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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Hungary: Insufficient Changes to Controversial Media Laws**

**Budapest 01.03.11: In statement released today, ARTICLE 19 reviews the amendments proposed by the Hungarian Government to the controversial media laws and calls for further changes to bring the current media legal framework in line with international standards.**

“ARTICLE 19 welcomes the Hungarian government’s decision to initiate a reform of the media laws adopted last year,” said Dr Agnès Callamard, ARTICLE 19 Executive Director. “At the same time, we are alarmed that the proposed amendments are not comprehensive and highlight again the problematic provisions which the authorities should revise,” continued Callamard.

In February 2011, following intense criticism by the international community, including ARTICLE 19, the Hungarian Government agreed to revise some provisions of the Press and Media Act and Media Law, adopted in 2010. The proposed amendments were consulted with the European Commission and relate to the media content regulation, the applicability of the regime of sanctions to foreign media, and the registration regime.

ARTICLE 19’s statement, Hungary: ARTICLE 19 Calls For Comprehensive Media Law Reform, reviews the proposed amendments and highlights the problematic issues they fail to address. The statement observes that some proposals by the Government are inadequate and remain vague. ARTICLE 19 is not satisfied with the scope of these amendments, as many problematic issues in the controversial media laws are not addressed.

A list of recommendations are included in the statement, including: Hungarian lawmakers should expand the media law reform by adopting the following key measures; regulatory control should be limited over broadcasting media only; media regulatory body and public media should be independent from the government. In addition, the framework of right to protect journalistic sources should be revised in line with international standards and the high fines for infringement of the media laws should be reduced.

**ENDS**

**NOTES TO EDITORS:**

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- For the full statement, visit: [www.article19.org/pdfs/press/hungary-article-19-calls-for-comprehensive-media-law-reform.pdf](http://www.article19.org/pdfs/press/hungary-article-19-calls-for-comprehensive-media-law-reform.pdf)
- ARTICLE 19 is an independent human rights organisation that works around the world to protect and

promote the right to freedom of expression. It takes its name from Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which guarantees free speech.