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IAB - International Association of Broadcasting



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POSITION OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BROADCASTING

Considering the last version of the *"Media Caucus Proposals for the WSIS"*, dated September 18th, 2003, approved without consensus and by an unusual decision procedure, that avoided establishing disagreements, we have submitted these statements to be considered and registered in the final version of the "Media Caucus".

1. The existence and development of Independent Media has been, is today and must remain in the future as an essential element for the information, entertainment and cultural development of citizens and society, for the promotion of public opinion, social cooperation and Freedom of Expression.

This reality needs the promotion and support by national legislations creating a healthy Media environment, and ensuring fair rules for competition and coexistence in the Media framework.

2. In this way, to encourage pluralism, which is a reality in the majority of democratic societies and to avoid abuses in Media ownership concentration, which no one desires, general national antitrust legislation is the correct instrument to achieve that target, avoiding specific rules that could be discriminatory and could affect the independence of private media.
3. Public broadcasting plays a positive and important role by covering specific targets, derived from their public service obligation.

Both, public and private broadcasting, should be reinforced in their task to enhancing social inclusion and public debate in the information society, including other legally established forms of media, at local communities, and at national and regional levels.

4. In the information society, regions and countries have different realities and necessities in their forms of communications. The majority of the democratic countries, independently of how rich or poor they are, have a very good dissemination of the communications and information, with global, national and local content diversity. This is the reality of almost all the countries where independent media exist, for example, in Europe and Latin America where thousands of legally private and public broadcasting stations cover all areas.

Finally, we restate the principles passed by IAB XXXII General Assembly (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, October 2002) as a contribution to the WSIS.

1. "The need for the absolute respect for the principles of Freedom of Expression and Information as stated in art. 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and article 10 of the Declaration of Sophia, UNESCO 1997, ratified by its General Conference in that year"
2. "The need for the acknowledgement of the submission to any initiative to the basic principle of legality, with full respect for the laws and regulations that govern the administration of frequencies as the only form to guarantee the effective and ordered use of the possibilities new and old technologies offer".

Guayaquil, Ecuador, October 4, 2003