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Media responsibility and media ethics in a changing media environment

Motion for a resolution

tabled by Mr Mogens JENSEN and other members of the Assembly

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

Media freedom under Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights is a necessity for any democratic state. The rapidly changing media environment of today increases the impact and importance of free speech through the media.

The media have a responsibility to play the role as the “watchdog” for the citizens. When for instance authorities, individuals, companies or organisations behave wrongly or when embarrassing cases are hidden with intent, the media have an obligation to bring the stories to light.

But with freedom of expression and media freedom follows also a responsibility. A responsibility not to bring false stories or allegations. A responsibility not to accuse or flaunt individuals, companies or organisations on a false basis. A responsibility to respect ethical standards and fundamental journalistic principles.

In recent years in Europe we have unfortunately experienced a number of media not respecting the responsibility that comes with freedom of speech and media freedom. In times with constant deadlines, where journalists are subject to a need to produce news around the clock, and where the competition between media has become harder the tendency that media violate fundamental ethical and journalistic principles has increased.

Following a particularly severe case of ethical misconduct by the media, the recent Leveson report in the United Kingdom raises issues which are of relevance also to other countries in Europe.

Therefore, it is urgent for the Parliamentary Assembly to strengthen media responsibility and media ethics in a changing media environment.

Signed (see overleaf)



*Signed*¹:

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1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EDG: European Democrat Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
SOC: Socialist Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left