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Surprising Board decisions about video clips

Under Turkish legislation, private TV channels and radios are monitored by the Radio and Television Supreme Council (“RTUK”) who has the authority to impose a penalty in case of breach of the related law. While taking a decision, the Board acts either per the complaints of the audiences about TV and Radio programs or ex officio. But especially in recent decisions of the Council, the fines are not effective to solve the problems; if there even have been a problem!

One of the recent decisions of the Council in 2008 is about a famous Turkish music channel; because of the video clip of 50 Cent and Justin Timberlake for the song named “Ayo Technology”. It is one of the hit dance songs all over the world but the clip unfortunately collided on the Council’s standards

That music channel was fined for approximately 160.000 Euro by the Board, due to lack of compliance with the article 5/2t, which rules that *“productions likely to jeopardy physical, moral and mental development of children and young, due to existence of sexual elements, shall be broadcasted between 23.00 and 05.00 with written or oral warnings”*.

The channel managers opposed the fine before the court; however, as the legal procedure has been carrying on, the channel was fined for approximately 100.000 Euro again just for one of the video clips of Shayne Ward with the same reason.

In fact the aforesaid video clips have been broadcasted in many countries without any restriction and it is possible to watch these video clips which are being shown on most of the famous international music channels and also on internet at Youtube. As to channel managers, the fine is disgraceful and arbitrary to the point of creating double standard with other music broadcasting channels, and the fined amount is unbelievably high for just a simple video clip.

The Council based its decision on the existence of immoral acts in the clip. However it is clear that such kind of restrictions only for one channel does not serve to the purpose even if such may be defensible. Because of this senseless decision most of the newspaper columnists have taken the attention to the double standard and the unfairness of the similar decisions. Because despite the decision of the Council, it is still possible to watch such clips in other channels which are international thus out of the jurisdiction of the Council. Thus the decision of the Council just seems as for the sake of formality.

It is obvious that the Council is considering the psychological health of children who may be affected from the pictures in the clip. However the discussions on the subject will not come to an end since it is free to watch the same video clip on foreign channels via satellites.