Bratislava, 5 October 2020

**INPUT OF THE SLOVAK NATIONAL CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS TO THE REQUEST OF THE SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON THE SITUATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS**

*Slovak National Centre for Human Rights (the “Centre”) is a national human rights institution established in the Slovak Republic, accredited with status B by the Global Association of National Human Rights Institutions. As an NHRI, the Centre is a member of the European Network of NHRIs (ENNHRI). The Centre was established by the Act of the Slovak National Council No. 308/1993 Coll. on the Establishment of the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights. Pursuant to Act No. 365/2004 Coll. on Equal Treatment in Some Areas and on Protection from Discrimination, and on amendments and supplements of certain acts, as amended (the Anti-discrimination Act), the Centre also acts as the only Slovak equality body. As an NHRI and Equality Body, the Centre performs a wide range of tasks in the area of human rights and fundamental freedoms including the observance of the principle of equal treatment.*

*The Centre among other powers:*

*1) monitors and evaluates the observance of human rights and the observance of the equal treatment principle;*

*2) conducts research and surveys to provide data in the area of human rights; gathers and distributes information in this area;*

*3) prepares educational activities and participating in information campaigns aimed at increasing tolerance of the society;*

*4) provides legal assistance to victims of discrimination and manifestations of intolerance;*

*5) issues expert opinions on matters of the observance of the equal treatment principle;*

*6) performs independent inquiries related to discrimination;*

*7) prepares and publishes reports and recommendations on issues related to discrimination; and*

*8) provides library services and services in the area of human rights.*

**The Centre submits following answers to the request concerning the situation of human rights defenders in Slovakia:**

**Contact Details:** (edited for public release)

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| --- | --- |
| **Type of Stakeholder** | National Human Rights Organisation |
| **Name of Stakeholder**  **Name of Survey Respondent** | Slovak National Centre for Human Rights |
| **Email** |  |
| **Telephone** |  |
| **Address** |  |
| **Can we attribute responses to this questionnaire to your Institution or Organisation publicly?** | Yes |

**1. Does your Institution/Organisation accept the legitimate right to defend human rights and if a defender is killed in the course of their work, do you publicly condemn it?**

The Centre fully recognize one's right to defend human rights. In case of a death of a human rights defender or a journalist defending human rights in the course of their work, the Centre always publicly condemns it. The Centre have been actively working and providing aid to many human rights defenders working in Slovakia, especially defending rights of LGBTIQ+ communities and other vulnerable groups or right to clean environment. Some of these human rights defenders are bullied or threatened by private entities, some by parliament parties or a state itself.

**2. Have there been any cases of human rights defenders killed in your country (or in the geographic area of responsibility of your organisation) since 1 June 2019 up to 30 June 2020?**

No. The Centre is not aware of any human rights defender to be killed in Slovakia in the referencing period.

**3. How many convictions of perpetrators of killing of human rights defender were there in your country/geographic area of responsibility since 1 June 2019 – 30 June 2020?**

In the referencing period, there were two persons convicted from the death of a journalist defending human rights – Mr. Ján Kuciak. The young reporter wrote about corrupt Slovak businessmen, EU subsidy and VAT fraud, and Italy's notorious 'Ndrangheta mafia and its attempts to cultivate ties with Slovak politicians. He was gunned down with his fiancée inside their home in the capital Bratislava in 2017. The killings sparked mass protests which prompted at that time the Prime Minister Robert Fico to resign.

**4. Does your Institution/Organisation have a procedure to respond to death threats to human rights defenders?**

No.

**5. Does your Institution/Organisation have or would be willing to put in place legal guarantees and other protection measures to allow human rights defenders to do their work without persecution?**

Yes. The Centre would be willing to put in a place legal guarantees and other protection measures to allow human rights defenders to do their work without persecution. However, the experience of the Centre of working on placing such guarantees and measures is very limited.

**6. Could you please share good practices (evidence-based) that have proofed effective to respond to death threats? And to prevent them from escalating into the killing(s) of human rights defenders?**

There are no evidence-based good practices to be shared from Slovakia.