[FR] Creation of a French International News Channel

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After extensive consideration of the matter on the part of the Parliament, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Culture and Communication, and the public- and private sector operators in the audiovisual sector, the signing on 29 November of an agreement by the Prime Minister, Dominique de Villepin, TF1 and France Télévisions should make it possible to create a French international news channel (Chaîne Française d'Information Internationale - CFII) by the end of 2006. A joint company held equally by France Télévisions and TF1 will be created, governed by a “shareholders' pact” and articles of association that will guarantee that it is run properly. The “shareholders” pact” between the public holding company and TF1 has now been signed and an order has approved France Télévisions taking up a EUR 18 500 holding in the capital of the company being constituted with a view to editing the CFII; this figure corresponds to 50% of the company's capital. The programmes, comprising news bulletins, magazine programmes and studio broadcasts, in French and other languages, will be broadcast by satellite, cable and Internet to Europe, Africa, the Near and Middle East, and then at a later stage to Asia, Latin America and North America. According to Dominique Baudis, Chairman of the national audiovisual regulatory authority (Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel - CSA), the channel could also be included in terrestrially-broadcast digital television packages. In addition to the EUR 65 million provided for in the draft budget for 2006, a further EUR 15 million is to be voted under the 2005 budget; this is intended to go some way towards equipping and running the channel, which will subsequently receive EUR 70 million per year. The purpose of the new channel, which would complement the present international audiovisual offer (TV5, RFI and AFP), is to provide pluralist information on world current affairs and a window onto French culture and discussion on matters of concern to society as a whole.

Discours de Renaud Donnedieu de Vabres, ministre de la Culture et de la Communication, à l'occasion de la conférence de presse de la chaîne française d'information internationale, 30 novembre 2005

http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/actualites/conferen/donnedieu/cfii.html

Address by Renaud Donnedieu de Vabres, Minister for Culture and Communication, at the press conference on the French international news channel on 30 November 2005

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Arrêté du 24 novembre 2005 portant approbation d'une prise de participation financière réalisée par la société France Télévisions, J.O n° 274 du 25 novembre 2005, p. 18301 texte n° 57

http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/

Decision of 24 November 2005 approving the take-up of a financial holding by the company France Télévisions, gazetted on 25 November in issue no. 274 of the Journal Officiel , p.18301 (text no. 57)

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