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E-006692/2020

Answer given by Ms Johansson
on behalf of the European Commission
(29.4.2021)

As set out in its reply to written questions E-003732/2020 and E-005750/2020, and as recalled during the European Parliament plenary session of 20 October 2020 on police brutality¹, the Commission strongly condemns the disproportionate use of force or violence, and any form of discrimination by police forces. Member States should promote and respect their law enforcement rules in full respect of their European and international human rights obligations. National authorities must investigate individual cases of reported police brutality and ensure that justice is served.

The Commission is committed to ensuring the highest standards of protection for journalists in the European Union. For this reason, as announced in the European Democracy Action Plan², the Commission plans to present its recommendation to further tackle safety issues as well as to encourage better implementation by the Member States of the standards set out in the Council of Europe Recommendation on the protection of journalism and safety of journalists and other media actors³. The Commission will also continue to analyse the aspects related to the safety of journalists in its annual Rule of Law Report.

Member States are responsible for maintaining law and order and safeguarding internal security. Consequently, any action by national authorities, including national police officers, remains the responsibility of the Member State concerned. The Commission does not comment on draft national legislative proposals, but will continue to monitor closely further developments in this respect.

¹ https://multimedia.europarl.europa.eu/en/plenary-session_20201020-0900-PLenary_vd (recorded debate on police brutality starting at 16:39),

https://ec.europa.eu/commission/commissioners/2019-2024/johansson/announcements/commissioner-johanssons-speech-police-brutality-european-parliament-plenary-session_en

² COM(2020) 790 final.

³ Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)4 on the protection of journalism and safety of journalists and other media actors of 13 April 2016.