*Non-binding translation from Ukrainian into English*

**Joint Agreement Act No. 3**

**On media coverage of the issue of children’s participation in the armed conflicts**

The City of Kyiv 19th November 2018

In view of the on-going international armed conflict in the territory of Ukraine that causes social tensions and lasting psychological damage to the citizens, in particular to children,

Taking into account that this adverse impact can be diminished or increased by the media coverage of the armed conflict,

The TV and radio organizations-signatories to this Act voluntarily undertake the obligation to observe the following principles and rules during the coverage of the issue of children’s participation in the armed conflicts:

**1**. Coverage of the issue of children’s participation in the armed conflicts (including their involvement in traumatic situations that ensue from the military actions) is possible and necessary in order to provide the public with complete, objective and reliable information about the existence of a crucial social matter, direction and state of its resolution, risks that this problem directly poses to the audience of the relevant media.

**2**. At the same time, reporting on suicide cases in the media may lead to such socially dangerous consequences as:

* involvement of children in the armed conflict or copying by other children of the actions of underage participants of the armed conflicts, out of their own accord;
* child endangerment of minors that reside in the temporarily occupied territories in case of them voicing their opinion on the political situation in Ukraine;
* creation or enforcement of the negative perception by the audience of media in the territory controlled by Ukraine of children-IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons);
* traumatization of the underage media audience by demonstration of the visual images of warfare.

**3**. In order to diminish the risk of children involvement in the armed conflict it is recommended to:

* avoid heroization of children’s participation in the military actions;
* avoid sensationalizing the fact of children-participants of the armed conflicts of heroic actions, *inter alia* by: not making such facts a top story in the newscast, not including them in the previews;
* information on children’s participation in the armed conflicts should be accompanied by comments on the impermissibility of such participation and on criminal responsibility of adults for recruitment of children to participate in the armed conflicts;
* if possible, the children TV shows of patriotic nature should contain information that participation in the armed conflicts is possible only after coming of legal age.

**4**. In order to prevent child endangerment of minors that reside in the temporarily occupied territories in case of them voicing their opinion on the political situation in Ukraine the dissemination of information that could enable identification of these minors by the general public is prohibited, *including*:

* surname of the said minor;
* demonstration of an image (photo and video) of the person’s face, as well as facial features that are used for identification (such as eyes and ears);
* the name of the locality, where the said minor resides (apart from the cities with over 50 thousand residents) without generalization to larger territorial scales (district or region).

If the opinions, voiced by these children can create a particularly grave danger for them (in particular, if they contain criticism of the aggressor state, of the illegal armed groups etc.), it is recommended to obscure their faces completely.

**5**. In order to avoid the negative preception by the media audience in territories controlled by Ukraine of children-IDPs, it is recommended that:

* while disseminating negative information about a minor, particularly about their participation in the conflict or committing an offense, the media avoid informing the audience that the said minor previously resided in the temporarily occupied territories and is an IDP, with exception of cases when such information is directly related to the main storyline (for instance, the conflict stems from this fact);
* in case if negative information about the minor is directly linked to the said minor previously residing in the temporarily occupied territories and being an IDP, the events should receive fair and balanced coverage without bias and taking into account the inadmissibility of discrimination on the grounds of territorial affiliation.

**6**. In order to avoid further traumatization of the underage media audience it is recommended to refrain from demonstration of the most traumatic imagery of warfare at a time when minors are likely to view TV on their own (on weekdays from 7.00 am to 7.00 pm), including:

* close-up photographic and video images of death of the minor or of their body;
* tortures of minors;
* bodily harm sustained by minors as a result of military actions, particularly in case of use of the firearms or explosives.

It is also advisable to avoid the special effects and instruments that amplify the emotional impact of the traumatic visual imagery of warfare and needlessly escalate the atmosphere of fear.

**Executive Director of “1+1 Media” Yaroslav Pakholchuk**

**CEO of LLC TRC «Ukraina» Viktoria Korogod**

**Deputy CEO of «StarLightMedia» Anatoliy Maksymchuk**

**Board Member of the National Public Television Company of Ukraine Yuriy Makarov**

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