

To the attention of the Polish Minister of Justice, Zbigniew Zbro.

Spanish journalist Pablo González was arrested on 28 February 2022 in Poland by the Internal Security Agency (ABW) on charges of espionage while covering the refugee crisis following the Russian invasion of Ukraine for several Spanish media outlets. Pablo's journalistic work has been specialised in Eastern Europe and ex-Soviet countries, which has led him to cover conflicts such as the Second High Karabakh War, the Donbas war and the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Pablo González is the grandson of a "war child", exiled because of the Spanish Civil War. For this reason, he was born and lived in Moscow until he was 9 years old and has both nationalities, a reason for accusation by the Polish authorities.

His arrest took place in the city of Przemyśl on such serious charges as participating in foreign intelligence activities against Poland and being an agent of the Russian Central Intelligence Department, which can lead to a prison sentence of up to 10 years according to the Polish Penal Code. During the last 18 months in prison, he has been held uncommunicated, spending 23 hours a day in a cell without sunlight and with no visits other than the "obligatory" visits of the Spanish consul in Poland. Furthermore, his family has only been able to visit him on two occasions. This is particularly serious, as the rights of his minor children are also violated due to the impossibility and denial of communication with their father. The only means of communication that he is allowed is by post, but letters arrive at least 2 months late and many of them are returned to the sender. We consider this a violation of the European Charter of Human Rights and Fundamental Rights by a Member State such as Poland. In the meantime, the Polish Prosecutor's Office has requested and obtained successive extensions to his provisional detention without justification and without informing his lawyers. All this entails the serious risk that if this continues to happen, Pablo will remain in these conditions for up to 2 years.

In short, we are very concerned about the situation of total defencelessness of Pablo González, a European citizen who has seen his basic rights systematically violated, such as the right to telephone communication, as well as regular visits from his family and legal team. Therefore, we demand:

- That Pablo González can return to Spain in a situation of provisional freedom, close to his family and with guarantees of respect for his rights as a citizen of the European Union and the support of the Spanish government to make this possible;
- That a trial with due legal and procedural safeguards be held as soon as possible;
- The complaint of the multiple violations of rights that are taking place within a Member State of the European Union, as in the case of Poland;
- The defence of freedom of the press and expression to prevent the persecution of journalists by Member States.

Yours sincerely,

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