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STATEMENT OF THE *COMPLAINTS COMMISSION OF*

THE PRESS COUNCIL IN BIH

regarding irresponsible and incorrect reporting of the web portal *source.ba* and other web portals on the alleged death of a public figure

grave breach of the professional Press Code of reporting!

Media report in the interest of the public.

To release information on the death of a person, that did not happen, is not only not in the interest of the public, but also not in the interest of the media that released such information.

The Complaints Commission of the Press Council in Bosnia and Herzegovina REMINDS the editors of web portals that they are obliged to **strictly obey the Press Code BiH** in their reporting, and **to pay special attention to verification of information** before publishing them on their portal.

Each information has to be confirmed from at least two confidential and verified sources before releasing it to public.

This especially concerns Article 9 of the Press Code – *Privacy*, which speaks of reporting on tragic events.

Releasing unverified and incorrect information on death of a public figure, for the sake of being fast, for the sake of the race to be the first and acquire as many visits to the portal as possible for that day, is a grave breach of the professional Press Code of reporting.

Irresponsible editorial decision to publish such unverified information causes delusion of the public, creates confusion and leads to misguided acts, and before all causes great emotional pain to the family and friends of people about whom the public is informed completely wrongly and irresponsibly. What even to say about what kind of pain that causes to the person which was, in such an irresponsible way, pronounced deceased!

Mistakes of such kind have permanent consequences, that is not a mistake that can easily be corrected by a denial or correction of untruthful or incomplete allegations.

Because of that, *the Complaints Commission* of the Press Council in BiH, **appeals to all editors of web portals to be aware of their professional responsibility towards public and to give priority to correctness and verification of information they publish over their desire to be the first and fastest**, because that is a short-term benefit.

Such media permanently loses its credibility with its readers/visitors, loses credibility in the professional community and in overall public.

Press Code for the Press and Online Media in BiH can be found at the website of the Press Council in BiH www.vzs.ba

http://english.vzs.ba/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=218&Itemid=9&lang=en

