

Recommendation for governments to push the Eutelsat to restore NTDTV broadcasting to China

On June 16, 2008 the signal of New Tang Dynasty Television's (NTDTV) was cut off. NTDTV is the only uncensored Chinese-language TV channel that millions of Chinese have relied on since 2004 as the free alternative to the Communist state-controlled TV, the channel which Beijing's Communist rulers have tried by all means to silence. There has been no plausible explanation of the "power anomaly" on the W5 satellite and why NTDTV's service could not be continued.

On July 10, 2008, Media freedom watchdog Reporters Without Borders (RSF) has revealed evidence to further verify that the shut-down was ordered by Eutelsat's CEO to please the Chinese communist regime, and was "a premeditated, politically-motivated decision violating the free flow of information and the convention under which Eutelsat operates."

In 2005, the Eutelsat attempted to unlawfully terminate the contract with NTDTV. Due to the pressure from media, governments and general public throughout the world Eutelsat was obliged to sign a 6-year contract with NTDTV. Why only three years later the similar incident happens again. Once more Eutelsat's credibility and business ethics were put at stake. It is hard to believe that Eutelsat is enjoying freedom in Europe while assisting the Chinese communist regime to deny freedom of information for millions of Chinese.

We wish to convey to you our serious concern regarding the cessation of NTDTV's satellite transmission to Asia. We highly acknowledge the work of the NTDTV channel, which provides an independent forum linking Chinese communities globally. Since 2004, NTDTV began its unprecedented free broadcast in Asia. NTDTV works tirelessly to provide timely and objective news and programmes directly to the audience in China and around the world.

According to Amnesty International report on July 28, 2008, the Chinese authorities have broken their promise to improve the country's human rights situation and betrayed the core values of the Olympics. With the Chinese regime stepping up its tight controls on media and free expression before 2008 Beijing Olympics, NTDTV has covered extensive news in China censored by the Chinese authorities, such as Tibet, Falun Gong, massive arrest of Human Rights activists and suppression of Chinese people.

Eutelsat must live up to its International and European agreements and obligation—and its own company charter—that require the practice of non-discrimination, equal access, and respect for media pluralism. As Eutelsat's corporate description states: "For millions of homes, the Group's satellites are synonymous with openness and exchange." Even with the promise of financial benefit from the 2008 Beijing Games and your series of recent deals and potential deals with Chinese state entities, Eutelsat still has a clear legal and moral obligation to resume transmitting NTDTV immediately.

Particularly as of July 31, there are transponders available for broadcast to Asia on the W5 Satellite, and Eutelsat is contract-bound to offer them to NTDTV. On August 18 Reporters Without Borders (RSF) have remind Eutelsat's technical ability to restore NTDTV broadcast to Asia since August 1 when the transponder C2 was set free by BBG (Broadcasting Board of Governors), an independent U.S. government agency in charge of government funded international broadcasting, including VOA (Voice of America) and RFA (Radio Free Asia). There is now sufficient capacity for restoring NTDTV on one of the satellite's transponders, C2, after it's being used by BBG to broadcast 5 TV stations and

12 radio stations to Asia in July, 2008. On August 20, 2008 International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) informed that so-called technical problems have evaporated and calls on Eutelsat to end bar on Chinese NTDTV Broadcasts.

The support was given by 95 european parliamentarists, more than 180 French parliamentarists, 4 Canadian parliamentarists and Polish memebers of the European Parliament: Paweł Piskorski, Wojciech Roszkowski, Hanna Foltyn-Kubicka, Ewa Tomaszewska, Konrad Szymański and members of the Polish Parliament: Marek Balicki (former Minister of Health) and Marek Biernacki (former Minister of Interior and and Administration). Dotychczas na świecie poparcie wyraziło

We voice our serious concern over the basic freedom of information that the Eutelsat's decision is taking away for the millions affected in China, and condemn its ongoing keeping NTDTV signal away. We urge the Eutelsat's members, shareholders and governments to help restore NTDTV broadcasting to China without delay and further excuse.

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