



OPERATING EUROVISION AND EURORADIO

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BY EMAIL

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REFERENCE

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Mr Jakup Krasniqi
Chairman, Assembly of Kosovo
Republic of Kosovo

Members of the Assembly,
Republic of Kosovo

Distinguished Mr Krasniqi and Members of the Assembly,

I write on behalf of RTK, in which my own organization – the European Broadcasting Union – played an important founding role.

We at the EBU are very pleased overall with how Kosovo's public service broadcaster has developed since 1999, despite severe political and financial difficulties. The recent launch of RTK 2 was an important step towards serving the whole population. We also welcome the planned channels for news and children, and the investments in new technology.

However, according to my information, Members of the Assembly from all political groupings have increasingly been seeking to pressurise RTK and some of its staff into according them privileged coverage. While such attempts may be understandable, especially during an election year, they are not acceptable. A public service broadcaster exists to do what its name says: serve the public – not any specific political parties or interest groups.

RTK's audience ratings compare very favourably with those of public broadcasters elsewhere in Europe. This says a great deal for the trust accorded by citizens to RTK's news reports, and to the general quality of its programmes. And of course this is why some members of the Assembly are reportedly so eager to receive special treatment from RTK.

Just 18 months ago, the entire membership of the EBU unanimously adopted six core values of public service media: universality, independence, excellence, diversity, accountability and innovation. One of the most important of these – perhaps the most important – is independence, in particular editorial independence.

The EBU's Members, the public service broadcasters of Europe, strive to be completely impartial and independent from political, commercial and other influences. Free to challenge the powerful, test prevailing assumptions, and contribute to an informed citizenship.

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RTK's programmes and studios should be open to representatives from all sectors of Kosovo society, including minorities and legitimate political parties and their representatives. But it is for RTK and its journalists, exercising their professional editorial judgment, to decide when and how issues should be covered, and whom to invite on their programmes – naturally in a perspective of balance and of service to all segments of society.

In summary, my message is simple: leave the professionals of RTK in peace to do their job according to the principles and values of independent public service media!

I also take this opportunity to raise again the property question which I first took up as long ago as 2011, and which remains unresolved. The physical assets of RTK's predecessor, Radio Television Pristina, urgently need to be assigned in a proper legal manner to RTK. Only when this has happened will RTK have legal security and its managers the freedom to manage as efficiently as they should.

This is an important year for Kosovo, and for RTK. Your citizens will be electing a new Assembly. RTK will play an important role in reporting on the different issues and candidates – and they must be allowed to do so independently and responsibly, according to the established standards of public service media in Europe.

RTK also has ambitious plans to roll out new channels to serve the public better as the country prepares for digitalization next year. I urge you to give your public broadcaster the political and financial support that it needs.

Yours sincerely,



Ingrid Deltenre
Director General

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