

December 11, 2013 Press Release

The Broadcasting Council reminds the media that upon coverage of social issues and events, they are obligated to comply with the professional journalistic standards, which are reflected in Article 68 of the Law on Broadcasting.

The media shall particularly make efforts to ensure “ fair and impartial presentation of events with equal treatment of different views and opinions, and enable free creation of the public opinion about certain events and issues,” as well as, to promote “the spirit of tolerance, mutual respect and understanding between individuals of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.”

Like all other citizens, reporters and editors also exercise their constitutionally guaranteed rights and freedoms, including the right to their own opinion. However, as media professionals, they must not forget that in journalistic products the comment is free, but the fact is undisputed, and that the repetition of hate speech may cause hate crimes.

It is especially important when informing about topics that relate to interethnic relations, as is the case with the reporting on the events associated with the placement of the sculpture of King Dusan in Skopje, which may result in occurrence of statements with elements of discrimination or even hate speech , to provide additional context or to retell such occurrences.

Respecting the independence and editorial freedom of the media, the Council, especially pays attention to Alsat – M TV, to respect the professional journalistic standards and to avoid the use of sensationalism in its reports, so as not to cause ethnic tensions and expects that upon coverage of this

topic, a neutral tone of reporting will be maintained.

Furthermore, the Broadcasting Council rejects the speculation indicated by the chief editor of Alsat – M, Muhammad Zeqiri, conveyed by some media, that some ministries exerted pressure on the work of this regulatory body. The Council is an independent regulatory body, which in its operations and decision-making is only guided by the provisions of the Law on Broadcasting and the international acts ratified and recognised by the Republic of Macedonia.