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PRESS STATEMENT

In Košice, 13 May 2021

He achieved justice at the European Court in Strasbourg – Domestic court acquitted him of false accusations charges now

In September 2020 the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg decided on police violence against two Romani men from Moldava nad Bodvou they faced during police raid in 2013 in a local Roma marginalised community in Eastern Slovakia. The court ruled that Slovak state authorities violated both their right to protection from police violence and their right to its effective investigation. However, in Slovak courts they both have been facing criminal charges of false allegations against police officers who have committed violence against them.

At today's hearing, the District Court Košice finally discontinued criminal proceedings against one of these men. It did so after the district prosecutor dropped the charges against him.

The Center for Civil and Human Rights (Poradna) - human rights grassroots NGO - has long time provided free legal assistance to the affected man in respect to the police violence against him. A few weeks after the police raid in 2013 our lawyer filed in his name a criminal complaint and represented him in criminal proceedings conducted by Slovak police inspection, before the Slovak Constitutional Court and also before the European Court of Human Rights.

In this regard, we welcome today's decision of the Košice court.

Vanda Durbáková – a lawyer cooperating with Poradna, who successfully represented the affected man before the European Court in Strasbourg - commented:

"As a matter of fact, my ex-client should have never stood in front of the criminal court in this case. Criminal proceedings for false accusation against him had no justification. I am very glad that they have been discontinued after years. I believe that the judgment of the European Court, that we achieved, largely contributed to the reversal in criminal proceedings in his case. I hope that people who decide to stand up for their rights in the future in Slovakia will no longer have to face the fear that they will eventually find themselves in criminal court as accused. The Slovak authorities have to ensure that such injustice never happens again to anyone in this country."

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The Center for Civil and Human Rights (Poradna) is a non-governmental grassroots organization based in Slovakia focused on the protection of human rights with particular emphasis on the rights of minorities and protection from discrimination. Poradna has for a long time worked on the issue of discrimination against Roma ethnic minority in various areas of public life. It has also been active in the protection of reproductive rights and protection from police brutality. Poradna employs strategic litigation to combat discrimination and human rights abuses against minorities. Poradna offers free legal advice to victims of discrimination and in selected cases free legal representation to victims of discrimination before Slovak courts and the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. It also

conducts monitoring in the field, advocacy, and educational activities on the protection from discrimination for lay and expert audiences. Visit us at: www.poradna-prava.sk

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