

[AL] Parliament elects five members of the Steering Council of the Public Broadcaster

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Ilda Londo
Albanian Media Institute

On 4 December 2014 the Parliament elected in a plenary session five members of the Steering Council of the Public Broadcaster Radio Televizioni SHqiptar (RTSH.) The new members were elected by Members of Parliament from the ruling majority, as the Members of Parliament representing the opposition continued to boycott all parliamentary activities. The short listing process in the Parliamentary Commission on Media was also only done by Members of Parliament from the ruling majority after failed appeals to the opposition to come to the parliament and resolve the deadlock. The mandate of all members of the Steering Council of RTSH had expired at least one year earlier, while some mandates were not valid since already two years. Similar to the regulator Audiovisual Media Authority (AMA) the Members of Parliament representing the ruling majority have stated that the five remaining members of the Steering Council of RTSH can be shortlisted by the Members of Parliament from the opposition when they return to the Commission. However, the Members of Parliament from the opposition have opposed the election of the members of the Steering Council of the Public Broadcaster RTSH without their presence and agreement, claiming that the process goes against legal procedures.

According to Article 93-94 of the Law no. 97/2013 on Audiovisual Media in the Republic of Albania the Steering Council is composed of the chair and ten members. The candidates which are proposed from different associations and organizations, are then eliminated one by one by members of the Parliamentary Commission on Media where Member of Parliament from the opposition and from the ruling majority take turn in eliminating the candidates, so that a political balance can be preserved, in case they cannot agree.

The election of new members of the Steering Council was also opposed by the Deputy Speaker of the Parliament and chair of the Party of the Union of Human Rights. He stated that it was unacceptable that a body like the Steering Council which has to represent interests of all Albanian citizens in the Public Broadcaster does not have a representative of ethnic minorities. The Prime Minister replied by stating that such a requirement existed in the old Law on Radio and Television, but during the drafting of the existing Law on Audiovisual Media such a requirement had been removed.

After the election of the five members of the Steering Council, the ruling majority declared that the process of electing the chair of the Steering Council of RTSH will start soon. According to Article 95 of the Law 97/2013 on Audiovisual Media in the Republic of Albania the chair is elected no later than ten days after the procedure for the election of the Steering Council members is completed. The Parliamentary Commission on Media shortlists four candidates for the chair and the Members of Parliament representing the opposition in the commission are expected to eliminate two of the four shortlisted candidates, while the final two remaining candidates are elected by simple majority in the parliament.

Act no. 97/2013 “On Audiovisual Media in the Republic of Albania”

<http://institutemedia.org/Documents/PDF/Law%20on%20Audiovisual%20Media.pdf>

Kuvendi mblidhet në seancë plenare [04 Dhjetor, 2014]

http://www.parlament.al/web/Kuvendi_mblidhet_ne_seance_plenare_18744_1.php?kc=0,0,0,0,0

The report on plenary session of 4 December 2014 “Parliament convenes in plenary session”

