



Joint statement from meeting in Warsaw with the Office of the Polish Ombudsman

Representatives of global and regional bodies concerned with rule of law and human rights have met in Warsaw with the new Polish Ombudsman, Dr. Adam Bodnar, to discuss the institutional landscape in Poland and the environment in which the Ombudsman's Office is currently operating.

These bodies were:

- the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNOHCHR), through its Regional Office for Europe;
- the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of Human Rights Defenders;
- the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE/ODIHR);
- the Council of Europe; and
- the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI).

The participants recall that the bodies they represent have worked harmoniously with Mr. Bodnar's predecessors, namely Ms Ewa Letowska, Mr Tadeusz Zielinski, Mr Adam Zielinski, Mr Andrzej Zoll, Mr Janusz Kochanowski and Ms Irena Lipowicz.

They also underline that the institution of the Polish Ombudsman is highly respected among its peers in Europe and beyond. It is considered today by many actors as a model national human rights institution, especially in terms of its independence and professionalism.

They are confident that there is a broad consensus which recognises the benefits of Poland having an institution of this standing which:

- enjoys independence and functional immunity and which is therefore able to act impartially to safeguard the rights of individuals;
- ensures the harmonization of national legislation with international human rights instruments;
- can bring or join cases before the courts of the country, including the Constitutional Tribunal;
- has been conferred "A" status as an institution acting in full compliance with the UN Paris Principles; and
- serves as a role model for other similar institutions in Europe and beyond.

They confirm that the bodies they represent look forward to continuing their close cooperation with the Ombudsman's institution as it continues to implement its mandate in full compliance with the Paris Principles.