

*September 30, 2014*

## Ruling majority and opposition fail to solve regulator and PBS deadlock again

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Alfred Peza, Member of Parliament of the Socialist Party and head of the Parliamentary Media Commission, in the name of the ruling majority MPs in the commission, sent a letter addressed to his opposition colleagues in the same commission on September 29. The letter highlights the deadlock of both the regulator and of the public broadcaster, emphasizing again that mandates of PBS Steering Council members have expired from at least a year and the regulator AMA cannot function, as it currently has only three members. The letter set Wednesday, October 1, as a deadline for the opposition members to go back to the commission in order to proceed with the election of missing members in these institutions. At the moment the opposition MPs are boycotting all parliamentary activities. The letter also stated that in case the opposition refuses to go back to the commission, the ruling majority will proceed with election of missing members on its own, saying that it cannot wait forever on this matter.

The letter highlights that the commission faces important challenges ahead, such as reform of AMA and public broadcaster RTSH, reform of higher education, as well as other initiatives related to culture, sports, and intellectual property. In addition, Peza in his letter reminded his colleagues that due to the inability of AMA and Steering Council of RTSH to make decisions, there have been delays and obstacles to proceed with the digital switchover process, for both public and commercial actors. In addition, AMA's new structure could not be approved, and functions such as monitoring of frequencies and programs could not be carried out. Peza also stated that there is an increase in terms of pirated programs broadcast as result of AMA's inability to carry out its duties in the current situation. Finally, in view of all of these factors, the letter called on the opposition MPs to come back to the commission and contribute to solving these problems.

Meanwhile, today, Luciano Boci, opposition MP of the Parliamentary Media Commission, in a press conference announced that the opposition refused the invitation the ruling majority made a day earlier. He stated that according to the opposition, this ultimatum was not acceptable and that the only intention of the ruling majority was to take over the independent institutions. He also added that while the letter pointed to the concern of the ruling majority on approaching digital switchover deadline, it should also be made clear that it is the ruling majority that has suspended this process, with the aim of controlling the regulator.

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