



THE SIGNALS NETWORK

the whistleblowers foundation

UPDATE - January 18, 2019

The Signals Network welcomes the release of Rui Pinto

Rui Pedro Gonçalves Pinto, 30, is now under house arrest in Budapest. However, the prosecutor appealed the decision, so he might be sent back to detention next week by the court of appeals, pending a hearing in 60 days, when he still faces possible extradition to Portugal.

[EIC media](#) report that before his arrest, Pinto was working with the French National Financial Prosecutor's Office (PNF), concerning a criminal investigation for "aggravated tax fraud" opened by the PNF in December 2016 "There is an active cooperation between Rui Pinto and the French National Financial Prosecutor's office," said Pinto's French lawyer William Bourdon. "[My client] mandated me to answer favourably to the request for cooperation sent to him by the Swiss special prosecutor in charge of the criminal investigation about the relationship between a Swiss prosecutor and Fifa president Gianni Infantino," said William Bourdon.

"The fact that countries like France and Switzerland rely on information that Rui Pinto contributed to reveal to do their own investigation demonstrates against the high public interest of the Football Leaks revelations", said Delphine Halgand-Mishra, the Executive Director of The Signals Network.

The Signals Network supports arrested "Football Leaks" whistleblower

San Francisco, January 17, 2019 - The whistleblower, part of the so-called "[Football Leaks](#)" which exposed wrongdoing across the football industry and by major players, is being given legal and other support by [The Signals Network](#), a French-American foundation dedicated to supporting those who take the risk of exposing information in the public interest.

Rui Pedro Gonçalves Pinto, 30, was arrested in Budapest, Hungary on January 16, 2019 at the request of Portuguese authorities who are seeking his extradition, on charges of data theft and extortion.

Pinto's French lawyer, William Bourdon, who serves on The Signals Network [advisory board](#) and has represented prominent whistleblowers [Edward Snowden](#) and [Antoine Deltour](#), described his client as a "[very great European whistleblower and part of the Football Leaks](#)". Pinto, he said, was motivated to expose criminal activity in football to the world.

Bourdon, who first named Pinto as the man arrested in Budapest in an independent press release, said he and Pinto's Portuguese and Hungarian lawyers will oppose the extradition.

The French-American foundation [The Signals Network](#) is providing legal and other support to Rui Pinto. The Signals Network offers support services to a selected number of whistleblowers who have contributed to published reports that expose significant wrongdoing. The types of services The Signals Network can consider providing in appropriate cases include: legal support, information security, media relations, advocacy, psychological support, and safe-housing.

"The Football Leaks are key revelations of high public interest," said Delphine Halgand-Mishra, the Executive Director of The Signals Network.

"These leaks have been investigated by major international media organisations including Der Spiegel, Mediapart and other members of European Investigative Collaborations (EIC Network) for several years," she added. *"None of the articles published were subjected to a complaint for defamation, as [Mediapart](#) has highlighted. Many of the Football Leaks revelations initiated judicial investigations across Europe, in France, in Switzerland, in Spain and even in the United States.*

"For all these reasons, Rui Pinto deserves to be supported by all those who are committed to defending press freedom and investigative journalism," she said.

[Der Spiegel](#) and all media members of EIC Network, as a matter of principle and to protect sources, do not comment on the identity of its possible sources.

About The Signals Network

[The Signals Network](#) is a French-American non-profit organization. It aims to advance public interest by encouraging transparency, accountability, reporting and whistleblowing. Its goal is to create a pro-active dynamic towards whistleblowers.

Its first program focuses on [supporting investigative collaborations](#), so newsrooms are better equipped to work proactively with whistleblowers. The Signals plays a project management role in the collaborative efforts of its current media partners which include *Die Zeit*, *Mediapart*, *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Intercept*. The Signals provides media partners with access to digital security experts and a network of lawyers to whom they can refer putative whistleblowers who are in need of legal counsel, along with resources for journalists and whistleblowers. As a first step, The Signals media partners chose to [call for information on the misuse of big data](#). They are now actively investigating the tips received over the last months.

The Signals' second program is the [Whistleblower Protection Program](#) which affords customized support services - legal, psychological, PR management, advocacy, online security, temporary safe-housing - to a selected number of whistleblowers, who have contributed to published reports of significant wrongdoing.

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