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Court rules against suspension of former AMA chair

The Court of Appeals ruled yesterday against the decision of the District Court of Tirana to suspend Endira Bushati from her position as chair of the Audiovisual Media Authority (AMA.) The case has been brought before the court by the Prosecution, after the filing of a complaint by Digitalb, the main multiplex in the country. Digitalb claimed that AMA had failed to implement anti-piracy provisions, as the law requires. They maintained that Bushati had done nothing to stop piracy among cable TV stations and local analogue stations, leading to alarming levels of piracy and consequently to significant economic damage to commercial multiplexes. Meanwhile, Bushati claimed that Digitalb is not immune from piracy problems, neither, as they have not presented any copyright contract to AMA. She also maintained this lawsuit was a political move, aiming to remove her from the position she held in favor of someone that would further Digitalb interests in the future.

The District Court of Tirana ruled against Bushati, meaning that her suspension was in force. After Bushati appealed this ruling, the Court of Appeals decided in her favor, which means she could return to her job. However, the deputy chair of the Parliamentary Commission on Media, Alfred Peza, noted that this was only temporary. She would hold her position until the new chair of AMA was elected. He also underlined that the lawsuit against Bushati was a different matter and did not interfere with or reverse the process of electing new AMA chair. He said that the parliament had started the election process after finding that her mandate had expired, which was in no way related to the lawsuit started by the prosecution.

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