



# OMBUDSMAN OF THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

N<sup>o</sup> 8952/28.09.2018

TO MEDIA FREEDOM RAPID RESPONSE



DEAR REPRESENTATIVES OF MEDIA FREEDOM RAPID RESPONSE,

Thank you for your letter.

Regarding your strong concern and disagreement with the new rules and the order according to which Bulgarian journalists must work in the parliament, I would like to inform you that I addressed a recommendation to the Speaker of the National Assembly to provide for guarantee that journalists have complete access to the Parliament. I also insisted that the Speaker holds a meeting with representatives of the media in order to discuss the options of revising this decision, which made drastic changes to the work of the parliamentary journalists. As an Ombudsman, I expressed my first belief that the right balance must be found in order the proper functioning of the MPs and of the media to be ensured.

In relation to the incidents and reported cases of violence against demonstrators and journalists on the night of 2 September, as Ombudsman I would like to inform you that I condemn such actions that fully infringe human rights. In view of this I addressed a recommendation to the Minister of Interior urging for thorough, impartial and effective investigation into the allegations of police violence must be carried out in compliance with the Constitution and the European human rights standards.

I would like to ensure you that I exercise a constant monitoring on the protests in view of the protection of human rights. I had several occasions to request investigations on allegations for violence on citizens from Ministry of Interior in the last few months.

I would like to use this opportunity to thank you for your strong public position and I remain at your disposal.

Sincerely yours,



ASSOC.PROF.DR. DIANA KOVATCHEVA  
OMBUDSMAN OF THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA