

## **A declaration adopted on the occasion of 20th anniversary of the Ombudsman's office in Poland, concerning human rights violations in China**

The development of China - as we witness it within the last couple of years - remains an admirable phenomenon. Economic growth, technological and social advance have reached a level beyond expectations. Unparalleled life-quality leap in China has also affected the Chinese. Their lives have been positively changed: both from the technological and economic perspective. These changes rightfully make the Chinese people happy and proud.

Having due respect towards civilizational and historical particularity of China, and bearing in mind that the Chinese culture significantly differs in its concept of an individual, society or the relation between the two, we must stress the universality of human rights as well as the fact that respect for human rights lies in the very heart of international community of which China is a part. We are particularly alarmed by information regarding human rights violations in China, which - as we know it - do not occur occasionally; to the contrary: entire social or ethnic groups tend to be subject to oppression. Today - in the eve of an exciting event of Olympic Games - we must remember how ruthlessly Tibetan nation have been suppressed in their struggle for autonomy. We must remember a million Chinese peasants whose rebellions have been violently put out. We must remember the situation of different religious groups that are being persecuted in China.

Tibetan spiritual leader - Dalai Lama - on numerous occasions appealed to international community not to boycott the Olympic Games in Beijing. On the 20th anniversary of establishing the Commissioner for Civil Rights Protection of the Republic of Poland, here, in the Royal Castle in Warsaw, in the place where over two hundred years ago a Constitution of 1791 was proclaimed, we appeal to Chinese authorities to enter dialogue with Dalai Lama in order to resolve the Tibet conflict as soon as possible. We are convinced that dialogue with Dalai Lama, and possibly inviting him to the Olympic Games opening ceremony would be interpreted not only as a sign of good will of Chinese authorities, but may also serve as an argument for those leaders who have refused to attend this important ceremony: a festival of sport and peace.



Jan Lechowski.