



THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND
Ombudsman for Children
Marek Michalak

Warsaw, 28th April 2016

Bogdan Simion
Chairman
Federation of NGOs for Children
in Romania

Dear Mr Simion,

human rights begin with the rights of the child – that is why it is important that the rights of the youngest citizens of every state be secured by official bodies and institutions of relevant legal status. The Convention on the Rights of the Child, the most important international documents on the rights of children, commits State-parties to undertake measures to provide best possible protection of the interest and welfare of every minor. Undoubtedly, establishment of the institution of the Ombudsman for Children fulfils this commitment of a State party to implement the highest standards of care of its youngest citizens.

The first office of an Ombudsman for children's affairs was established in Norway in 1981. In the following years many countries all over the world decided to appoint an advocate of children's rights. Depending on the country, institution of the Ombudsman vary with respect to their position in the state structure and have various ranges of responsibilities. Regardless of that, they constitute a guarantee of effective protection of the rights of the youngest citizens of a particular country.

In the Republic of Poland, the Ombudsman for Children was established by force of the Constitution of 1997 and was appointed for the first time in 2000. Over 15 years of practice show that this institution is very needed.

In exercising his powers based on international and national law, the Ombudsman, among other things, strives for provision of full and harmonious development of the children, with their dignity and subjectivity respected; he undertakes actions to protect the child against

all acts of violence, cruelty, exploitation and against demoralization, neglect and other forms of maltreatment.

The Ombudsman for Children, as the central state body, is the guarantee of constant improvement of performance of commitments under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, undertakes measures to synchronize cooperation among all institutions and organizations dealing with protection of children's rights – is the monitoring body and initiator of actions for improvement of observance of children's rights.

Legally valid mechanisms of control of persons and institutions responsible for execution of children's rights. They allow to eliminate irregularities and draw general conclusions for Fuller realization of children's rights. Appointment of the Ombudsman for Children contributes to more effective supervision in the field of child's rights observance. It is crucial that this institution have wide range of competences with respect to possible ways of proceeding in case the rights or welfare of a child is found to be infringed.

I am very pleased to hear that the institution of the Ombudsman for Children is going to be established. I am convinced that it is very needed and desirable in every country and that it will contribute to the fullest possible protection of the rights of minor citizens of your country. The decision on establishment of the institution shall be a great culmination of many years activity of Romanian non-governmental organizations that support children.

On my part, please be assure that I am ready and willing to cooperate. I shall share my experience referring the functioning of the Ombudsman's institution with pleasure.

With kind regards,

Marek Jankowski

