

---

## **STATE SECRETARY IN ROMANIA'S MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT DETAINED IN BLACKMAIL CASE**

-

14.11.2017

---

Romania Insider (13 November 2017)

Prosecutors from the National Anticorruption Department (DNA) detained Ninel Cercel, a Secretary of State in the Ministry of Transport, on charges of blackmail. DNAs new case is related to a train carrying ammonium nitrate, which was very close to exploding at end of October this year after a small fire broke out at one of the wagons.

Ninel Cercel was appointed Secretary of State in August this year. Prime Minister Mihai Tudose dismissed him soon after DNAs announcement.

DNA said in a statement that the Ministry of Transport and the management of the national rail freight company CFR Marfa didnt treat the incident as a serious event.

The prosecutors also said that starting the next day, namely November 1, Ninel Cercel used his position to request the manager of the Brasov Zonal Freight Center to resign because otherwise he would be dismissed, even if the incident didnt occur within his territorial area of responsibility. Cercel allegedly promised the Brasov Zonal Freight Center director that he would not face any disciplinary investigation if he resigns, and will receive a position of councilor in Brasov. Moreover, the State Secretary also promised him that he would later receive a position within CFR Marfa, as part of the rail freight companys reorganization.

However, the director of Brasov Zonal Freight Center didnt accept Ninel Cercels proposals. In return, the Secretary of State began threatening him with checks that will lead to his dismissal. According to DNA, Cercel kept his promise and sent two control teams to Brasov on November 3. The same day, the manager of the Brasov Zonal Freight Center was informed that he would have to go to Bucharest because he was the subject of a disciplinary investigation.

Ninel Cercel could be placed under preventive arrest for 30 days if Brasov Court approves the prosecutors request in this sense.

by Irina Marica

<https://www.romania-insider.com/state-secretary-blackmail-case/>