



MEDIA ETHICS OBSERVATORY OF ARMENIA

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JUDGMENT OF MEDIA ETHICS OBSERVATORY

Regarding RA NA Deputy Taguhi Ghazaryan's complaint
against an article published on 168.am

A. FACTS

1. On July 31, 2025, Taguhi Ghazaryan, a deputy from the National Assembly "Civil Contract" faction, submitted a complaint to Media Ethics Observatory regarding an article titled "*On Whose Tip-Off Did the NSS Launch Its Raid on the American University?*" published on 168.am website. The complainant, citing specific excerpts from the article and presenting her objections, qualified the information contained in the publication as defamatory and false. In particular, she noted:

Quote from the article: "...The reason for not renewing Taguhi Ghazaryan's employment contract is the complaint lodged by students, who alleged that she turned her classes into Civil Contract campaign..."

Taguhi Ghazaryan's objection: "...this claim is a lie: the fact-finding team has recorded that [Vahram] Ter-Matevosyan's claims about me engaging in political campaigning during my classes are untrue."

Quote: "... According to our information, Taguhi Ghazaryan entered the lecture-hall for the specific purpose of conducting political campaigning."

T. Gh.'s objection: "... This claim is a lie: I entered the lecture-hall for teaching purposes."

Quote: "... By trying to constantly promote to students the absurd idea that the peace treaty is the only and unmatched solution and to convince them that this is the right thing to do."

T. Gh.'s objection: "... While there is nothing wrong with advocating for peace as a universal value, this claim is a lie. I have never discussed the peace treaty in the lecture-hall."

Quote: "... The students were dissatisfied with this one-sided political campaigning, and the University administration ultimately responded to their numerous complaints."

T. Gh.'s objection: "... This claim is a lie: during my time as a lecturer, only one student voiced the view that politicians should not engage in teaching. Overall, an average of 70% of my students indicate that they would like to enroll in another course with me, and there is written evidence supporting this."

Quote: "... This is precisely what the CC deputy refuses to accept under any circumstances."

T. Gh.'s objection: "... This claim is a lie. Prior to these events, I had stated that I had no wish to restore the course, and there is written evidence to confirm this."

Quote: "... The CC deputy has taken her complaints everywhere, using her personal and political contacts."

T. Gh.'s objection: "... This claim is a lie: I have challenged the decision exclusively through institutional mechanisms."

Quote: "... Otherwise, Anna Hakobyan, Nikol Pashinyan's wife, would not have attended Zemfira's Yerevan concert specifically with Taguhi Ghazaryan and would not have posted a video."

T. Gh.'s objection: "... This claim is a lie. My personal friendship with Anna Hakobyan has nothing to do with the American University: it began long before I started teaching there."

2. Based on the complaint, MEO Coordinator informed the *168.am* editorial office in writing about the content of the complaint and suggested that they present their position and clarifications. However, the media did not respond to MEO's email.

3. MEO Coordinator also contacted the complainant and received clarifications regarding certain factual circumstances referenced in the complaint.

B. LEGISLATIVE AND ETHICAL NORMS

I. RA Law "On Mass Communication"

Article 8: Right to Refutation and Response

1. An individual retains the right to demand that a media entity refute any factual inaccuracies within their information dissemination that violate the individual's rights, should the media entity fail to substantiate the accuracy of those facts.

5. Along with refutation, a person has the right to demand publication of a response.

II. Code of Ethics of Armenian Media and Journalists

... editors and journalists are obligated:

1.1. prior to publishing, to check the accuracy of information from any source, not to conceal or distort facts, and not to publish obviously false information;

1.2. clearly notify the audience about the cases when the editorial office received information of public significance, but has been unable to verify the facts after employing all the reasonable measures;

1.5. to rely on accurate facts and trustworthy information when making analysis and comments;

2.1. to the extent possible, specify the sources of information;

2.2. to the extent possible, avoid using confidential sources of information and, before promising to keep the source of information confidential, always justify that decision. However, if the provision of information is conditioned upon keeping the source confidential, never to disclose the source;

6.1. to encourage free exchange of opinions, regardless of any differences between those opinions and the editorial views;

6.3. to admit mistakes and to be ready to correct them.

C. MEO JUDGMENT

Media Ethics Observatory,

having reviewed Deputy Taguhi Ghazaryan's complaint regarding the article titled "*On Whose Tip-Off Did the NSS Launch Its Raid on the American University?*" published on *168.am*, reminds that MEO, first of all, examines the complaints from the perspective of compliance with professional ethics. MEO does not have the commitment to evaluate the accuracy of facts or allegations of defamation, nor does it possess a sufficient set of tools to make conclusive and unambiguous judgments about whether the disputed information corresponds to reality.

Nevertheless, MEO notes that the content of the article in question contradicts paragraphs 1.1, 1.2, 1.5, and 2.1 of the [Code](#), since:

- the author of the piece (the media) did not make all necessary efforts to verify the accuracy of the obtained information prior to publication;
- failed to present Taguhi Ghazaryan's point of view or commentary;
- failed to base the analysis and conclusions on a comprehensive examination of the issue;
- did not indicate the source of the information and did not inform readers about the need to maintain the source's confidentiality.

MEO expresses regret that the complainant did not take the opportunity to clarify the issue directly with the media and to exercise her right to refutation or response. In this regard, MEO reminds that, under paragraphs 1 and 5 of Article 8 of the RA Law "On Mass Communication," Taguhi Ghazaryan could have reached out to the *168.am* editorial office seeking a refutation or response concerning the information related to her. At the same time, taking into account the ongoing confrontation between the ruling political force and the opposition media, as well as the reluctance of *168.am* to participate in the settlement of the dispute, MEO reserves the right to conclude that under such circumstances the out-of-court exercise of the right to refutation or response is practically impossible.

MEO reminds that members of the Self-Regulation Initiative - such as 168.am in this case – are obliged, under their commitment, to publish the specific parts extracted from this judgment that relate to violations of the Code, without adding any editorial remarks. Upon release, they must also notify MEO by providing a link to the particular publication.

**Adopted on September 16, 2025
by the following MEO composition:**

Gnel NALBANDYAN, Chief Editor of "Newmag" Publishing House

Boris NAVASARDIAN, Honorary President of Yerevan Press Club

Davit ALAVERDYAN, Chief Editor of "Mediamax" news agency

Vigen SARGSYAN, Chairman of the Commission on Professional Ethics of

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Ruben BABAYAN, Director, Professor at Yerevan State Institute of Theatre
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Anzhela STEPANYAN, Editor of Armavir “Alt” TV Company

[Media Ethics Observatory](#) was established by the media, joining the self-regulation initiative, which make 94 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 May 18, 2024 general meeting of the media that joined the self-regulation initiative.