

Conference on broadcasting of parliamentary business through dedicated TV channels and public broadcasting systems

organized jointly by the IPU, the ASGP and EBU

Thursday 19 October 2006 - CICG Geneva (Switzerland)

Background

The relationship between parliament and the citizen is an issue of growing importance everywhere. Many parliaments are working to open the institution to greater involvement of individuals and organizations that have a contribution to make to their work. They also want people to be better informed of what is done in parliament. As part of these efforts, parliaments are keen to have some of their proceedings broadcasted to a wider public.

While some parliaments have established their own radio stations or TV channels that transmit directly to the public, more frequently parliaments rely on public broadcasting through public service stations or simply public broadcasters. In recent years, a number of new media outlets have emerged, using the internet or the digital environment to offer the public insights into parliamentary proceedings. This is an area of interest to the European Broadcasting Union (EBU).

The relationship between parliament and public broadcasters is a complex one. The media outlets are independent institutions that exercise editorial control over the content of their broadcasts. Parliaments are institutions that have a legitimate interest in broadcasters informing the public about their work, an interest which needs to be respected.

The October Conference could be the start of a larger process. It will explore the relationship between parliaments and parliamentary channels and/or public broadcasters and try to identify good examples that may serve as inspiration for others, as well as examples of sharing experiences and materials.

The process could also explore the possibility for the IPU to make recommendations to parliaments to establish a parliamentary channel in cases where it does not exist and to develop a network of existing parliamentary channels in order to facilitate exchange of material and expertise. The process could be developed by the IPU, ASGP (Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments) and EBU.

Participants

The conference will be open to senior representatives of public broadcasters, parliamentary channels and Secretaries General of Parliament. EBU Members and members of parliament who sit on committees that oversee parliamentary outreach to the broader public will also be invited. The Conference will be open to the press.

Date and venue

The conference will take place on 19 October 2006 immediately after the 115th IPU Assembly to ensure the presence of as many Secretaries General of parliament as possible. The venue will be the Geneva International Conference Centre (CICG).

Meeting support

Interpretation will be provided into Arabic, English, French and Spanish. The EBU will provide technical expertise, including in the preparation of conference papers.

Draft programme - Thursday 19 October 2006

- 9 a.m. Visit of EBU Headquarters in Geneva (departure from hotels by bus)
Presentation of EBU and News Room.
- 10.15 a.m. **Opening remarks** (CICG - 5 minutes each):
Mr. Pier Ferdinando Casini, IPU President and former Speaker of the Italian Chamber of Deputies;
Mr. Anders Forsberg, ASGP President and Secretary General of the Swedish Parliament;
Mr. Fritz Pleitgen, President of the EBU, Director general of WRD and former founder of Phoenix (German documentary and parliamentary channel) or Mr. Boris Bergant, EBU Vice-President.
- 10.30 a.m. **Panel discussion**
- Parliamentary activities: MPs, majority, opposition, minorities, media and citizens - shared needs, different interests**
While Parliamentarians - from all political tendencies - journalists and citizens are all interested in greater visibility for the role of legislators and the impact politics can have in daily life. They nonetheless have different interests. How can parliamentary channels and public broadcasting face this challenge?
- Panellists' presentations** (8 minutes each)
- 11.30 a.m. **Open discussion - Moderator:** Journalist
- 1.00 p.m. Lunch at the CICG
- 2.15 p.m. **Parliamentary exchanges of materials**
- Presentation by Mr. Peter Vickers (EBU-Eurovision) on the possibilities EBU could offer to parliamentary channels and public broadcasters.
- 2.30 p.m. **Panel discussion**
Free and fair access to information on parliamentary activities and access to TV channels
Freedom of expression, access to information and access to parliamentary channels and public broadcasters are important. Moreover, representatives of different political tendencies, both majority and opposition, as well as minorities and gender balance must be respected.
- Panellists' presentations** (8 minutes each)
- 3.00 p.m. **Open discussion - Moderator:** Journalist
- 4.30 p.m. **Report: good practices and recommendations**
- Rapporteur:** Mr. Eric Fichtelius - Executive Producer and Editor of SVT 24 Direct
- 5.00 p.m. Tea, coffee, refreshments

Post Conference Publication - IPU-ASGP-EBU Brochure