

**Response of Poland to the alert “Wysockie Obcasy editor in chief Aleksandra Klich-Siewiorek questioned over a cartoon”.**

The District Prosecutor’s Office in Warsaw conducts preparatory proceedings ref. No PO I Ds. 326.2020 in the case occurred on December 19,2020 in an undetermined place, concerning the offending of other people's religious feelings by publicly insulting the object of religious worship in the form of an image of the Virgin Mary, through publishing – in both the paper and online edition of the supplement to “Gazeta Wyborcza” newspaper – of a graphic presenting the Virgin Mary with a black face mask with the symbol of red lightning on it and holding a black umbrella in her hand. The proceeding is conducted with reference to an offence under Article 196 of the Polish Penal Code.

The proceedings in question were initiated by notifications of suspicion of a crime submitted by numerous private persons and organizations who indicated that the image of the Virgin Mary was presented in the graphic in a manner contrary to the doctrine of the Catholic Church.

The prosecutor's office opened an investigation into the abovementioned case with a ruling dated on January 7, 2021. In the course of the preparatory proceedings, there was a need to hear as witnesses the journalist Aleksandra Klich-Siewiorek and the newspaper graphic designer Marta Frej. Carrying out the above-mentioned action was dictated by the need to comprehensively explain the circumstances of the case and to ensure the proper course of the proceedings.