

Dear Sirs and Madam,

I wish to protest strongly, concerning the Polish Government's discriminatory and repressive treatment of the television-company, TV Trwam, and to express my wholehearted support for Fr Tadeusz Rydzyk and his fight for media-freedom in Poland.

The decision to exclude TV Trwam from the Polish Broadcasting Council - despite the company's multi-million viewer base, long term presence and excellent financial standing - has raised important questions about freedom of the media, generally, in Poland.

TV Trwam is a consistently conservative medium, which opposes the programme of the current Civic-Platform government. Bearing in mind that the new membership of the Broadcasting Council was selected by the ruling parties, we clearly see the political context of its discrimination against TV Trwam.

The Europe of Freedom and Democracy Group has always, and consistently, been a strong advocate of freedom of speech and of media-freedom. In June 2012, Mr Zbigniew Ziobro MEP (EFD) organized a public hearing in the European Parliament about governmental discrimination against TV Trwam, in order to express growing concerns with the policy of the current government towards the independent media.

So far, more than 2 million people have signed a petition, protesting against the government's attempts to suppress TV Trwam. This Saturday, thousands of people will march on the streets of Warsaw in support of TV Trwam and against violations of freedom of speech in Poland.

I trust that the demonstrators will hear the message, which I hereby send to you, and which expresses my encouragement to them, in their battle to preserve freedom and democracy, in Poland

I appeal to all other political groups in the European Parliament to co-sign the present letter and to join me in requiring the Polish government to restore the freedom of the media and stop discriminating against the Catholic media in Poland. Whether one agrees or not with the views of Fr Rydzyk and Catholic TV Trwam, the current situation of the media in Poland undoubtedly fails to meet recognised, democratic standards and should be a matter of concern for all of us.

Yours sincerely,

Nigel Farage