

June 2, 2009

Ethnic Channels Group Limited  
907 Alness Street  
Toronto, Ontario  
M3J 2J1

Re: Broadcast Application by Al-Jazeera – English

Dear Mr. Levin,

On behalf of the 41 000 students of the University of Toronto Students' Union, we are writing to reiterate and affirm our unwavering support for the application of Al-Jazeera's English-language cable television news network to broadcast in this country.

The Canadian news media have become increasingly narrow in their scope and philosophy, reducing the amount of diverse, accurate, and challenging material Canadians are exposed to on a daily basis. As our population becomes more and more diverse, both in our schools and in the country in general, it becomes increasingly necessary for diversity in the news media.

We have the opportunity to change this trend and to reflect the interests of Canadians by adding Al-Jazeera's global, alternative perspective to mainstream Canadian news. This introduction of a truly international news source will improve Canadians' understanding of global issues that affect the lives of our families, friends, and neighbours. We are much too diverse to continue relying on Western-centric media outlets. Given the over 100 countries that broadcast Al-Jazeera, including the United States and Great Britain, it seems obvious that its inclusion into cable programming would put us in line with international standards of news media.

One of the most attractive features of Al-Jazeera is its public nature. Just as the CBC benefits from few, if any, restrictions in its coverage, so too does Al-Jazeera. The journalistic integrity, honesty, and effort apparent in Al-Jazeera news coverage is among the best in the world, one of the reasons that it has overtaken the BBC as the most-watched English-language news source in places like the State of Israel and Zimbabwe. Operating without commercial influences or specific political agendas, Al-Jazeera is a clear embodiment of the very values that we uphold as Canadians and demand from our own public media.

It is these qualities that are, on the whole, lacking from a majority of Canadian news media, but the addition of Al-Jazeera can help to re-balance this. It is for these reasons, then, that we urge the CRTC to approve Al-Jazeera's English network for broadcast in the homes of Canadians across the country. On behalf of the members of the University

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University of Toronto Students' Union  
Local 98 of the Canadian Federation of Students

of Toronto Students' Union, we trust that the CRTC and television-providers will take this opportunity to enrich and expand the Canadian media experience.

Sincerely,

The Executive Committee—University of Toronto Students' Union  
Local 98, Canadian Federation of Students