Republic of Albania

SPECIAL PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE AGAINST CORRUPTION AND ORGANIZED CRIME

No. N Prot., Tirana, on January 1, 2024

Subject: Response to the open letter of the "SafeJournalists" Network

Addressed to: Members of the "Safejournalists" Network and partner organizations of the Rapid Response for Media Freedom (MFRR), as well as Reporters Without Borders

Dear representatives of the media,

The Special Structure Against Corruption and Organized Crime (SPAK) values ​​the communication you have undertaken with our institution and your effort to protect the freedom and integrity of journalists in the context of protecting the public interest. Your consideration on the need for the legality of court proceedings, including cases involving journalists in legal violations, is in full accordance with the philosophy followed by us for the investigation of this case and towards any other subject under the jurisdiction of SPAK.

As it was announced in our press release dated 14.12.2023, the actions related to the checks against Mr. Qyno and the tools seized from him, were carried out in accordance with the law and only after a court decision was made for them. We also set that Mr. Qyno has published information that constitutes an investigative secret. The purpose of releasing these data to the public does not justify the reason of "public information". The publication of these data obstructs justice, intimidates the collaborators of justice, informs organized crime and, above all, endangers public order and security. We underline that the release of these data in violation of the law can seriously endanger the lives of innocent persons and employees of law enforcement agencies.

We believe that there can be no informing the public while committing crime and obstructing the law enforcement agencies to fight organized crime. It would be a serious violation of the integrity and image of the respected journalist profession to abuse professional immunity to face justice.

We highly appreciate the fact that Mr. Qyno has followed all legal steps, presenting his claims before the competent court, giving him the opportunity to control the respect of rights through a proper legal process.

We underline that SPAK considers the media an important ally in fulfilling its constitutional mission in the uncompromising fight against corruption of high officials and organized crime.

SPAK invites journalist members of your esteemed network to support our institution in sensitizing society and the journalist community to denounce and distance themselves from all forms of media abuse and capture of journalists by organized crime and corrupt officials.

We assure you that this issue is being assessed by us with maximum care and in full compliance with the law. Appreciating your interest in bringing this case to our attention, we hope for your understanding of our positions in the legal resolution of this matter.

Thanking you for your cooperation,

Head of SPAK

ALTIN DUMANI