



**The Greens | European Free Alliance**  
in the European Parliament

**Valtteri Niiranen**  
Executive Director  
ENPA - European Newspaper Publishers' Association  
Square du Bastion 1A, Bte 3  
Brussels 1050  
Belgium

Strasbourg, 20 October 2009

Dear Mr Niiranen,

Thank you for your letter regarding press freedom in Italy.

Greens/EFA have tabled a resolution regarding press freedom and concentration of the media. This resolution focuses specifically on the situation in Italy.

Our resolution mentions that media freedom and pluralism are considered as part of human rights as enshrined by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU and the European Convention on Human Rights. As such, there are concerns regarding the actions of the Italian Prime Minister against newspapers regarding publication of information about himself, the interference of Italian authorities in Italian state television broadcasting and the inherent conflict of interest arising from the control and influence of the Italian Prime Minister over the television networks in Italy.

We consider it necessary that public broadcasters should be independent and free from interference. Given that the freedom to receive and communicate information without interference of state authorities is a fundamental principle on which the EU was founded and an essential element of democracy, we believe that the EU has the political and legal obligation to guarantee these rights to all citizens if Member States do not take the necessary measures.

In addition, we do not see that a Directive on media concentration would harm media pluralism and cultural diversity - on the contrary, we believe that such a Directive would help to guarantee pluralism as the normative framework of the EU in the area of information media remains fragmented and it is imperative that the EU uses its competences in audiovisual media, competition, telecommunication, state aid; obligations of the public service and fundamental rights of citizens to define the key minimum standards that Member States are invited in respect with the aim of ensuring, safeguarding and promoting freedom of information as well as an appropriate level of pluralism.

Yours sincerely,

Rebecca Harms MEP  
Co-President of the Greens/EFA Group in the European Parliament

Letter to ENPA\_freedom of the press