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Slovak Republic

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## Mass Surveillance Operation on Slovak Journalists

State replied

SOURCE OF THREAT ▶ Unknown

CATEGORY  ▶ Other acts having chilling effects on media freedom

**PARTNER: IPI, AEJ, RSF**

Slovak media in April revealed the existence of a massive surveillance operation on journalists conducted between March 2017 and February 2018 by a former intelligence agent, Peter Tóth, on behalf of Marian Kočner, the disgraced businessman charged with ordering the murders of Slovak journalist Ján Kuciak and his fiancée, Martina Kušnírová. The leading Slovak daily SME today published reports that a small, organised group worked with Tóth to gather information to be used by Kočner apparently to discredit journalists, including those working for SME, Aktuality.sk, Trend and Denník N. The group closely monitored the targets' personal lives and daily activities, going so far as to monitor journalists as they picked up their children from kindergarden. SME also said members of the group sat in a parked car every day in front of the newspaper's office to follow one of its journalists, Adam Valček. Media also reported that the surveillance team obtained extensive access to official police databases, collecting private data on journalists ranging from vehicle license plates to tax information. According to reports, information about Kuciak obtained through the surveillance operation was used by the individuals suspected of carrying out the double murder in February 2018.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

 [Article by IPI: "IPI urges Slovakia to investigate surveillance of journalists"](#)

### STATE REPLIES



16 Aug 2019 | Official response of the Government of Slovakia

 [Letter from the Permanent Representation of the Slovak Republic to the Council of Europe](#)

## FOLLOW-UPS



**23 Aug 2019** | On 22 August 2019, the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) evaluated the effectiveness of the existing framework to prevent corruption in central government and law enforcement agencies and published a series of recommendations aimed at strengthening transparency, integrity and accountability in public life.

[!\[\]\(0f848bbd71cef6b345273b16f905912a\_img.jpg\) \*\*Evaluation Report on the Slovak Republic\*\*](#)