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European Broadcasting Union

Union Européenne de Radio-Télévision

COAP (The Secretary General)  
Please prepare reply  
for signature NK  
TAN 11/10

10 OCT. 2005

Le Secrétaire général

SG/8445  
JR/JB/ck

CABINET KROES	
To: NK BS OG CT BB LBA MS RB JdBP SEC	
001733	10.10.2005
cc: NK BS OG CT BB LBA MS RB JdBP SEC	

Mrs Noëlie Kroes  
Member European Commission  
European Commission  
Rue de la Loi 200  
B - 1049 BRUSSELS

Geneva, 5 October 2005

Dear Commissioner,

I am writing in relation to the State Aid Action Plan recently published by the Commission.

The Commission refers to the contribution made by high quality Services of General Economic Interest to the competitiveness of the European economy and the social and territorial cohesion, and these objectives lie at the heart of public service broadcasting. In particular, the European Broadcasting Union welcomes the reference to the specific provisions that regulate public service broadcasting, including the Amsterdam Protocol on the system of Public Service Broadcasting in the Member States.

In the Action Plan, the Commission also announces that it plans to review the 2001 Communication because new issues have arisen regarding the scope of public service broadcasters due to the development of new digital technologies and of internet based services. The document does not expand on the problems that, according to the Commission, would lead to a need for a revision.

While all Members are all too aware of the speed and depth of change in the media industry, I am not sure which particular aspects of the 2001 text would require revisiting and in what sense. The so-called Broadcasting Communication was arrived at after extensive consultation and discussion, principally aimed at making the text both clear and flexible enough to take account of technological change. In our view, that work was successful: the text remains an effective basis for Commission action and provides the necessary legal certainty. The recent issues and decisions having to do with public service broadcasting would seem to support this.

In the spirit of contributing in the best possible way to Commission work in this area I would be extremely interested in any further clarification you or your services would feel in a position to offer on this matter. If the Commission were to go ahead with reviewing the 2001 Communication, the EBU and its Members warmly welcome the Commission's commitment to involving stakeholders in this work.

Yours faithfully,

Jean Réveillon  
Secretary General

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