[DE][TR] Regional Media Bodies Inspect Programmes Broadcast in Germany by the Turkish State Television Broadcaster TRT-INT

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At their conference at the beginning of May 1995 the directors of the regional media bodies were called upon to make an inspection of the programmes broadcast by the Turkish state television channel TRT-International (TRT-INT). This Turkish station can be seen by cable or satellite in most of the Federal states. The inspection was instigated by a special 56-hour programme broadcast at the end of April 1995 under the title "Rise up Turkey! Give courage to our soldiers" in which TRT-INT had called the population to support military forces deployed in Northern Iraq against the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) by giving very generous donations.

Following this, the "media agency for human rights", Delmenhorst, lodged a complaint with the regional media bodies against this call for donations. The agency demanded that TRT-INT's licence to broadcast by cable be withdrawn. They accused TRT-INT of inciting racism and glorifying war.

Criticism also came from the journalists' association IG Medien in Stuttgart and from the "Federation of Kurdish Associations in Germany" (YEK-KOM).

At their session on 9 May and following the translation of 8 hours of this 56-hour programme into German, the conference of directors of the regional media bodies expressed their concern about the nationalist and warlike tone employed in the programme. The chairman of the Joint Observatory for Youth Protection and Programme Planning was requested to liaise with TRT-INT directly on this subject. The Federal government was also asked to express its doubts to Turkey to the effect that the programmes broadcast by TRT-INT had incited a considerable amount of protest from the German public. No other criticisms were expressed however. Turkey belongs to the states which ratified the European convention on cross-border television on 5 May 1989. As an approved broadcaster in Turkey, TRT requires no licence to broadcast its programmes in Germany. Even though the European convention forbids inciting racism and both the uncontrolled showing of violence and the disregard for human dignity, this infringement can only be penalised by action under article 24 of the convention. This means that the broadcasting signatory is given a warning and only in exceptional cases is the programme in question subject to a temporary ban (see article 24 of the TV convention).

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