

Statement Regarding the Offensive Behavior of Four Deputies of the National Assembly of Armenia towards Parliamentary Journalists

May 26, 2014

The parliamentary four-day sittings of May 19-22 were marked by explicitly aggressive and indecent behaviors on behalf of MPs towards journalists.

On May 19, [Shushan Petrosian, MP from the Republican Party of Armenia](#), got infuriated by a question from the correspondent of Armenian Service of Radio Liberty about the May 17 shooting in downtown Yerevan. “All of you are immoral”, the MP told the journalists.

On May 21, Melik Manukian, MP from the “Prosperous Armenia” party, behaved vulgarly with the correspondent of “Hraparak” daily who had inquired about the opinion of the deputy on the program of the new Government, presented at the four-day parliamentary sittings.

On May 22, another MP from RPA, [Mher Sedrakian, used foul language](#) addressing the correspondent of Tert.am who asked him a question.

On the same day, [MP Araik Grigorian](#), in drunken condition, behaved indecently with Fnews.am correspondent.

Shushan Petrosian was the only one among the four MPs who tried to come up with explanations in the media, but the latter turned out to be unconvincing. And the MP’s readiness to apologize to the correspondent of Radio Liberty was inadequate to her offensive expression towards journalists. The other three, Melik Manukian, Araik Grigorian, Mher Sedrakian, did not bother to apologize. By the way, in December 2012 a similar incident occurred involving [indecent behavior of Mher Sedrakian](#) in relation to the correspondent of “A1+” TV company.

We, the undersigned, condemn the aggressive and indecent behavior of the above- mentioned MPs and demand:

- The parliamentary factions of RPA and “Prosperous Armenia” to bring the above-mentioned incidents for discussion and publicly give appropriate assessments;
- The Prosecutor’s Office to consider this statement, as far as Mher Sedrakian’s incident is concerned, as a report on crime, in case Sedrakian does not publicly apologize to Tert.am correspondent.

We urge the journalists who had been insulted to file complaints to National Assembly Committee on Ethics to consider the issue of the parliamentarians’ behavior.

We also suggest that the journalistic community show professional solidarity and provide moral support to their colleagues, as well as express their disapproval of indecent behavior of MPs.

COMMITTEE TO PROTECT FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

YEREVAN PRESS CLUB

MEDIA INITIATIVES CENTER (FORMERLY INTERNEWS ARMENIA)

“ASPAREZ” JOURNALISTS’ CLUB

MEDIA DIVERSITY INSTITUTE-ARMENIA

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