

MANIFESTO

To the citizens of Europe,
To the architects, defenders of cultural heritage,
To the community of academia, arts and humanities,
To the legislators of the European Parliament:

Since a year and a half, the citizens of Tirana have risen in defence of the historic building of the National Theater of Albania, which Prime Minister Edi Rama and the Tirana Mayor Erjon Veliaj have slated for destruction for the sake of their blatantly corrupt interests.

The land, on which the National Theater Building is located, is publicly owned. A special, anti-constitutional law was passed to endow upon a company run by the cronies of the Prime Minister and of the Tirana Mayor the right to demolish the theatre so as to make place for their real estate development plans. This ad-hoc law was passed by the Parliament, although the president refused to enact it twice on the grounds of its anti-constitutionality.

Right now, the Prime Minister of the Republic Albania has usurped all executive, judicial and parliamentary powers. Through a pseudo-reform of the justice system he has paralyzed the Constitutional Court. There is at present no instance in Albania to appeal his corrupt law.

Edi Rama's efforts to demolish the national theatre have so far been resisted by the artists and citizens who have created a human barricade in and around the building.

Today, on July 24, Albanian police officers for the first time physically assaulted several Albanian artists, intellectuals and citizens standing in defence of a public building, of public land and public interest.

In today's raid the police forces used impardonable violence on Edmond Budina, a renowned filmmaker, actor and director.

We urgently call for the political, institutional and the moral support of the European community, so that this assault on culture and public interest be put to a final stop before it is too late.

Citizens of Europe!
European Institutions!

Your support is urgently needed today. For us, your engagement today this is the clearest indicator of a common future tomorrow, based on rule of law, and on a history of shared values and civilization.

The Alliance for the Protection of the National Theatre