Complaint of R.I.C. against daily newspaper S. for discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation in area of public information

No. 07-00-270/2016-02 Date: August 29, 2016

**OPINION**

This opinion has been issued in the procedure acting upon the complaints filed by organizations R.I.C. from B. and G., regarding front pages of the daily newspaper „S“ published on 16th and 18th April, 2016, namely: „Gays spreading aids all over Serbia“ and „P for S: gays are sick! That problem must be eradicated“, as well as because of the titles of articles published in the same issue of this newspaper: „Gays are spreading aids all over Serbia“ and „Being a gay is a grave illness, we must eradicate it“. The complainants deem that by these front pages and titles „S.“ has discriminated the citizens of Serbia on grounds of sexual orientation. In reply to these complaints, among other things, it has been stated that these articles and front pages are in fact focused on the interest of gay population, because they deal with the topic and problems which predominantly affect and endanger health and lives of gay population. Upon completion of proceedings and established state of facts, The commissioner for Protection of Equality has issued the opinion that the front page „Alarming disclosure of doctors: Gays spreading aids all over Serbia“, the article titled „Gays spreading HIV throughout Serbia“, headline of this article „Anal sex and homosexual relations culprits for the increase in the number of infected“, the photo of two young men walking one behind the other, while the youngster walking in front ostensibly „says“: „Be a train and I will be a locomotive!“ and a sidebar „A shortcut to sex“, published in the daily newspaper „S.“ on 16th April, 2016, as well as the front page „P. for S: Gays are sick! That problem must be eradicated!“, and the title of article „P. about LGBT strike on S.- Being a gay is a grave illness, we must eradicate it“, published in a daily newspaper „S.“ On 18th April, 2016 expressed ideas and viewpoints which are disturbing and humiliating and insulting dignity of persons of different sexual orientation than heterosexual, thus violating the regulations of the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination. For that reason, the editor in chief of this newspaper has been recommended to invite the representatives of R.I.C. and organization G. to a meeting, to learn firsthand about problems the LGBT persons have to face in everyday life, as well as how the front pages and articles of such content have affected them, and not to publish in future the texts insulting the dignity of members of LGBT population and supporting prejudice towards marginalized social groups, but instead to use such texts to promote the change of usual patterns, customs and practices that cause stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination of LGBT persons.