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Subject: Complaint against Independent Media Corporation (Pvt.) Ltd (GEO) for taking action under the PEMRA Ordinance and the Rules for false and scandalous campaign undermining the integrity and tarnishing the image of state institution (ISI) and its officers

On 19th April, 2014, an incident of firing, apparently an assassination attempt was made by some unknown assailants at around 1730 hours at Karachi on Mr. Hamid Mir, an anchorperson associated with GEO News, a venture held and operated by M/S Independent Media Corporation (Pvt) Limited, Karachi. Immediately thereafter, a vicious campaign libelous and scandalous in nature was started initially on GEO News channel wherein false accusations were made against a state institution tasked to work for the defense, sovereignty and integrity of Pakistan i.e., Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) and its DG Lt. Gen. Muhammad Zahir ul Islam. The telecast in question / campaign was aimed at undermining the integrity and tarnishing the image of state institution and its officers and falsely linking it with the terrorist outfits/activities. The attempt was detrimental to the interest of the institution and the country. Said footage was picked up by foreign media particularly Indian Channels who instead of objectively reporting the incident overplayed it repeatedly. GEO network made extensive reporting of the incident primarily aimed at targeting a state institution and its DG. The entire electronic media covered the said incident as 'Breaking News' as well as in 'News Bulletins' and the tickers. Details are provided in the CDs

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The print media particularly the newspapers published by 'Jang' and 'The News' also published defamatory, libelous and scandalous material as has been done by their sister-concerns in electronic media. The management thereof followed the suit and joined hands for doing the above illegal acts. This makes the said Publications and the persons responsible for actions under i) section 3, 4 and 9 of the Defamation Ordinance, 2002, ii) Section 19 and 27 of the Press, Newspaper, News Agencies and Books Registration Ordinance 2002 and the Rules framed there-under and also the terms and conditions of the licenses/declarations granted or operated there-under and iii) the measures and mechanism under the Press Council of Pakistan Ordinance 2002.

The said false, malicious and irresponsible reporting is a continuation of policy of GEO Network for maligning the state

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along with script as Annexure-A & B. The said reporting has violated the specific terms and conditions of its license.

The reporting made and the programs aired cannot be viewed as a single event. GEO Network has a history of acting illegally in furtherance of the anti Pakistan agenda. If required, material can be provided to the regulator. The inability of editorial team and management or monitoring staff at GEO failed to either control the content and deliberately allowed scandalous views to go on air. This constitutes breach of terms of its license and violating code of conduct. Moreover, the above instance establishes that the editorial team and management of GEO has clearly violated the following provisions of PEMRA rules /code of conduct, making GEO liable for cancellation of its license:-

- a. Rule 15 of PEMRA Rules
- b. Para (c), (g), (j) of standing code of conduct
- c. Section 20(a) of PEMRA Ordinance
- d. Section 27(a) of PEMRA Ordinance

The above be read with all enabling provisions of the PEMRA Ordinance and the Rules as amended from time to time.

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The said false, malicious and irresponsible reporting is a continuation of policy of GEO Network for maligning the state institutions as it has done earlier in the case of Daniel Pearl, Wali Khan Babar, the killing of Mr. Hamaad (an officer of Supreme court of Pakistan) and also the killing of parents of an honorable judge of the Supreme Court at Lahore. The malicious reporting later proved false.....

The violations of terms of conditions of license issued by PEMRA to Independent Media Corporation (Pvt.) Limited make the Network liable for measures including the cancellation of license by PEMRA.