

## **Press Freedom in Cyprus: Wierd Obstacles**

I'm afraid to tell you that the problem we declared two years ago here, in Human Dimension Meeting in 2007, is still going on as it always used to be in Cyprus.

Unfortunately the discrimination shown to the media and also to the journalists by the Republic of Cyprus, which is a member of the EU since 2004 and also member of OSCE has still been going on.

The Republic of Cyprus authority, prevents the right of reaching any kind of information which is a very important part of press freedom. Crossing to the Southern part of Cyprus and collecting information has been blocked for both foreign journalists and also for the Turkish Cypriot Journalists.

Press Freedom which is a part of human rights has been ignored absolutely by prohibiting even the members of board of international journalist unions and some journalists who already have the international press card. This practice is not only against the international human rights, but also against the Green Line Regulations accepted by the EU in 2004.

Once again we'd like to ask all human rights organisations and especially the Council of Europe to pay attention to all these unfair applications and do something against this unacceptable and inhuman practice in the European area.

On the other hand, Turkish Cypriots have also been facing some other obstacles in the field of media. Radio stations and TV channels who transmit from the North Cyprus can not find a clear frequency to reach the audiences. Because the power of frequency allocation belongs to the Republic of Cyprus authorities who never accept Turkish Cypriot radios and TV channels as legal institutions and who always overlook Greek Cypriot channels and radios' transmitting via the same frequencies.

As a result, Turkish Cypriots who are the equal part and the owner of Cyprus have been facing lots of difficulties to receive broadcasts in their mother-tounge.

As Turkish Cypriot Journalists Union we call you to stop this obstacle which limits the press freedom and also increases the rate of unemployed journalists.

Another point is that the Greek Cypriot media including newspapers, radios and TV channels keeps refusing to publish or broadcast any single advertisement that belongs to Turkish Cypriot companies.

However, most of Turkish Cypriot media institutions publish and broadcast Greek Cypriot companies' advertisements.

This outcome causes inequalities in terms of human rights and it is also against the rule of free competition of the EU.

We'd like to point out that the Turkish Cypriot community was one of the two equal founders of the Republic of Cyprus in 1960 and the examples above are the proof of an unfair life on our island and they also show that the authority of the Republic keeps practising and encouraging ethnic discrimination among citizens living in the same country.

Knowing about the fact that lots of human rights violations, including human trafficking are basically caused by the conflict in Cyprus, as Turkish Cypriot Journalists Union, we invite the international community to support us and make efforts to contribute to the progress of negotiations between leaders to be able to reach a comprehensive solution in Cyprus.

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