

PRESS STATEMENT

Date: 20th July 2023

Last Friday it was an extremely sad and devastating day for myself, Wojciech Bialek, who cofounded Together Razem Centre in 2006 and led it for the last 17 years. I personally put an It is difficult for me to understand the recent action of Mr Brendan Dempsey, a former chairperson of our organisation who alleges to the High Court that the reason for my recent resignation from the role of CEO of Together Razem was to avoid replying to some questions related to some financial matters. His allegations are misleading and misplaced. Firstly, and foremost, I wish to state that there were never any issues related to transactions, grants, or payments received by our organisation and the way they were used. We had a part-time Finance Manager Ms Agnieszka Wozniak diligently managing the organization's finances, and we underwent annual audits conducted by a reputable accounting company in Cork-

Of course, with limited resources, there may have been minor areas for improvement, as indicated by a recently hired accountant, but **not a single penny went missing or was unaccounted for.**

To suggest otherwise and to link it to my resignation is a clear attempt to damage the Together Razem Centre reputation. The allegation made by Mr Dempsey is even more surprising as the Board was receiving regular financial reports and never reported any irregularities to anyone.

However, I must note that for some time I believed that Mr Dempsey together with some other Directors have not acted in the best interest of the Together Razem Centre. Sadly, his recent actions related to Friday's Court proceedings are further evidence of it.

Prior to the High Court injunction, which was reported in the main Irish media, the Board had been failing to address other important matters related to charity principles of good governance.

There is a limit to how much pressure one can handle, and with the mounting stress of being ignored, overworked, and unappreciated financially by the Board, I reached a breaking point and made the difficult decision to resign. I hoped that it would be a wake-up call for the Board. But I was mistaken.

Given serious concerns about how some of the Directors were running the organization for some time, EGM was called by the members of Together Razem Centre to address the situation.

I wish to note that the Together-Razem Centre belongs to its members, who are primarily Polish migrants. The members, as per the organization's constitution, have the right to exercise their duty in terms of electing or removing Directors. If the members believe that there is an urgent need to call EGM to address fundamental issues, they have a right to do so. Which they did.

Regardless of the outcome of Mr Dempsey's current actions, reputation of the organisation I've been building since its creation in 2006, my life's work, might be now in tatters. I don't understand the true purpose of his action and in what way these may serve the best interest of the organization. Together Razem Centre is one of not many communities' organisation who has been providing help and support for Eastern Europeans since 2006.

To conclude, not only is this a sad time for migrant communities, but it is also deeply personal and distressing for me and my family. This situation has left me emotionally devastated after years of dedicated hard work. It is disheartening to hear baseless accusations being brought to court, which serve as nothing more than distractions and red herrings.

Wojciech Bialek