On 25 December 2017 Ukrainian journalist Anastasia Tovt, who works for online newspaper Strana.ua, was detained by the Roman police, subjected to a full-body search and then escorted to the airport. Her two phones and a laptop were also seized by the police. As of 23 January 2018 the equipment still has not been returned.

Tovt was on an editorial assignment to film a performance by feminist group Femen. The arrest happened during the performance, when activist Alisa Vinogradova stole the doll representing baby Jesus from the Vatican's nativity scene. Vinogradova was arrested for injury to a public official, religious offenses, attempted theft and obscene acts in a public place. Tovt was also detained by the Roman police, allegedly as accessory to Vinogradova.

According to Tovt, several other foreign journalists also filmed the incident. Tovt believes her equipment was seized due to the footage she had filmed during an interview with Vinogradova the day before the performance. This is also why, she believes, she was detained by the police for 12 hours and subjected to a full-body search. The police reportedly didn't take her press credentials into account. Tovt says no translation of documents was provided, and her rights to a phone call and to speak to a lawyer were denied.

After 12 hours of detention, Tovt was escorted back to the airport by the Roman police.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

- Article published by Strana.ua (in Russian)
- Video published by Strana.ua
Report on the incident published by Strana.ua (in Russian)

First report on the incident published by Strana.ua (in Russian)

STATE REPLIES

21 Oct 2019 | Reply from the Italian authorities

Letter from the Permanent Representation of Italy to the Council of Europe