

URGENT ACTION

CLAIMS TO PROTESTER TO PAY COSTS OF POLICING WITHDRAWN

Following the recent elections and the change of government in Slovenia, the lawsuits against theatre director Jaša Jenull for covering the costs associated with policing of protests attended in 2020 were withdrawn by the Slovenian authorities. Jaša Jenull is among several peaceful protesters who faced exorbitant claims for compensation and lawsuits requiring them to pay for the costs of policing. Such claims are punitive in nature and aim at silencing people exercising their human rights. Requiring participants to pay for the costs of policing is a violation of people's right to freedom of peaceful assembly.

NO FURTHER ACTION IS REQUESTED. MANY THANKS TO ALL WHO SENT APPEALS.

In March 2022, Jaša Jenull, an activist and theatre director, received a 'call for payment before filing a lawsuit' from Slovenia's State Attorney ordering him to pay nearly 35,000 Euros to cover the costs of policing a protest held in Ljubljana, the capital, on 19 June 2020 against restrictions on the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly imposed in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. The March 2022 financial claim for reimbursement of the costs of policing was not an isolated case. Jaša Jenull already faced at the time two other proceedings for reimbursement, bringing the overall financial claims to over 40,000 Euros. The Slovenian authorities, before the recent change of government, announced they intended to claim over 970,000 Euros against protesters for policing services.

The authorities had, at the time, justified their claims to reimburse the costs of policing costs on the basis that the protests were held without notifying the authorities. According to the police, the lack of notification required additional resources in order to ensure public safety. Invoking a lack of notification to impose financial sanctions to claim back the costs of policing is an illegitimate interference with the right to peaceful assembly and violates international and regional human rights standards. Requiring participants or organizers either to arrange for or to contribute towards the costs of policing a protest is a violation of the right to peaceful assembly. Under regional and international human rights standards, Slovenia has a duty to allow and actively facilitate demonstrations, including spontaneous assemblies, which includes the need to provide adequate services such as security, cleaning services and first aid.

Following the withdrawal of the proceedings against him, Jaša Jenull thanked Amnesty International's supporters and members that took action on his case and he said: "*Thank you for your signatures, thank you for your actions, thank you for each little thing that you do, it actually counts and it is much better than being silent or just despairing for the state of the world. Please keep it up, please support activists, fighters, active citizens all over the world who are trying to fight for these values, for these basic human values. And yes, it will be needed in the future as well, but if we stay connected, if we stay active, if we collaborate, over the borders, together, I think there is a reason for optimism, like now in Slovenia, where we have reasons to be optimist. Thank you again and keep up the good work and see you in the streets*".

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Jaša Jenull (he/him)

THIS IS THE SECOND AND FINAL OUTPUT FOR UA 25/22

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur68/5346/2022/en/>

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