



To the Members of the Committee
on the Election of Judges to the
European Court of Human Rights

Brussels, 8 March 2021

Dear honourable members of the Committee on the Election of Judges to the European Court of Human Rights,

According to reliable sources, the Polish government has decided to propose Aleksander Stępkowski, co-founder and former president of Ordo Iuris, as a judge candidate to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). Ordo Iuris is a conservative association of lawyers, known for its close ties to the ruling PiS party, its battle against what they refer to as “gender ideology” and for advocating extreme penalties for abortion, including imprisonment for women terminating pregnancy.

As members of the European Parliament working on issues related to the Rule of Law and women’s rights, we would like to express our deepest concern regarding Mr Stępkowski’s candidature. There can be no doubt that Ordo Iuris has been working for years in Poland to dismantle democracy and human rights, especially women's and LGBTI persons’ rights, as part of their ultraconservative political agenda.

We believe that out of the many competent candidates in Poland, the Polish government has deliberately chosen to nominate someone who will not advance Human Rights or the Rule of Law, but who will advance their retrograde political visions.

We call on the members of the Committee on the Election of Judges to reject this candidacy to the ECHR, which goes against the very principles of this honourable institution.

Yours sincerely,

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Members of the European Parliament