

# ***Steering Committee on Media and Information Society***



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## **Comments of the Steering Committee on Media and Information Society (CDMSI) on the Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 2075 (2015) on Media Responsibility and Ethics in a Changing Media Environment**

1. The Steering Committee on Media and Information Society (CDMSI) welcomes the Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) Recommendation 2075 (2015) on Media Responsibility and Ethics in a Changing Media Environment and considers it a timely and useful instrument for fostering professional and ethical journalism in the new media landscape. The recommendation recalls important principles and initiatives concerning media accountability and training in a fast developing media landscape.

2. The PACE refers to three essential documents adopted by the Committee of Ministers, the Resolution (74) 26 on the right of reply - position of the individual in relation to the press, and Recommendations Rec(2004)16 to member States on the right of reply in the new media environment and No. R (97) 21 on the media and the promotion of a culture of tolerance. They comprise the basis for fostering accountable and professional media and journalism in the digital age.

3. The CDMSI supports the PACE on its call to member States to ensure that individuals have an effective right to reply, this could be enhanced by the use of the information and communications' technologies.

4. The CDMSI emphasises that media self-regulation is a crucial means for accomplishing media independence and it complements media regulation. Self-regulation should fall within the remit of media itself and this is most necessary in the contemporary dynamic media environment. Human rights norms have to underpin the self-regulatory mechanisms and bridge human rights and special media standards as a sound basis of journalism. The sustainable operation of self-regulatory bodies monitoring the consistent implementation of self-regulatory rules equipped with appropriate means, knowledge and skills merits a particular focus in this respect.

6. An important point that CDMSI wishes to stress is that although a diversity of media accountability rules already exist, their practical implementation is of crucial importance. In this regard strengthening practical activities aiming at improving self-regulatory, ethical standards for media professionals and their consistent implementation is a most desirable goal to be pursued by the media and their associations.

7. The CDMSI supports the recommendation made by the PACE to strengthen programmes aimed at raising self-regulatory ethical standards among journalists and the media. The Council of Europe has already launched a number of initiatives aiming at boosting professional and ethical journalism through its cooperation-activities in this field. As an example, it can be recalled the support for the establishment of a network of media self-regulatory bodies in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, the Russian Federation and Ukraine (2011) and in South Eastern European countries (2015). Seminars with journalists have also been organised

and support for the elaboration of codes of ethics has been provided in different member States through the co-operation activities.

8. In view of the above, the CDMSI does not consider it necessary at this stage that the Committee of Ministers produces guidelines for governments in order to support media self-regulation nationally. The CDMSI will continue to pay attention in its future work to media responsibility and ethics and how they are impacted by a changing media environment.