[HU] President of the Regulatory Authority Resigns

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On 2 December 2002 the president of the Országos Rádió és Televízió Testület (National Radio and Television Commission - ORTT, the independent regulatory authority for the media) announced her resignation.

She was elected to the presidency by the previous Parliament - general elections had been held in April 2002 - in February 2000 for a four-year term of office.

According to her statement, financial pressure caused by the planned budgetary decisions in respect of the ORTT has reached a level which - beyond her controlfundamentally endangers the proper functioning of the regulatory authority.

According to the provisions of Act No I of 1996 on Radio and Television Services (Broadcasting Act) the ORTT's annual budget is determined by the Parliament year-by-year in a separate act. The draft act for the year 2003 - proposed by the responsible committee of the Parliamentwould provide the ORTT for the next year with a budget of approx. EUR 3,512,000.- (HUF 831,552,000.-). This would mean a decrease of EUR 573,713.- (HUF 13-5,821,000.-) regarding the amount granted for 2002 and only provides just less than two-thirds of the necessary financial resources as indicated by the regulatory authority.

In a recent decision the parliamentary majority has also rejected the annual report of the ORTT on the activities it carried out in the year 2001.

According to the Broadcasting Act, the successor of the departing head of the regulatory authority shall be elected by the Parliament upon the joint nomination of the president of the Republic and the prime minister.

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Bill on the Budget of the ORTT for the year 2003 (T/1551)

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