

## **Statement Regarding the Decisions of the RA Special Investigation Service on the Cases Related to Impeding Professional Activities of Journalists (Extract)**

September 29, 2014

The statement mentions two high-profile cases investigated by RA Special Investigation Service (SIS): the incident which took place on September 9, 2014, at the entrance to the RA National Assembly, when the head of the security service of the parliament obstructed the professional activities of Marineh Khachatryan, “A1+” TV correspondent, and the February 12, 2014 incident, when police officers used force against Ani Gevorgian, correspondent of “Chorrord Ishkhanutyun” newspaper. On the first incident, the SIS refused to open criminal case as there was no corpus delicti (September 25, 2014). On the second incident, the investigation was terminated (June 24, 2014).

Such course of events suggests that the incident which occurred on September 19, 2014, when Artyusha Karapetian, the head of the Armenian community of Kazakhstan, and persons accompanying him used violence against Taguhi Hovhannisian, correspondent of “Haikakan Zhamanak” daily, most probably will bring no further consequences.

In fact, a vicious tradition is being set: after receiving reports on obstruction of journalists’ activities or usage of violence against them, the RA Prosecutor’s Office requests the SIS to investigate the incidents, but the latter glosses over the cases with a standard explanation “absence of corpus delicti”. And this happens even in the cases where the facts of violence and impeding had been filmed and published on the Internet and in numerous media outlets.

Such work style of the SIS is extremely reprehensible and dangerous: SIS, in fact, protects the perpetrators, thereby increasing the frustration and distrust to law enforcers.

Journalistic organizations demanded:

- the SIS administration to take measures to review the decisions made on the aforementioned incidents, and to hold responsible the investigators that did not show impartiality and professionalism;
- the RA Prosecutor’s Office to exercise pertinent supervision over the activities of the SIS and the decisions it had delivered, and to ensure a thorough investigation of each case of violence and impeding the professional activities of journalists in order to identify the perpetrators and bring them to justice;
- the authorities of the country to oblige the law enforcement agencies, with all severity, to put an end to the parade of impunity gaining momentum in the country.

**Committee to Protect Freedom of Expression  
Yerevan Press Club  
Media Initiatives Center (former Internews Armenia)**

**“Asparez” Journalists’ Club**  
**Media Diversity Institute-Armenia**  
**“Journalists for the Future”**  
**Goris Press Club**