

Office for Human and Minority Rights
Sector for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights
Belgrade
May 20, 2019

**Annexes of the competent authorities of the Republic of Serbia
for the preparation of the report of the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
on the topic of journalists' safety and, in this regard, the problem of impunity
in accordance with the Resolution GS UN 72/175**

In order to ensure a favorable environment for freedom of expression, the Law on Public Information and the Media (Article 4) has prescribed that direct and indirect discrimination against media, journalists and other persons in the field of public information, in particular due to their political affiliation and beliefs or other personal preferences is forbidden; that the free flow of information through the media, as well as the editorial autonomy of the media, and in particular through pressure, threats, or the blackmail of editors, journalists or sources of information should not be jeopardized; that a physical attack on the editor, journalists and other persons involved in the collection and dissemination of information through the media is punishable by law.

The Working Group of the Government of the Republic of Serbia has prepared the Proposal of the strategic document on the development of the public information system in the Republic of Serbia, in which special attention was paid to improving the safety of journalists and protecting journalism. The drafting of the Strategy's Proposal was characterized by transparency and inclusiveness, which was reflected in the conduct of the public debate from February 1 to March 1, 2019, and within which four roundtables were organized, in Novi Sad, Nis, Cacak and Belgrade.

In the process of adopting the strategy, the existing situation in the field of journalist safety has been analyzed and measures for improving the security conditions for the work of journalists and media workers have been defined, including measures for creating conditions for adequate level of protection of journalistic sources of information, achieving an adequate level of information security of journalists and media, and achieving adequate protection of the professional autonomy of journalists and editors. The strategy proposal should be adopted by the Government of the Republic of Serbia in mid-2019.

Confirming the commitment to strengthening the overall protection and safety of journalists, as well as building confidence and creating a stimulating environment for the work of journalists and media workers, the Ministry of Culture and Information has repeatedly issued, including on the occasion of the International Day Against the Impunity of Crimes against Journalists, a principled stance to harshly condemn every type of violence against media representatives or limitation of their work in any situation, and encouraged all state authorities responsible for resolving such cases to correctly investigate and sanction them.

The Ministry through project co-financing in order to improve professional and ethical standards in the field of public information supports projects related to the protection of freedom of expression and media freedoms.

Supported projects deal with topics on the position of journalists, relations between journalists and authorities, strengthening the capacities of media workers, combating corruption, self-censorship and censorship in the media, and also projects are being supported for organizing thematic conferences and expert meetings on media freedom, journalist safety , protection of rebels, minority and local media, or where relevant research results in this domain are presented.

In 2018, the project of the Independent Association of Journalists of Serbia (NUNS) entitled "Media Freedom and Safety of Journalists in Serbia" was supported, followed by the project of the Union of Journalists of Serbia "Let's Protect Journalists, Let's Defend Journalism" and the project of the Eutopia Association "Let's Protect Sources: Suggestions for Improving Legal frameworks for the Protection of Journalists and Their Sources."