

OPEN LETTER to the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in London

In connection with the investigation carried out by the BBC's journalists that revealed and showed that the Polish Ambassador in London is funding events organised by the Polish far right in the United Kingdom (where hate speech is against the law), a scandal broke out in the international media. Gazeta Wyborcza wrote on its front page that Poland financially supports racists, OKO.press noticed that the Embassy manipulates facts in its statements, and KOD UK (KOD United Kingdom) issued a letter to the Polish Ambassador. Here is its content.

Arkady Rzegocki
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in London

Dear Ambassador,

We, the undersigned, wish to express our highest indignation at the facts revealed by BBC journalists in the Newsnight program, broadcast on June 25, 2018 (youtu.be/H1WGqS7cRzw, bbc.co.uk/news/uk-44601218). The embassy formally admitted funding at least one public event in the UK by the Polish far right, in spite of the fact that hate speech is a breach of British law.

Citizens of Poland expect their Embassy to be worthy of representing their homeland and themselves on the international forum. Cooperation with nationalist hate speakers, especially in the case of a nation that has suffered so much in its history from the hands of totalitarian systems, is contradictory to this expectation. It is an example of unworthy behaviour, which not only is adverse to the interests of Poles in the UK, but also hurts and upsets.

The behaviour of Polish extreme right groups in the UK arouses the reluctance of British society. It stigmatises Poles as xenophobes who cannot comply with the rules of tolerance and civic equality in force in the United Kingdom.

We demand immediate cessation of any form of support for extreme right-wing organisations and apologies from the Ambassador, sent to everyone who felt offended by the activities of your institution.

Initially, six organisations that are part of the London Agreement, followed by many others, including Polonia KOD bodies, pro-democratic, feminist and anti-fascist organisations signed the letter.

In addition, many important people gave their support to the matter, from Poles known for their public activities in the field of respect and tolerance, scientists to top class specialists in international relations and diplomacy. The status of signatures in the second half of July was as follows:

KOD UK (Committee for the Defence of Democracy UK)
Nowoczesna Londyn (Modern party London)
Razem Londyn (Together party London)
A Million (A Million Poles association)

FARSA (Feminists Artvists Society in Action)

Dziewuchy Londyn

DOK - Democracy is OK

Open Dialog Foundation

ADDP (Association Défense de la Démocratie en Pologne)

Rebelia Mazovia

Femini Berlin Polska

Polish Expats Association

Far Right Watch

OSA - Obywatele Solidarnie w Akcji

KOD International

Mitte 21

Dziewuchy Berlin

Open Republic - Association Against

Anti-Semitism and Xenophobia

Unite Against Fascism

Eugeniusz Smolar, international affairs analyst, former director of BBC World Service Polish Section

Sławomir Adam Fejfer, Lib Dems, am-

balance crew member

Michał Kobosko, international affairs analyst

Piotr Łukasiewicz, former diplomat

father Paweł Gużyński, dominican

Adam Mazguła, retired colonel, chairman of Stow. Tarcza (Shield association), scouts master

Dariusz Libionka, professor at Philosophy and Sociology Institute at PAN (Polish Academy of Sciences)

dr Janusz Marszalec, Gdańsk Museum

Piotr Buras, European Council of Foreign Relations

Polish media also wrote about the Poles Abroad petition, those included: Polityka, OKO.press and Koduj24, as well as various representatives of the Polish press in the U.K., among others: the Polish Express, Cooltura and Tydzień Polski.

The letter can be signed by anyone: by writing to contact@koduk.org (as a public person or an organisation) or anonymously via the Avaaz platform: bit.ly/list-do-ambasadora



Polish Embassy in London. Photo: Wikipedia

KOD UK is an association registered in Great Britain, working to promote the principles and values of democracy amongst Poles living in the U.K. It has been operating since 2015, bringing together people from all over the country. Its activities centre around the organisation of actions and events that support protests taking place in Poland, as well as the provision of education through open meetings with known people from Poland.

More information at www.koduk.org

Joanna Gos