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Diversity of Voices in Canadian broadcasting means greater support for Canadian programming and the CTF, says Directors Guild of Canada

Toronto, July 18, 2007 - The Directors Guild of Canada (DGC) filed comments today with the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) on how to achieve greater diversity in Canadian broadcasting.

The DGC states that given the current structure of the Canadian broadcasting industry the best way to achieve diversity is for broadcasters to air a broad range of programming. "Appropriate regulatory requirements are essential to ensure a rich and diverse broadcasting system for our nation," says Monique Lafontaine, General Counsel and Director of Regulatory Affairs. "There is a clear lack of Canadian programming available on television, particularly high-end drama. There needs to be some shelf-space for our own voices on Canadian conventional TV, the most powerful cultural medium in existence today," she adds.

Since the deregulation of Canadian drama in 1999, there has been a steady decline in English conventional broadcaster spending on and exhibition of original Canadian dramatic programming. If the CRTC wants to see a broadcasting system that provides many Canadian points of views, ideas, stories and experiences, it has to require broadcasters to support it and more specifically, support Canadian drama.

In its brief, the DGC also strongly opposed the CRTC CTF Task Force's proposal that a portion of transfer benefits received through broadcaster consolidations be directed to the CTF. The Task Force has proposed that money directed to the CTF by cable and satellite operators (BDUs) be used to fund 8-point instead of 10-point Canadian productions. The Task Force also proposed to eliminate the requirement that CTF funded productions be set and shot in Canada. The result of this will be fewer Canadian voices and fewer Canadian stories showcased on television. This is surely not the route to a strong and more diverse broadcasting system for Canada.

About the Directors Guild of Canada

The Directors Guild of Canada (DGC) is a national labour organization that represents over 3,800 key creative and logistical personnel in the film and television industry covering all areas of direction, design, production and editing. The DGC negotiates and administers collective agreements and lobbies extensively on issues of concern for members including Canadian content conditions, CRTC regulations and ensuring that funding is maintained for Canadian film and television programming.

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