



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION OFFICE

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Dear Sirs,

Peter Kropsch, President of EANA and CEO of dpa
and Mr Alexandru Ion Giboi, Secretary General of EANA,

We have received with disbelief your letter that attempts to summarize some of the facts related to the developments around the Slovenian Press Agency. It would be the norm, in accordance with the principles of journalism ethics, to first examine some of the facts that you simply deny in the letter.

We, too, would prefer that the events that occurred in the Slovenian Press Agency had never happened. Unfortunately, they did happen, and they should serve as a reminder and warning to all so that something similar never happens again.

It is known that in 2009 the government led by the Social Democrats appointed Bojan Veselinovič as the director of the Slovenian Press Agency. Prior to that, the same government forced the resignation of the then director of the Slovenian Press Agency.

When Veselinovič officially took over as the director in 2009, one of his first moves involved coming into conflict with the then editor-in-chief Borut Meško. The conflict, which ended utterly tragically, is considered to be one of the gravest and most brutal political attacks on journalism since Slovenia became a democratic state.

It was obvious that director Veselinovič did not agree with the editorial policy of the then editor-in-chief, who as a journalist also provided a platform to those who were persecuted during the rule of the communist regime. Soon after Bojan Veselinovič took over as director and when Borut Meško was still the editor-in-chief, the Slovenian Press Agency published an interview with a renowned Slovenian communist dissident Ljubo Sirc, which apparently was not to director Veselinovič's liking. "One day after the interview was published, more precisely on 21 April, Veselinovič started bombarding me from the early morning hours with numerous requests for explanations which arrived by e-mail at the following times: 00:06, 00:09, 00:27, 12:32 (two requests that are different in their content!), 12:34, 14:59, 15:12, " is how Borut Meško publicly explained at the time the developments that followed the publication of the interview, which was also reported on by the Association of Journalists and Publicists. However, this was actually only the beginning of the pressures on the apparently politically unsuitable editor-in-chief.

In order to force the editor-in-chief to resign, Veselinovič started subjecting him to extreme bullying. One of the first measures was the request that the editor-in-chief write reports every day by 9 a.m. about what was going on in the editorial board and what he himself was doing, and then to write additional weekly reports.

By using invented reasons, he also accused Borut Meško of failing to meet his daily obligations and handed him the first warning before the termination of the employment contract. It is precisely because of this that the editor-in-chief fell severely ill soon after and was on sick leave for two months.

