

Additional information – May 2020

The Ministry of the Interior and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have launched the **Be Safe mobile phone app** which enables the victims of violence to reach help via a single click.

The application enables the victims of violence to immediately send an alert that they are in danger, report domestic violence and ask for help. The message with the exact geolocation and the phone number is sent directly to the National SOS Helpline for victims of domestic violence and its activists will react immediately. The data is completely safe, and the professional staff has been trained to act in such situations. The app offers numerous features including adding the numbers of trusted individuals or organisations by the users, that they can contact in case they find themselves in danger. Also, this app has educational and informative content, including all relevant contacts, key explanations about the victim's rights, practical advice, self-defence videos, as well as details on the Protocol for action, prevention and protection against domestic violence. This overarching document prescribes all relevant procedures and defines institutional co-operation in relation to domestic violence and violence against women. The app has been created during the coronavirus pandemic, in times when the measures of restricted movement and social isolation reduce the possibility to get out of violent relationships and risky situations. However, this is also a long-term solution for all those situations where the victim is unable to speak in front of the perpetrator of violence and where they need help in the shortest possible deadline.

On the occasion of launch of the app and promotional campaign, the Minister of the Interior, Mevludin Nuhodžić, said: "In these challenging times of the fight against the coronavirus, when the risk of domestic violence is increasing, the Government of Montenegro and UNDP are launching an SOS mobile phone platform that enables quick reporting of exposure to violence. In this way, we would like to emphasise that violence in the family is not a private matter. It is an issue that affects us all and permeates the society as a whole. This is why our aim is to use the app to also encourage and instigate the victims to report violence." He also stressed that the responsible authorities are working intensively and devotedly, even during the pandemic, on prevention of violence and protection of victims. "For the Police it is of the utmost priority to ensure responsible and immediate action following each violence report, along with the implementation of urgent measures. This is why my message to victims of violence is – seek help and you will be safe and protected", Minister Nuhodžić concluded.