Role of broadcasting media in projecting the EU and its values. Recommendation to the Council, the Commission and the EEAS

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The European Parliament adopted a **recommendation** to the Council, the Commission and the European External Action Service of 2 April 2014 on the role of broadcasting media in projecting the EU and its values.

Independent European broadcasting media offer the public – in Europe and worldwide – a joint vision, support the values enshrined in the EU Treaties, such as human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression, and promote pluralism, independent thought, cultural diversity, plurality of vision and the fundamental value of fostering non-violent conflict resolution, tolerance and respect, both within the EU and in the context of its external relations.

Parliament recalled that the EU's provision of initial funding for '**European Radio for Belarus'** and of continuous project-based support for independent broadcasting media in third countries are good examples of promoting freedom of expression and other fundamental rights and freedoms in the framework of the common foreign and security policy (CFSP).

Governments bear the primary responsibility for guaranteeing and protecting freedom of expression and the media. Parliament considered that there is a need to establish a coherent European media broadcasting strategy in the EU's external relations.

Therefore, Parliament addressed the following **recommendations** to the Council, the Commission and the European External Action Service:

- to understand the importance of **free European media**, and in particular of financially sustainable and independent public service broadcasting, in promoting EU democratic values and informing the public about policies and goals in the sphere of the CFSP, notably by enhancing understanding of the issues that unite and divide Europe and bringing European citizens closer together as regards their understanding of foreign policy;
- to establish a **coherent and robust EU media broadcasting strategy** in the context of the EU's external relations, thereby promoting freedom of expression and media pluralism and upholding and strengthening democracy and human rights in Europe and in third countries;
- to define, as part of this strategy, a **specific approach to European broadcasting media** – notwithstanding the independence of the media and the competence of Member States to confer, define and organise the public service broadcasting remit. It encouraged European media broadcasting internationally to: (i) operate in a **pluralistic and competitive media** environment – having immediate access to first-hand current news, being able to make use of the advantages of the latest technologies and staying at the forefront of the digital revolution – and create authentic and diversified content; (ii) be editorially independent; (iii) adhere to a broadcasting charter requiring accurate and objective news coverage; (iv) offer a platform for the exchange of opinions and debate pertaining to socially and/or politically relevant issues; (v) reflect appropriately the diversity of opinions and contexts in the EU.
- to consider that **Euronews (which receives, since 2005, core funding of EUR 5 million per year from the EU)**, with its broad network of national broadcasters and its wide distribution, has the potential to play an important role in the media landscape and in stimulating the debate on Europe,

including in third countries. In order to play such a role Euronews should have the means to continue to operate in various languages, including non-European languages; be further strengthened financially and structurally in order to be able to perform at a level comparable to that of worldwide news channels and to publish on its website an overview of its revenue so as to provide transparency of its operations;

- to direct **project-based EU external aid funding** towards those broadcasters that already respect and work in accordance with the highest standards of journalistic independence, accuracy and balance and promote EU values;
- to launch a reflection process at EU level with the aim of establishing a **worldwide European radio service**;
- to work towards the creation of an **enabling media environment in third countries**, along with the development of independent and professional broadcasting media.
- to react swiftly when **satellite signals** from European media broadcasting internationally are jammed in third countries, and when third-country governments suspend broadcasting by European media.