

STATEMENT

ENGLISH only

**of Ambassador Svetoslav Spasov, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Bulgaria to the UN, the OSCE and other International Organizations in Vienna
on the murder of Victoria Marinova**

The OSCE Permanent Council, 11.10.2018

6. Any other Business

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

In connection with the murder of Victoria Marinova, a Bulgarian woman, who was a journalist in a regional TV media in the City of Rousse, and the press release of the OSCE RFoM Mr. Harlem Desir, we would like to inform the Permanent Council about the latest developments.

A violent premeditated crime has been committed. The Bulgarian authorities have approached it with seriousness and have sided with the general public in its empathy and intolerance to such brutal criminal acts. The whole Bulgarian society is shocked by this brutal murder and is deeply saddened by the tragic loss of the life of a young woman, a mother of a seven years old daughter.

The competent Bulgarian authorities react swiftly in each case of a violent crime, without prejudice to the professional occupation of the victim.

The murder of Victoria Marinova was subject to a wide public debate, which went beyond the borders of Bulgaria and to a certain extent led to false interpretations and claims. At this stage of the investigation, the evidence points to a random and spontaneous criminal act on a sexual basis, without any relation to the journalistic work of the victim.

The competent Bulgarian authorities took swift and adequate measures to identify the perpetrator of this crime. The suspected perpetrator has been detained on the territory of Germany. On a special Press conference yesterday, Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Borisov, the Minister of the Interior and the Prosecutor General of the Republic of Bulgaria expressed their condolences to the relatives of the victim and thanked all prosecutors and investigators, as well as the authorities of three federal provinces in Germany, which provided assistance for the detection and the arrest of the suspect.

Despite the fact that at this stage it cannot be said that the murder is related to the professional activity of the victim, the Bulgarian authorities will continue to approach any case of violation against journalists in due seriousness. Bulgaria considers as a high priority the topic of the safety of journalists and specifically female journalists, and in this context supports further deliberations within the OSCE on how to address more effectively these challenges.