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The Prosecutor's Office of BiH intimidates its critics with criminal prosecution

The BiH Prosecutor's Office announcement that it will examine negative comments about its work and open cases related to this matter presents intimidation of the public by mentioning criminal prosecution and violation of the freedom of speech and opinion

Banja Luka, 20th June, 2019 – The latest information provided to the public by the BiH Prosecutor's Office announces the investigation the Prosecutor's Office of BiH shall conduct in accordance with the law to examine the motives and reasons of the persons sending negative messages about the work of the judiciary through the media, with the final goal to destabilize the judicial system. At the same time, the BiH Prosecutor's Office states that it is under an intense pressure daily, along with the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council of BiH (HJPC), which starts to be an issue for the work of the judiciary.

The announcement of the BiH Prosecutor's Office that it will investigate negative comments on its work and initiate cases related to this matter presents an intimidation of the public by indicating criminal prosecution since such criticism is considered freedom of expression and it is characteristic of democratic societies.

Transparency International in BiH (TI BiH) reminds that interference with the work of the judiciary is considered a criminal offense, and that it is related to the use of physical force, threats, intimidation and other illegal actions aimed at obstructing the criminal proceeding or preventing judges, prosecutors and authorized officials to perform their duties. Criticism provided by the professional and wider public or media reports on the work of the judiciary cannot be shown as the disturbance of the work of the judiciary in any way, nor can it be presented as some illegal pressure.

TI BiH believes that the last announcement of the BiH Prosecutor's Office is an attempt to prevent any further media reports on irregularities in the work of the judiciary and to silence the part of the public that reacted on the information about the latest affairs with judges and prosecutors as the main actors.

The Prosecutor's Office of BiH has been established to, among other things, conduct investigations concerning the criminal offenses which may cause the most severe consequences for the economy, and the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina must provide some serious funds for this. Instead of the Prosecutor's Office dealing with the most serious forms of crime and corruption, citizens in return received a censorship body that deals with their public criticism. The only way in which judiciary can regain its reputation and trust of the citizens is to process gross and political corruption, and not to deal with the media and the critics.

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