

Statement Regarding the Obstruction of Professional Activities of Agnessa Khamoyan, Yerkir.am Correspondent

January 23, 2013

On January 21, right on the first day of the official campaign of the elections to RA President, a case of violation of a journalist's rights was registered during the meetings of the presidential candidate, incumbent RA President Serzh Sargsian. Even though Agnessa Khamoyan held an accreditation, the correspondent of Yerkir.am was deprived of the possibility to cover two events with participation of the abovementioned candidate. The first event took place at the RA Government's Meeting Hall, the second – at the Center of Culture of Avan Administrative District of Yerevan.

This is not the first case of favoritism practices towards different media representatives at meetings with the participation of the RA President. On September 4, 2012, during the RA President's visit to Gyumri, the local journalists were restricted from participating in the briefing of the Head of the State. Both in Yerevan and in Gyumri, the event organizers brought the lack of space as an argument for their behavior, which, in our opinion, does not sound convincing.

We, the undersigned, believe that favoritism was practiced towards the media representatives: yet again, the media outlets were sorted out between "favorites" and "unwanted". This is an extremely vicious phenomenon, specifically during the elections.

It takes note that the campaign headquarters' representative of the presidency candidate Serzh Sargsian apologized to the journalists. However, the practice by which accredited journalists will have to participate in the events on a rotation principle is inadmissible.

In this regard, we call upon the campaign headquarters of Serzh Sargsian, as well as of the other candidates to select facilities and fix procedures, when organizing meetings and events, in such a manner, which will ensure equal and non-discriminatory conditions for all journalists, covering the pre-election promotion.

Committee to Protect Freedom of Expression

Yerevan Press Club

Internews Media Support NGO

"Asparez" Journalists' Club

"Investigative Journalists" NGO

"Journalists for the Future" NGO

Goris Press Club

Journalists for Human Rights

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Public Journalism Club

"EcoLur"

Helsinki Committee of Armenia

Vanadzor Office of Helsinki Citizens Assembly

"Rule of Law" NGO

Europe in Law Association
Women's Support Center
Helsinki Group of Spitak
Sakharov Armenian Human Rights Centre
"Public Information and Need of Knowledge" NGO