

VII CONCLUSION

In the period observed, further deterioration of the relationship between the Government and the media sector was noticed, with two facts being of particular concern. First, there was no progress at all in drawing up the media strategy, which seems more and more as an excuse of the authorities and stalling so that things would remain unchanged. And secondly, even more worrying is fact that the Government is openly showing it does not respect the will of the representatives of the media sector, by refusing to select one of its candidates for membership in the RBA Council. This has opened the way for a renewed procedure, in which the authorities would be well positioned to impose someone more to their liking, through the Parliament's Culture and Information Committee and its arbitrary selection of candidates.

The Government is lately working only on raising fines for the media, in an attempt to discipline them. At the same time, when journalists and the media are victims of threats and attacks, the perpetrators receive mild sentences or are not sentenced at all. This is all contributing to an increased level of frustration that is additionally complicating the situation on the media scene.

The paradoxical combination of zero tolerance for the media when the latter have to comply with their obligations and the lack of any responsibility of the competent authorities, when their obligations towards the media are concerned, creates an uneven balance of power, where the media are typically on the losing end. At that, the Government is failing to consider the importance of media for the development of a democratic society, thus compromising the so far achieved results of social changes.

The ability of the authorities to recognize the buzz of discontent of the media with how the Government deals with them, their needs and problems, will determine the depth of the gaps in their mutual relations and the time needed to bridge those gaps, in order for things to move forward.