



MINISTRY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
AND JUSTICE

Budapest, 29. December 2010

Dear Madam Vice President,

Thank you for your letter, which I received on 23 December.

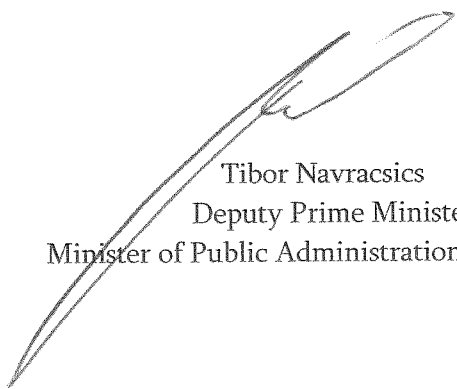
We are equally committed to the belief that freedom of expression and freedom of speech are among our most important European values. In the transitional period of 1989-90, Fidesz was the political force most assertively championing the values of liberal democracy – values dear to all freedom-loving Hungarians, despite more than forty years under the yoke of communist dictatorship. The result of our efforts and persistence is that Hungary is now a state based on the rule of law, in which the Hungarian Constitution and legal system guarantee media diversity, freedom of speech and political freedom in line with European values and laws. There is no political force in Hungary today which is more committed to these values and principles than the current government.

As you know, on 21 December a two-thirds majority in the Hungarian Parliament passed the new Media Law, which will replace a now outdated and contradictory collection of media regulations. We are convinced that the new legislation is compatible in every way with EU guidelines and with regulations established across Europe, and that no part of it contains provisions which are not found in the legislation of one or more EU Member States. The new regulatory framework awaits signature and official pronouncement by the President of the Republic. The official English translation of the Statute will be available one week from now – this delay is due to the length of the text. Judging by your letter, I assume that your request is primarily focused on the need to see an authorised translation of the document as soon as possible. Naturally I shall send you such a translation the moment it is available. Until that time – and subsequently – we shall be happy to furnish you with any information on the matter which you may require. We are confident that, when viewed in the light of the full range of European values, every aspect of the legislation will withstand the severest scrutiny. Therefore I will welcome any specific questions that you have after you have had the opportunity to carefully study the legislation's wording. Our specialists in the field will supply you with full and prompt replies to such questions. I am sure that after such a dialogue the European Commission will be able to give an authoritative and judicious assessment of the new Hungarian media regulations.

The political statements and opinions which have appeared recently in the press have been written without knowledge of the legislation's exact wording, and I do not wish to respond to these here. In

your letter you express doubts concerning the Hungarian government's commitment to democracy, citing the opinions of 'numerous commentators', but referring neither to the text of the legislation nor to its specific provisions. I am convinced that a proper assessment of this question can only be arrived at through objective examination and balancing of arguments – I feel confident that you would agree with me on this. It seems to me that any other approach – made without reference to the specific wording of the legislation and questioning the Hungarian government's commitment to democracy – must have underlying political motives. I am sure that it is in the basic interests of Madam Vice President and the European Commission – as well as the Government of Hungary – to reject such motives.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'T. Navracsics', written over a large, light-colored diagonal stroke that spans across the signature area.

Tibor Navracsics
Deputy Prime Minister
Minister of Public Administration and Justice