

Monthly report on the situation with the human rights in the Republic of Macedonia for December 2017

JUDICIARY

THE REPORT OF THE WORK OF THE WORKING GROUP INSPECTING THE ACMIS SYSTEM PRESENTED

Over the course of December 2017, the Minister of Justice Bilen Saljiji presented the Report on the inspection of the functionality of the information system and the supervision over the implementation of the provisions from the Court Rules of Procedures in the courts.

The insight into the work of the ACCMIS system for automatic computer case allocation in the Macedonian courts was the result of the report by the Priebe expert group, which stated that there are serious indications of abuse of this system.

This insight was conducted during the months of October and November 2017 within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice as stipulated in the Law on Courts and the Court Rules of Procedure and covered the Primary Court Skopje 1 Skopje, the Court of Appeal Skopje and the Supreme Court of the Republic of Macedonia.

According to the information presented by the Minister of Justice, the inspection was carried out by a working group comprised of experts from the Ministry of Justice, judges and IT engineers. The subject of inspection, in all three courts, were the procedures for the functioning of the ACMIS, the annual schedule of judges, the procedure for excluding a judge from automatic distribution and redistribution of cases, as well as all the decisions for manual distribution of objects were subject to inspection.

The inspection working group found inconsistency in the application of the Law on the Managing the Distribution of the Cases in the Courts and the Court Rules of Procedure, as well as an inconsistency in the use of the ACMIS system in the Primary Court Skopje 1 Skopje and the Supreme Court. With regards to the Court of Appeal in Skopje it was established that the Law on Managing the Distribution of Cases in the Court and the Court Rules of Procedure were complied with, the ACMIS system was implemented and regularly used except in the court administration section.

In addition, the Minister of Justice also informed about the findings and the observed inconsistencies in each of the courts separately. In brief, some of the irregularities identified refer to the following:

1. In the Basic Court Skopje 1, an Annual Plan for managing the distribution of cases in the court was adopted only for 2013, but no Working Body was established to manage the distribution of cases in the courts. At the same time, no internal procedures for certain processes in the management of the distribution of cases in the court were adopted. The annual work schedule for the courts for 2016 and 2017 was frequently tampered with and the procedure for its adoption was not followed. At the same time, the Working Group determined that the provisions of the Law on the Management of the Distribution of Cases in the Courts were not complied with according to which the ACMIS system must be used in the management of the movement of the distribution of the cases in the courts. During the inspection of the courts it was concluded that there were 860 cases to which no judge was assigned, which puts into question the accuracy of the statistical data in the monthly and annual reports on the work of the court and the judges that are submitted to the higher courts, the Judicial Council of the Republic of Macedonia and the Ministry of Justice. Moreover, according to the findings of this Working Group, the exclusion of judges from the automatic distribution of cases was carried out without drafting a written decision with an order and without a justified reason, but only with a paraph of the president of the court and a telephone call to the court registry.

2. With regards to the Supreme Court of the Republic of Macedonia, numerous irregularities were found that refer to the fact that the Working Body for the Management of the Distribution of Cases in the Courts was not established, every change of the President of the Court was immediately followed by adoption of a new schedule for work of the judges, and the procedure for annual change of the schedule was not complied with as well. In that sense, it was noted that the principle of specialization of judges was neglected, so that the judges who dealt with civil matters were reassigned cases on criminal matters and vice versa. Furthermore, although the ACMIS system was applied according to a previously applied manual assignment of cases for which there was a written decision by the President of the court, it was not in accordance with the provisions of the Court Rules of Procedure, thus in this way, instead of randomly choosing a judge, the appointment of a judge was expected. The Working Group also detected redeployment of named cases from one to another concrete judge, which was not carried out through the ACMIS system, but manually, cases were assigned to the judges who were assigned to act on those particular type of case.

3. With regards to the Court of Appeal in Skopje, the Working Group did not find any significant deviations from the legal obligations, except that the original cases were registered in ACMIS, but not all supplements to the cases were not recorded, only the number of the original case was taken and the case was kept in the registry.

Recommendations: Overall, the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights of the Republic of Macedonia welcomes the activities undertaken in order to identify the inconsistencies in the functioning of the ACMIS system so far and finding ways to overcome them. Namely, the system's shortcomings were so far the reason for its frequent abuse, which inevitably increased the public distrust in the judiciary, especially when it comes to the treatment of certain high profile cases of organized crime and corruption, which also involved high state officials. However, in addition to the already given recommendations by the Working Group established within the Ministry of Justice, which refer to the consistent respect of the existing legislation and strengthening of the institutional framework embodied through the working bodies as oversight mechanisms for managing the distribution of cases in the courts, as well as the role of the Judicial Council in

monitoring the implementation of the ACMIS system, the Helsinki Committee points to the need for a more systemic approach to the entire process of implementation and monitoring of the established system of allocation of court cases. It should create guarantees for prevention of future inconsistencies and abuses and ultimately affect the promotion of the credibility and confidence in the justice system as a requirement for effective judicial protection of human freedoms and rights.

DISCRIMINATION

DISCRIMINATION IN AN INSTITUTION OF UNIVERSITY EDUCATION ON GROUNDS OF RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS BELIEF

A client from the Islamic faith wearing a hijab turned to the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights of the Republic of Macedonia saying that she had been discriminated against by a professor at one of the faculties of the University of St. Cyril and Methodius. In this specific case, the party was discriminated against by the professor who intercepted her in one of the corridors at the faculty, warning that if she came to sit at the forthcoming exam with hijab on, he would not be able to take it if he did not remove the scarf. Since she had to take her upcoming exam before the said professor in two months, she worried that because she might be prevented from taking the exam due to what the professor told her. For these reasons she decided to turn to the dean of the faculty about this problem, who only confirmed the professor's statement that she was required to take the hijab off if she wanted to take the exam.

Discrimination is contrary to the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia and the Law on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination. The Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia guarantees that the citizens of the state are equal in their freedoms and rights, regardless of their sex, race, skin color, national and social background, political and religious beliefs, property and social status. The Law on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination stipulates that any unjustified legal or factual, direct or indirect discrimination or unequal treatment (exclusion, limitation or giving priority) in relation to persons or groups, on different grounds, is considered discrimination. Among the grounds for discrimination, the law also lists the discrimination on grounds of religion and religious beliefs. Furthermore, Article 3 of this Law prohibits any direct or indirect discrimination, calling on and incitement of discrimination and supporting discriminatory treatment based on sex, race, color, gender, belonging to a marginalized group, ethnicity, language, citizenship, social origin, religion or religious belief, other types of beliefs, education, political affiliation, personal or social status, mental and physical disability, age, family or marital status, property status, health status a, or any other grounds stipulated in the law or in a ratified international agreement. Additionally, the Law on Higher Education (Official Gazette No. 35/2008 of 14.03.2008) in Article 7 stipulates that "the Citizens of the Republic of Macedonia have equal rights to education in higher education institutions in the Republic of Macedonia under equal conditions".

Redommendation: With regards to this case, the Helsinki Committee submitted a complaint to the Ombudsman requesting from the Ombudsman to initiate a procedure for protection of the constitutional and legal rights of the citizens and protection of the principle of non-discrimination and to give an opinion and recommendation to the faculty, the professor and the dean of the faculty to stop with the discriminatory practice aimed at students from Islamic religious background who

wear hijabs and unconditionally allow them to take all the exams in the future. In addition, the Helsinki Committee asked from the Ombudsman to provide general recommendations to all faculties within the University Ss. Cyril and Methodius, for the elimination of this type of discriminatory practice, because not only does it discriminates against female students who wear a headscarf, which is prohibited, but also limits the right to higher education which is contrary to the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia and the Law on Higher Education.

DISCRIMINATION OF A PERSON WITH A DISABILITY AT THE RADIOLOGY AND ONCOLOGY CLINIC

Another case of discrimination was registered in December, after the Helsinki Committee received a report from parents of a disabled child who had been operated due to the cancer, otherwise a protégé in the Special Institution in Demir Kapija, stating that their son was discriminated against on the basis of his disability by a doctor from the Clinic of Radiology and Oncology, where he should have been prescribed a postoperative therapy due to deteriorating health. The Doctor refused to examine the patient with a disability twice, thereby directly discriminating and violating the applicable normative framework.

The Helsinki Committee received an application from parents of a child with a disability who is also a protégé in the Special Institution in Demir Kapija, stating that their son was discriminated against on the basis of his disability by a doctor at the Radiology and Oncology Clinic. In this case, the person with a disability was operated due to cancer, who needed to be prescribed postoperative treatment due to his worsening condition. The parents noticed that their son had begun to lose weight in the past period after the surgery and for that reason they wanted to have him examined by a doctor who would give him an adequate treatment if necessary.

The first time, the protégé was taken to the Oncology Clinic in October by two nurses employed at the Special Institute Demir Kapija, whereby the doctor did not admit the nurses and examine the protégé, and only asked to see the medical history they had brought. After she took a look at the documents and saw that a protégé of the Special Institution in Demir Kapija was in question who had a disability, she told them that she was unable to take him for a medical examination, because according to her, “there were people to examine him there, at the institution, I don’t know what to do with him and why you have come to me”. The protégé was not even admitted to her office. The report that the doctor gave to the nurses stated that that the patient had severe mental retardation, is non communicable and nonverbal, and due to those difficulties and his general health condition, any further treatment is counter indicated. Considering that the doctor did not receive the patient in her office, she can by no means give a report solely on the basis of the medical documentation containing data on the surgery in July and a the specialist report for further treatment, much less state that further treatment of the patient would be counter-indicated. After two months, in December, the parents decided to go to the doctor’s themselves with the entire documentation, in order to ask for their son to be admitted for examination and to be given possible treatment due to the apparent deterioration of his health, that is, the prolonged weight loss. The doctor initially refused to receive them, but still allowed them to enter her office for a talk. The parents asked for an explanation as to why their son had not been examined in October when he had been brought by the nurses from the institute and asked for a term when to bring him for examination. The doctor’s response was almost the same as the first time, that their son had a place

to be treated at and that they had no place asking anything from her. She told them “not to bring him there again” and not to come anymore. After this, the parents left and immediately reported the case to the Helsinki Committee.

The Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia guarantees that the citizens of the country are equal in their freedoms and rights, regardless of their sex, race, skin color, national and social background, political and religious beliefs, property and social status. Furthermore, the Law on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination prohibits any direct or indirect discrimination, calling for and incitement of discrimination and assistance in discriminatory treatment based on sex, race, color, gender, belonging to a marginalized group, ethnicity, language, citizenship, social origin, religion or religious belief, other types of beliefs, education, political affiliation, personal or social status, mental and physical disability, age, family or marital status, property, health or any other grounds prescribed by the law or ratified international agreements. In accordance with the Law on Protection of Patients, health services are to be constantly available and accessible to all patients equally and without any discrimination. The law in several articles explicitly prohibits discrimination against patients on any grounds. . The Law on Health Case also stipulates the principle of fairness which is exercised by prohibiting any discrimination in the provision of healthcare based on the type of illness, psychological or physical disability, as well as Article 20 of the Law on Mental Health, which prohibits discrimination based on sex, language, religion, political or other belief, national or social background, kinship, property and social standing or any other status of a person with a mental illness. According to Article 8 of the said law, “A person with mental illness is entitled to the same approach in their care, treatment and rehabilitation, as any other person suffering from other diseases”. In addition, a violation was also established in the Medical Deontology Code of the Doctors’ Chamber of Macedonia, which stipulates that in the performance of their medical duties doctors will not allow to be affected by any differences due to age, sex, nationality, race, political affiliation, sexual orientation, disability and social and economic standing, and that doctors are bound to perform their profession conscientiously, accurately and responsibly, regardless of age, sex, religion, nationality, race, political affiliation, sexual orientation, disability and socio-economic standing and his/her personal relationship with the patient and his/her family. At the same time, the patient's treatment in this case is contrary to the European Charter of Patients' Rights, according to which “Each individual has the right to access the health services necessary for his or her health, and healthcare must guarantee equal access for all, without discrimination on any grounds of financial standing, place of residence, type of disease, or the time necessary to reach healthcare.” Furthermore, Article 417 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Macedonia which stipulates punishment for Racial and other types of discrimination, lists mental or physical disability as grounds for discrimination, while Article 208 of the Criminal Code stipulated punishment for non-provision of medical assistance by a doctor or another medical professional.

There is no provision stipulating that people who are unable to work, non-contactable or disabled, should not be examined, on the contrary, it is considered to be a duty of the doctor. Only when certain medical interventions are in question, a patient's statement is required, or in cases of an incapacitated patient, the statement is to be signed by the parent, legal representative or custodian. The doctor, on two occasions, contrary to the provisions of the Constitution, the laws and the Code of Medical Deontology, refused to examine a patient with a disability, which constitutes direct discrimination and violation of the laws and the code.

Recommendation: The Helsinki Committee emphasizes that discrimination on any grounds is explicitly prohibited by the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia, the Law on Prevention and Protection and Discrimination and other laws that contain provisions for prohibition of discrimination. Persons with disabilities, as well as all other patients, should be admitted and examined by a doctor who is not permitted to refuse a patient's examination. The Code of Medical Deontology of the Doctors' Chamber of Macedonia explicitly obliges doctors to carry out their professional duties. With the help of the Helsinki Committee, the parents were admitted by the director of the clinic and the patient was sent to a doctor who adequately examined him. With regards to this case, the Helsinki Committee will take all legal actions for protection of the rights of the discriminated patient and a procedure to determine the responsibility of the doctor will be initiated.

HATE SPEECH

HATE SPEECH AGAINST WOMEN

Although hate speech caused by the socio-political developments in the country dominated the public space in 2017, a decrease was noted during the last month of the year. The extinguishing of the political crisis was adequately reflected in use of speech in public spaces, by both public figures and citizens.

During this month, two more notable cases of hate speech emerged that appeared on social networks. What is of concern, is that both examples consisted of hate speech on grounds of sex and gender. i.e. were sexist slurs against women. In the first case, the hate speech appeared in response to the statement by the wife of the President of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, Ms. Zorica Zaeva, who was a panelist at the public debate on the equality of women within the national campaign "16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence". In her statement, Ms. Zaeva pointed out that "a woman's place is not in the kitchen. No place is only for women and no place is only for men. We are all the equal". After sharing this statement on the social media pages, apart from the comments with political connotation, numerous comments were also posted with sexual offenses that were degrading, discriminatory and humiliating towards women, along with comments that called for violence against women. The Committee strongly condemns this speech and believes that the comments containing hate speech directed at women should be immediately removed.

In the second registered case involved a post on the social media network Facebook, by Nina Janeva, a public figure and a music artist who, using hate speech, commented on the setting up of an art installation in Skopje called "Skopje red light district" on the occasion of the International Day to Prevent Violence against Sex Workers (17 December). In her post about the event, apart from the use of offensive words towards sex workers, she also used inappropriate terminology and discriminatory content based on sex and gender, as well as social status. In addition to the hate speech used in the post itself, the comments additionally contained abusive and disparaging words about women. Taking into account the fact that a public figure is in question, the influence she may have on her followers is great, and hence the consequences of the speech used are more detrimental. This spreading of hate speech towards a particular marginalized group in society

contributes to the strengthening of prejudices and stereotypes that serve as a basis for intolerance and violence.

Recommendation: The Helsinki Committee strongly condemns the use of hate speech by public figures and urges them to refrain from using such speech in public or on social networks. Furthermore, the Helsinki Committee warns the electronic media to introduce a policy of removing comments containing hate speech on their social media posts, bearing in mind that they have access to large audiences and have an increase detrimental effect.

POLICE AND INTERCEPTION OF COMMUNICATIONS

REFORM IN THE SECURITY-INTELLIGENCE SERVICES, WITH EMPHASIS ON THE INTERCEPTION OF COMMUNICATIONS

The Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, together with the other civil society associations working on the Blueprint document in the field “Control over the police and security and (counter) intelligence agencies” submitted a document containing detailed recommendations for improvement of the proposed legal solutions in the area of interception of communications to the Ministry of Interior. The recommendations refer to the strengthening of the control mechanisms for interception that will improve the legal framework in order to reduce the opportunities for abuse of the monitoring of communications and improve the system of human rights protection when they are violated due to unlawful interception of communications.

At the same time, we would like to emphasize that the process of developing the proposed legislative changes in this area, as the most critical, was non-transparent, since none of the civil society organizations working in this area was invited to be a member of the working groups that were preparing the legal changes. This action of the Ministry of Interior is contrary to the efforts of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia given in Plan 3-6-9, a reform plan proposed by the Government. In fact, in the part of the reform of the intelligence and security services, the Government stated that “it will provide a transparent and inclusive debate, in which the consultation process will be properly implemented. The reforms will be implemented through specific steps and on-field, once we get a clear picture, plan and dynamics for the necessary changes, which will eliminate the reasons for the identified weaknesses in the security mechanism and the security and intelligence services, and we will restore the confidence in them”.

Furthermore, the Government predicted that it will launch an inclusive discussion in the Parliament on the selection of the model for reform of the system for interception of communications and will prepare a plan for the implementation of the recommendations of the group of senior experts on the systemic issues in the rule of law regarding the interception of communications (2015), with a list of legal acts, administrative and technical measures and financial implications.

However, the model for the reform of the system for interception of communications was selected without any public discussion, and the selected proposal was available to be seen for the first time in the proposed legal changes published on the ENER website. In addition, it was announced to the public that the Government chose the system reform model, however, no such decision is

available, which gives grounds for suspicion that the Ministry of Internal Affairs has opted for a non-transparent and autonomous choice.

In this regard, we would like to emphasize the conclusion of the expert group on systemic changes in the rule of law that no actions have been taken to follow the recommendations from the previous report made in 2015 regarding transparency. The latest report of the expert group released in September 2017 states that transparency is one of the key tools for restoring the confidence of citizens in institutions and that mistakes of the past must not be repeated so that one form of a captured state is replaced by another.

Recommendation: The Government should respect the principle of transparency in its work, especially on topics related to the protection of the fundamental human rights of citizens, such as the right to privacy.

LABOUR RIGHTS

AN INCREASED NUMBER OF REPORTED VIOLATIONS OF LABOUR RIGHTS

Several reports of violations of labor rights by employers were submitted to the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in December.

In the reports that were submitted to the Committee, the workers complained of unpaid overtime hours, unpaid salaries for more than 3 months, unpaid contributions, unlawful restriction to the right to a break during working hours, unpaid annual vacation supplement.

Pursuant to the Labor Law, the employer is obliged to keep a separate record of the overtime work and to specify the hours for overtime work in the monthly calculation of the salary of the employee. The employer is obliged to inform the Regional State Labor Inspectorate in writing about any introduction of overtime work in advance.

Furthermore, the employee is entitled to his/her earnings - salary, in accordance with the law, the collective agreement and the employment contract. The salary is paid for periods that may not be longer than one month. The employer is obliged to pay the salary to the employee in a manner determined by law. With every salary payment, the employer is obliged to issue a written salary calculation to the employee, and also by January 31 of the new calendar year, a calculation of the salary contributions and wage compensations for the payment period, i.e. for the past year, where the calculation and payment of taxes and contributions is also indicated.

Pursuant to the Labor Law, during the working hours the worker who works for six hours, or longer than six hours has the right to a break with a duration of 30 minutes.

According to the General Collective Agreement for the private sector in the field of economy, the supplement for annual should be in the amount of at least 40% of the base salary, provided that the employee has worked for the same employer for at least 6 months in the calendar year. With a collective agreement at the level of activity or a collective agreement at the level of an employer, a supplement for annual leave in an amount higher than the amount determined in this collective

agreement can be set. The supplement for an annual leave is paid once a year. The amount shall be determined according to the base salary applicable on the date of the decision for payment.

In the past experience of the Helsinki Committee, when dealing with reports of violation of workers' rights, there is great distrust towards the competent institutions and the aversion among the workers to directly turn to the State Labor Inspectorate, because of the fear that their application may not end up processed or that their report will cost them their job.

Recommendation: Employers are obliged to respect labor rights in accordance with the Law on Labor Relations and the Collective Agreements. Violations of labor rights should occur as unwanted exceptions, not a rule. Having this in mind, effective and efficient action by the State Labor Inspectorate is indispensable. The Helsinki Committee has submitted requests for initiation of unannounced inspection supervisions to the State Labor Inspectorate after each individual application and will monitor the actions of the competent institutions.

TEXTILE WORKERS

MINIMUM WAGE NOT PAID AND THE STANDARDIZED PERFORMANCE NOT ESTABLISHED IN A TEXTILE FACTORY IN KRATOVO

Upon submission of a request for extraordinary inspection by the Helsinki Committee, the State Labor Inspectorate - regional unit Kratovo identified irregularities and shortcomings in the operation of TPD DE-TEKS LTD Probistip - subsidiary no. 1 Kratovo, in terms of not having established the standard of performance, unpaid salaries for October 2017, less than the law stipulated minimum wage for 43 employees and non-issuance of monthly wage calculations and salary contributions for October 2017 for 43 employees. The inspectorate obliged the employer with an order to prepare a rulebook for standardized performance within 15 days, in accordance with Article 1 of the Law amending the Law on Minimum Wage, to pay the leftover between the paid salary and the minimum wage determined by law in accordance with Art. 10 of the Law Amending the Law on Minimum Wage for 43 employees in the subsidiary and to issue the calculations for payment of salaries and salary contributions to the employees.

This is the first registered case of the Helsinki Committee on identified irregularities and shortcomings by the State Labor Inspectorate with regards to non-payment of the minimum wage and not established standardized performance by the employer in the textile industry, after the entry into force of the Law amending the Law on Minimum Wage.

Recommendation: We welcome this decision of the State Labor Inspectorate - the regional unit Kratovo, and we encourage the workers in the textile industry to report such violations of workers' rights in the future. In addition, we appeal to employers to respect the Law on Minimum Wage in terms of determining the standardized performance and payment of the legally prescribed amount for a minimum wage. The Helsinki Committee will continue to monitor this case and monitor whether the employer acted upon the order of the Inspectorate.

KRIVA PALANKA PRIMARY COURT RULED IN FAVOUR OF THE WORKERS FROM KADORO OTTO

The Primary Court in Kriva Palanka on 25/10/2017 ruled in favour of a suit filed by 105 female and male textile workers employed at the Kriva Palanka based DPČT KADORO OTTO DOOEL export-import Kriva Palanka. The Court ordered the employer against whom the suit was filed, to pay the female and male workers a total of 1,430,856.00 MKD, an outstanding amount for compensation of wages for February 2017, the due benefits to the Pension Insurance Fund of the RM, health insurance benefits, employment benefits and personal income tax to the Public Revenue Office, including the legal interest rates accrued due to non-payment of the wages.

The defendant submitted an appeal to the Skopje Appellate Court appealing the decision of the Kriva Palanka Primary Court.

Following information provided by employees of KADORO OTTO, the Helsinki Committee for Human rights initiated this case in March 2017 by submitting a request to the State Labor Inspectorate for performing unannounced inspection supervision. The request urged the Inspectorate to establish whether or not the employer has made payment to his/her employees of due wages and benefit contributions for the months of December 2016 and January 2017. Pursuant to this request the State Labor Inspectorate performed its unannounced inspection oversight via its Regional Office in Kriva Palanka and found that the employer did make payment of wages and social benefit contributions for its employees for December 2016, and failed to make payment for January 2017. In accordance with the established factual situation during the inspection oversight, the authorized inspector in charge issued an order to the employer and the officer in charge to amend this irregularity, i.e. to make payment of the due wages and benefit contributions to its employees for the month of January of 2017, no later than 8 days after the conclusion of the inspection oversight. Since the employer failed to act according to the orders issued by the State Labor Inspectorate, the Helsinki Committee requested for extension of the procedure following the conclusion of the on-sight inspection urging the State Labor Inspectorate to initiate an infringement procedure against the employer. After completing an additional inspection oversight, the State Labor Inspectorate issued against the employer an infringement order with a mandatory fine, which was duly paid by the employer.

Since by the end of March 2017 the employer failed to make payment of the wages and benefits for the month of February 2017, 105 employees of KADORO OTTO with the support of the Helsinki Committee decided to take the employer to court for failing to make payment of their wages and benefits for January and February 2017. In May 2017, after the employer made late payments of the January wage and benefits, his/her employees initiated a court procedure against the employer for failing to make payment of the February 2017 wages and benefits.

Recommendation: Even though the decision of the Kriva Palanka Primary Court has yet to become final, we nevertheless welcome it. We also welcome the move of the empowered textile female and male workers of KADORO OTTO who sought judicial protection of their workers' rights and we hereby urge all female and male textile, leather and shoe workers to report any violation of their rights and seek protection of their workers' rights.

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