



Podgorica, 7 March 2007

TWO YEARS WITHOUT INFORMATION ON THE FUNCTIONING OF RTCG

Centre for Development of Non-Governmental Organisations (CDNGO) and Centre for Civic Education (CCE) remind that the Council of PBS RTCG, whose President and at least one other member are occupying these positions contrary to the Law, have not been making their financial reports and plans public, and that the work of the Council has been hidden from the public for at least two years.

Namely, according to the Law on PBS RCG, the RTCG Council is obliged to publicise Bulletins about its work on the RTCG website, and those reports should also contain information on RTCG financial accounts.

The last information about RTCG Council dates back to mid 2004. Instead of twelve, the public thus has access to merely three Bulletins reporting on the work of RTCG Council, and for three years now, the citizens have no information on the financial dealings of the public service that they pay for!

The Bulletins should contain periodical and annual reports by an authorised auditor. Article 15 of the Law clearly states that the Council “appoints an authorised auditor of periodical and annual accounts of RTCG. His findings are to be published in the Bulletin on RTCG”.

The question is whose interests are protected by the Council whose members are ready to break the Law?

Should the citizens of Montenegro who are paying subscriptions to the public service, financing the work of RTCG, have to beg the Council’s members for information on how their money is being spent, or the money of tax payers which is transferred through the Government budget as a subsidy to RTCG? Should the Council members be begged to respect the Law? How come the Law has no power over them?

The irony is apparent in the words of Branislav Čalić whose words we present here integrally, as they appeared in the statement on the occasion of the first Bulletin being published, and can be found on the RTCG website. The reader is free to judge on the relationships between rhetoric and practice.

The first issue of RTCG Bulletin

Dear citizens, the Council of Radio Television Montenegro, which on behalf of the Republic represents the founding body of the RTCG and the interests of the citizens of Montenegro has began, in accordance with legal provisions, publishing the RTCG Bulletin in printed and electronic format.

The primary purpose of the Bulletin is to provide as complete information as possible to the public regarding the work of RTCG. The Bulletin will therefore contain key information and programme documents of our media firm, decisions of the Council and other governing bodies, plans of activities and reports on their implementation, survey results on TV/radio ratings, as well as other information relevant for the effective functioning of RTCG as a public service.

Radio and Television Montenegro already has its own webpage.

In addition to this, in order to ensure maximum transparency of the RTCG, the Council will aim to inform the citizens through Radio and Television programmes on important issues regarding its own and activities of other organs, as well as the activities of the RTCG as a whole, making sure that such information is broadcasted in line with customary rules of access to the RTCG programmes, without any special privileges.

We believe this to be our duty, derived from the role of the Council, which is yet to be established in accordance with the nature of a public broadcaster and its responsibility towards the citizens, the viewers and listeners in Montenegro.

This is why we would like, first of all, to hear your voice, dear citizens, in order to be able to fulfil your wishes and needs to the maximum extent of our competences. We are interested in the citizens' opinions and needs, because their needs and interests are senior, broader, and more important than all other. This is our duty, for we are responsible to the citizens. We therefore encourage you to take initiative towards the governing bodies of RTCG and your media – Radio Montenegro and Television Montenegro: propose anything that you feel is missing from our work, criticise whatever you find unsatisfactory, support where you agree, express your attitudes, opinions, and judgements on everything that interests you.

The RTCG Council and other governing bodies of this media firm will take steps to the maximum of their competences to promote citizens' interests as guidelines for the creation of the programme and for all responsible in RTCG, who had gained enough trust to authorise and implement the editorial policy of RTCG.

Your active participation will help us become more accountable to the public, and will also ensure that the interests of the citizens dominate the public opinion, in order to make sure that those who decide and create social relations will not be able to disregard or avoid its influence.

We all depend on the citizens, and we are all responsible to the citizens and to our conscience. We are convinced that, in doing so, we will never find ourselves in conflict with either the public or our conscience. We will invest all of our efforts to make this the motto of the Council and the Radio Television Montenegro as a public service to the citizens.

Branislav Čalić
President of the RTCG Council

On behalf of CDNGO
Stevo Muk, Executive Director

On behalf of CCE
Daliborka Uljarević, Executive Director

