



Right of reply by Serbia – Working session 5

We would like to exercise our right of reply to the intervention by the delegation of the United States of America.

Our delegation has already intervened this morning, but we would like to add some information on existing mechanisms for protection and improving the safety of journalists, including female journalists.

We would like to particularly focus on the Working Group on Safety of Journalists, as one of the rare models in the OSCE area, comprised of representatives of the Public Prosecutor's Office and Ministry of Interior of Serbia, together with representatives of associations of journalists. The Working Group was created in line with the Agreement on Cooperation and Measures to Raise the Level of Safety of Journalists signed in 2016 between the above-mentioned actors.

Members of the Working group meet regularly in order to discuss actions of state authorities in cases against journalists and all signatories of the Agreement timely fulfilled their obligations foreseen in the Action Plan for the Safety of Journalists for 2018 and 2019. Moreover, the Republic Prosecutor's Office is submitting to all members of the Permanent Working Group a Bulletin –Information in all cases of criminal offenses committed against journalist from January 2016 and is drafting a new Instruction on prescribed actions of Public Prosecutors in line with the conclusions of the Subgroup for Analysis of the Criminal Code.

We would also like to draw your attention to one project developed by the Association of Independent Electronic Media and co-financed by the Serbian Ministry of Culture, namely the "Improvement of Mechanisms and Infrastructure to combat threats and violence against journalists". This project includes an online platform dedicated to the safety of journalists, legal interpretation and guidelines, free legal assistance and representation for all journalist, media workers, editors-in-chief and media owners.

Concerning the mentioned cases of dead threats to Albanian journalist Zana Ćimili and Serbian journalist Tanja Vojtehovska, we would like to underline that concrete measures were taken by the relevant

authorities and that the perpetrators were swiftly identified, arrested and brought to justice. The highest officials of Serbia also condemned these cases.

Thank you.