

Statement Regarding the Anniversary of the Events on Baghramyan Avenue in Yerevan

June 23, 2016

Today marks a year since the Armenian authorities dispersed with the use of brutal force the June 23, 2015 protest action against hike in electricity tariffs on Baghramyan Avenue in Yerevan. During those events physical violence was exerted against 13 correspondents and cameramen, and the legitimate professional activities of 24 various media representatives were obstructed.

Numerous facts prove that the police acted deliberately: the equipment of journalists was smashed, the memory cards were unlawfully seized, media representatives were taken to various police departments, audio and video materials were erased.

Ten days later it will also mark a year since the institution of criminal case on the events. According to the information provided by RA Special Investigation Service in response to the request by the Committee to Protect Freedom of Expression, the criminal case has been prolonged until August 17, 2016. During the investigation 25 media representatives were interrogated, of which 21 were recognized as injured parties.

However, what makes it ridiculous is that there are no accused persons or suspects in the case so far. Meanwhile Internet abounds with video materials, clearly showing the perpetrators of violence. All this speaks of the intention to handle the criminal case as a formality and to cover-up the case.

We, the undersigned, once again expressing our resentment towards the actions of law enforcement bodies on June 23, 2015, restate our demands addressed to the Armenian authorities: to display impartiality and responsibility in the investigation of the criminal case and to subject to liability all the perpetrators regardless of their posts.

COMMITTEE TO PROTECT FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

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