

JusMin says not obsessing over undoing court section, not feather in his cap

Justice Minister Stelian Ion said on Thursday evening that he does not obsess over undoing the court section for investigation of judicial crimes (SIJ), adding that he will not turn the issue into a feather in his cap.

"Know that I have not turned and I will not turn it into a feather in my cap, and I do not obsess over it. It is not even a surprise (...), ever since its establishment I have criticized it. Its establishment happened at a time when justice legislation and criminal law procedure were being taken to an area where crime and pressure on justice would have been favoured. For instance, justice laws were changed, not as much as they would have liked to, but they managed to make some harmful changes, in my opinion, and partly because the amendment of the Criminal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure was not successful," Ion told a show on the TVR national public broadcaster asked about the abolition of the SIJ.

At a meeting on Wednesday, the government approved a memorandum saying, among other things, that a bill on the abolition of the section for the investigation of judicial crimes be adopted by the government by the end of February.

"We have committed ourselves, in the government agenda, to meet these essential criteria for the rule of law in Romania. Subsequently, lifting the Co-operation and Verification Mechanism (CVM) will come as a consequence of our concerted efforts. Now is the time to repair everything that got broken in the last years, to put justice on the right path and to consolidate the rule of law and democracy in Romania," Ion is quoted as saying in a press statement released by the Justice Ministry (MJ).

According to MJ, the memorandum is designed to prioritise steps necessary for the Co-operation and Verification Mechanism (CVM) being lifted - legislation in the field of justice, providing a timetable for the adoption by the government of bills of interest to the judiciary.

The document provides for the government approving, as a matter of priority and by the end of February 2021, of a bill abolishing the SIJ and its submission to Parliament for fast-track adoption.