 105/2023 BNT Reporter Forcefully Removed from Public Event of Far-Right Vazrazhdane Party**

The Republic of Bulgaria would like to present the following information regarding the reported case of forceful expulsion of the BNT journalist Tsveta Stratieva from a public event of the Political Party "Vazrazhdane" on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023:

To establish whether there was a violation within the meaning the Penal Code of the Republic of Bulgaria, the competent authorities have conducted fact-checking investigation. Information was gathered from the General Director of BNT, the leader of the Political Party "Vazrazhdane", and the concerned journalist and vlogger from BNT, Ms Tzveta Stratieva.

It has been established that Mrs Stratieva presence at the event of the Political Party "Vazrazhdane" on 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2023 was part of her vlogging activities during the election campaign for parliamentary elections at the time. Ms Stratieva was asked to leave the event by leader of the Political Party "Vazrazhdane". The journalist stated that rude and offensive language was used by other persons present at the event. She noted that she was not threatened. On a later stage, she has received an apology by the leader of the Political Party "Vazrazhdane".

Based on the facts gathered, the investigations concluded that there are no reasons for initiating pre-trial proceedings and there are no acts that could be qualified as criminal under the Penal Code.

Ms Stratieva could initiate a civil proceeding regarding the events.