April 14, 2014

Police assaults journalist during protest

On April 12 the police was involved in an incident with a reporter of one of the main dailies in the country. The police was following the protest related to the death of an Albanian prisoner in a Greek camp. As the police claimed that the protesters deviated from their plan, the police tried to stop them, clashing with the protesters. Journalist Armand Bajrami of daily Panorama reported that he was taking pictures of a special unit of the police that was beating up one of the protesters inside their van. When the police spotted the reporter, the latter said they approached him and forced him to go inside the yard of the police department. The reporter said that even though he was wearing his badge and repeated several times that he was a journalist, they still insisted on bringing him in. Afterwards, according to the journalist, they threatened him and made him delete all pictures he had taken, documenting their violence against the protester. Two of the policemen insisted that the journalist should be taken inside the police department, but in the end they let the journalist go after making him delete all pictures.

The journalist denounced the act and the newspaper filed a complaint at the police's Internal Control Service. A day later, the police, in a meeting with the journalist, made an apology on behalf of the police forces for the pressure he suffered and for hindering him from doing his job, while stating that an investigation on this matter was in course.