

**EXTRACT FROM THE JUDGMENT OF MEDIA ETHICS OBSERVATORY
ON THE COMPLAINT OF HAYK DEMOYAN,
DIRECTOR OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE MUSEUM-INSTITUTE**

On May 16, 2011 Hayk Demoyan, Director of the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute, addressed the Media Ethics Observatory requesting to render an expert judgment on a number of TV, print and online media pieces, which allegedly contained untrue and discrediting information.

After examining the pieces presented by Hayk Demoyan, MEO made the following conclusions:

1. While watching the September 6, 2008 piece of **“Yerkir Media” TV company** about the night lighting of Tsitsernakaberd Memorial during the Armenia-Turkey football match, MEO concluded that at the shooting site “Yerkir Media” journalists could get an impression that the night lighting of the Memorial during the football match differed from the lighting of other days. It is obvious from the reportage that the comments of “Yerkir Media” were not personified, it did not anyhow mention the Armenian Genocide Museum Director and presented but facts. The management of “Yerkir Media” had informed the MEO members that in response to Hayk Demoyan’s October 8, 2008 letter, he has suggested to express his viewpoint on the air of “Yerkir Media”. However, no answer followed the suggestion. Thus, MEO considers that the TV company was consistent with Point 6.2 of Code of Conduct of Media Representatives, when it showed that was “ready to meet with and allow a response from individuals against whom accusatory publications have been made”.

As regards the interviews with Armen Ayvazian, the first was published in **“Yerkir” newspaper** on September 26, 2008 and the second - broadcast on the air of **“Yerkir Media”** on October 1, 2008, the abovementioned media are not proper dispute parties. In fact, the media only presented the opinion and assessments of Armen Ayvazian. Besides, as the media assert, they were ready to publish the viewpoint of Hayk Demoyan. Hence, MEO considers that the media complied with Point 6.1 of Code of Conduct of Media Representatives, calling “to support the free exchange of opinions, regardless of any differences between such opinions and the editorial views”.

MEO concluded that neither “Yerkir Media” TV channel nor “Yerkir” newspaper have violated the Code of Conduct of Media Representatives. At the same time, MEO considers that it would be desirable that “Yerkir Media” have not used the TV shots on the football match in the interview with Armen Ayvazian - to exclude any doubts about partiality.

2. The second, third and the fourth parts of the complaint regard the violation of academic discourse ethics by Gevorg Yazychian, question his impartiality (article “About Scientific Morality and Timeserving in Science” appeared on March 26, 2011 in **“Hetq” online publication** and April 9, 2011 in **“Azg” daily**), and the use of ideas and theses of Hayk Demoyan by Armen Ayvazian (article “Republic of Turkey - the

First Fascist State in History”, published in “**Sobesednik Armenii**” **weekly** on March 18, 2011). MEO considers that the abovementioned media are not proper parties in the dispute; from the journalistic ethics perspective the opinions as contained in the pieces are consistent with the Code of Conduct of Media Representatives. Besides, MEO is not competent to rule about matters of academic discourse ethics.

3. As regards the expressions of Vladimir Harutiunian’s article “Defilement, Defilement up until the End”, published in “**Aravot**” **daily** on April 1, 2011 and alleged by the complainant as discrediting, insulting and not supported by facts, MEO considers them value judgments, which do not contradict the Code of Conduct of Media Representatives. In this assessment MEO is also guided by the case law of the European Court of Human Rights, particularly by Point 46 of the ruling on the case “Lingens versus Austria” stressing the improbability of value judgments.

4. MEO is not competent to rule on the materials of **www.arka.am**, **www.panarmenian.net** and **www.economist.com** online media, which reflect the opinions of Hayk Demoyan. These media are not member of the media self-regulation initiative.

Adopted at the MEO session of December 25, 2011