[CY] New Provisions on Political Advertising

IRIS 2006-7:1/13

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Political parties and presidential candidates can place paid political advertisements on radio and television during the campaign period for parliamentary and presidential elections respectively. The amending law L.85(I)2006 of the Law on Radio and Television Stations of 1998, published in the official Gazette on 20 April 2006 provides that political advertising is allowed during the 40 days preceding the elections and must stop 55 hours before the start of voting. Their total duration can not exceed 100 minutes, which is limited to 30 minutes in the case of independent candidates to the parliament. The respective time for radio broadcasts is 60 and 12 minutes. In the case of presidential elections, 25 minutes is allowed on radio and 25 minutes on television for the week between the two rounds.

The Law provides for the obligation of the broadcasters to offer political advertising under the same terms and conditions for all, ensuring if possible equal time and equal distribution of advertisements for all both in and outside the family viewing period.

The schedule for placement of advertisements must be deposited with the Cyprus Radio and Television Authority both by the parties/candidates and the broadcasters at least five days before the first broadcast is made.

A ban on broadcast political advertising imposed under regulations 10/2000 of the Law on Radio and Television Stations of 1998 was declared by the Supreme Court as *ultra vires* of the Law and as a violation of the right to free speech in 2002. The House of Representatives amended the Law in January 2003 and allowed political advertising in presidential elections. The new amendment of 2006 extends political advertising to parliamentary elections.

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Amending law L.85(I)2006 of the Law on Radio and Television Stations of 1998, Official Gazette of 20 April 2006

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