



Montenegro
BROADCASTING AGENCY COUNCIL
Number: 01 – 1458
Podgorica, 23 June 2008

P R E S S R E L E A S E

At today's session, the Broadcasting Agency Council discussed the **Electronic Communications Bill**, submitted to the Parliament of Montenegro in early June by the Government of Montenegro.

The Broadcasting Agency Council estimated that there were no essential improvements in the new bill and confirmed its disapproval of the proposed solutions, which would result in the interruption of the ongoing process of media reforms and jeopardize the independence of regulatory authority. The proposed solutions foresee the establishment of a new regulatory body, which absorbs all vital segments of the broadcasting in a manner that is not in compliance with the Council of Europe recommendations and other European rules and standards related to the regulation of this sector. Such an opinion was contained in the comments of the European Commission, submitted to the Government of Montenegro in mid-April.

The Broadcasting Agency Council regrets that the Government of Montenegro has not accepted the proposed amendments, submitted by the Broadcasting Agency upon its request. That is surprising, especially having in mind that the amendments were aimed at overcoming the disparity between the bill and the standards related to the position and authorities of the regulatory body in the broadcasting sector.

The fact that there were no public debate about such an important piece of legislation raises great concern, confirming the claim of the Broadcasting Agency Council that the overall process of drafting of this law, which radically redefines the broadcasting system, was not transparent without valid arguments and justification.

Chairman
of the Broadcasting Agency Council
Zdravko Uskoković, PhD