

## **MEDIA ETHICS OBSERVATORY STATEMENT**

Having familiarized with the appeal of the Press Council (PC) of Azerbaijan to the Azerbaijani media to “seriously consider the degree of sensitivity” of their pieces “addressing interethnic conflicts,” along with the call addressed to Media Ethics Observatory to “support its initiative and take a principled stance” on this matter, MEO states:

- The Code of Ethics of Armenian Media and Journalists stipulates the following: “5.1. To avoid prejudice against people on the ground of their race, sex, age, religion, nationality, geographic origin, sexual orientation, physical handicap, external look or social status; 5.2. Not to promote in any way ethnic or religious hatred and intolerance, or any discrimination on political, social, sexual, and language grounds, exclude hate speech.”

- MEO, responding within its competence and established procedures to Code violations (including the provisions mentioned) by the media, is interested in further enhancing the efficiency of the media self-regulation system, taking consistent measures to advance this purpose.

- We are hopeful that the initiative of the Azerbaijan PC will help reduce the degree of hatred and aggressive rhetoric in the publications of journalists and statements of officials. We are ready to discuss the possibility of joint endeavors towards this end.

- Acknowledging the existence of profound political contradictions between our nations, we emphasize the importance of overcoming mutual intolerance and stereotypical perception within our societies, viewing this potential process as one of the conditions for resolving the conflict on the basis of mutual interests and regional peace.

- At the same time, we firmly believe that achieving tangible outcomes goes beyond declarations: it necessitates practical steps based on universally acknowledged principles of quality journalism. If the Press Council of Azerbaijan shares this approach, our media self-regulation body, founded by Armenian media, is ready to initiate consultations with them on specific methodologies and modes of interaction, followed by a joint discussion of the received proposals.