

Der Vorsitzende - The Chairman - Le Président

Letter to Şahin Alpay  
Silivri Prison, Istanbul  
Turkey

Strasbourg, 15 June 2017

Dear Mr Alpay,

This is a letter that I don't want to write.

Because it shouldn't be necessary.

Because I would have thought that in the 21st century freedom of press would no longer be endangered, that the progress made in the past centuries could not be retroactive.

Because it is absurd to imagine that you will read my letter in the press. I should be the one reading your articles in the press, not the other way round.

Because I cannot get used to the idea that a neighbouring country of the European Union, a country which wants to join the European Union, is the world's biggest prison for media personnel.

Because it makes me very angry to see how fragile freedom of speech, of thought, and freedom of the press are in today's world.

Because it requires a lot of courage nowadays to be a journalist in your country, and it shouldn't be this way.

Because I believe that when freedom of press is at risk, there is no democracy.

I am writing this letter to you Mr Alpay, and to all your colleagues who are also in jail, just for doing their job.

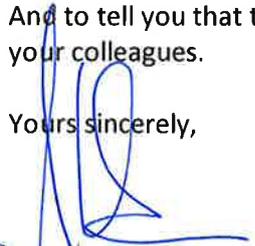
I am writing to you to tell you that we will never get used to the idea that you are in prison.

I want to tell you that you should be proud of choosing journalism as your vocation.

I want to thank you for remaining true to your commitment to your mission of informing the citizens.

And to tell you that the European Union will not give up on you and will not forget about you and your colleagues.

Yours sincerely,



Manfred Weber MEP  
Chairman of the EPP Group in the European Parliament

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