
Malta: Mijatovic (Council of Europe) 5 years after Caruana Galizia's murder, "lack of results in establishing accountability"

"The murder of Daphne Caruana Galizia, the lack of effective results in establishing accountability almost five years later, and the above-mentioned vexatious lawsuits against her family and journalists in Malta show the urgency of strengthening the protection of media actors". The Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Dunja Mijatović, said this in a letter to Maltese Prime Minister Robert Abela. In the run-up to the anniversary of the Maltese journalist's assassination on 16 October, Mr Abela replied that after the conviction of Vincent Muscat, the investigations into the mastermind and the two other persons involved in the murder are being finalised. Since Mijatović in her letter also expressed concerns about the lack of protection for journalists, the lack of transparency in the process leading to the development of anti-SLAPP legislation, the ongoing defamation cases against the family of the Maltese journalist, and about the difficulties that journalists in Malta face in accessing information of public interest, Mr Abela replied by highlighting the measures that Malta is taking, giving assurances that the proposals contained in the draft legislation on the media are "ground-breaking and innovative also within the European context". Ms Mijatović, who published the exchange of letters, acknowledged that it is "a step in the right direction". But, she stressed, "it is crucial to secure a broad public consultation to include the views of civil society and of the journalism community in this legislative process".

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