

PRESS RELEASE

“Karachi, October 1, 2015: Pakistan Broadcasters Association has taken notice of recent Acting Chairman PEMRA and Secretary Information remarks on creating a rating company. PBA's stance has been clear from day one that Government has a grave conflict of interest to do content regulation against the media as well as form its own ratings company.

These are tools that any Government will be tempted to use against Independent Media and influence access to information and the citizen's right to know guaranteed under Article 19 of the constitution. PBA also categorically denies the statement of Acting Chairman PEMRA that all stake holders have been consulted. PBA has not been consulted by either PEMRA or Ministry of Information on the proposed rating set up.

The Government's efforts to regulate content and circulation in print have not yielded healthy results and it should learning from that experience. In fact, Supreme Court of Pakistan's Media Commission report has recommended that Government undertakes substantive restructuring of Ministry of Information and PEMRA to make them more autonomous and independent of the influence of the executive so they can play a role in development of the Media Industry instead of acting as propaganda arm of the Federal Government. The Media Commission report also recommended that Government of Pakistan abolish secret funds to do with media and create transparency in the way Government Ads are placed in the media.

PBA encourages the Government of Pakistan to implement the recommendations of the Supreme Court Media Commission in letter and in spirit and to refrain from any actions that can be perceived as obstructing the fulfillment of rights guaranteed by Article 19 of the Constitution”.

Sincerely for,
Pakistan Broadcasters Association

Muhammad Ali Butt
Executive Director