

Athens October 18, 2013

To: Honorable President of the European Parliament, Mr. Martin Schultz

Cc: SES ASTRA

Dear President,

We were informed, that the Deputy Minister of Radio and Television Broadcasting of the Hellenic Republic, Mr Kapsis has formally requested the termination of granting the satellite capacity, which is required for the broadcasting of the ERT employees' programs (NET and ET3 channels), something which is out of his jurisdiction.

We firmly believe that such a request should be rejected for a number of reasons, associated with the defense of democracy, the freedom of speech and the respect of the contracts between POSPERT (as the legal representative of ERT employees) and SES ASTRA.

More concretely:

1. On June 11th, 2013, the Greek Government, with an entirely unprecedented decision terminated the operation of Hellenic Public Broadcasting Organization (ERT), generating a massive outcry in national and international outcry. We should also mention that there is an appeal against that decision, which is still pending before the plenary of Supreme Abrogative Court of the Hellenic Republic. Since then, the employees of ERT continue to produce full TV and radio program on a completely voluntarily basis, which receives a wide acceptance from the Greek audience.
2. The Greek Government has attempted to establish an improvised TV channel (the so-called "Public Television) which is already discredited by the audience as a biased, pro-government entity, serving and promoting the government's position. For this reason, not even one of the political parties of the opposition have accepted the participate in the broadcastings.
3. An interruption of the satellite transmission of NET and ET3 broadcasting, through the ASTRA 23.5E (ASTRA 3 B) satellite, will silent any alternative political voice, which disagrees with the government, not only in Greece but also for the Greek speaking audience abroad.

For all these reasons, and while still expecting the final decision from the Council of the State, we request your institutional intervention in order to maintain the the provision of satellite capacity for the ERT employees' program.

The President
of SYRIZA

Alexis Tsipras