



**MEO Composition:**

Davit ALAVERDYAN

Narineh AVETISYAN

Ruben BABAYAN

Levon BARSEGHYAN

Shushan DOYDOYAN

Karineh HARUTYUNYAN

Ara GHAZARYAN

Ashot MELIKYAN

Gnel NALBANDYAN

Boris NAVASARDIAN

Ara SHIRINYAN

Nouneh SARKISSIAN

Vigen SARGSYAN

Anzhela STEPANYAN

**JUDGMENT OF MEDIA ETHICS OBSERVATORY**

**Regarding the “CTR v. Second Armenian TV Channel” case**

**A. FACTS**

1. On July 6, 2023, Media Ethics Observatory received a letter from the Commission on Television and Radio. The CTR requested the MEO position regarding the potential violations of ethics during the June 25, 2023 issue of “Hayeli Akumb” program aired on “Second Armenian TV Channel”.
2. The CTR raised concerns about H2 allowing Khachik Manukyan and Tigran Chobanyan, guests of the program, to make severe statements on its air, which MEO finds inappropriate to quote. Moreover, the guests made these contentious statements without any intervention from the host.
3. On July 7, 2023, MEO reached out to H2 via email, informing about a new complaint.

**B. BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM**

1. Despite the [Clarification](#) issued by MEO on April 17, 2023 regarding numerous and repeated violations on H2 air, the Commission of Television and Radio still expected MEO to review this complaint.
2. At several sessions held between October 2022 and August 2023, MEO discussed the CTR appeals regarding the “Second Armenian TV Channel”, which were mostly related to the coverage of “Hayeli Akumb” press conferences. The discussions at the MEO sessions and the General Meeting of the Self-Regulation Initiative (Hermon, June 23-25, 2023) exposed significant contradictions between the representatives of the self-regulatory body and the media regarding the interpretation of the Code of Ethics of Armenian Media and Journalists and the MEO activities. The judgments issued on the previous complaints against H2 did not have any impact on the editorial policy of the TV Channel.
3. The CTR regularly reaches out to MEO, suggesting to examine any instances of journalistic or quoted profanity, vulgar language, use of slang and manifestations of hate speech in H2's political programming.
4. MEO regularly underscores that broadcasting such content is not

appropriate for the media that have joined the media self-regulation initiative. This practice runs counter to the principles of quality journalism.

5. H2 regularly declares that according to their editors, this is a manifestation of their freedom of speech.

### **C. MEO JUDGMENT**

1. The specific expressions in question directly name the individuals who are the recipients of the insults and hate speech. This is a violation of Provision 5.2 of the [Code](#), which states: “*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.*”

2. Editorial teams should be interested in not disseminating street vocabulary on their broadcasts. The fact that such content is created in response to the actions or speech of political opponents cannot justify gross and frequent violations of the rules of ethics. MEO believes that the broadcaster must refuse to disseminate indecent expressions.

3. H2 broadcasts statements that go beyond the acceptable boundaries of political debate, presenting them without any modifications and comments. This gives grounds to assume that not only do the guests’ perspectives align with the media’s ideas, but also their manner of expression, extending to the permissible vocabulary for a broader public context. This clearly hampers the improvement of the overall political culture of Armenia and damages the media’s reputation as a promoter of such culture.

4. Without drawing any conclusions from the previous judgments of MEO, H2 continues to violate Provision 6.3 (which defines: “*To admit mistakes and to be ready to correct them*”) of the [Code](#), signed by the media itself.

### ***Reminder***

*The representatives of the media that have signed the [Code](#) acknowledge the authority of MEO (which was elected by them) to review the compliance of their actions and publications with the provisions of this Code. They express their readiness to publish the specific parts extracted from the Media Ethics Observatory judgments that relate to violations of the Code, without adding any editorial remarks. They also commit to notifying MEO by providing a link to the particular publication.*

***Adopted on August 29, 2023  
by the following MEO composition:***

**Karineh HARUTYUNYAN**, Executive Director of Gyumri “GALA” TV Company

**Narineh AVETISYAN**, Executive Director of Vanadzor “Lori” TV Company

**Gnel NALBANDYAN**, Chief Editor of “Newmag” Publishing House

**Boris NAVASARDIAN**, Honorary President of Yerevan Press Club

**Davit ALAVERDYAN**, Chief Editor of “Mediamax” News Agency  
**Ruben BABAYAN**, Director, Professor  
at Yerevan State Institute of Theatre and Cinematography  
**Ara SHIRINYAN**, Chairman of the Council of Public Broadcaster of  
Armenia  
**Vigen SARGSYAN**, Chairman of the Commission on Professional Ethics  
of Yerevan Press Club

*[Media Ethics Observatory](#) was established by the media, joining the self-regulation initiative, which make 76 as of today. In its judgments MEO is guided by the Code of Ethics of Armenian Media and Journalists, adopted on March 10, 2007 and revised at the June 25, 2023 general meeting of the media that joined the self-regulation initiative.*