[RO] Joint Statement on Correct and Objective Public Information and Respect for the Rights of National Minorities

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The members of the National Audiovisual Council (Consiliul Naţional al Audiovizualului – CNA) and the representatives of the broadcasters of Romania met and issued on 23 January 2018 a Joint Statement on Correct and Objective Public Information and Respect for the Rights of National Minorities (see, inter alia, IRIS 2017-4/31 and IRIS 2017-6/27).

The Statement was triggered by the fact that in 2018 Romania celebrates 100 years since the territories inhabited predominantly by Romanians united in a national state – causing historical disputes with neighboring states and some national minorities – and that numerous breaches of the provisions of the audiovisual legislation occurred in recent times. The Council has found that mainly the Article 3 (2) of the Audiovisual Law no. 504/2002, as well as the Article 47 and 70 of the Audiovisual Code (CNA Decision no. 220 /2011) were breached by the broadcasters. The goal of the meeting was to share ideas about the best editorial means to treat subjects which could affect the rights of the minorities of all kind.

The Council and the representatives of broadcasters declared they believe that particular attention should be paid to the manner in which different events are reflected on radio and television stations, with due respect for human rights and fundamental rights. It is important that there is no form of incitement to national, racial or religious hatred and discrimination in audiovisual programs and no generalizing defamatory assertions against a group or community, they say.

It is necessary to present in the news and debates programs addressing issues of public interest regarding ethnic, religious or sexual minorities a point of view of those minorities, stated the parties. The members of the CNA and the representatives of broadcasters stated their full readiness to intensify the collaboration in order to ensure free expression with respect to audiovisual legislation for the benefit of the viewing / listening public.

The provisions of the audiovisual legislation the most breached by broadcasters are:

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- Article 3 (2) of the Audiovisual Law no. 504/2002 with further modifications and completions: All providers of audiovisual media services have the obligation to provide objective information to the public by presenting the facts and events correctly and to favour the free formation of opinions.

- Article 47 of the Audiovisual Code (CNA Decision 220/2011 with further modifications and completions): (1) It is prohibited to broadcast in any audiovisual program any form of incitement to national, racial or religious hatred, to discrimination and the commission of genocide crimes against humanity and war crimes. (2) The broadcasting of any form of racist, anti-Semitic or xenophobic manifestations in audiovisual programs is prohibited. (3) Generalized defamatory assertions against a defined group(s) of gender, age, race, ethnicity, nationality, citizenship, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, education level, social category, medical condition or physical characteristics are prohibited. (4) Generalized defamatory assertions against a person based on their belonging to a group/community defined by gender, age, race, ethnicity, nationality, nationality, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, level of education, social category, medical conditions or physical characteristics are prohibited.

Article 70 of the Audiovisual Code: In the news and debates programs addressing issues of public interest regarding ethnic, religious or sexual minorities, a point of view of the minorities will be presented.

The Declarație comună privind informarea corectă și obiectivă a publicului și respectarea drepturilor minorităților naționale 23.01.2018

http://www.cna.ro/article8754,8754.html

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