

PRESS INFORMATION

District Court of Hamburg Forbids Negative NDR reporting

Accusations against Ecolog AG are unfounded

The District Court Hamburg issued a restraining order against the Norddeutscher Rundfunk (NDR). The applicant is Ecolog AG, a leading provider of logistical services for armed forces in conflict areas. The background for the application were unfounded utterances of suspicion by the NDR in radio reports, internet publications (among others on tagesschau.de) and in a press notification. In these, the NDR raised the suspicion that Ecolog AG has abused contracts with ISAF in Afghanistan for illegal actions. In these instances “drug smuggling” was mentioned. Furthermore, the NDR reported possible actions in the area of “organized crime” by the family of Ecolog’s founder.

“The accusations are unfounded and without any substance”, says Thomas Wachowitz, board member of the Ecolog AG. “Repeatedly we have offered NDR the opportunity to gain extensive insight into our activities and company structure, to clarify its impression of the internal and external company procedures. This opportunity was not used. Instead, the NDR distributed unsubstantiated suspicion and thereby caused severe damage to the reputation of our company.”

Consistently the District Court of Hamburg directed NDR (Az. 234 O 94 10, resolution of the 5th March 2010) from repeating equivalent utterances of suspicion with regard to Ecolog AG. Moreover, the NDR, by this restraining order, is enjoined from uttering suspicion with regard to the company founder’s family being involved in “organized crime”. “We are delighted that our confidence in the state, under the rule of law, was confirmed and that the District Court of Hamburg has now enjoined the NDR from uttering these suspicions,” says Wachowitz.

The NDR was enjoined, by a previous restraining order from the District Court of Cologne, from insinuating that prior to 2007 Ecolog obtained contracts from the Bundeswehr without fair competition. “After today’s decision by the District Court of Hamburg we will take the next step and seek compensation for the damage to our reputation, caused by NDR’s reports.”, explains Wachowitz.

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Besides the actions in Germany, Ecolog investigates the potential to pursue claims based on the potential damage to its foreign subsidiaries through the untrue reporting of the NDR, not least in the USA.

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