



Minister Obrony Narodowej
Antoni Macierewicz
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18 July 2017,

Dear Defence Minister Macierewicz,

Reporters Without Borders (RSF), the European Centre for Press and Media Freedom (ECPMF), European Magazine Media Association (EMMA), European Newspaper Publishers' Association (ENPA), the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ), Freedom House, the Global Editors Network (GEN), Index on Censorship, the International Press Institute (IPI) and the South East Europe Media Organisation (SEEMO) are very concerned about the criminal proceedings you have brought through the military bureau of the Polish prosecutor-general's office against the investigative journalist Tomasz Piatek in connection with a book he has written.

You accuse this journalist of “using force or threats against a public official” and “public insults or humiliation of a constitutional body” – charges that could result in a three-year jail sentence.

In our view, there are absolutely no grounds for subjecting a civilian to military justice in connection with his writings.

The organizations signing this letter therefore urge you to abandon these proceedings against this journalist.

We understand that Tomasz Piatek is an investigative journalist of recognized standing and that the book is based on 18 months of research and reporting.

As a prominent representative of the Polish state, using the prerogatives of your position to suppress criticism that has been levelled against you undermines the rule of law and helps to project a very damaging picture of respect for media freedom in your country. Like all other citizens, government ministers have other means at their disposal if they want to dispute allegations they regard as erroneous.

This latest attempt to intimidate a journalist seems to be part of a broader two-year-old offensive against freedoms in Poland that could be aggravated by the controversial proposed reform of the judicial system.

We thank you in advance for the attention you give to our letter.

Sincerely,

Lutz Kinkel, General Director of European Centre for Press and Media Freedom (ECPMF)

Max Von Abendroth, Executive Director of the European Magazine Media Association (EMMA)

Sophie Scrive, Executive Director of European Newspaper Publishers' Association (ENPA)

Ricardo Gutiérrez, the European Federation of Journalists General Secretary

Nate Schenkkan, Nations in Transit Project Director at FreedomHouse

Peter Bale, President of the Global Editors Network (GEN)

Melody Patry, head of advocacy, Index on Censorship

Steven Ellis, Director of Advocacy and Communications at the International Press Institute (IPI)

Pauline Adès-Mével, Head of the EU-Balkan desk of Reporters Without Borders (RSF)

Oliver Vujovic, Secretary general of South East Europe Media Organisation (SEEMO)



EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR
**PRESS & MEDIA
FREEDOM**



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Journalists



EUROPEAN
MAGAZINE MEDIA
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EUROPEAN NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS' ASSOCIATION



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