

**Subject: Reply by Montenegro concerning an alert no 230/2024 on the Safety of Journalists Platform of the Council of Europe**

"Pobjeda's" journalist Ana Raičković was attacked in Podgorica on the evening of November 10th by businessman Zoran Bećirović, his son Luka and members of their security team Mladen Mijatović, who is also an MOI officer. The attackers also targeted the members of Raičković's family who were accompanying her, and after the attack they also vandalized her car. After the incident, Raičković was transferred to the Emergency Center. On November 11 2024 the police arrested Bećirović and three other people on suspicion of violent behavior. The prosecutor ordered Bećirović and Mijatović to be detained for 30 days which was later extended until the decision of the High Court. The Ministry of Internal Affairs initiated disciplinary proceedings against Mijatović. The trial began on January 31th, 2025 in the Basic Court in Podgorica, where the prosecutor confirmed the qualification of the act as violent behavior.

Montenegro emphasizes the key role of media freedom in a democratic society and remains committed to further cooperation with the Platform to improve the media environment. Freedom of media is crucial to the functioning of a democratic society, and the Government of Montenegro is dedicated to upholding the independence of the media and creating an environment that supports safe and unrestricted work of journalists. Continuous efforts are being made to enhance media freedom and support the safety and welfare of journalists through the effective implementation of recently adopted strategies and an updated legal framework.