



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

Organisation  
des Nations Unies  
pour l'éducation,  
la science et la culture

Organización  
de las Naciones Unidas  
para la Educación,  
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация  
Объединенных Наций по  
вопросам образования,  
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、  
科学及文化组织

## The Director-General

Mr Philippe Leruth  
President  
International Federation of Journalists  
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Kingdom of Belgium

Ref.: DG/5/16/6209

19 AUG 2016

Dear Mr Leruth,

I wish to thank you for your letter of 4 August last, by which you draw UNESCO's attention to your concerns regarding recent developments concerning Empresa Brasil de Comunicação (EBC), the public service broadcasting company in the Federative Republic of Brazil.

As you know, since its establishment, UNESCO has worked actively to promote public service broadcasting because of the unique role it plays in providing access to information and knowledge through quality and diverse content. This is central to UNESCO's constitutional mandate to foster the free flow of ideas and information.

Public service broadcasting also fulfills important cultural and educational roles, and remains a key instrument for promote democratic participation by all citizens for all citizens. This is why UNESCO believes that such broadcasting can fulfill its potential only if it maintains genuine editorial, financial and managerial independence against commercial or political influence.

Indeed, the principle of independence of public service broadcasting has been reaffirmed in numerous international documents and forums. Most notably, the Joint Declaration on Diversity in Broadcasting, adopted by the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression in 2007, the Organization of American States' Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information clearly states that: "Regulation of the media to promote diversity, including governance of public media, is legitimate only if it is undertaken by a body which is protected against political and other forms of unwarranted interference".

.../...

In this context, allow me to take this opportunity to assure you that UNESCO will continue its work aimed at defending media independence, diversity and pluralism, including in Brazil, by promoting, among other activities, the role of public service broadcasting as one of the key mechanisms for strengthening freedom of expression worldwide. You may rest assured that the Organization will continue to follow closely the case of Empresa Brasil de Comunicação.

Thanking you again for sharing these concerns, I remain,

Respectfully

Yours sincerely,

Irina Bokova

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