

Dear Colleagues

First, I would like to thank President Jan Dworak and the Polish Committee for the kind invitation to participate in this well organized and well managed CERF meeting, which is taking place in this magnificent palace.

However, for us Mediterraneans, well organized is important, as there are also other things that are equally important: the warm hospitality and the friendliness of our Polish hosts. Thank you once more, chenkoyie !

Dear Friends,

I don't have to argue in order to convince you that we are living in a totally interconnected world. Its complexity is such that it is necessary to work and collaborate simultaneously on a bilateral level, a regional and European Union level and an extended Europe level.

As EU member states, we belong not only to a specific geographical area, but also and more importantly, we belong, by our free choice, to a common economic, social and juridical space. A space of democracy and freedom that ensures the free circulation of people, services, companies and capital.

Of course, we also have some differences, but we all share a heritage of fundamental freedom and more specifically, we all recognize the critical role and importance of the free press and media in a democratic society. This notion is, I believe, very clearly reflected in the common declaration.

The initial discussions about this initiative undertaken by Cyprus, Portugal and Malta, took place last year in Belgrade during the previous EPRA meeting. In the beginning we were concerned about finding practical ways to establish a close, steady and effective cooperation between our respective authorities, as it is also suggested by the AVMS directive which among other things, states that :

'close cooperation between member states and regulatory bodies is particularly important with regards to the impact which, broadcasters established in one member state, might have on another member state'.

So the idea behind this initiative is I believe crystal clear. It is not to replace EPRA or CERF or any other network, it is to create, at the highest level, a political network, not technical, which will enable us to know each other better. And on the other hand, to create an effective mechanism of close cooperation that will enable us to define policies and directions, with the ambition to be clearly heard in Brussels.

So I would like to conclude my short intervention by clearly stating that we recognize and value the need for cooperation between our regulatory authorities on the basis of our broader European identity, this is clearly very well undertaken by EPRA, and at the same time, we realize the need for better and more efficient cooperation between us, as members of the European Union regulatory authorities family.