

**Statement of the Permanent Representative of the Slovak Republic to the Council of
Europe to the alert submitted
to the Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists on 16
May 2018 entitled „Slovak Police Seize Mobile Phone of Czech Investigative Reporter“**

In the process of criminal investigation of the murder of the Slovak journalist Ján Kuciak, the Slovak police called the Czech Investigative Reporter Pavla Holcova in evidence on 15 May 2018. The reason for taking this procedural measure was her cooperation with deceased Ján Kuciak on preparation of information concerning articles to be published in the press.

According to the domestic legislation, a prosecutor in charge pursues supervision of the pre-trial procedure. In this particular case, the prosecutor concluded that a police officer had not exerted pressure on Ms Holcová, had not threatened her or had not treated her in inappropriate manner.

The prosecutor however concluded that a part of hearing of the witness had exceeded the object of evidence and the proceeding of the criminal case. The prosecutor drew the police officer's attention to this issue on 21 May 2018 during a joint meeting.

The same day, the prosecutor likewise revoked the decision of the police officer of 16 May 2018 regarding taking on EUROPOL in order to carry out an expert examination of the mobile phone concerned. The reason for such a decision of the prosecutor was the fact that the object of the expert examination should also have been data and information stored on the mobile phone having no relevance to the object of evidence and the proceeding of the criminal case. Accordingly, the police officer issued a decision to return the mobile phone to Ms Holcova on 4 June 2018 and on the same day, the mobile phone was returned to Ms Holcova's lawyer.