



12th Plenary Assembly of the Mediterranean Network of Regulatory Authorities

Istanbul, Legacy Ottoman Hotel, Turkey

30th September & 1st October, 2010

The 12th Plenary Assembly of the Mediterranean Network of Regulatory Authorities was held in Istanbul on the invitation of the *Radio and Television Supreme Council* (RTUK), on the 30th September and 1st October 2010 under the Presidency of Mr. Juan Montabes Pereira, President of the *Consejo audiovisual de Andalucía* (CAA) of Andalusia, Spain.

From a total of nineteen regulatory authorities - members of the Network, fourteen were present at the meeting. The two Israeli authorities, the Council for Cable TV and Satellite Broadcasting (CCTSB) and the Second Authority for Television and Radio (SATR), the Audiovisual Commission of Jordan (AVC), the Republic Broadcasting Agency of Serbia (RBA) and the Comisión del Mercado de Telecomunicaciones of Spain (CMT) were not present at this meeting.

Thursday, September 30th, 2010

Opening Session:

President Montabes declared the meeting open by highlighting the work accomplished by the network during the year 2009-2010 after the adoption of the Declaration of Intention regarding the protection of young publics and the fight against violence in the media, calling for a Mediterranean alliance for media literacy. He also saluted the achievements of 2008 marked by the adoption of the Declaration on audiovisual content regulation and its recognition by key euro-Mediterranean players during the past year.

The President reminded that the activities of the Network depend on the research of a shared juridical framework based on the common values of the regulators in this area on the principle of cultural diversity and the respect of national specificities. Faced with the multiplication of digital and satellite content, the Network has to direct its efforts towards this void for a concerted and shared regulation by all the key players in the Mediterranean area.

Then Prof. Davut Dursun, President of the Turkish Authority and Vice President of the Network, in his turn reminded the participants of the importance of multilateral cooperation in the area and the regional dimension of MNRA. In continuation, M. Bülent Arinc, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister responsible for the media in Turkey who attended the meeting during the first half of the day, took the floor and addressed the plenary.

The first day was devoted to the presentations and exchanges on two current issues for the audiovisual regulation in the Mediterranean space: the protection of minors: regulation and co-regulation (signalisation) and new services (1st session) as well as the representation of women in the media (2nd session).

1st session:

During the 1st session Turkey, Catalonia, France and Morocco made their presentations. The subject of programme signalisation, in the current context of the development of new services, captured all the attention of the regulators. Various criteria are employed and different levels of signalisation are applied for the same programme in many countries. The participants conveyed their wish to engage in a common thought on the subject, proposing the creation of a working tool on the criteria in use for the classification of fiction, TV series, music videos broadcast in various countries.

Particularly the representative of the General Directorate of Social Services and Child Protection Agency, Dr. Ismail Baris, presented the Turkish reality on the subject of the protection of minors. Specifically, he talked about the Turkish national child policy and the activities carried out under it as well as the service policy of social services and child protection agency in the country.

Then the representative of RTUK, Mr. Nurullah Öztürk, Head of the Monitoring Department, made a presentation on its studies on the protection of minors with special emphasis on smart signs and other practices.

Continuation of the 1st session:

During the second half of the 1st session Mrs. Dolors Comas d' Argemir i Cendra, member of the Catalan Council (CAC), Mrs. Marie-Laure Denis, member of the French CSA, and Mrs. Naima El Mcherqui, member of Moroccan Council (HACA), shared their experiences on the same subjects that had been deployed by their colleagues from Turkey.

Mrs. Dolors Comas d' Argemir, member of the Catalan Council, shared the experience of her council regarding the above mentioned subject. She particularly talked about new services in relation to signalisation based on the Catalan reality and the decentralised signalisation system in the country and the fact that we are driven towards a convergence of categories and criteria. Since the traditional content prohibitions based on age group or time limitations are obsolete simply because they target conventional TV only and not new services, Mrs. Argemir concluded that there should be more media literacy, conditional access of children to inappropriate content, the promotion of greater social exigency and the promotion of auto-regulation and co-regulation as well as co-operation between regulators. She also called for a convergence of signalisation criteria for the young publics and of the age categories while respecting the social, cultural specificities of each country.

The speech of Mrs. Marie-Laure Denis, member of the French CSA, followed the same lines. Mrs. Denis pointed out the diversity of the role of regulators in terms of protecting minors with the new order of things in the digital era as well as the worrying increase of television programmes unsuitable for young publics. She specifically talked about the experiences and actions of CSA in respect of imposing restrictions and signalisation on new forms of TV content such as, DTTV, Satellite TV, Mobile TV, Internet TV, Baby TV VoD, Catch-up TV, etc.

The 1st session ended with the presentation of Mrs. Mrs. Naima El Mcherqui, member of HACA whose speech concentrated on the subject of regulation and co-regulation of new services, which is more and more imminent based on the unavoidable digital revolution in contrast with the regulators' main concern: that of protecting minors. She also talked about HACA's development strategy of the audiovisual sector facing the convergence of technologies and the overlapping of its interests with the local telecommunications regulator.

2nd session

The second session on the representation of women in the media was the subject of the presentations of Andalusia (CAA), Portugal (ERC), Italy (AGCOM) and Morocco (HACA).

Numerous studies and activities on the subject saw the light of the day accentuating national specificities. The participants underlined the stakes for the regulators, in terms of measuring the gender equality, the progress and the integration of Mediterranean societies, in the North as well as in the South.

Mrs. Carmen Fernandez Morillo, member of the Andalusian CAA, opened the 2nd session with her presentation regarding the above mentioned subject. Mrs Morillo, talked about the fact that media in general still today build and reinforce the true inequalities between men and women as well as gender stereotypes mainly through publicity. Then she elaborated on the functions of the Andalusian council regarding the equality of the sexes, presented the results of a barometer that CAA conducted in 2007 and 2009 on the subject of media contribution to the equality of sexes and talked about the presence of women in information programmes.

In turn, the President of the Portuguese Authority, Mr. José Alberto de Azeredo Lopez, made his presentation on the portrayal of women by the media and shared 3 distinct cases that his authority examined or still examines, the steps taken by the regulator as well as the outcome.

After Mr. Lopez's presentation, the speech of Mr. Corrado Calabró, president of the Italian Authority, focused on the image projected and the representation of women in the media today. He particularly paralleled the media representation of the feminine figure today with a "theatrical" dimension as in the ancient Greek theatre where actors used to wear masks in order to characterise the persons they were impersonating. Mr. Calabró also noted that this is far from the truth and does not reflect the effective role women play in daily life. He then shared the experiences of the Italian reality and the actions of the state in respect of this matter.

Last but not least, the President of the Moroccan Authority, Mr. Ahmed Ghazali, gave his council's point of view regarding the subject in discussion. He presented the role of the Moroccan authority in the promotion of the women's image in the audiovisual media in Morocco and shared the experience of HACA in respect of this matter as well as the actions taken by his authority and other actors in the Moroccan society in order to improve it.

Friday, October 1st, 2010

The second day was at first devoted to the presentation of the activities of the Network under the Andalusian Presidency and the materialisation of the implementation of the Declaration of Intention adopted in Granada regarding the protection of young publics and the fight against

violence in the media. The conclusions of the seminar on Media Literacy that was held in Malaga on the 25th June 2010 on the invitation of the CAA were also presented to the participants. Concerning the Euro-Mediterranean scene, the presidency commented on the Memorandum of Understanding that was signed on the 20th April 2010 between the Permanent Conference of Mediterranean Audiovisual Operators (COPEAM) and the MNRA, which was the result of the wish of the two platforms and shows the common will to work together and in particular in the heart of the Union for the Mediterranean in order to promote a shared juridical framework.

The President of the Conseil supérieur de l'audiovisuel (CSA), M. Michel Boyon followingly intervened on the necessity for the implementation of the MNRA Declaration on audiovisual content regulation and specifically the cooperation between regulators in the case of satellite trans-frontier broadcasting. He asked the members of the Network for an enhanced vigilance and he underlined the necessity for a concrete co-operation in the domain of satellite regulation especially for the sharing of information on audiovisual media service providers as well as the procedures foreseen in the event of content infringement of the principles coded in the Declaration on audiovisual content regulation of Reggio.

Then Mr. Wolfgang Closs, Chief Executive of the European Audiovisual Observatory had the opportunity to present to the participants the activities of his institution and notably the database of MAVISE, a database of TV channels and companies in Europe.

In the second part of the morning the discussions focused on the Life of the Network.

The Network's Life:

➤ ***Revision of the Charter:*** A new stage for the governance of the network was achieved with the adoption of the Charter amendment concerning the operation of the Network, specifically guaranteeing the representation of regulatory institutions, national and regional authorities in the Network. Therefore, article 3, from now on should read as follows:

“Article 3:

The Network consists of the following Mediterranean Regulatory Authorities:

- *Conseil supérieur de l'audiovisuel (CSA, France),*
- *Entidade Reguladora para a Comunicação Social (ERC, Portugal)*
- *Autorità per le Garanzie nelle Comunicazione (AGCOM, Italy),*
- *National Radio-Television Commission (CNRTV, Greece),*
- *Consell de l'Audiovisual de Catalunya (CAC, Catalonia, Spain),*

- *Cyprus Radio Television Authority (CRTA, Cyprus),*
- *Broadcasting Authority of Malta (BAM, Malta),*
- *Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTUK, Turkey),*
- *National Council for Radio and Television (NCRT, Albania),*
- *Comisión del Mercado de Telecomunicaciones (CMT, Spain),*
- *Haute Autorité de la Communication Audiovisuelle (HACA, Morocco),*
- *Council for Cable TV and Satellite Broadcasting (CCTSB, Israel)*
- *Second Authority for Television and Radio (SATR, Israel),*
- *Republic Broadcasting Agency (RBA, Serbia),*
- *Consejo Audiovisual de Andalucía (CAA, Spain),*
- *Audiovisual Commission (AVC, Jordan),*
- *Communication Regulatory Agency (CRA, Bosnia-Herzegovina),*
- *High Authority of the Press and Audio-visual (HAPA, Mauritania),*
- *Conseil National de l'audiovisuel (CNA, Liban),*
- *Broadcasting Council of Republic of Macedonia (BCRM, Republic of Macedonia).*

The Network is open to the candidature of other independent national or regional regulators dealing with audiovisual content from countries in the Mediterranean area. These candidatures, presented in the form of request and accompanied by the documentation relating to the judicial status of the regulator and its activity report during the previous year, are addressed to the Presidency of the Network which submits them for examination at the plenary assembly which may grant the observer member status to the regulator concerned.

Regional and national audiovisual regulators of the same country may co-exist as members of the Network.

Regulators having observer member status participate at the plenary assemblies without the right to vote. After the lapse of at least one year, if they so wish, they can present their candidature for membership in the same manner and under the same conditions as mentioned in the previous paragraph. Otherwise, they may continue to participate with observer member status.

The President of the Network can invite at the plenary sessions, as observers, representatives of governments or non-governmental institutions dealing with audiovisual content and notably with its regulation in their respective countries as well as relevant international organizations, if their participation is considered useful for the meeting.

The European Commission, the Council of Europe, the European Audiovisual Observatory, the European Platform of Regulatory Authorities (EPRA), RIARC (Réseau des Instances Africaines de Régulation de la Communication), REFRAM (Réseau francophone des régulateurs des médias) may each send observers to the Network's plenary assemblies".

➤ ***New candidates:*** The members of the Network also discussed the participation of countries and organisations under the status of observers, some of which joined the Network or under the status of authorities associated to the Network and its members through programmes or the projects of cooperation and partnership.

The representatives of the Council of Europe (European Audiovisual Observatory), the European Commission and the Agency for Electronic Media of Croatia, participated at the debates as observers.

At the end of the meeting the Broadcasting Council of the Republic of Macedonia, member-observer since the Granada meeting and the Agency for Electronic Media of Croatia, both present, joined the Network under the status of member and member-observer, respectively.

➤ ***Nomination of Vice-Presidency:*** The members of the Network also addressed the issue of nomination of vice-presidency to be taken up at the next plenary meeting that will take place towards the end of 2011 in Malta. Portugal and Cyprus made their offers to take up the vice-presidency next year and at the end it was decided that the vice-presidency for the years 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 will be assured by the Entidade Reguladora para a Comunicação Social (ERC) and Cyprus Radio and Television Authority (CRTA) respectively.

➤ ***Other issues :***

Regarding the 1st session dedicated to the subject of programme signalisation, in the current context of the development of new services the participants, after mentioning the fact that various criteria are employed and that different levels of signalisation are applied for the same programme in many countries, conveyed their wish to engage in a common thought on the subject.

A proposal was made by the Greek representative for the creation of a working tool, in the form of a common data base, providing the criteria in use for the classification of fiction, TV series, music videos broadcast in the member countries, so as to monitor a common reflection

on programs classification systems existing in the member countries of the Network, with a special focus on the most prominent prime time TV series currently broadcast.

Regarding the session dedicated to the presentation of the recent commitments of the Network on the Euro-Mediterranean scene which was made by the Andalusian presidency, the Catalanian Authority (CAC) issued a statement to inform the member authorities that the CAC has implemented an informal meeting office in the offices of the General Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean, *Union pour la Méditerranée* (UpM)¹ located in Barcelona and hosted in the walls of the Pedraldes Palace owned by the Catalan Government. This initiative will provide an informal link for Mediterranean Regulatory Authorities with the UpM to review and update UpM developments. It may also act as a ground basis for further cooperation with the UpM on multicultural and audiovisual issues.

Finally, at the end of the session dedicated to the network's life, Mr. Hassan Hamadé, member of the Lebanese Conseil national de l'audiovisuel, handed out to the participants a document entitled *Charte consacrée à la lutte des médias audiovisuels contre le phénomène du terrorisme d'Etat*.

Conclusions and closing ceremony:

During the closing ceremony the presidency of the Network was entrusted to Prof. Davut Dursun, president of the Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK). The vice-presidency of the Network for the year 2010-2011 is assumed by the Broadcasting Authority of Malta (BAM).

The next annual meeting of the Network will take place in 2011 in Malta on the invitation of the Maltese Authority.

¹ The Union for the Mediterranean, *L'Union pour la Méditerranée*, was created by the 43 Euro-Mediterranean Heads of State and Government in Paris on 13 July 2008. Foreign Affairs Ministers in their meeting in Marseille on 4 November 2008. The General Secretariat was officially installed in Barcelona in March 2010. It is currently in charge of implementing the six priority projects identified by the Heads of State and Government as the following : De-pollution of the Mediterranean, Maritime and land highways; Civil protection, Alternative energies, Mediterranean solar plan, Higher education and research, Euro-Mediterranean University, The Mediterranean Business Initiative.