

## **Response of the Estonian authorities to an alert dated 28 August 2017 on the Platform to Promote the Protection of Journalism and the Safety of Journalists**

Estonia ranks 12<sup>th</sup> among 180 countries according to World Press Freedom Index 2017 and has thus proven how highly it values the freedom of the press.

Estonia provides a safe and open working environment to all the journalists and media outlets who respect and follow the principles of conduct of journalists defined by International Federation of Journalists (IFJ, Declaration of Principles on the Conduct of Journalists, adopted in 1954, amended in 1986).

*According to the Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)4 The exercise of the right to freedom of expression carries with it duties and responsibilities, as stated in Article 10, paragraph 2. In the context of journalism, relevant duties and responsibilities are understood as including acting in good faith in order to provide accurate and reliable information, in accordance with the ethics of journalism.*

Hence, platforms, which frequently and consistently disseminate information that is inaccurate, distorted or false, cannot be considered acting in accordance with the Recommendation of the Council of Europe.

In its Resolution of 23 November 2016, the European Parliament called Sputnik (a company of MIA Rossiya Segodnya group) a *'pseudo- news agency'*.

Guided by these above-mentioned principles, the government agencies of Estonia reserve the right to deny access to media events to individuals or organizations, which have proven not to follow the principles of journalism.

The same principles are valid for other high-level meetings held in Estonia during the EU presidency.

All information made available at the press events in question will be livestreamed and thus instantly and publicly accessible.