

*Romania guarantees, upholds and protects the freedom of the media, a key pillar of our democracy, and respects the fundamental right of journalists to practice their profession in full safety and independence.*

*The case highlighted in the current alert ought to be considered a regrettable exception and is not, under any circumstances, representative for the condition or treatment of journalists in our country. After the incident, both the President of Romania, Mr. Klaus Iohannis, and Prime Minister Nicolae Ciucă have vigorously denounced this unfortunate episode and sent out a strong message in support of journalists. They have called on the relevant authorities to shed light on the case and investigate its circumstances, bringing perpetrators to justice.*

*The Romanian Police spokesperson immediately issued a public statement and made clarifications with regard to the incident. Police have ever since informed without delay mass-media and the public opinion about the status of the investigations and measures taken, and have provided timely updates on the matter at stake.*

*With regard to the current alert, the Romanian Police would like to further clarify the course of events which took place on December 10, 2021. Bucharest Police Precinct no. 4 was called via the 112 emergency line by the office of Senator Diana Șoșoacă, on account of a conflict the Senator was having with a team of journalists. Upon arrival of the police crew, while conducting the preliminary inquiry at the scene, tensions escalated and the spouse of Senator Șoșoacă physically assaulted one of the police officers and journalist Lucia Goracci. After the conflict had been settled, the Italian journalists were duly informed of their right to press charges over the assault.*

*Thereby, RAI UNO crew willingly decided to go to the Police Precinct no. 4. Shortly after their arrival at the Precinct, Senator Șoșoacă and her spouse also arrived and stated they wanted to press charges against the journalists, whom they accused of having removed several documents from the Senator's office and of carrying drugs. RAI UNO team were informed about the Senator's claims, and they therefore decided to halt their own claims and dialogue with the police officers until the arrival of an Italian Embassy representative at the Police Precinct. According to the legal provisions applicable in such a situation, the Italian TV crew were searched for the presumed missing documents and drugs, but none were found.*

*A consular officer from the Italian Embassy in Bucharest joined shortly the journalists, and an authorised interpreter was requested to assist the TV crew during the inquiry. The hearings were completed earlier that night for two members of the team, who decided to wait for Lucia Goracci's hearing to end, so that they may leave the Police precinct together. The Italian Embassy's representative remained present throughout the proceedings. The RAI UNO journalists were treated with respect, were in no way indicted, nor held abusively in the Police Precinct. All proceedings were co-ordinated by a prosecutor from Bucharest District 1 Court.*

*The claims filed by the RAI UNO journalists and by senator Șoșoacă are currently under investigation. Senator's Șoșoacă spouse was placed under judicial control for 60 days.*