



**MISSION PERMANENTE DE SERBIE  
AUPRES DU CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE**

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No. 387-4/2020

Strasbourg, 19 October 2020

Dear Mr Gruden,

Please find attached the information by the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Serbia sent in response to the following Alerts published on the Platform for the Safety of Journalists and Protection of Journalism of the Council of Europe:

- on the attacks and obstruction of journalists and media workers while covering Belgrade, Novi Sad and Niš protests (on 15 July 2020),
- on the assault on journalist Saša Mikić (on 25 June) and
- on the threat to journalist Jeton Ismaili's family (on 20 August).

Yours sincerely,

Aleksandra Đurović  
Ambassador

Mr Matjaž Gruden  
Director of the  
Directorate of Democratic Participation  
Strasbourg

**Subject: Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists – alerts concerning attacks on journalists during the protests in Belgrade, Novi Sad and Niš,  
Reply.**

With reference to alerts published on the Council of Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists concerning attacks on journalists during the protests in Belgrade, Novi Sad and Niš, it should be noted that the Ministry of the Interior is taking all necessary measures and steps within its competence to check and establish factual situation in every single case.

Regarding allegations about attacks on journalists during the protest in Belgrade, we wish to inform you as follows:

Concerning the allegations about the attempt to prevent N1 TV crew and journalist Jelena Zorić from reporting and inflicting injuries to a journalist of “Nova” portal, we would like to inform that the Sector for Internal Control of the Ministry of the Interior is working on collecting information as requested by the competent prosecutor’s office.

Acting within their powers established by the law, police officers of the Ministry of the Interior investigated allegations related to events of 8 July 2020 (injuries inflicted to “Nova” portal journalist Marko Radonjić and attack on “Nova” portal journalists Milica Božinović and Nataša Latković) and established that they were not reported or recorded following the procedure prescribed by the law, and that no further actions were taken.

Regarding the injuries inflicted to “Beta News Agency” journalist, Žikica Stevanović, we would like to inform that a report on this event was submitted to the competent prosecutor’s office in Belgrade, as well as that additional measures have been taken to identify the perpetrator of this criminal offence.

We particularly wish to emphasize that, in accordance with the Methodology for conducting investigations in cases of abuse by the police, the investigation of cases of alleged abuse is conducted by a public prosecutor. Taking into account that a public prosecutor can exceptionally entrust the execution of certain evidentiary actions to the Sector for Internal Control of the Ministry of the Interior, we wish to inform that upon receiving orders of the competent prosecutor’s offices in relation to attacks on journalists during events in Belgrade, Novi Sad and Niš in July 2020, police officers of the Sector for Internal Control of the Ministry of the Interior will act upon them as a matter of priority.

As regards allegations about attacks on journalists during the protests in Novi Sad and Niš, please be informed of the following:

On 8 July 2020, during the protest, several people took part in breaking the glass on the front door of the official premises of the Radio-Television of Vojvodina in Novi Sad, which was reported to the competent prosecutor’s office in Novi Sad, which qualified the event as violent behavior under Article 344 paragraph 1 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Serbia. In relation to this event, criminal charges were filed against two persons while one person was ordered detention for 48 hours.

Regarding the attack on the crew of the Radio Television of Serbia (RTS) and the injury of cameraman Lazar Vukadinović and journalist Milan Srdić on 8 July 2020, we would like to inform that police officers of the Ministry of the Interior notified the competent prosecutor's office in Novi Sad of criminal charges being filed in relation to this event. The prosecutor's office qualified the event as a criminal offense of violent behaviour under Article 344, paragraph 1 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Serbia.

On 13 July 2020, police officers identified and arrested a suspect who, in the presence of defence counsel, confessed to having committed a criminal offence. The police officers of the Ministry of the Interior will take further action to identify a suspect who took and broke the camera of the cameraman Lazar Vukadinović.

In relation to the attack on the journalists of the Radio Television of Serbia and the cameraman Ivan Stambolić in Niš on 8 July 2020, we would like to inform that it was not reported or recorded. In a telephone conversation with police officers from the Ministry of the Interior, RTS journalist Lidija Georgijeva and RTS cameraman Ivan Stambolić stated that they would not file charges in relation to this event.