

Press freedom organizations support Reporters United & EfSyn

Lawsuit threatens Greek journalists who exposed spyware scandal

The undersigned press freedom groups condemn the ongoing, abusive legal action by Grigoris Dimitriadis against the journalists who exposed Greece's Predator spyware scandal. Greek institutions must enact strong legal protections for journalists against the growing trend of Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation, aimed at silencing critical reporting.

Investigative journalists from *Reporters United*, newspaper *Efimerida ton Syntakton* (EfSyn), and their colleagues - including Nikolas Leontopoulos, Thodoris Chondrogiannos, Christoforos Kasdaglis, and Dimitris Terzis - find themselves entrenched in an unacceptable legal harassment saga. Repeated Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPPs) have been filed against them by Grigoris Dimitriadis, nephew of the Greek Prime Minister, former Secretary General of the Prime Minister's Office and politically responsible for the Greek NSA (EYP).

Following the journalists' landmark reporting on the "PredatorGate" spyware scandal, Dimitriadis initially filed a defamation lawsuit in 2022. In January 2024, [we united in support of the reporters](#) to denounce the legal action as a retaliatory attempt to suppress media coverage on matters of undeniable public interest. Recently, an Athens court [dismissed the case](#), recognizing the value and veracity of the reporting. Now, with a [second lawsuit](#) totaling €3.3 million filed on 24 November 2023, Dimitriadis is again aiming to pressure these reporters into silence.

Our organizations assessed the claims and [branded](#) them as SLAPPs, due to Dimitriadis' apparent aim to intimidate journalists reporting on matters which ultimately led to his resignation, instead of seeking legal redress in good faith. This conclusion was supported by the Coalition Against SLAPPs in Europe (CASE), and by the [revelations](#) which followed, further validating the reporting.

The second SLAPP case arose after a report published in early November 2023 as part of the [Predator Files](#) investigation (based on the collaborative investigative journalism with international media outlets such as Der Spiegel, Mediapart, Infolibre, and Domani Giornale), implicated Dimitriadis's phone number in [sending spyware-linked messages](#) to multiple individuals, including prominent Greek public figures. The report sheds light on potential illegal surveillance practices linked to Greek intelligence. Reporters United and EfSyn, who made the revelations, should be recognized for their public watchdog role, not financially and psychologically exhausted by legal actions.

We call on the Greek courts to dismiss these lawsuits in acknowledgment of their chilling impact on press freedom. As European States prepare to implement the [EU anti-SLAPP Directive](#), we

call upon Greek authorities to swiftly transpose the Directive as well as follow the [Council of Europe Recommendation on countering the use of Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation](#), thereby taking decisive action in defense of press freedom by prioritizing journalist protection. We reiterate our commitment to supporting investigative journalists and standing against SLAPPs in Greece and beyond.

Signed:

International Press Institute (IPI)
Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)
European Centre for Press and Media Freedom (ECPMF)
The European Federation of Journalists (EFJ)
Free Press Unlimited (FPU)
Osservatorio Balcani Caucaso Transeuropa (OBCT)
Reporters Without Borders (RSF)
South East Europe Media Organisation (SEEMO)