

We appeal to the President of the Republic of Poland to ask him to release Piotr Ikonowicz who was jailed because he took the defense of an elderly couple at risk of being expelled from their homes and thrown out into the street.

Piotr Ikonowicz was sentenced for events that took place in 2000, during a trial in which the democratic rule of law were not respected, even though several witnesses from both sides confirmed the falsity of the accusation. The judgment was based solely on the version presented by the police. Protest against the expulsion using brutal methods against the elderly, the disabled or people in a situation of great uncertainty has led many citizens respecting the constitutional principles of social justice to act, including Piotr Ikonowicz. Since that time, the Constitutional Court has also held that the expulsion of tenants were unconstitutional.

Piotr Ikonowicz made the statement after his arrest , which we reproduce here:

*"1. I was convicted during a biased trial because the judgment was pronounced against the accumulated evidence. This judgment was decided to stigmatize any action based on the right to civil disobedience for the defense of people evicted from their homes what is in opposition to the constitutional principles. Therefore, I consider myself to be a political prisoner.*

*2 . I ask the authorities of the Republic of Poland to impose a five-year moratorium on the execution of expulsion decisions of citizens from their homes .*

*3 . I start from now on a indefinite hunger strike to demand the application of the principle set out in paragraph two."*

We, undersigned, call on all those who are concerned about the respect of fundamental freedoms enshrined in the Charter of Rights of the United Nations to address , wherever they are, to the Polish authorities to demand the release of Piotr Ikonowicz who was an activist against the Franco dictatorship in Spain , an activist for the rights of Polish workers and who participated in the foundation of the trade union "Solidarnosc", who was arrested several times before 1989 and is once again in prison for the cause of the rights of the oppressed, the marginalized and exploited. It is unacceptable to imprison people for the sole reason that they publicly speak out against the brutality and to require the amendment of a law contrary to human rights and constitutional principles guaranteeing the social character of a State.

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