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Forum
BARCELONA
2004

FORUM DIALOGUES

Barcelona

May 28 and 29

Global Broadcasting, Cultural Diversity and Regulation

World Meeting of Broadcasting Regulators



**Consell
de l'Audiovisual
de Catalunya**



Forum
BARCELONA
2004

Global Broadcasting, Cultural Diversity and Regulation

World Meeting of Broadcasting Regulators

Forum Barcelona 2004, which will take place in Barcelona from May 9 to September 26, is an unprecedented event of international stature, organized with the purpose of fostering communication between men and women from around the world, in order to reflect on the foremost cultural and social challenges of this new century.

Cultural diversity is generated and disseminated through the language of broadcasting - the true nervous system of the 21st century. A diverse broadcasting sector is, therefore, the best guarantee for a more democratic society that shows greater respect for other cultures.

The combination of the digital revolution and market deregulation, however, has led to a new phenomenon known as media concentration, whereby large media conglomerates are dominating large sectors of markets around the world. This phenomenon is focusing the creation, production and distribution of broadcast content in a small number of countries, which, in turn, is tipping the cultural balance in favor of cultures which use audiovisual media to transmit their 'essence'.

It is within this context that the Broadcasting Regulatory Authorities, under the impulse of the Catalonia Broadcasting council – organizer of the dialogue along with the Forum 2004 – wish to analyze the current situation and propose actions to ensure a more balanced relationship between those countries that are mainly producers of audiovisual contents, and those which are mainly consumers.

Another area of analysis will be how to provide developing countries with the means to produce and distribute its own audiovisual contents. Last but not least the discussion will also deal about the coordination between the protection of basic rights with the protection of the viewers and consumer rights.

As independent broadcast regulators, we understand that regulation is vital not only for ensuring the correct functioning of national and international markets, but also for guaranteeing basic rights such as democracy, cultural diversity and freedom of expression.

The Federico Fellini Medal, awarded annually by the UNESCO to filmmakers, directors and actors from around the world who have made exceptional contributions to cinematography, will be awarded this year at the dialogue. Coinciding with the values being promoted by the Forum, this year's recipient will be rewarded for his or her contributions to cultural diversity.

The regulation of the broadcasting sector is crucial for guaranteeing cultural diversity on a national and international scale, and for ensuring that everybody has access to audiovisual expression.

Program

Friday 28 of May

Morning

9.30

Opening Ceremony
Francesc Codina, President
of the Catalonia Broadcasting Council (CAC)
and Director of the Dialogue

11.00

Plenary Session:
**Broadcasting,
Between Culture and the Market:
The Role of Regulation**

Afternoon

15.30

Work group A:
**Cultural Diversity
and Broadcasting Regulation**

Work group B:
**Regulation, Self-Regulation
and the Public**

Saturday 29 of May

Morning

9.30

Work group C:
**The Broadcasting Industry
in Developing Countries**

Work group D:
Old Media – New Media

Afternoon

15.30

Plenary Session: Rapporteurs Panel
Challenges for the Future

Friday

Plenary Session

Broadcasting, between Culture and the Market: The Role of Regulation

The regulation of broadcast products and services is a much-debated subject.

On the one hand, it is argued that broadcast content cannot be treated like an ordinary product as it is a vehicle for fundamental values, and therefore plays a key role in building social identities and cohesion. In the face of globalization and uniformization, states need to be able to define and implement policies that promote cultural diversity.

On the other hand, it is argued that broadcast content is an entertainment product, and should, therefore, be subjected to the same commercial regulations as other products. In this new digital era, the demand for broadcast products and services has become a driving force behind the development of telecommunications networks.

Speaker:

Ramon Torrent, Director of
the Globalization Observatory at
the University of Barcelona.

Dialogue panel

Jack Lang, former Minister of culture of
the French government and Deputy of the
Assemblée Nationale (France)*.

Joan Majó, Director General of the Catalan Radio
and Television Corporation (CCRTV)*.

Bonnie J. K. Richardson, Vice President of
the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA).

Wolfgang Closs, Executive Director, European
Audiovisual Observatory, Council of Europe.

Pierre Curzi, actor, Co-Chair of the Coalition for
Cultural Diversity (Quebec).

Group A

Cultural Diversity and Broadcasting Regulation

The 1990s were witness to the implementation of deregulation policies within the broadcasting sector aimed at stimulating the market and strengthening freedom of expression and diversity of opinion. The idea was to open up the market to new actors, but nobody expected the unprecedented business and territorial concentration that took place.

Digitalization, vertical integration and economies of scale have all provided large companies with even greater hegemony, and this has set alarm bells ringing warning of the birth of a new global oligopoly which is threatening the manifestation of diversity and cultural exchange.

In this context, broadcast regulatory authorities should look to ensure a type of media diversity that not only guarantees the successful functioning of free competition, but that also ensures cultural diversity.

Speaker

Evelyn Lentzen, President of the Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel (CSA) (Belgium).

Dialogue panel

David Currie, President of the Office of Communications (OFCOM) (United Kingdom).

Xu Guangchun, Director of the Chinese Administration of TV and Cinema*.

Cordel Green, Executive Director of the Broadcasting Commission Jamaica.

Julieta Langa, President of the Social Communication Board (Mozambique).

Carlos Santiago, journalist (Uruguay).

Rapporteur

Divina Frau-Meigs, Lecturer at the University of Orleans (France).

Group B

Regulation, Self-Regulation and the Public

In addition to state regulation, which always presents governments with the temptation to take an interventionist approach to content and editorial lines, what is needed are citizens who demand their rights. We need a culture that protects consumers and establishes self-regulation codes for different fields and sectors.

The information society will only be truly participative and democratic if it advances within a cohesioned society which can channel its opinions and needs towards the media and towards the regulatory authorities. In light of this, are the existing self-regulation codes that promote respect for cultural diversity enough? Do we need supranational regulatory authorities?

Speaker

Stephen Wittle, Controller of Editorial Policy of the BBC (UK).

Dialogue Panel

Noa Elefant Loeffler, Head of the Research Department of the 2nd Authority (Israel).

Alejandro Echevarría, President of Tele 5*.

Xavier Grau, Director General of the Spanish National Organization for the Blind (ONCE).

Rapporteur

Juliette Brown, Diversity and Training Programme Executive, Office of Communication (OFCOM) (United Kingdom).

Saturday

Group C

The Broadcasting Industry in Developing Countries

In theory, the opening up of new markets creates new opportunities for the culture industry and creators in developing countries. Digitalization is also bringing down production and transmission costs, and increasing bandwidth is opening up new perspectives for low-cost international content distribution.

There is, nonetheless, an abyss between the production of products and services in rich countries and developing countries. As for lesser-developed countries, the production and exportation of cultural content is almost non-existent in the majority of cases, where public broadcasting could, in fact, be used to promote the culture of the countries in question.

Whatever the case may be, the fact is that developing countries are currently unable to promote their creative talent, and what's more, large multinationals are able to sell broadcasting rights in these countries at very low prices once they have recouped production costs in their home markets.

Speaker

Milagros del Corral, Deputy General Director of Culture, UNESCO.

Dialogue Panel

Dima Dabbous, Lecturer in Communications at the Lebanese American University (Lebanon).

Uday Dholakya, Consultant at Global Consulting UK (United Kingdom).

Basyouni Ibrahim Hamada, Professor in Mass Communication at the United Arab Emirates University (United Arab Emirates).

Rapporteur

Ruth E. Teer-Tomaselli, Lecturer at the University of Natal (South Africa).

Group D

Old Media – New Media

Advances in information and communication technologies (ICTs) provide cultures and languages with a means for participating in society, culture and the economy. Precisely because of their delocalized nature, new media pose a threat to authoritarian regimes, and in this sense are a powerful tool for social and cultural diversity. Traditional media, which is independent, plural and free, has, therefore, a key role to play in the new information society.

New media, however, are faced with a serious barrier – the poor infrastructures that exist in developing countries and particularly in Africa and Southeast Asia. This problem is further aggravated as it is linked to social and family customs which tend to overload certain groups, like women, with responsibilities. Access, is, therefore, only half of the problem.

An important aspect of diversity in new media is also the ability to choose between different computer applications, and in this sense, it is crucial to develop open-source software. Traditional regulatory authorities could also be given a role in this new area.

Speaker

Moussa Keita, President of the Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel (Mali).

Dialogue Panel

Miquel Bonastre, Director of the Local Television Network of Catalonia.

Martin Yudkovitz, President of TiVo (USA).

Josep M. Torrent, Director General of the Local and Regional Catalan TV Consortium.

Carlos Santiago, journalist (Uruguay).

Rapporteur

Lluís Bonet, Lecturer at the University of Barcelona (UB)*.

Plenary Session

Rapporteurs Panel Challenges for the Future

The regulation of the communication sector is a tool which guarantees not only economic efficiency but also pluralism and cultural diversity.

Technological convergence made it possible to digitally codify, transmit or store all types of messages, meaning that the broadcasting and telecommunications sectors merged to create a macro communications sector. Technological convergence was soon followed by privatization and market liberalization, and then by economic convergence. In short, the activities of publishing companies, media companies and telecommunications companies have overlapped, giving rise to large multimedia groups which are present both nationally and internationally.

It is within this context that we need to study the need for national and international regulatory convergence in order to guarantee a plural and diverse use of network infrastructures and content distribution.

Group Rapporteur Panel Round Table: Challenges for the Future

Dominique Baudis, President of the Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel (CSA) (France).

Francesc Codina, President of the Catalonia Broadcasting Council (CAC).

Michael O'Keefe, President of the European Platform of Regulatory Authorities (EPRA) (Ireland).

Patricia Politzer, President of the National Television Board (Chile).

* (Pending final confirmation)

Registration

Before April 15: 65 euros for two days.

Before May 19: 72 euros for two days.

15% discount for under 25s and over 65s.

25% discount for holders of Forum season pass.

Dialogue registration fees include admission to the Forum site.

To register please visit:

www.barcelona2004.org and

www.audiovisualcat.net/forumbcn2004