

# Statement of Stavros Nicolas Niarchos: 20 July 2022

I arrived home yesterday after five-and-a-half days' extrajudicial detention in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. My friend and colleague, Mr. Joseph "Jeef" Kazadi is still being detained, and I call on the Congolese security services to release him immediately.

I am also concerned that my passport was seized by the Agence Nationale de Renseignements and a picture of my passport information was widely and unprofessionally leaked on social media.

No charges have been filed against me or Jeef by the Congolese authorities, and we were detained in the process of setting up an interview. We are both accredited journalists and were conducting

journalistic work with respect for the ethics and norms of reporting.

I was accredited by the Congolese Ministry of Communication to work on economic stories, and I was exploring the links between artisanal mining and Katangese separatists. The products of artisanal mining in southern DRC (cobalt, copper, coltan and others) reach the global economy, and it is in the public interest to understand the sources of such minerals. When I was detained, my devices were seized and the records of my journalistic work destroyed.

Journalism is not a crime, it is the fertile soil from which a free and Democratic society can grow. I call again on the authorities in Kinshasa to free Jeef Kazadi.