

PLATFORM TO PROMOTE THE PROTECTION OF JOURNALISM AND SAFETY OF JOURNALISTS

First response by the Government of Iceland to the platform alert concerning investigation of Icelandic Police of Four Journalists over Alleged Privacy Breach.

27 April 2022

The Icelandic Government takes note of the alert published by the Council of Europe's Platform to Promote the Protection of Journalism and Safety of Journalists concerning the investigation of the Icelandic Police of Four Journalists over Alleged Privacy Breach.

The promotion and protection of human rights, safeguarding the rule of law, democratic values and freedoms, is a core priority for the Government of Iceland, in both domestic and foreign policies. This includes the freedom of the media and freedom of opinion and expression, as well as an independent judiciary and a well-functioning and trustworthy justice system.

Iceland's national police force and the judicial system must work in accordance with human rights and the fundamental principles of rule of law, in this case as in any other cases. The Icelandic Police works in accordance with the Code of Criminal Procedure, no. 88/2008, and according to art. 2 of the Police Act no. 90/1996. The Icelandic Police is bound by the international obligations that Iceland has undertaken, including the European Convention on Human Rights that was incorporated into Icelandic law with Act no. 62/1994. Judgements of the European Court of Human Rights are precedents for the interpretation of the obligations undertaken by Iceland in this regard.

The case referred to in the alert is under investigation in its due process under the Icelandic legal and judicial system. The Icelandic Government and relevant ministries do not have information on individual cases and are currently not in a position to provide further information on the case while due and impartial process is underway for the case at hand.

Impartiality of the police and prosecution services is an important feature of the Icelandic legal system. The investigation and prosecution of individual cases is under the scrutiny of independent Icelandic Courts, taking into consideration the aforementioned international obligations. The Icelandic Government will formally reply to the alert published by the Council of Europe's Platform to Promote the Protection of Journalism and Safety of Journalists as soon as further information is available and the case has been processed.