

## To the Participants of the 40th Human Rights Days

Warsaw, 11 December 2023

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen, participants of the 40th Human Rights Days, held on the 25th anniversary of Adam Podgórecki's death centred on the concept of complete and flawed human rights.

First of all, my compliments to the organisers of the Human Rights Days for the impressive range of issues raised, for bringing together excellent speakers and for honouring Adam Podgórecki as the patron of these Days. Let me start with a personal reminiscence: I belong to the generation which still had the chance to listen to the lectures of Prof. Adam Podgórecki. I remember his slightly stooped figure, his unhurried manner of speaking, with his characteristic occasional murmuring. But I also remember the content of the lectures, which consisted of theory and empirical research in the sociology of law, which was a pioneering approach at the time. Pioneering because it founded a new field of sociological science – the sociology of law, and also pioneering because Prof. Podgórecki was seeking to combine theoretical concepts with empirical data. Among the compulsory readings for the exam were also his books *Prestiż prawa* [*Prestige of the Law*] (1966), *Patologia życia społecznego* [*Pathology of Social Life*] (1969) and *Zarys socjologii prawa* [*Outline of the Sociology of Law*] (1971). At the University of Warsaw, Adam Podgórecki found himself on the wave of the 1956 thaw, first in the Department of Logic of Prof. Tadeusz Kotarbiński, and from 1958 in the Department of History and Theory of Morality, chaired by Prof. Maria Ossowska. He was a co-founder of the interdisciplinary Institute of Social Prevention and Resocialisation (IPSiR), where he chaired the Department of Sociology of Norms and Social Pathology. Removed from the university on charges of “anti-state research activities”, he left Poland in 1977. He was a professor at Carleton University in Ottawa, and guest lectured at many prestigious

universities. His students and followers remained in the country, including, in alphabetical order, Kazimierz Frieske, Andrzej Kojder, Jacek Kurczewski, and Jerzy Kwaśniewski, two of whom are among the speakers. The institute he co-founded, which today is part of the Faculty of Applied Social Sciences and Resocialisation, remains to the present day. And, above all, there remains the now firmly established sociology of law. It has continued not only in Poland: in order to honour Adam Podgórecki's significant contribution to the development of the sociology of law, The Research Committee on Sociology of Law (one of the committees of The International Sociological Association) established an annual prize named after him, which is awarded for outstanding achievements in socio-legal research. Adam Podgórecki can be envied for his good fortune and for his masters (Leon Petrażycki, Maria Ossowska) and students, his organisational skills and his academic legacy. Under such patronage, the 40th Human Rights Days will certainly be inspiring and fruitful, which I wish to you.

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