[FR] CSA terminates mandate of Mathieu Gallet as President of Radio France

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On 31 January 2018, the national audiovisual regulatory authority (Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel - CSA), meeting in plenary assembly, decided to withdraw the mandate of Radio France's President, Mathieu Gallet. The decision, to take effect on 1 March, follows a court judgment delivered on 15 January giving him a one-year suspended prison sentence and fining him EUR 20,000 for favouritism during his term of office at the French national audiovisual institute (Institut National de l'Audiovisuel - INA). He has lodged an appeal.

Since the 2013 reform, under Article 47-4 of the Act of 30 September 1986, the presidents of France's public audiovisual companies (France Télévisions and Radio France, the companies with responsibility for France's external audiovisual sector) are appointed by the CSA by a majority vote of their members. Their mandate may be withdrawn, subject to a decision whose reasoning is substantiated, under the same conditions. In the present case, the CSA reached its decision after proceedings involving both parties and a collegial debate.

In its decision, the CSA emphasised that it had been conscious, at the time Mathieu Gallet was appointed head of Radio France in February 2014, of the serious sense of public service demonstrated by the short-listed candidates. A considerable amount of legislation has been passed in recent years with regulating the obligations of public figures and officers, with a view to ensuring exemplary behaviour on their part. The French President and the Minister for Culture have also announced plans for far-reaching reform of the public audiovisual sector, giving rise to advance debate among all the stakeholders in the sector and members of parliament (see IRIS 2018-2/17). The reform demands concerted action between the public authorities and the heads of these companies, and the full ability of the latter to implement the envisaged transformation of the functioning and missions of the companies in a calm, efficient manner. Even though Mr Gallet has appealed against his court sentence and has the benefit of the presumption of innocence, the CSA stresses that the judgment indicates the move towards criminalising disregard for the provisions of the section of the French Criminal Code dealing with failure to comply with a duty of probity. Emphasising the current context - in which the credibility and exemplary behaviour of heads of public undertakings are more than ever necessary for preserving trust on the part of the State the Parliament and the public - the CSA, in "the general interest of the public audiovisual service", has

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therefore terminated Mr Gallet’s mandate.

CSA, décision n° 2018-13 du 31 janvier 2018 mettant fin aux fonctions du président de Radio France

https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000036565081

CSA, Decision No. 2018-13 of 31 January 2018 terminating the mandate of the President of Radio France

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