

**Ms Vera Jourova, Vice President
Commissioner for Values and Transparency
European Commission**

Brussels, 5th January 2024

Urgent Appeal Regarding Ongoing Violations of Press Freedom at RTV Slovenia

Dear Esteemed Vice-President of the European Commission, Ms Vera Jourova,

I trust this message finds you well. As has sadly become routine, I find it necessary to draw your attention to the persisting transgressions against journalistic and editorial freedom orchestrated by the current RTV Slovenia management. The latest incident involves the revocation of security access cards for a group of reporters, preventing them from accessing the RTV premises and carrying out their professional duties.

Preceding this development, just before the new year, the new management temporarily laid off 15 employees for one month, citing business and organizational reasons. They claimed an inability to fulfill the work specified in their employment contracts due to financial constraints and urgent internal restructuring. Notably, of the 2500 employees, those affected by the temporary lay-offs were conspicuously individuals who have long been a thorn on the side of the Slovenian Government. Let me remind you again that the prime minister himself admitted to political purges that he encouraged at RTV Slovenia. This selective action seems to be a clear political maneuver against journalists who do not conform to the current government's narrative. To add further insult to injury, these journalists are now denied access to their offices as their security access cards have been revoked.

A prominent editor-in-chief of the news program on TV SLO 2, part of the aforementioned group not overtly pro-government, has labeled the management's actions as illegal, describing them as bullying and an abuse of authority. Seeking resolution, they have involved inspection services and plan to engage the police, emphasizing the need for an explanation as to why access to their workplaces is being denied.

This unfortunate incident is the latest in a series of troubling events that have unfolded since the controversial assumption of control by the new management, sanctioned by an RTV Slovenia Act with questionable constitutionality. In previous correspondences, I highlighted mass dismissals of journalists, the cancellation of critical broadcasts, sudden terminations, and reports of persistent harassment, particularly targeting journalists not aligned with the new

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leadership and government. In my earlier letter, I informed you of the rumored cancellation of a satirical show known for its criticism of the current government. Regrettably, that rumor has now materialized into reality.

It appears that the anticipated purge of journalists critical of the government, as hinted by Prime Minister Robert Golob, is actively underway. Esteemed Vice-President, how much longer can the European Commission overlook this evident purge at the Slovenian public broadcaster?

Sincerely,



Romana Tomc MEP

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