

16  
Dec 2019

▲ Lvl. 2

Resolved

France

n° 112/2019

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## Threats to the Independence of the Daily "Le Monde"

SOURCE OF THREAT ▶ Non-state

CATEGORY  ▶ Other acts having chilling effects on media freedom

**PARTNER: EFJ/IFJ**

On 10 September 2019, 460 journalists from the daily "Le Monde" co-signed an opinion column calling for the preservation of their editorial independence. On 13 September 2019, 500 prominent figures co-signed another opinion column asking the newspaper's shareholders to recognise an "approval clause", in order to preserve the editorial independence of the newspaper's editorial staff.

After selling 49% of its "Le Monde" shares to Czech billionaire Daniel Kretinsky in October 2018, French businessman Matthieu Pigasse remains unclear about the future of the company "Le Nouveau Monde", which is a shareholder of the daily. "Le Monde" journalists demand an "approval clause", which would subject any share acquisition by a new major shareholder to a vote by the editorial board.

### RESOLVED

**16 Dec 2019:** On 16 December 2019, given that the main shareholders agreed on an "approval clause" preserving the newspaper's editorial independence, the partner organisations to the Platform declared this case to be "resolved", concluding it was no longer an active threat to media freedom.

### UPDATES

**08 Oct 2019:** On 24 September 2019, the two co-shareholders of the newspaper, Matthieu Pigasse and Xavier Niel, signed an agreement providing for an approval clause to the benefit of the newspaper's independence centre and for the start of a "brainstorming on launching a foundation". The independence center said "to be delighted by this outcome which combines everyone's interests and enables Le Monde group to look into its future development".

- ➔ Article from Les Echos (in French): « Le Monde »: bras de fer entre Matthieu Pigasse et Xavier Niel »

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



- ➔ Article published by RFI: "Au journal «Le Monde», les rédacteurs fixent un ultimatum aux actionnaires"
- ➔ Opinion column co-signed by 500 prominent figures: "Plus de 500 personnalités s'engagent pour l'indépendance du groupe Le Monde"
- ➔ Opinion column co-signed by more than 460 journalists from "Le Monde": « Nous, journalistes du "Monde"... »

## STATE REPLIES



16 Dec 2019 | Reply from the French authorities

- ➔ Letter from the Permanent Representation of France to the Council of Europe (in French)