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MEDIA RELEASE:

Launch Web Petition To Stop Ads On SBS - Federation Square Melbourne

A consumer lobby group concerned with recent changes in public broadcasting was active in Melbourne's Federation Square today. The ABC was holding their 75th birthday party in the square when the group made their appearance known.

The group called, **SAVE OUR SBS DOT ORG (SaveOurSBS.org)** is concerned with Australia's younger public broadcaster, SBS. **SaveOurSBS.org** is concerned that the recent spate of advertising on SBS is affecting SBS programming and causing SBS to ignore its multicultural Charter responsibilities. SBS-TV has been on air since 1980.

A spokesperson for **SaveOurSBS.org** said that in late 2006 SBS-TV began interrupting television programs with advertisements and that ads in program were not in keeping with the SBS Charter. **SaveOurSBS.org** was formed as a direct result of viewers being continually annoyed by adverts in program and frustrated by SBS at requests from the general public to stop the practice. Until nine months ago SBS only placed ads between programs, not in them.

SaveOurSBS.org is calling on the federal government to increase funding for SBS, to fund the public multicultural broadcaster fully and properly and without commercial supplementation.

Three weeks ago **SaveOurSBS.org** placed a petition on-line on their web site www.SaveOurSBS.org. The spokesperson said that although there has been no publicity for the organisation or their web site it has had a phenomenal response from viewers of SBS who simply do not want their public broadcaster to interrupt SBS-TV for ads. "*People hate it.*" Many loyal viewers of SBS have stopped watching due to the interruptions for advertisements. The spokesperson said that the on-line petition is addressed to the Minister for Communications. The petition calls for more government funding for the multicultural public broadcaster as well as a stop to the ads. Funding from the federal government for SBS has not increased in more than a decade.

The spokesperson for **SaveOurSBS.org** said that a number of people were not aware that SBS was funded from taxes and, like the ABC is a public broadcaster.

SaveOurSBS.org is a not for profit community organisation that is not aligned to any political party or group.

For more information about **SaveOurSBS.org** look at their web site: www.SaveOurSBS.org