

Developing a Comprehensive National Public Service Media (PSM) Policy

-- An united appeal form the PSM labor unions

Date: Aug. 23, 2016

Participant: Labor Unions of CTS, CNA, RTI, PTS and TITV.

Preface

Pan-Public Service Media (PTS, CTS, CNA, RTI, TITV, Hakka TV, and Macroview TV) is a resource of our nation and assets of all the citizens, while workers in the Pan-PSM serve the public interests.

However, there's no comprehensive long-term policy for our public service media. The Governments appoint board members to the PSM and keep their hands off the operation of the board, so to avoid the so-called political intervention. However, without a comprehensive PSM policy, PSM management becomes difficult and may vary depending on the preferences of individual board members, thus leads our PSM to be blurred in positioning and chronically underfunded in terms of financial recourses.

In facts, a mature PSM cannot be achieved merely by the withdrawing of the government; but instead, it requires the government to shoulder the responsibility to develop a long-term and holistic public service media policy to complete the mechanism, in which the independence of PSM can be realized under both the surveillance of the public and the inside supervision of the PSM workers, and can be maintained by stable funding that won't be interfered by political powers.

We urge that the government should propose a comprehensive 10-year term PSM policy and hold public hearings to end the chaos in the media environment. With this policy, we expect that in ten years, each PSM can produce high quality contents that serve the interests of the public, and can free themselves from the blurred positioning and inadequate funding.

Summary of Our Appeals

Government should:

1. Propose an at least 10-year term comprehensive PSM policy.
2. Promise adequate funds and resources to secure the functions of PSM.
3. Promote Taiwanese culture and foster media industry.
4. Contribute more production resources for international news.
5. Establish a mechanism for industrial democracy; allow labor union representatives to take part in the board as Employee Directors.
6. Implement citizen supervision and information transparency to avoid political intervention.

Appeal 1: Propose an at least 10-year term comprehensive PSM policy.

- 1) PSMs need a long-term development scheme which won't be influenced by party intervention nor by the change of the management team. The policy should start from the needs of the citizens, with an aim to advance the production quality and the promotion of local cultures. As a result, we urge that government should propose an at least 10-year term PSM policy to form a holistic PSM development scheme.
- 2) The policy should be openly discussed in public hearings, and which should be performed via TV, radio, and Internet.
- 3) All the PSMs need this long-term development scheme to ensure that the needs of different ethnic groups are well considered. CTS and Hakka TV should be regulated under Public Television Act to clarify their positioning, so Taiwan Broadcasting System (PBS) can create a greater synergy from the collaborations.
- 4) PTS board of directors should operate the TV channels as a group and assign CEOs to manage respective channels.

Appeal 2: Promise adequate funds and resources to secure the functions of PSM.

- 1) PSMs need sufficient financial resources to produce non-commercial oriented/high-quality content, to protect/empower

- local culture development, and to protect the rights of the citizens without the pressure of fund-raising or profit-seeking.
- 2) To help PSMs thrive in an environment monopolized by commercial media, this policy should:
 - a. Ensure all the PBS channels to be “must-carry” in cable systems.
 - b. Collect the tax from MSOs and reimburse the tax to PBS.
 - 3) Purchase the residual non-government-owned CTS shareholdings so to have CTS completely public owned.
 - 4) The policy should apply the principle of future regulation of media convergence, **in which channel operation and broadcast platform are regulated separately.**

Appeal 3: Promote Taiwanese culture and foster media industry.

- 1) Broadcast and introduce more Taiwan and Southeast Asia news or content in multiple languages via multiple channels (TV, Radio, and Internet) to promote Taiwanese culture and foster media industry.
- 2) The above missions should be carried out by designated international channels and international radio stations.

Appeal 4: Contribute more production resources for international news.

- 1) Improve the quality of international news to broaden the horizon of the citizenship.
- 2) Increase the number of PSM’s foreign correspondents, as well as their wages and professional skills.
- 3) International news should be produced in collaboration with CNA, RTI, and TBS.

Appeal 5: Establish a mechanism for industrial democracy; allow labor union representatives to take part in the board as Employee Directors.

- 1) The content quality of PSM needs self-control. As labors of PSM know the production process best, it’s necessary to make laws to ensure the seats of employee directors so the public value of news, quality of program, or even the standard of advertising can be closely examined by internal review.
- 2) In accordance with Article 35 of *Administrative Law of State-Owned Enterprise*, at least one fifth of the directors shall be recommended by the relevant labor union.

- 3) Labor unions of the PSMs are nonprofit public welfare legal entities that supervise the labor directors and can collect laborers' opinions for labor directors to act accordingly. To ensure labor directors work properly, relevant laws should be amended to have representatives of labor unions to fill the position of Employee Director.

Appeal 6: Implement citizen supervision and information transparency to avoid political intervention.

- 1) As a media for the public, PSM should establish a feedback mechanism that allows audiences' comments. Take KBS in Korea for example: KBS conducts surveys on program quality regularly so viewers' opinions can be considered for further program production; KBS also runs monthly meetings with the Audience Committee consisting of audiences from all sectors of life to evaluate KBS's news and program, people's access to KBS, or even to express opinions to one certain program.
- 2) Information transparency is highly addressed: reports on operations and relevant records should be made available online; When selecting new board members, press conference should be held to introduce the nominees to the public.
- 3) To avoid political intervention, PTS Directors Selective Committee should be abolished, nominees should be reviewed by the Legislative Yuan (Parliament) directly.

Note:

CTS, Chinese Television System (Public-owned)

CNA, Central News Agency

RTI, Radio Taiwan International (State-owned)

PTS, Public Television Service Foundation

TITV, Taiwan Indigenous TV (State-owned)