

DATE

31st December 2015

Mr Andrzej Duda,
President of the Republic of Poland
Warsaw, Poland

SUBJECT : Media Independence in Poland

Dear Mr President,

You will not be surprised that I am writing to you in the aftermath of yesterday's vote in the Sejm on the law on public service media. We are dismayed that such a law could be adopted by the House of Deputies of the Polish Parliament. It is an attack on an institution which will no longer be independent as soon as the measures take effect. In our view, this is a most profoundly retrograde step and will deeply damage public service media.

You will be aware, from the copy which I sent you of my letter on Tuesday to the Speaker of the Sejm, of our alarm at the bill introduced into the Polish Parliament which would immediately oust the supervisory and management bodies of TVP and Polish Radio and transfer the power of nomination and dismissal of the Boards of both organisations to a government minister. That letter and the joint statement issued yesterday by press freedom and media organisations including the EBU, and all the protests made by others against the measure, have so far been ignored.

To preserve the integrity and independence of public service media as a symbol of a free and democratic country, we ask you in the strongest possible terms not to sign this measure into law and certainly not without having first undertaken a careful analysis of its compatibility with the Polish constitution and the freedom and pluralism of the media, guaranteed by Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

The haste with which this new law has been rushed through Parliament strikes a discordant note about Poland and its respect for the rule of law and the democratic process.

Accordingly, we urge you not to sign the new law.

Yours sincerely,

Ingrid Deltenre, Director General, EBU