

## **WE DEMAND PUBLIC BROADCASTING NOT ONE VOICE and ONE COLOR at TURKISH RADIO AND TELEVISION CORPORATION (TRT)**

The last legislative change, namely the Emergency Decree Law No. 703, resulted in one man's control over Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT) that is defined as autonomous and impartial public broadcasting institution by the Constitution. In fact, TRT lost its impartiality and turned into an institution/media organ of the political power in practice and it was observed particularly during the last elections period. The Emergency Decree Law No. 703 and the subsequent Presidential decrees, however, transformed TRT into a broadcasting institution with no obligation to public broadcasting principles even from a legislative perspective. The legislative changes in question provided an opportunity to authorities to transfer "Extra Staff" to other public institutions.

There is no closure or downsizing or privatization of TRT. Yet, there is a pressure on experienced and knowledgeable staff on the ground of labelling them as "Extra Staff". These staff are under pressure to "get retired or transfer to other public institutions." So far, about 1800 personnel retired from TRT and quit the institution and profession.

TRT staff, who resist to this pressure so as to defend and support the institution as well as profession, are threatened by authorities. Furthermore, these authorities say "those who do not retired or are not transferred to other public institutions will not continue to work as permanent staff at TRT because they will be subjected to 'Private Law Contract' due to change in their working status." Which public institutions these experienced and knowledgeable staff, such as reporters, broadcasters, and artists transfer will be transferred? What will be new positions of these reporters, broadcasters, radio broadcasters and artists in other public institutions? The current policy and practice ignore experience, accumulated knowledge and skills and, to some extent, send these reporters, broadcasters and radio broadcasters to exile.

Who will be new reporters, programmers at TRT? If the objective is public broadcasting, why do authorities send useful staff? How can the political power think that it has right to liquidate TRT? In fact, TRT must belong to public. Do these policies and practices define the value of public broadcasting in this country?

**TRT, WHICH HAS STRAYED FROM THE PUBLIC BROADCASTING FOR A LONG PERIOD, HAS BECOME A COMPANY IN PRACTICE!...**

The Emergency Decree Law No. 703 and subsequent Presidential decrees turned TRT into a company in practice. In the past, TRT had different voices, diversified broadcasting policies because the executive board was composed of people from different segments of the society and there were Advisory Boards. Yet, these new legislative regulations resulted in one man's control over TRT. The frequency of the executive board meetings was changed from 15 days to "three months." This change aims to limit administrative power, except for obey to one man's decisions, within the institution. Moreover, the scope of the legal provision on establishing companies under TRT and purchasing processes and become a

partner with other organisations/companies has been expanded by the new changes. This change will lead to higher level of subcontracting. Furthermore, all companies be it established or bought by TRT or become a partner, even 1%, of TRT are out of Public Procurement Law.

As known TRT, of which mission is public broadcasting, is funded by all citizens. There are several methods that collect money from citizens. For example, there is an item for TRT services in electricity bill, tax label in this respect. TRT, of which more than 80 fund comes from citizens, belongs to the public and must serve to the public through respect for public broadcasting principles. It is responsible to the public only.

The TRT process is part of the broader policies about privatization of the public services, destruction of job security for public officers, precarious employment forms, attack on labor rights under the State of Emergency. "Employment form under Private Law Contract", which has been recommended within the scope of the 11<sup>th</sup> Development Plan, has begun in TRT. 11. There is also a risk that it will be applied to all other public officers in the sector. It is clear that TRT is a pilot practice. Therefore, the prevention of the liquidation and transformation and corporization at TRT is a critical threshold for a public service understanding in favor of the society and public.

In the light of these facts, we demand TRT;

- to be impartial as pointed out by the Constitution and relevant law, and to have a public broadcasting policy,
- to be transparent and accountable for its financial processes,
- to provide an explanation about new staff, who are transferred from other ministries and institutions, while numerous experienced staff are transferred to other public institutions on the ground extra staff,
- to stop forcing staff to get retired, to transfer staff to other institutions under the name of extra staff, and new employment forms such as Private Law Contract.

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED ORGANIZATIONS, DEMAND TRT TO BE AN INSTITUTION PAYS ATTENTION TO ELIGIBILITY AND EXPERTISE AND IN LINE WITH DIVERSITY RATHER THAN ONE VOICE AND BELONGS TO THE PUBLIC. WE ALSO STAND BY HABER-SEN THAT IS KEY TO THE STRUGGLE FOR AN AUTONOMOUS TRT WITH A PUBLIC BROADCASTING MENTALITY, RESPECT FOR DEMOCRATIC AND PARTICIPATORY PRINCIPLES.

Confederation of Public Employees Trade Unions (KESK), Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey (DİSK), Union Of Chambers Of Turkish Engineers And Architects (TMMOB), Turkish Medical Association (TTB), G9 Journalism Organizations Platform, Association of European Journalists (AEJ) Turkey Office, Progressive Journalists Association (PJA), DİSK / BASIN-İŞ, Association of Parliament Reporters, Journalists' Union of Turkey