



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
The Representative on Freedom of the Media
Miklós Haraszti

-CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY-

1 April 2004

Written Statement to the Permanent Council
(Under Current Issues)

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

After two years, the case of the two independent TV stations in Armenia, *AI+* and *Noyan Tapan*, is still not resolved. They lost their broadcasting frequencies in 2002 and have not been able to resume their operations.

My Office has been closely following the developments with regard to the issuing of broadcast licenses in Armenia for the last two years. In particular, special attention was paid to the eight tenders where the above-mentioned stations participated followed by a number of court cases.

My predecessor, the OSCE Chairman-in-Office and other international bodies have stated on several occasions that the absence of these two stations from the airwaves limits media pluralism that I believe exists in Armenia.

I note that no progress has been made in rectifying the existing situation and I appeal to the Government to take all the necessary steps to help recreate a broad media landscape in Armenia.

In particular, I urge the Government to ensure that the National Commission on TV and Radio functions as an independent body. It is also important to provide for licensing procedures to be more transparent.