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## Prague Hosting the Largest European Public Service Media Assembly

**From June 24 to 26, almost two hundred top representatives of public service broadcasters from sixty-five countries across Europe are coming to Prague to discuss future public service strategies. Czech Radio and Czech Television will become the hosts of the General Assembly of the European Broadcasting Union (EBU).**

Current technological development, transition to digital audio broadcasting, planned media legislation amendments and new international collaboration possibilities are some of the topics on the agenda of this week's assembly of representatives of European public service radio and TV broadcasters. EBU's seventy-fourth General Assembly will take place under the auspices of Deputy Prime-Minister Pavel Bělobrádek and Minister of Culture Daniel Herman in the new building of the National Museum. On Wednesday, members of EBU's top governing body, the Executive Board, will also meet with the Czech Prime Minister, Bohuslav Sobotka.

*"Public service media play an irreplaceable role in today's world. The most developed European countries have been built on traditional democratic values and freedoms. Freedoms and public service media form one of its indisputable pillars, as they are entirely independent, unbiased, balanced and not susceptible to any sort of pressure or manipulation. One of the guarantees of a healthy development of public service media is their membership in EBU which gives them the opportunity to implement and participate in significant projects that lead to the improvement of the programme offer and technical background. One of the major challenges for Czech public service media is the transition to digital audio broadcasting. Digitalisation is the only key that will open our way to further diversification of our services, especially multimedia content and help us enhance the quality of the transmission. Aside from adopting requisite legal amendments, it will be necessary to specify a date for the discontinuation of the analogue signal,"* said Czech Radio's Director General, **Peter Duhan**.

*"In the public media arena, Czech Republic is becoming increasingly visible. There are several reasons – one of the main being the fast rate and the character of changes in the structure of the media market and the current issues related to the amendment of laws dealing with media. Other broadcasters in Europe face similar challenges and they will sooner or later have to deal with the fact that it is now time to, at least partially, revise the traditional definition of public service media. For instance, Czech Television was the first ever medium to have undergone an international audit evaluating its ability to promote public service values, and a similar evaluation has so far also taken place in Finland, Switzerland and Belgium,"* said **Petr Dvořák**, Czech Television's Director General who was last year appointed as a member of the EBU Executive Board. He added, *"I believe that the fact that EBU's General Assembly takes place in Prague is a clear signal that the Czech Republic has become an equal partner in public service media sphere."*

EBU's General Assembly brings together general directors of public service media and it is EBU's main decision-making body. Its task is to define the overall development strategy and to gradually implement the goals set forth in Vision 2020. These should contribute, for example, to complementing the public service broadcasting with multimedia content and the development of new platforms for communication with the viewers and listeners.

Czech Radio and Czech Television have been members of EBU since 1993. The organisation was established in 1950 and is based in Geneva.

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