



## Komisja Krajowa

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**Mr. William Maunier**

President of UNI Europa

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**Dear Mr President,**

We were astonished and even indignant to have found the information on the protest action led by you against the changes in the Polish public media. Never before have we seen a case that trade union organisations united in one Confederation did not even inform each other about actions referring to the countries they operate in.

The start of the protest action, dissemination of protest letters and making general statements without prior consulting and asking opinion from the affiliated in UNI Europa Polish trade unions, undermines the legitimacy of its functioning, and also violates the principles of this organisation.

A representative of NSZZ "Solidarność" is a member of the Steering Committee of UNI Europa, and we are asking ourselves how it was possible that before issuing such explicit appeals and demands you had not even asked us for information and our opinion on the present situation. Why did you not ask the trade unions organised in Polish public media about their opinion on the situation? Why did you not even inform us about the planned action?

**Dear Mr President,**

Public media in Poland are going through a deep crisis, especially due to the lack of effective financing and deep political engagement. The last eight years of the coalition government of the Civic Platform (PO) and Polish Peasant Party (PSL) have greatly contributed to this crisis. They have contributed not only to the degradation of the public media, but in a broader sense to the violation of trade union rights, workers' rights and degradation of the labour market.

It was former Prime Minister, Donald Tusk, who from the very start of his term of office, eight years ago, started to call on the citizens to violate the law and not to pay the radio and television licence fee, promising its elimination. Due to his action, public media suffered a financial collapse, especially in the regional centres. We are asking you: where was UNI Europa then?

At the same time, the supervisory body for the media, the National Council of Radio and Television (KRRiT), appointed by the PO-PSL parliamentary majority at that time, filled positions in supervisory bodies of the public media with persons connected with the parliamentary majority, thus making them extremely political. As a result of this political puzzle we had executives, presidents and members of the boards of directors of Polish radio and television deriving directly from political servitude. We are asking again: where was UNI Europa at that time?

It was those executive bodies appointed in that way, who commenced restructuring based on outsourcing key employees of the public media to external companies or dismissing them. Many of those employees still work for the public media on much worse conditions from the ones they had when directly employed in public media. Polish trade unions loudly protested against that practice,

also during the deliberations of the Steering Committee of the ETUC. At that time, UNI Europa ME&A were also silent.

Present critical condition of the public media is the direct result of all those actions mentioned above. The licence fee is paid only by 8% of the audience, public media are extremely political, they operate on the basis of commercial law and are focused on generating profit from direct competition with private broadcasters on the advertising market. Over last eight years the journalists selected only from supporters of the PO-PSL ruling parties made radio and TV openly political and today they stand hand in hand against the newly elected – and different – parliamentary majority and the President of Poland. Unfortunately, starting its action UNI Europa ME&A became a party supporting political action of the present Polish opposition, political management and journalists.

The time has come to clean up this abnormal situation. Present majority is working on the changes in financing and functioning of the media, setting them free from the present form of “stock company under commercial law” and transforming them into “national institutions”, as well as on implementing general radio and TV licence fee paid by all, and removing the political attachment.

The new law will come into force in the middle of this year. Presently, so-called “small amendment” is being introduced which in our opinion does not restrict the freedom of speech at any rate, does not impede the media independence in Poland, and the entire campaign of resistance is based on personal interests of executives of Polish Radio S.A. and Polish Television S.A., and the interests of the PO-PSL politicians who lost elections a few months ago.

**Therefore, we demand an immediate stop to the action led by UNI Europa ME&A and removal of the petition from the UNI Global internet site. At the same time, we would like to inform you that if the freedom of speech, or independence of the media, especially the public ones, is violated in the Republic of Poland, “Solidarność” will know how to react and will ask its friends, trade unionists from Europe and the entire world for support and assistance.**

In solidarity,

Alfred Bujara

Vice-President of UNI Europa Commerce  
NSZZ “Solidarność”  
National Commission Member

Wiesław Murzyn

President of NSZZ “Solidarność”  
Culture and Media Workers' Secretariat  
NSZZ “Solidarność”  
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Piotr Duda

President of NSZZ “Solidarność”

cc:

1. Philip Jennings, General Secretary, UNI Global
2. Oliver Roethig, Regional Secretary, UNI Europa
3. Luca Visentini, General Secretary of European Trade Union Confederation
4. Sharan Burrow, General Secretary, International Trade Union Confederation
5. Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission
6. Günther Oettinger, Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society
7. Martin Schulz, President of the European Parliament