

# **EUROPEAN ALLIANCE OF NEWS AGENCIES**

SECRETARIAT

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To the Government of Serbia,

The Board of the European Alliance of News Agencies (EANA) wishes to place on record its concern over uncertainties about news agency Tanjug's ownership and mission as an independent news agency providing unbiased news to Serbian media and to international media partners.

The rapid development of information technology opens up more and more platforms where there is a direct or indirect need for reliable news coverage. In EANA's view, it is increasingly important for news agencies to have secure, transparent ownership structures that can guarantee their continued existence as essential providers of independent news.

This is the background to the EANA board urging the Serbian government to take these aspects into consideration and to secure a transparent ownership structure for Tanjug that also serves as a guarantee for that agency to continue its mission as a vital provider of trustworthy news services to traditional and digital media in Serbia and abroad.

Tanjug is a well-known brand in the news agency business and the agency has been for many decades a member of the international news agency community. In fact, Tanjug was one of the founders of the European Alliance of News Agencies when a number of European news agencies in 1956 decided to create a news agency organisation for cooperation and exchange of experiences etc.

For a news agency's trustworthiness, both within the country and towards its international partners, it is vital that the ownership structure is clear, transparent and makes the provision of true and unbiased news the foremost editorial goal.

EANA comprises privately and publicly owned news agencies in 31 European countries and serves as a forum for cooperation and information for the news agency business. The news agency business constitutes the very basics of news gathering and distribution and has to be seen as a backbone of true and reliable news reporting in a democracy.

News agencies working in accordance with the principles of press freedom and unbiased news are of major importance to a democratic society. To secure an economic and legal environment for news agencies operating in accordance with these rules is therefore one of EANA's main concerns.

It is our conviction that, like news agencies around the world, Tanjug's role as an unbiased news provider is essential both for Serbian society and for enabling the European and global community to be well informed about Serbia.

Should the government of Serbia wish a further discussion about these issues we are at your disposal.

London, Prague, Nicosia, Zagreb, Stockholm May 27, 2015

Clive Marshall, CEO PA Group and President EANA

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