

Brussels, 12 January 2010

**To the attention of: MPs of the Lower House of the Parliament of the Czech
Republic**

Re: Changes to the Criminal Code ("Muzzle Law")

ENPA – European Newspaper Publishers' Association having its headquarters in Brussels, Belgium and representing over 5.200 national, regional and local newspapers and their online editions in Europe including newspapers in the Czech Republic, is watching very closely the ongoing discussion regarding the Czech "muzzle law" in the Lower House of the Czech Parliament.

ENPA is satisfied that during the first reading the Lower House has passed the necessary amendments to the current law in force which would ease the current restrictions on the media, particularly investigative journalism.

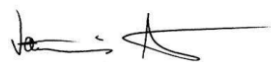
We therefore respectfully call on all the Czech MPs to finally pass the amendments. We stress that the law in force poses a serious threat to investigative journalism and freedom of speech and press in general. In its current form, the law with its sanctions is unprecedented compared to other European legal systems.

The amendments - once passed - would be a first step in order to bring the Czech legislation back to international standards. The minimum would be to allow publishing police wiretaps when and if publication of such information is in the public interest. The extreme sanctions for violating the law should also be eased.

Yours truly,



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President, ENPA



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