



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

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No. *84-1/2025*

Subject: The reply on alerts No. 221/2024 and No. 223/2024

Strasbourg, 4 February 2025

Dear Mr Gruden,

Please find attached the official information provided by the Supreme Public Prosecution of the Republic of Serbia in response to Alerts No. 221/2024 and No. 223/2024 published on the Council of Europe's Platform for the Safety of Journalists and Protection of Journalism on 8, November 2024.

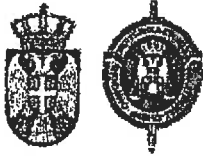
We look forward to publishing official responses on the Platform website.

Yours sincerely,


Suzana Grubješić
Ambassador



Mr Matjaž Gruden
Director
Directorate of Democratic Participation
Strasbourg



**REPUBLIC OF SERBIA
SUPREME PUBLIC
PROSECUTION**

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MP no. 517/24

14 January 2025

Belgrade

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA
TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE**

Reference number: 708-1/2024

With reference to your letter under the above ref. number of 8 November 2024 regarding the letter from the competent directorate of the Council of Europe informing you that two new alerts related to Serbia have been published on the Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists, we are informing you of the following:

1.

- Regarding the event that occurred on 5 November 2024 in Novi Sad, when an unknown person hit the cameraman of N1 Television, **Nikola Popović**, on the hands, causing him to drop his camera, which was damaged on that occasion, on 6 November 2024 a criminal complaint was filed with the Basic Public Prosecution Office in Novi Sad, on the basis of which a case was opened against the unknown perpetrator. On 8 November 2024 an interview was conducted with the aggrieved party about the circumstances of the aforementioned event, during which the aggrieved party added that another person, during the broadcasting, addressed a series of insults to him and the journalist who was present. In relation to the above events, he stated that no one had threatened him, and that his impression was that the person who hit him on the hands did not want to hit him, but rather that his goal was to get the camera to be put away, to stop filming them, and that he did not perceive it as a physical attack on him and that he did not feel scared or threatened.

On the same day (8 November 2024), a request was sent to the Police department in Novi Sad for collection of the necessary information. It results from the submitted report that an

interview was conducted with the journalist who reported from the protest with the aggrieved party and that further actions are being taken to identify the perpetrators.

It results from the report of the Police department in Novi Sad dated 29 November 2024 that a person who addressed insults to the aggrieved party and the journalist during the live program has been identified. The Basic Public Prosecution Office in Novi Sad has filed a request to initiate misdemeanour proceedings against this person for the misdemeanour of Insulting, committing violence, threatening or fighting under Article 9, paragraph 1 of the Law on Public Order and Peace.

In relation to the person who damaged the camera, it was determined that the actions he is charged with constitute the criminal act of Preventing the Printing and Distributing Printed Matters and Broadcasting Programs under Article 149 of the Criminal Code. Measures aiming at establishing the identity of the perpetrator are ongoing.

- Regarding the event that occurred on 5 November 2024 in Novi Sad when the cameraman of the media company "Euronews" **Mirko Todorovic** was thrown to the ground by an unidentified person, a criminal complaint was filed with the Basic Public Prosecution Office in Novi Sad on 6 November 2024, based on which a case was opened against an unknown perpetrator. On 8 November 2024, a request was sent to the Police department in Novi Sad to collect the necessary information and the aggrieved party was contacted. Given that the aggrieved party was absent due to work commitments, an interview with him was conducted on 12 November 2024.

On 22 November 2024, a report was received from the Police department in Novi Sad related to the checks that were carried out and statements obtained from witnesses to the event.

It results from the additional report of the Police department in Novi Sad of 29 November 2024 that the perpetrator of this criminal act has been identified, and evidentiary actions are ongoing before the Basic Public Prosecution Office in Novi Sad due to grounds for suspicion that he committed the criminal act of Violent Behaviour under Article 344, paragraph 1 of the Criminal Code.

2.

Regarding the alert related to the statement of the Mayor of Belgrade, Aleksandar Šapić, from the conference held on 24 October 2024 that journalists are "manipulators" and that reporting about him is biased and false, after which the Journalists' Association of Serbia condemned the way in which the mayor communicates with journalists, that instead of answering journalists' questions, he insults and targets, which may endanger the safety of journalists working at TV N1, and a reporter from that television station stated that journalists are afraid of physical attack, we emphasize that the mayor's statement may possibly contain elements of the criminal act of Insult under Article 170 of the Criminal Code, for which the public prosecution does not have the authority to initiate criminal proceedings, given that the criminal prosecution for the aforementioned criminal act is undertaken upon a private complaint.

Public Prosecutor of the
Supreme Public Prosecution
Branko Stamenkovic

