

HUNDEE

Oromo Grassroots Development Initiative

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25 March 1999

Ms. Marjorie Roman Salas
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
The Portals
445-12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: Amendment of AfriSpace, Inc.'s Application for Authority to Construct, Launch and Operate a Subregional Africa and Middle Eastern Satellite Sound Broadcasting Transmission System, File No. CSS-90-017 [IBFS File No. SAT-LOA-19900723-00002]; Amendment File No. SAT-AMD-19990125-00016 (Call Sign 52367)

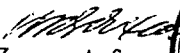
Dear Ms. Salas,

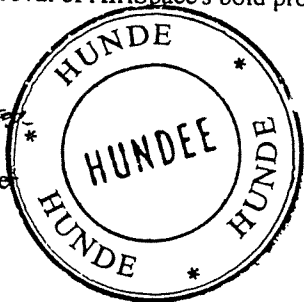
I am writing in my capacity as founder and General Manager of HUNDEE, a non-governmental organization that aims to help peasants in their efforts to improve their lives. Following a long service in government, in areas of rural development as Minister of Land Reform and Minister of Agriculture, I have come to appreciate the importance of work at the grassroots level. Among other things, work relying upon direct contact with the agents and beneficiaries of change in rural life enables more concerted efforts than is possible under the mandate of sector ministries. For example, our work through HUNDEE combines activities such as improvement of seeds, environmental protection, enhancement of the rights of women. Holistic approaches to rural development are likely to engage the peasant's commitment and thereby to yield palpable results. The effectiveness of holistic approaches and their spread greatly depends on effective communication between development workers and peasants as well as among peasants themselves. Moreover, improvement of rural general literacy as well as agricultural literacy is a critical component of rural development that cannot do without effective communication.

The emergent grassroots initiative in Ethiopian rural development therefore welcomes the satellite broadcasting transmission system spearheaded by AfriSpace. Non-governmental institutions such as HUNDEE dedicated to the improvement of the lives of the rural poor can make effective use of AfriSpace's novel communication system.

I urge your approval of AfriSpace's bold proposal.

Sincerely,


Zegeye Asfaw
General Manager



HUNDEE is an Oromo concept which signifies development at grassroots level.