



World Association of Newspapers

ASSOCIATION MONDIALE DES JOURNAUX • ASOCIACIÓN MUNDIAL DE PERIÓDICOS • WELTVERBAND DER ZEITUNGEN

Home Rule Premier Hans Enoksen
Greenland Home Rule
P.O. Box 1015
DK-3900 Nuuk, Greenland

12 April 2007

Dear Premier Enoksen,

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Journal nr. Sags. nr.	02.23
13 APR. 2007	
Sagsbeh.	ELY
Indblikkode	
Kopi til	TM
Henlægges	

We are writing on behalf of the World Association of Newspapers and the World Editors Forum, which represent 18,000 publications in 102 countries, to express our serious concern at proposals to enact a new Media Liability Act which may open the appointment of the Press Council to politicisation.

Greenland is currently subject to the Danish Media Liability Act, which determines who is legally responsible for media content and establishes the Greenland Press Council. The Press Council has powers to criticise mass media for content or conduct contrary to sound press ethics and may ask them to publish a reply to correct factual information which may cause significant financial or other damage.

Greenland's government has decided to adopt a new Media Liability Act. The act is heavily inspired by the Danish act but also contains several significant changes. The most important being that the Press Council will be composed of a president, two journalists, two editors and two representatives of the public. Until now, there has been both a president and a vice-president, both of whom are lawyers or judges; in practice the president has been a judge from Greenland's High Court.

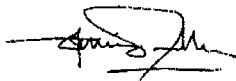
We are concerned that under the current proposal, the Council's appointment and thus the decision-making process might become political. We respectfully remind you that it is of utmost importance that the Press Council continues to be – and seen to be – an independent institution. Consequently, we urge you to maintain the current modus operandi and legal expertise that have secured independence and public trust

As there are too few press complaints to establish a separate secretariat, we also suggest that an existing independent institution fulfils this role for the Press Council. Greenland's court administration seems to be ideal for this purpose, particularly as Greenland Home Rule will assume responsibility for the judicial system within a few years.

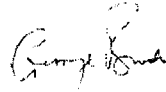
We respectfully call on you to do everything possible to ensure that appointment to the Press Council and its decision-making process remain apolitical and that the current structure that retains public confidence is maintained.

We look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,



Gavin O'Reilly
President
World Association of Newspapers



George Brock
President
World Editors Forum

WAN is the global organization for the newspaper industry, with formal representative status at the United Nations, UNESCO and the Council of Europe. The organization groups 18,000 newspapers in 102 countries, 11 news agencies and nine regional and world-wide press groups. WAN is non-governmental and non-profit.

cc: Mr. Jonathan Motzfeldt, Chairman of Greenlandic Parliament, Greenland Home Rule,
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