

INTRODUCTORY SPEECH



Ladies and Gentlemen,

I thank the representatives of various newspapers and audiovisual media who responded to our invitation to attend this press briefing.

I am pleased to welcome you on my behalf and on behalf of the members of the Higher Council of Audiovisual Communication -CSCA, the Director General, the chief of cabinet and the person in charge of media at the High Authority for Audiovisual Communication (HACA).

This press briefing aims at keeping you informed on the level of satisfaction, at mid-course, of the obligation for public and private Moroccan audiovisual media, whether radios or televisions, to respect the pluralist expression of diverse currents of thought and opinion as far as the project of Constitution is concerned.

For that purpose, allow me to expose briefly to you:

1. the essentials of the HACA's action, as an independent administrative authority, to accomplish its mission;
2. the normative and organizational device set up to guarantee the equitable access to audiovisual media on this occasion;

before showing you the results of the follow-up carried out by the HACA at the mid-course of the referendum campaign, i.e. from June 17 to June 25, 2011.

1. Regarding some beaconing elements which constitute our reference of principles and values in the practice of our regulatory mission:

First of all, our action is guided by the conviction that the HACA, since its creation, is an institutional actor set up to contribute to the change at the service of democratization and modernization of our society.

Furthermore, we consider that the audiovisual media are major devices at the service of this change and that one of their paramount roles is to enlighten the citizens in their choices, thus enabling them to form their opinions freely in order to exert their voting right, which is a basic right of participation in the running of public affairs.

Consequently, the mission which the HACA assigned to itself regarding the guarantee of pluralism of the expression of different currents of thought and opinion for the referendum period 2011 in the audiovisual media, is based on the ideas of effective democracy, sustainable development and freedom of speech in particular, which inspired the Speech by his Majesty the King Mohammed VI of March 9, 2011, that invokes the option of extending the public debate within the framework of the editorial responsibility.

Therefore, the HACA provided for ideas, opinions and comments to which the referendum consultation will give rise, to be exposed by the audiovisual media with a constant preoccupation of balance and honesty, within the framework of a consequent leading freedom.

2. Concerning the normative and organizational device set up to guarantee the equitable access to the audiovisual media on this occasion, and in accordance with the provisions of the Dahir instituting the HACA, law n° 77.03 relating to the audiovisual communication as well as law n° 9-97 bearing the electoral Code and the orders taken for its application, the CSCA adopted, on June 16, 2011, the Decision n°27-11 bearing adoption of the recommendation n° 01-11 relating to the guarantee of pluralism of the expression of the currents of thought and opinion in the audiovisual media for the referendum period.

Within this framework, the CSCA stated a series of deontological principles and rules having to be observed by the public and private audiovisual media for the period of the referendum consultation, which starts immediately after the official public communication of the project

of the Kingdom's new Constitution, and extends until the day before the poll day at midnight.

Thus, while reaffirming their whole leading freedom, the CSCA recommends to the broadcasters to **open their programs**, for the period of the referendum consultation, to **all the currents of thought and opinion**, as well as to all political, union, economic, academic, cultural and social concerned stakeholders. The CSCA also recommends to these broadcasters to ensure a **balance between the plurality of viewpoints, within each program, on the basis of an equitable and diversified invitation policy**, in compliance with the legal provisions into force and the commonly allowed deontological rules.

In addition, and within the framework of its missions of *a posteriori* control, the HACA watches over the **respect by the public broadcasters of the regulations device set up by the Government in order to guarantee to all the lawfully constituted political parties and unions the equitable access to the public audiovisual media, through direct speech** related to the referendum.

The concerned recommendation states, finally, that the topicality nonrelated to the constitutional reform will continue to be governed by the Decision of the CSCA n°46-06 of September 27, 2006 relating to the rules of the guarantee of pluralism of expression of different currents of thought and opinion in the audiovisual media outside the election times.

The HACA mobilized its human and material means to watch over the respect of this device. The follow-up is ensured by the permanent personnel and by fixed-term contract recruits, called in reinforcement. The analysis and alerts are daily produced. The CSCA itself is in open session to take any corrective measure, if necessary.

In the light of this normative and organizational device, the HACA recorded the results obtained in a mid-course report related to the period ranging from the Royal Speech of June 17 to June 25, 2011 at midnight (fifth day of the official referendum campaign). During these nine (9) days, the audiovisual media, both public and private, broadcasted 1392 programs (in initial broadcasting, including 844 newspapers and 548 magazines and special programs).

The total time volume of speech, all media and all types of programs (newspapers, magazines and special programs) included, reached 120:25:26 (a hundred and twenty hours, twenty five minutes and twenty six seconds). This time volume was thus distributed:

- the speeches broadcasted on five televisions (Al Oula, 2M, TV Tamazight, Medi 1 TV and TV Laâyoune) represented **41 hours and 54 minutes**, i.e. 35 % of the total time volume of speech.

- the share of the three public radios (Radio Nationale, Radio Amazighe and Radio Chaîne Inter) represented **31 hours and 52 minutes**, i.e. 26,5% of the total time volume of speech.

Lastly, the rise of private radios was confirmed, because their share exceeded that of the public TV channels by reaching **46 hours and 39 minutes**, i.e. 38,5% of the total time volume of speech.

In terms of contents finally, a significant remark is to be raised: the teaching and didactic part of the presentation and explanation of the provisions of the new Constitution was very present. Thus, the speaking time of experts and academicians was 44:54:07, i.e. 36,5% of the total of speech. Finally, in addition to the political parties (26% of the total of speech), national unions (4% of the total of speech) and organizations (CNDH, IRCAM, CMRE... 3% of the total of speech), we noted the presence of 93 entities from civil society that amounted to 12% of the total volume of speech.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We deliver the obtained results to you without comment. It is up to you then to draw the conclusions which you consider likely to ensure your duty of information of the public.