 Brussels, 19 April 2023.

**To the attention of the Minister of Interior Suella Braverman,**

We the undersigned are writing this letter to protest at the scandalous treatment of the French citizen Mr. Ernest Moret, foreign rights manager for the French publisher *Editions La Fabrique* and the [well known science fiction] author Alain Damasio (*Editions La Volte*).

Ernest Moret arrived to London the evening of 17 April by Eurostar for the London Book Fair, which takes place at Olympia over 3 days from 18-20 April. Ernest had over thirty appointments planned with foreign publishers and had a return ticket to Paris for Friday 21 April. He is invited to the reception this evening at the French Institute at which the French Ambassador will be present.

On arrival at St Pancras Station, Ernest was pulled aside by police officers acting under Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act 2000 and detained for questioning without a lawyer present, allegedly to determine whether he was engaged in terrorist acts or in possession of material for use in terrorism.

The police officers claimed that Ernest had participated in demonstrations in France as a justification for this act − a quite remarkably inappropriate statement for a British police officer to make and which seems to clearly indicate complicity between French and British authorities on this matter.

It was demanded that he give up his phone and pass codes to the officers, with no justification or explanation offered. Finally, Ernest was formally arrested and transferred to a police station, accused of obstruction because of his refusal to give up his pass codes. He remains in police custody. For these reasons:

- We express our concern about this situation and we consider these actions to be outrageous and unjustifiable infringements of basic principles of the freedom of expression and an example of the abuse of anti-terrorism laws.

- We consider that this assault on the freedom of expression of a publisher is yet another manifestation of the slide towards repressive and authoritarian measures taken by the current French government in the face of widespread popular discontent and protest. It is crucial for all defenders of basic democratic values to express in the strongest terms that we find this intolerable and outrageous.

Sincerely,

Urbán Crespo, Miguel. The Left.

Biteau, Benoit. Verts.

Chaibi, Leila. The Left.

Daly, Clare. The Left.

Demirel, Oezlem. The Left.

Gusmao, Jose. The Left.

Kouloglou, Stelios. The Left.

Matias, Marisa. The Left.

Miranda, Ana. Verts.

Rodríguez Palop, M. Eugenia. The Left.

Villanueva, Idoia. The Left

Wallace, Mick. The Left.