

The General Director of CONATEL demands once again that Radio Solidarite change frequency: according to the General Director of the station it is political harassment

Port-au-Prince, February 14, 2005 - (AHP) - The General Director of the National Council for Telecommunications (CONATEL), Jean-Michel Boisrond, demands once again, the private radio station Radio Solidarite change it's frequency.

Mr. Boisrond had accepted to defer his requirements after they met last November at the request of the General Director for the station, Venel Remarais, at the offices of the radio and promised that he will not do anything to attempt to shut down Radio Solidarite.

Jean-Michel Boisrond had also represented that he understood the preoccupations of the station after numerous criticisms were raised against him, because of the suspicious nature of his request.

Mr. Remarais asserted that he made him understand at the time of that meeting that a possible change of frequency would cause serious harm to the radio show, given that it's been operating for six years on 107.5. The General Director of CONATEL came back with the issue in a letter dated on February 7th and sent to Radio Solidarite on February 14th.

"CONATEL grants you a delay until February 29th to make the change of the frequency 107.5 MHz to the new frequency 107.3 MHz," wrote Jean-Michel Boisrond.

Mr. Remarais did no say how he would proceed but characterized this demand by CONATEL as a form of political persecution.

Radio Solidarite is one of the six or seven radio stations and television stations that accept to let all the sectors of the society speak including the residents in the popular neighborhoods.

Mr. Remarais asserted that he cannot understand that they want to make such arrangements against a station that is very popular, which is listened to by all levels of society, while the authorities should be in need of such places to do civic education since they announced that elections are scheduled for this year.

"You have to understand that it smacks of a way to decrease the impact of the station at this crucial moment," added the CEO of the station.

Several medias are the subject of persecutions during these past weeks including Teleginen and Radio Megastar of which the journalists were attacked or injured.

A journalist-correspondent of a radio station in Florida, Abdias Jean, was killed on January 14th while he was reporting on a strong arm operation of the police force in Cite de Dieu, a popular neighborhood in the capital.

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