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Brussels, 2 September 2020
Ares(2020)

Dear Safe Journalists Network,

Thank you for your letter in which you describe your concerns with the safety of journalists in Serbia, in particular following the recent protests.

The European Commission condemns any attacks or threats against journalists. A free press is a cornerstone of democracy, and freedom of expression is one of the European Union's fundamental values. A democracy cannot work without free and independent media. Respect for the freedom of expression and legal certainty are essential, and it is crucial that journalists are able to do their job free of any threat of violence, harassment and intimidation to ensure that citizens have access to all information.

The European Commission pays close attention to the freedom of expression and free media as indispensable elements of any democracy. It will continue to raise these matters with the Serbian authorities in the context of Serbia's accession negotiations with the EU. We expect the Serbian authorities to ensure an effective judicial follow-up to all instances of physical and verbal violence against journalists. The Commission will also provide an overall assessment of Serbia's progress in these areas in its annual enlargement package. At the same time, we will continue to provide financial support to media in Serbia and other candidate countries.

Let me take this opportunity to thank you for your monitoring and reporting, which gives us a fuller picture of how media freedom and freedom of expression are exercised in the Western Balkans. I encourage you to uphold your regular dialogue with us.

Yours sincerely,



Oliver Várhelyi

***Western Balkan's Regional Platform for Advocating
Media Freedom and Journalists' Safety***

*Association of Journalists of Kosovo
Association of Journalists of Macedonia
BH Journalists Association
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