

17 October, 2012

Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho

Dear Prime Minister,

The International Federation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity (IFCCD) is an alliance of 43 national coalitions on all continents. Together, they represent over 600 organizations of cultural professionals in the sectors of cinema, television, performing arts, music, visual arts, multimedia, etc.

The objective of this alliance is to keep national, regional and international institutions informed of the expectations and needs of the creators and cultural professionals, and monitor any other issue related to culture, particularly trade negotiations. It also promotes the ideals of the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions ratified by the European Union in December 2006 and by Portugal in March 2007, which specifically recognizes the sovereign right of States to take measures to support and develop their own diversity of cultural expressions.

At the recent congress of the International Federation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity, held this past September 21-23 in Bratislava, Slovakia, the delegates have been informed by their Portuguese colleague of your government's proposal to privatize the country's public television and radio broadcaster, RTP, which runs two of the country's four main television channels. Delegates adopted a strong motion, attached, calling on all governments to recognize the irreplaceable and important role played by public service broadcasters for the protection and the promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions. Public broadcasters are an important pillar of our democratic societies by providing a diversity of viewpoints and cultural expressions, as stated in article 6. 2) (h) of the 2005 UNESCO Convention.

The International Federation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity wishes to add its voice to the many, including the European Broadcasting Union and UNI-MEI, who have expressed their deep concerns at the prospect of the privatization of Portugal's public service broadcaster. This would prove disastrous to the situation of artists who are already deeply affected by the impact of the current financial crisis on the cultural sector.



The International Federation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity strongly supports the mobilization of the Portuguese Coalition and its member organizations from the cultural sector against this proposal and urges your government to quickly announce that it no longer intends to privatize the public service broadcaster and further imperil the capacity of artists, cultural and media workers to contribute in a vital way to the identity and economy of their country.

Yours truly,



Beat Santschi
Vice-President for Europe



Rasmané Ouedraogo
President

