

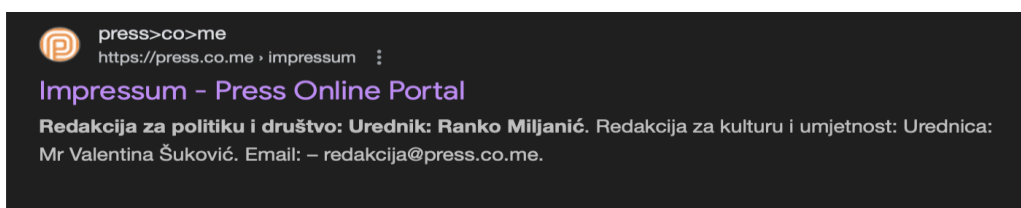
COMPLAINT TO THE PRESS PORTAL OMBUDSMAN, SRĐAN RUŽIĆ

I am submitting a complaint regarding the article: [“Husband of Tea Gorjanc Prelević developed a construction business with the guarantor nephew of Milo Đukanović”](#), published on the PRESS portal on August 25, 2025, at 7:45 a.m.

The article was signed as “PRESS portal editorial team.” According to available information as of today, the editorial team of this portal [consists of editor Ranko Miljanić](#). The name of editor Valentina Šuković was listed in the imprint (impressum) at the time of publication but was later removed.

It is also widely believed that the actual owner and editor of this portal, which is close to the authorities, is Vladimir Otašević, Executive Director of RTV Podgorica.

Exhibit 1:



Introduction

I have been working in the field of human rights protection for 30 years, the last 20 of them in Montenegro. Since 2010, I have been the Executive Director of the NGO Human Rights Action (HRA) in Podgorica, and in that capacity, I continue to speak publicly today, responding to human rights violations and threats to the rule of law.

The disputed article on the PRESS portal was immediately preceded by a public verbal attack against me by the ruling political party. In a statement of August 23, entitled [“Gorjanc Prelević uses Radulović as cannon fodder, to threaten, attack, and slander in her name”](#), Democratic Montenegro unjustifiably accused me, among other things, of “living off a system of communicating vessels between politics and crime” and of acting in the service of Milo Đukanović and the DPS.

The Democrats’ statement was a response to [my advocacy](#) for the right of lawyer Radulović to file criminal complaints against the authorities without being threatened by the authorities or humiliated by unfounded allegations.

This statement by Democratic Montenegro is key to understanding the PRESS portal article against which I am filing this complaint.

The disputed article was published immediately after [my response to the Democrats' statement](#), which I released on August 24, in which I refuted their claims as unfounded, unsubstantiated, and inadmissible.

The morning after my reaction, the PRESS portal published the disputed article.

The sole purpose of that article was to continue the Democrats' attacks from another angle, with the aim of discrediting me and portraying me in the same way the Democrats had previously labeled me — as a person living off the nexus of politics and crime, connected to Milo Đukanović through vested interests, and, on top of that, hypocritical, since I allegedly have no problem with my husband's supposedly unlawful dealings of which I am allegedly aware. In other words, the purpose of the article was, in the service of the Democrats and their attempt to cover up potential illegalities in the Ministry of Interior, to discredit me, to intimidate me as an activist, and to prevent my further advocacy for the rule of law in Montenegro, against the interests of those in power.

Violations of the [Code of Journalists of Montenegro](#) in the disputed text

The text "[The husband of Tea Gorjanc Prelević developed a construction business with the guarantor of Milo Đukanović's nephew](#)" violated the following:

- a) **Principle no. 1** of the Code of Journalists of Montenegro: "It is the duty of journalists to respect the truth and persistently seek it, always bearing in mind the public's right to know and the human need for fairness and humanity."
- b) **General standard**: "Journalists are obliged to, in a professional sense, do everything to make sure they publish only accurate information and that their comments are honest."
- c) **Professional standard accuracy**, which requires that "before publishing a report, the journalist must ensure that all appropriate measures have been taken to verify its accuracy," and "journalists must strive to provide comprehensive reports on events and must not suppress or conceal essential information."

The fact that the authors and editors did not even attempt to verify the accuracy of the published information shows that they had no interest in the truth.

1. **The text maliciously listed entirely false financial data, although the correct information was publicly available.** The alleged "profit" of the law office of my husband was fabricated and exaggerated by dozens of times compared to the real one, which is publicly available on the website of the Montenegrin Tax Administration.

Furthermore, the value of the company in which my husband is a co-owner was falsely represented. The authors intentionally listed only the company's "assets," while omitting its "liabilities," which are also publicly available. This omission gave

a completely misleading picture. Ombudsman Srđan Ružić further reinforced this false claim by stating that “Dragan Prelević is co-owner of a multimillion-euro company with a Ukrainian partner,” which is untrue.

2. The text violated the professional standard: “Journalists must never publish an unfounded accusation against others, aimed at damaging their reputation.”

The purpose of the article was to damage my reputation, by:

- maliciously linking me to alleged illegal activities of my husband,
- a tendentious headline,
- a collage of photos of me with people I don’t even know,
- fabricated claims that I condone supposed unlawful dealings,
- and false statements about property without building permits, which were not illegal in any way.

3. The disputed article also violated Principle no. 2 of the Code, which states that “rumors and assumptions must be clearly identified as such.” The article does not present facts that would indicate any potentially unlawful actions by my husband, but rather assumes the guilt of his business associate, allegedly involved in “suspicious transactions” with a third party ten years ago. All of this is presented as an established fact, although without any criminal or other judicial decision. This also shows that the authors of the article were not interested in seeking the truth, but that their sole aim was to damage my reputation and to relativize my publicly stated arguments in the debate with the Democrats, thereby violating one of the general professional standards set out in the Code of Journalists of Montenegro, which states: “Journalists must never publish an unfounded accusation against others, aimed at damaging their reputation.”

4. The disputed article violated the journalist’s professional duty as prescribed by the Code of Ethics, which states: “A journalist must be a critical observer of those in positions of social, political, and economic power when reporting on them, in the public interest.” The Press portal clearly aligned itself with the statements of the Democrats by supporting their smear campaign against me. The actions of a political party in power, within a powerful national security sector, should have been critically investigated in the spirit of quality investigative journalism. Instead, the authors of the article engaged in a scheming attempt to expose me as allegedly two-faced, thereby aiding the ruling political party in its attempt to discredit me.

5. The article also violated the provision of the Code which states: “The public’s right to know cannot be used as justification for sensationalist reporting. Therefore, journalists must not distort information by exaggeration, inappropriate emphasis on one aspect of the story, or one-sided reporting. Journalists must avoid headlines or promotional slogans

that could mislead the audience about the essence of the event or phenomenon.” Neither the article’s headline, nor the accompanying cover photo, nor the way the information was presented and conclusions drawn, are examples of investigative journalism, but rather of low-level, sensationalist, false, and propagandist reporting, which cannot be justified by the public’s right to know. The very cover photo, intended to associate me with individuals I do not know and with whom neither I nor my husband have any cooperation, is in itself sufficient evidence of the malicious intent of the article’s authors and the portal’s editors — an intent that clearly has nothing to do with investigative journalism.

6. Evidence of the departure from the aforementioned ethical standards is also the fact that I, as the person the authors of the article focused on, was not even offered the opportunity to present my perspective on the issue at the center of the article. In other words, **no one from the PRESS portal ever contacted me or asked me anything related to the disputed article.** And journalists who respect the professional code of ethics should have asked me:

- a) whether I am aware of my husband's business activities that they intended to write about,
- b) whether that information is accurate and complete,
- c) and what my stance is on those activities.

Instead, the PRESS portal published both false and incomplete information about those business dealings, along with fabricated claims that I am allegedly “unbothered by any of it”. They also failed to contact my husband, whose business affairs were supposedly the subject of the article.

According to journalistic standards and ethical codes — including those upheld by most professional journalist associations and the International Federation of Journalists — one of the key principles is to give the person who is the subject of a journalistic piece the opportunity to present their side of the story. This standard applies:

- if the article contains accusations, criticism, or controversial claims about a person, the journalist is obliged to contact that person and request a comment or position;
- even if the person refuses to provide a statement, the journalist must indicate that they made an attempt to obtain a comment, thereby demonstrating adherence to the standard;
- in urgent situations or when the person is unavailable, the journalist may cite other relevant sources or publicly available statements by that person;
- in cases where contacting the person is not possible (e.g. for legal or security reasons), the journalist must clearly state the reasons for this.

This principle is a cornerstone of fair and professional journalism, and its violation is among the most common reasons for filing complaints about unethical reporting, as well as defamation lawsuits.

The PRESS portal, in cooperation with the NGO “Lupa,” published another article titled [“Investigative journalists are doing their job, the million-euro business of Tea Gorjanc Prelević’s husband is a legitimate topic,”](#) in which the mentioned NGO stated that “colleagues from the PRESS portal chose a completely legitimate journalistic topic and handled it professionally, with published documentation.” I therefore expect that this fact will also be taken into account when determining the obvious violation of the Code of Journalists of Montenegro by the PRESS portal.

It is astonishing that the Ombudsman of the PRESS portal, Srđan Ružić, is in a clear conflict of interest, as he is the founder of NGO “Lupa” and signed the above-mentioned article that praised the pamphlet-like piece I am formally complaining about. I therefore expect him to explain this in his response to this complaint.

In the interest of promoting ethical journalism in Montenegro, I would also point out that the initial statement from “Lupa” was published without any signature, and that Ružić signed it only later, **after journalist Jovo Martinović, the editor-in-chief and executive director of NGO “Lupa,” demanded that PRESS and Borba state that he was not consulted regarding the publication of the statement and that he opposed it.** It follows that Ombudsman Ružić himself originally published the praise of the controversial article under the name of “Lupa” without informing its executive director.

It is also a fact that the PRESS portal **never published Jovo Martinović’s rebuttal**, which he submitted on August 26, 2025, in his capacity as director and editor-in-chief of NGO “Lupa,” in accordance with the Media Law. By refusing to publish this rebuttal, the PRESS portal also violated the Media Law.

Exhibit 2:

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Jovo Martinovic <jovo_m@yahoo.co.uk>

To: Undisclosed recipients <jovo_m@yahoo.co.uk>; office.nasaborba@gmail.com <office.nasaborba@gmail.com>; redakcija@borba.me <redakcija@borba.me>; redakcija@press.co.me <redakcija@press.co.me>

Sent: Tuesday 26 August 2025 at 18:32:18 CEST

Subject: Saopštenje izvršnog direktora i glavnog urednika LUPA-e

Poštovani,

Danas su Vaši portali objavili nepotpisano saopštenje Mreže za istraživanje organizovanog kriminala i korupcije - LUPA

<https://press.co.me/lupa-istrazivacki-novinari-rade-svoj-posao-milionski-biznis-supruga-tee-gorjanc-prelevic-je-legitimna-tema>

<https://borba.me/lupa-istrazivacki-novinari-rade-svoj-posao-milionski-biznis-supruga-tee-gorjanc-prelevic-je-legitimna-tema>

Na osnovu Zakona o medijima molim Vas da objavite moj odgovor jer sam i dalje zvanično direktor i glavni i odgovorni urednik. LUPA-e.

Nepotpisano saopštenje LUPA-e je objavljeno bez moje autorizacije i znanja i bilo kakvog učešća u pisanju istog! Način izražavanja u saopštenju i upuštanje u subjektivne ocjene i političke debate nema moju podršku.

LUPA je već ranije dobila najavu moje ostavke na obje funkcije, što će u najkraćem roku biti i formalizirano.

Jovo Martinović

Conclusion:

I demand that Ombudsman Srđan Ružić urgently respond to my complaint, acknowledge the violations of the Code of Journalists of Montenegro, and that PRESS portal publish a public apology to me and to the public.

In addition to the apology, I demand removal of the disputed article.



Tea Gorjanc Prelević

Podgorica, 12 September 2025