

## VII CONCLUSION

The economic collapse of broadcasters continued in the period observed and the authorities continued to send contradictory messages to the media sector. For instance, it remains unclear what is the government's plan regarding the privatization of public media outlets. It is still not clear whether the coming digitalization of broadcasting will be implemented as specified by Government's Strategy, or as RTS is doing it in practice. This is creating a situation in which media companies can't predict even in the short term the conditions for their operations in the country, which is significantly hindering their development plans.

The announced drafting of the Media Strategy, which should contribute to defining the aspired goals and priorities, as well as the principles and values to be protected, remains merely an announcement; therefore one may reasonably doubt the sincerity of the government's intentions to reform the media scene so as to enable its development and further democratization of society.

The amendments to the Criminal Code that came into force on the 11th of September, are a step forward, especially in the part introducing a stricter penal policy for criminal offenses that are occurring almost daily against journalists and the media (e.g. "threats to personal security", which is the term employed by the Code for threats journalists are facing almost on a daily basis). Also commendable is the designation by the Serbian criminal legislation of "professions of importance for public information" as "professions of importance for the public", which are accordingly protected by a stricter penal policy.

On the other hand, the Law on Amendments to the Criminal Code introduces new criminal offenses, namely regulates differently the reporting on current legal proceedings so as to make it potentially more risky for journalists. In the following period it is necessary to organize additional training for journalists reporting about legal proceedings. Through education on how to report from courthouses without breaching the presumption of innocence or the independence of the court, without hindering the proceedings or obstructing the office of the judge or prosecutor, the possibility that the journalist be charged with unlawful "public commenting" on legal proceedings or obstruction of justice should be reduced to the minimum.