

**Resolution of the Management Board of the Association of Judges “Themis”
of 12 July 2021, on the media bill.**

The Management Board of the Association of Judges “Themis” expresses its deepest concern about the media bill presented on 7 July 2021. As a rule, associations of judges do not speak up in the public debate on matters which are not directly related to the judiciary, although, in this exceptional case, we cannot remain silent.

We note that, after the unprecedented and ongoing attack on the judiciary, the attack on the independent media is yet another move by the ruling camp to create an authoritarian state model in which the authority of the government is built on the fear of citizens deprived of legal protection and access to independent sources of information.

Given that the proposed change in the law is causing adverse effects in the form of the possibility of only one TV broadcaster losing its licence, we have no doubts that this timely change in the law is aimed directly against the largest independent TV station, TVN. This conviction is reinforced by the absurd justification of the change by the alleged protection against a possible hostile takeover, which does not suit the situation in which the station is owned by Poland’s biggest ally on the international arena. The reference in this context to hacking attacks on private e-mail boxes of politicians is equally absurd.

We express the view that free and pluralistic media are currently among the guarantors of the existence of an independent judiciary, which is especially true in a situation where the executive branch has been ruthlessly pursuing the subordination of the judiciary for several years.

An authority that fears independent courts and free media has an impure conscience and evil intentions with respect to the citizens. Once the judiciary and the media are subordinated to the executive, free elections will sooner or later become a fiction, just as happened earlier in Russia, Turkey, and Belarus.