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José Azeredo Lopes

Chairman of Entidade Reguladora da Comunicação Social (Regulatory Authority for the Media) (ERC)

As a representative of the media regulator, José Azeredo Lopes, chose to make a reflection from a citizen perspective, given that whatever the approach chosen (regulators, industry or market), it will always be the perspective of the citizen that will be at issue.

In respect of convergence, the time for reaction and reflection on phenomena which are associated with it does not have parallel with anything in the history of Today we have a completely new process. From the media the media. regulator's point of view, the remit, powers and object of regulation is clearly set out in political terms. Meanwhile there is contrast between the process of technological convergence (which ignores the definition of State) and the model of jurisdiction underlying legal and political premise. Therefore, the subjects of regulation must be defined in a more abstract way, so that these definitions can adapt to the new realities.

On the other hand, the chairman of the ERC commented that technological evolution (and the trend of convergence) cannot devalue things that are essential to society, for example, freedom of speech. He reaffirmed how it is becoming more and more difficult to define who the agents of mediation are, such is the demand for adaptation to multiplatform environments and given that the public is no longer merely a passive agent of communication.

Finally, Azeredo Lopes – who considered it less relevant to define who, at a national level, should take on regulation in the environment of convergence set out 4 trends associated with convergence:

- Deregulation, when seen through a purely national sphere, with some examples of this situation already seen in the area of advertising;
- A trend for regulation with similar standards of liner or non-linear services;
- Transfer from the sphere of public regulation to the sphere of private regulation
- A trend of public regulation taking on a supranational component and becoming more and more international/global.