National Media for Peaceful Coexistence Charter

Preamble: As a result of the critical challenges facing Iraq, and in order to create a better environment for peaceful coexistence amongst Iraqi citizens in the post-ISIL phase, also considering the decisive role of media in public opinion whilst complying with professional and objective standards to disseminate the truth - the National Media Conference for Peaceful Coexistence “Media Promotes Coexistence and Reconciliation” was held under the patronage of the National Reconciliation Committee in the Prime Minister’s Office in cooperation with the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). The conference was held in Baghdad on 23 September 2017, attended by over 50 media representatives and aimed at producing a national media charter that instills coexistence and contributes to achieve political and social stability in Iraq.

After holding sessions of free dialogue and constructive discussions, the participants agreed on the below articles of a Charter they called, “National Media for Peaceful Coexistence”, and stressed the need to respect and adhere to these articles.

This Charter represents a set of principles to be adhered to and applied to guide media work particularly in relation to peaceful coexistence. It also represents a foundation for media profession in all its forms, including social and electronic media.

Article 1: Refuse to favor politicians and individuals with private interests; respect public right of access to information; do not discriminate amongst the different public communities based on religion, sect, race, language, gender, culture, or color; respect freedom of thought, belief, and expression; and promote engagement and communication between the media and its audience.

Article 2: Preserve the unity of the state, solidarity and stability of society; respect diversity and pluralism; disseminate values of tolerance and acceptance; refuse to publish any material promoting extremism, crime, violence, terrorism, hatred, or provoking religious, sectarian, ethnic, or regional issues, or promoting violence, gender discrimination or human trafficking. Media should endeavor to disseminate values of world and national peace; contribute to peace-making process; and create enabling environment for national reconciliation and settlement to achieve security, stability, and coexistence.

Article 3: Do not issue premature judgements and seek accuracy and clarity when using terms and expressions in press coverage; avoid using terms referring to religious, ethnic, and sectarian identities in political segmentation and classification; respect individual, religious, sectarian, and ethnic privacy of the citizens; do not harm individuals or institutions due to press publications, and respect wishes of individuals not to disclose their identity or address for security or moral reasons.

Article 4: Do not exploit social, humanitarian, and economic situation in media areas of coverage; avoid publishing videos affecting the privacy and dignity of the victims (either dead or injured) or photos or videos that may put the victims, such as victims of sexual violence in armed conflicts, at risk.

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