

## **Halt Police Brutality against Students and Minors in Serbia**

Belgrade, 3 July 2025 - Civil society organisations are urgently calling for an end to the brutality and unlawful actions being carried out daily against college and high-school students and minors by the police and individuals impersonating them. The mass arrests and detentions in Belgrade, Novi Sad and Niš, marked by gross violations of the Constitution, domestic law and police conduct regulations, testify to the dangerous escalation of state repression. The concealment of the officers' identities further fuels this repression and increases the risk that it will go unpunished.

Just last night, at least four students were admitted to the Military Medical Academy (VMA), dozens of people, including at least five high-schoolers, were arrested, while the Ministry of Internal Affairs reported as many as 1,297 identity checks and 79 arrests.

The very fact that a large number of arrested people were charged with misdemeanours and subsequently released clearly points to the excessive and disproportionate use of force by police officers. Such actions are in contravention of domestic law, international standards and international conventions ratified by Serbia, including the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

We are also witnessing deeply troubling misuse of the judiciary, specifically the selective actions by the Belgrade Higher Public Prosecution Service (HPPS). Despite numerous videos documenting unlawful conduct by police officers and individuals wearing police uniforms and balaclavas, the HPPS has largely focused on prosecuting citizens expressing their dissatisfaction over the authorities' failure to meet the students' demands. By neglecting to initiate proceedings against police officers and others who have been physically and verbally assaulting and threatening citizens rallied at protest blockades, the HPPS has further deepened social division and escalated tensions at this sensitive moment for society.

The highest Serbian officials have shown no willingness to take any form of responsible action that could help lead Serbia out of the deep crisis that has persisted for nearly eight months. At the same time, the police brutality has already prompted reactions from the [UN Human Rights Office](#) and the [rapporteur of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe \(PACE\) for the monitoring of Serbia](#).

We once again call on the police and judicial authorities to immediately cease all unlawful and repressive measures and promptly initiate legal proceedings to establish the accountability of all police officers implicated in the unlawful treatment of students, minors and other citizens of Serbia.

### **Civil Society Organisations:**

Belgrade Centre for Human Rights  
CRTA

Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights – YUCOM  
Belgrade Centre for Security Policy  
Centre for Judicial Research (CEPRIS)  
Civic Initiatives  
FemPlatz  
Partners Serbia  
A11 Initiative for Economic and Social Rights