



We, the undersigned ombuds, gathered in Wrocław and Świdnica for the V4 Group Ombuds Summit, hereby reiterate our commitment to the protection of human and civil rights and freedoms as set out in our respective constitutions and national legislation, as well as international and European Union law.

We remain firm in our commitment to provide protection to all individuals whose fundamental rights and freedoms are infringed upon. As we commemorate the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, we pay tribute to the enduring principles it promotes. We are devoted thereto in ensuring that human rights are respected and protected in our respective jurisdictions.

As ombuds institutions, we find it important to raise awareness of human rights and freedoms among all individuals. We remain dedicated to upholding and advocating for these principles, creating an environment where every individual, regardless of race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status, can enjoy these fundamental rights without discrimination or impediment.

We recognize that collaboration among ombuds institutions is helpful to address complex transnational challenges. Consequently, we reaffirm our dedication to nurturing collaboration at regional and international levels, with the aim of exchanging knowledge and expertise to enhance our collective impact.

Our focus during the Summit primarily centered on the topics of the judiciary, prevention of torture, and equal treatment. The enriching discussions we held help us better understand the common challenges which our institutions face, and find appropriate solutions thereto in our everyday operations.

In addition, we are aware that other significant human rights issues also demand our joint attention. Therefore, we declare our firm commitment to maintaining an open channel for the regular sharing of our experiences at the operational level, readily available whenever the need arises.

We take account of new legislation, both draft and enacted laws, which broadens the scope of competences and mandates of our institutions. It is with satisfaction that we observe the ombuds being recognized by the public as organizations with the necessary expertise and recognition, such that national lawmakers

consider us capable of undertaking these new responsibilities. Simultaneously, we are fully aware of the obligations that accompany these added responsibilities.

In light of this, we wish to underscore that any expansion of our mandates requires adequate funding and staffing. The public authorities primarily responsible for the budgets of the ombuds institutions must consider that assigning new responsibilities to our institutions without a corresponding increase in resources significantly impedes our ability to provide effective assistance to individuals in need.

Following the Joint Statement of the Summit of the Ombuds of the Visegrad Group in Kroměříž in 2022, we renew our hope for a rapid end to the Russian aggression in Ukraine and the restoration of respect for human dignity and life in Europe. We call on the international community to bring war criminals to justice and to take the necessary measures to prevent future wars in our region. We also urge national authorities to continue to deliver appropriate care to those adversely affected by this conflict.

We endorse this joint declaration as a testament to our shared values and commitment to making a positive difference in the lives of the persons we protect.

Vít A. Schorm

Deputy Public Defender of Rights
Czechia

Ákos Kozma

Commissioner for Fundamental Rights
Hungary

Marcin Wiącek

Commissioner for Human Rights
Poland

Róbert Dobrovodský

Public Defender of Rights
Slovakia

Signed in Świdnica, Poland on 20 October 2023.