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## POLISH LEAGUE AGAINST DEFAMATION

Good Name Redoubt Foundation - Polish League Against Defamation  
Fundacja Reduta Dobrego Imienia - Polska Liga Przeciw Zniesławieniom  
00-021 Warszawa, ul. Chmielna 11 lok. 8  
KRS 0000486992

Warsaw, 7 March 2018

### **Asociación De Entidades Periodísticas Argentinas (ADEPA)**

### **El Sindicato de Prensa Rosario**

Dear Sir or Madam,

We would like to express our consternation and concern about your position and remarks concerning our claim brought against the Pagina12 news website, which you described as an attempt to impose censorship on Argentinian media.

In our opinion, this has arisen from the misunderstanding of the situation and failure to provide sufficient information on the circumstances which have led to our bringing the claim.

The same standards of journalism ethics, i.e. diligence, truthfulness and accuracy, should be applied by the media all over the world. The public trust in the profession of a journalist is based on applying such standards. In line with those principles, any errors or mistakes require prompt correction, even if the author or the editorial staff cannot be blamed for making them.

We believe that such principles are also applied by Argentinian media.

However, in the article entitled "*Familiar faces*" (Spanish: "*Rostros familiares*"), published on the Pagina12 portal on 18 December 2017, concerning the killing of Jews in Jedwabne which took place in 1941 during the German occupation, the authors used a photograph of Polish soldiers of anti-Communist resistance forces murdered in 1950. The soldiers were fighting after World War II with communist occupiers against the Sovietization of Poland. The photograph, taken by the officers of Security Forces, presents the bodies of young soldiers nailed to barn door.

The civil claim we have brought refers to the use of a photograph taken in 1950 as an illustration of the article describing events which had taken place in 1941. Photographs also tell a story, and are treated as an integral part of articles, and in this case the editorial staff of Pagina12 intentionally mixed the two historical periods and completely different events. In our claim, we do not refer to the content of the article (although it has a lot of errors, including the number of victims, which was disproved a long time ago). Therefore, the alleged censorship you are suggesting is unfounded.

After the article was published, many Poles and representatives of the Polish embassy in Buenos Aires expressed their dissatisfaction about the matter. However, the photograph

has not been changed, and after the editorial staff learned about the claim, the above-mentioned article was published again on 5 March 2018, together with the false photograph, which proves that the editorial staff's conduct has been intentional.

Does such conduct of a large, opinion-forming Argentinian news website, accessible to readers all over the world, have anything to do with diligence and accuracy in journalism?

Given the above, it is difficult for us to understand why your organisation cannot agree to our demand. We would like to explain that our request involves publishing an apology and information on the persons actually presented in the photograph accompanying the article. Do you still consider this demand too difficult to satisfy?

We would also like to stress that Pagina12 is not the only website which made a mistake in choosing photographs to articles. The following is another blatant example.

An article entitled *Justicia polaca persigue a diario argentino por informar sobre el Holocausto*, available on: <http://www.pichinchauniversal.com.ec/justicia-polaca-persigue-diario-argentino-informar-holocausto/> features a photograph which allegedly presents the killing of Jews in Jedwabne. The description under the photograph is misleading to readers and historically false. The photograph described as „Una imagen de la masacre de Jedwabne” actually captures an event related to the liberation of Bergen-Belsen, a German concentration camp, in May 1945. The photograph accompanying the article presents a group of people watching how the camp barracks are being set on fire after the camp had been liberated by the British. This has been confirmed by the digitalised collection of Imperial War Museums: <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205194174>

We have already informed the editorial staff of the error and asked for correction.

Given the the widespread interest of Argentinian media in Polish history, we are sending you several pieces of relevant information which will help you better understand the described issues. I hope they will prove useful. Should you require assistance or have any doubts, both the Good Name Redoubt and government units are ready to provide competent and professional support.

In addition, the editorial teams who are interested in the subject matter are invited to contact the employees of Polish Embassy, who will be happy to shed some light on the complexities of Polish history on the basis of historical sources.

**Mira Wszelaka**  
**President of the Good Name Redoubt**  
**Polish League Against Defamation**