

Reponse of the Croatian authorities with regard to the alert *Faktograf* Journalist Melita Vrsaljko Assaulted in the Street and at her Home

With reference to the alert of 19 July 2024 concerning the attack on Faktograf journalist Melita Vrsaljko on July 15, the Zadar Police Department announced the following:

The Ministry of Culture and Media strongly condemns the incident and attack on journalist Melita Vrsaljko in Nadine and fully supports freedom of expression and freedom of the media. However, the Ministry of Culture and Media condemns any form of insults and threats, any violation of rights and threats to the safety of journalists. Please note that the Ministry of Culture and Media implements specific initiatives and activities as part of national measures to strengthen the safety of journalists, all in accordance with the recommendation of the European Commission on guaranteeing the protection, safety and strengthening of the position of journalists and other media workers in the EU. <https://min-kulture.gov.hr/vijesti-8/na-sastanku-osce-a-o-projektu-sigurnost-novinara-predstavljene-hrvatske-inicijative/25680>

The Zadar Police Department reported on July 16, around 2 p.m that the officers of the Benkovac-Obrovac Police Station reacted promptly in the case of Melita Vrsaljko. Due to the violation of public order and peace, an **indictment proposal was submitted** to the competent court against the 36-year-old Croatian citizen, and a **protective measure** was issued prohibiting her from approaching and establishing contact with the injured 31-year-old Croatian citizen (journalist).

According to the police, it was established that the 36-year-old woman came to the victim's (journalist) residence where she verbally and then physically attacked her, throwing her cell phone from her hand to the ground. In further proceedings, the participants of the event refused the offered medical assistance, according to written information from the Zadar Police Department.

The Zadar Police Department also reported:

Because of the above-mentioned incident, Iva Perić, a 36-year-old Croatian citizen, was formally charged to the Municipal Court in Zadar due to reasonable suspicion that she had committed an offense under Article 13 of the Act on Public Order and Peace Offences, on which occasion she was immediately issued with an Order on Determining Measures of caution prohibiting approaching, establishing and maintaining contact with the injured journalist Melita Vrsaljko at a distance of no less than 30 meters.

The Municipal Court in Zadar immediately issued a decision extending the precautionary measure of banning Iva Perić, a 36-year-old Croatian citizen, from approaching the injured journalist Melita Vrsaljko at up to 30 meters and prohibiting her from establishing and maintaining direct or indirect contact with the same.

<https://n1info.hr/vijesti/novinarka-napadnuta-u-kuci-u-nadinu/>

<https://www.057info.hr/vijesti/2024-07-17/policija-podnijela-prekrsajnu-prijavu-protiv-36-godisnjakinje-koja-je-napala-novinarku-melitu-vrsaljko-u-njenoj-kuci-u-nadinu/>

The Protocol on police behaviour when learning about a criminal offence committed to the detriment of journalists and other media workers in the performance of their work tasks clearly indicates the behaviour of the police in relation to knowledge of a criminal offense, which was not the case in the described events, as confirmed by the Deputy Municipal State Attorney in Zadar, with which the police officers had previously consulted. For the reasons described, and conditioned by the legal qualification of events and facts that have been established up to this point, it can be confirmed that the police acted in accordance with the signed Protocol.

The Ministry of Culture and Media works to ensure the highest standards for all media operating in the Republic of Croatia.

<https://www.nacional.hr/napad-na-novinarku-oglasilo-se-ministarstvo-kulture-najostrije-osudujemo-ovaj-incident/>

<https://www.tportal.hr/vijesti/clanak/ministarstvo-kulture-najostrije-osudilo-napad-na-novinarku-u-nadinu-20240717>

<https://www.index.hr/vijesti/clanak/ministarstvo-kulture-osudilo-napad-na-novinarku/2583380.aspx>

<https://www.hnd.hr/ministarstvo-kulture-i-medija-ostro-osudilo-napad-na-novinarku-melitu-vrsaljko>