

## **An open letter to:**

**Theodore Spinoulas**, CEO 4π Special Publications SA

**George Copeliadis**, Publisher National Geographic-Greek edition

**Nikos Margaritis**, Director National Geographic-Greek edition

cc: **National Geographic Society**

Athens 06/11/2013

Gentlemen,

We, the undersigned staff of 4π Special Publications SA, former licensee of National Geographic-Greece, ask that you make arrangements for the prompt payment of our past-due salaries, ordered by the court of Chalandri, Athens, which hears labour issues. Since 12/20/2012 this court has granted us a temporary injunction regarding November's wage. The same court orders you to pay us eight month salaries for 2012 (decision number 27/2013 - 02/19/2013).

National Geographic-Greece magazine has been published by 4π Special Publications SA under license from the National Geographic Society since September 2009. During this time, 4π also published a series of books and other merchandise under the NGS brand. And it was by order of the CEO and the publisher that all the staff of 4π, regardless their title or position in the company (editors, proofreaders, computer engineers, computer network), had to be involved in the writing, editing, and production of any project under the National Geographic brand.

Since October 2010, in light of the economic recession in Greece, we took two pay cuts. By mid 2011 payroll delays became a regular occurrence and in June 2012 we were told that the company could not afford to pay us our full wages but could only small amounts as partial payment, with the balance of each employee's salary to be owed them by the company. We decided to support your efforts to keep the company viable and continued working full time, despite rumors that the Greek edition of National Geographic magazine was going to change hands. In November 2012 we were asked to sign a letter of resigning both our jobs and some of the money owed, thus losing all our rights. Those of us among the staff who did not wish to sign this letter took legal action to claim our past-due pay with the full support of the Journalists Association and Electronic & Periodical Press' Board (ESPIT) –member of Panhellenic Federation of Journalists' Union (POESY) and also member of European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) and International Federation of Journalists (IFJ).

In December 2012, the licence for National Geographic-Greece passed to Selena Publishing SA without any formal announcement or warning to the staff. You -Theodore Spinoulas, George Copeliadis, and Nikos Margaris-also moved to Selena Publishing SA, leaving behind 19 persons unpaid in a company that has not closed for business but produces nothing. These 19 people are part of the editorial staff working for National Geographic magazine, graphic artists, computer programmers, and marketing personnel. And up until the present day we have received nothing in the way of payment for 2013.

As mentioned above, the court of Chalandri, Athens, has justified us twice. Thus we ask that you comply with the above court orders paying past-due salaries.

We also ask the National Geographic Society and our colleagues in the Greek and international media to stand by our side until this situation you have forced upon us and our families has been resolved.

Sincerely,

Aspiotis Efstathios, journalist

Gerontis Costas, computer programming

Yiapitzi Natassa, NG Books, Videos & DVD department

Despotidis Euripides, graphic artist

Eustathiou Damianos, computer network – PC engineering

Zacharaki Garyfallia, graphic artist

Kaleodi Marina, proofreaders department

Kansou Sofia, graphic artist

Katsa Antonia, graphic artist

Economou George, journalist

Poulakos Stylianos, graphic artist

Rousioti Vassiliki, graphic artist

Salvarlis Miltiadis, journalist

Tikopoulou Magdalene, proofreaders department

Chatzisavvas Savvas, journalist

PS we respect the decision of the rest of the unpaid staff not to sign this letter.

### **For Your Interest**

Announcements and Posts about 4pi Special Publications SA, recent Rights Holder of National Geographic print publications in Greek language:

### **Journalists Union Magazine and Electronic Media Announcements:**

<http://goo.gl/ZEl2T>

<http://goo.gl/pqd80>

<http://goo.gl/Vde12>

<http://goo.gl/C3Scs>

<http://goo.gl/71iPB>

### **Association of Translators-Editors-Proofreaders (Greece):**

<http://goo.gl/Unr53>

### **Other related posts:**

<http://goo.gl/P6V5e>

<http://goo.gl/mThIK>

<http://goo.gl/UGzpl>