Complaint of R.I.C. against daily newspaper S. for hate speech in area of public information

No. 07-00-270/2016-02 Date: 1 September 2016

 **OPINION**

The opinion was issued in proceeding acting upon the complaint of organization R.I.C. from B. because of columns signed by B.DJ. "Honey, do not be a fag" and "Honey, do not be a fag 2 ', that daily newspapers " S." published on 21 and 28 May 2016. The complainant considered that the publication of these columns discriminated gays, lesbians and transgender people. In response to the complaint, among other things, the editor in chief of "S." M.L., among other things, stated that B.DJ., as the author of the column, conditioned "S." not to change the content of his columns, i.e. that the editorial team must not censor his texts, which "S." adhered to. It was stated that B.DJ. builds his successful career on his music and lyrics which he is personally responsible for, as it was the case with the controversial column, and that the "S.", in this case, was led by the fact that everyone is entitled to their opinion, especially people from public life who promote values ​​and goals they advocate with their attitudes. During the proceedings it was established that the column "Honey, do not be a fag" dated 21 May 2016 contains a number of intolerable insults against members of the LGBT community, who were named by the author as "fags", "ass kissers " and "assholes". Using such derogatory names, the author of the column upset and humiliated members of the LGBT population and very malevolently sent a message to his readers that the homosexuals are "depraved" and that it is acceptable for others to offend, harass and humiliate them by calling them extremely rude and degrading names. However, in this column, B.DJ . went one step further in disturbing and humiliating LGBT population members . Specifically, he recommended the organizers of the Pride Parade to invite football fans because they are "very tolerant towards the different ones ", but then his rhetoric escalated in words: "The only thing I hate and despise from the bottom of my soul is the sick idiots who would inject faggotingin schools, who would adopt children. They are not gay, they are fags. I should send them to the Islamic countries, where their disease is treated by the death penalty. Be sure that I am not a homophobe, just a normal person, "In this way, B.DJ . encouraged hatred towards the members of the LGBT community and called for their lynching. Such an attitude is extremely dangerous, given that the members of the LGBT sexual orientation in our society face a number of threats, harassment and other problems on daily basis. Finally, Commissioner for Protection of Equality concluded that the Law on Public Information and Media stipulates that the editor In chief is the one who is responsible for the content of editing for specific editions, columns, i.e. program segments. This practically means that the chief editor of the daily newspapers "S." is responsible for the entire content of the daily newspapers "S.", and all signs posted in this newspaper, including the columns by B.DJ.

Therefore, the Commissioner for Equality gave the opinion that the column by B.DJ . "Honey, do not be a fag" published in the daily newspaper "S." on 21 May 2016 expressed the ideas and attitudes that are in violation of the prohibition of hate speech against the LGBT population, and which is stipulated by Article 11 of the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination. Also, the column by B.DJ. "Honey, do not be a fag 2" published in the daily newspaper "S." on 28 May 2016 expressed the ideas and attitudes that are harassing, humiliating and insulting for the dignity of transgender people. By publishing this column the provisions of Article 12 of the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination were violated.

Therefore, the editor in chief of the daily newspapers "S." was recommended to publish an apology to LGBT and transgender people in the daily newspaper "S." within 15 days of the receipt of this opinion with the recommendation, as well as to take all necessary actions in accordance with its powers, as not to publish articles and columns that contain ideas, information and opinions that incite discrimination, hatred or violence against individuals or groups because of their personal properties in the daily newspapers "S." no longer.