[MT] Requirements for the Promotion of Racial Equality by Broadcasters

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Article 22a of the Television Without Frontiers Directive requires EU Member States to ensure that broadcasts do not contain any incitement to hatred on the grounds of race, sex, religion or nationality. Bearing this provision in mind, the Broadcasting Authority has on 7 March 2007 launched draft “Requirements as to Standards and Practice on the Promotion of Racial Equality” by the broadcast media. These Requirements have been circulated to all broadcasters and to the general public for consultation purposes. Once approved by the Authority, they will become legal mandatory requirements and sanctions will be imposed for their eventual breach.

Essentially these Requirements encourage broadcasters to be proactive by promoting racial equality in their programming, to judiciously select presenters and participants during a programme dealing with racism and to foster a multicultural society. When discussing multicultural issues, broadcasters will have to include the views of persons from different ethnic and religious backgrounds rather than report their views second hand. Broadcasters will be required to take into account the linguistic and cultural differences that may be experienced by the interviewee and all necessary steps must be taken to place the interviewee at ease, and to reflect the interview faithfully.

Viewers and listeners expect that broadcasters assume their responsibility to respect and promote human dignity, in respect of both individuals and individuals as members of groups.

As the Broadcasting Authority had previously decided that a programme had contributed to incitement to racial hatred (the Authority’s decision is still subject to judicial review), it is proposed in these draft Requirements that programmes should never stir up racial hatred. Instead, programme schedules should give a fair reflection of the contribution of all races to society. The broadcast media must at all times be aware of the danger that arises when the media, deliberately or inadvertently, encourage discrimination and intolerance. Mindful of this danger, the broadcast media will have to be aware of the fact that they cannot inflame hatred or inequality on grounds of ethnicity, nationality, race or colour, or incite criminal acts of violence.

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Broadcasting Authority Requirements as to Standards and Practice on the Promotion of Racial Equality

http://www.ba-malta.org/Guidelines/PR_1207.pdf

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