



IAB PRESS RELEASE
INTERNATIONAL CONCERN RELATED TO INITIATIVES IN PROGRESS IN PANAMA

The International Association of Broadcasting- IAB - expresses its deep concern and rejection at different legal initiatives presented to the Assembly of Deputies of the Republic of Panama, that could seriously affect the Right to Freedom of Expression in that country.

During the current parliamentary term, various initiatives have been presented to the National Assembly seeking to regulate the editorial content of the media, the exercise of the journalistic profession and the advertising. The last one, consisting of a bill proposed by Deputy Noriel Salerno from Cambio Democrático, in which he proposes mechanisms to regulate the editorial content of the media.

Principle 5 of the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights states:

“Prior censorship, direct or indirect interference in or pressure exerted upon any expression, opinion or information transmitted through any means of oral, written, artistic, visual or electronic communication must be prohibited by law. Restrictions to the free circulation of ideas and opinions, as well as the arbitrary imposition of information and the imposition of obstacles to the free flow of information violate the right to freedom of expression”.

The Panamanian model of broadcasting, of open reception and free access, was built on the basis of a democratic and pluralistic system, where information, ideas and opinions circulate freely in the various media and through its journalists and communicators, without undue intervention of the State.

IAB is aware of the firmness of the Panamanian institutionalism to resist such attempts to restrict the freedoms of its citizens, but considering the regrettable experiences that have occurred in some countries of the region, will remain alert to the evolution of these initiatives in the country.

The International Association of Broadcasting - IAB is an organization founded in 1946 that represents over 17.000 private radio and television stations and its goal is the defense of private and free broadcasting as well as the effectiveness of Freedom of Expression and Opinion.