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PRESS STATEMENT

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The Slovak court acquitted of false accusations charges the second Roma man from Moldava nad Bodvou, who achieved justice at the European Court of Human Rights last year

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 accusations against police officers who have committed violence against them.

At today's hearing, the District Court Košice finally discontinued criminal proceedings also against the second 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. Our lawyer 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.

Stefan Ivanco – program coordinator of Poradna, said:

"During the investigation conducted by the Slovak police inspection as well as later before the European Court of Human Rights, our former client claimed that in 2013 during the police raid – police officers took him out of his house, while shouting "get out the Gypsies, you will perish today!". Outside, they beat him with a baton all over his body and struck him with an electroshock weapon. And last September, the European Court ruled that the Slovak authorities had seriously erred in investigating his case. In addition, the Strasbourg court also pointed out that the authorities had not thoroughly investigated the possible racial motive of the entire police raid. The fact is that, starting with police violence against him, the state authorities have trampled on his rights to this day. Now they must do everything they can to ensure that such injustice never happens again to anyone in our 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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