

MEDIA ETHICS OBSERVATORY APPEAL

On maintaining professional responsibility in covering the peace process

The significance of the Washington Agreements

The agreements signed by the leaders of Armenia, Azerbaijan and the United States in Washington on August 8, 2025 are of crucial importance for Armenia and the entire region. However, numerous issues and details related to these documents still lack full alignment.

As the coming months will be filled with intensive negotiations, the likelihood of information leaks is also expected to stay high. Under such circumstances, the responsibility of media is amplified, since they not only cover the process, but also shape the public atmosphere around it.

The issue of information reliability

It is widely recognized that any sensational or unconfirmed information reported by journalists and media can have a significant impact, extending beyond the borders of the country. A clear example of this is the article released by the Spanish outlet *Periodista Digital* in late July, which presented alleged details about a private American company's involvement in the reconstruction and management of the railway passing through Syunik.

The article contained unverified claims suggesting that a foreign private military company would allegedly be involved in ensuring the security of the road and managing the revenue distribution. This could have discredited the agreements on unblocking the communication routes from the outset. This incident demonstrates that similar information “injections” are also likely to happen in the future, given the upcoming tough negotiations for peace and stability.

MEO's recommendations to the journalistic community

In light of the above-mentioned trends, Media Ethics Observatory finds it necessary to present to the public some observations and recommendations regarding the situation:

- Every detail of the process initiated by the August 8 Agreements is of utmost importance in terms of public interest, and media's focus on every piece of related information is justified. Nevertheless, the principles of conscientious journalism and integrity before the audience imply that such information be verified, and if the full accuracy of the information cannot be ensured at the time of publication, the audience should be warned about it.

- Considering that in today's information landscape, new platforms spreading fake news and misleading content are constantly emerging, it is the professional duty of media to distinguish between sources and to process or collect data regarding their degree of reliability.
Decisions about the appropriateness of disseminating information obtained from various sources should be based on your knowledge of how reliable they are.
- When publishing unconfirmed facts (especially from questionable sources), apart from warning about their uncertain nature, it is recommended to incorporate commentary from one or more experts on these issues, thereby helping the audience to better assess the reliability of the information they have received. In such situations, it is also advisable to provide noteworthy quotations from other media publications on the topic, if available. All these measures will help reduce negative consequences in cases where the accuracy of the reported facts may later be questioned.

We call on representatives of the Armenian media field to be guided by the [Code of Ethics of Armenian Media and Journalists](#), along with the [guidelines](#) developed by MEO, in ensuring conscientious coverage of issues of public significance.

MEO's call to official bodies

The lack, delay or distortion of official information has in the past led to tensions both among the Armenian public and within Armenian-Azerbaijani relations. In this context, Media Ethics Observatory calls on the RA official structures to provide the public with as much information as possible—not only about the August 8 agreements, but also about accords on other aspects of the peace process with Azerbaijan and the progress of their implementation.