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HELSINKI FOUNDATION for HUMAN RIGHTS

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URGENT

Warsaw, 1 October 2007

Ambassador
Sladjana Prica

Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers
Council of Europe

26, avenue de la Forêt Noire
67000 Strasbourg

Your Excellency,

The Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights has been unofficially informed that the Government of the Republic of Poland has put forward, on behalf of Poland, a list of three candidates to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe for Poland's member of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT), one of the most important control bodies in this domain. We do not wish to comment on the professional and moral qualifications of these candidates. However, we are seriously concerned by the fact that despite the great significance of the function in question within the CPT, the candidates for this body have not previously been publically presented. Also, the government did not consult the list with non-governmental organizations working in the domain of human rights protection. As a result we have no guarantee that during the coming four years Poland will be represented at the CPT by a person who meets

the high requirements of the European Convention against Torture. It is necessary to recall that in accordance with the Convention only persons “of high moral character, known for their competence in the field of human rights or having professional experience in the areas covered by the Convention” can become members of the CPT.

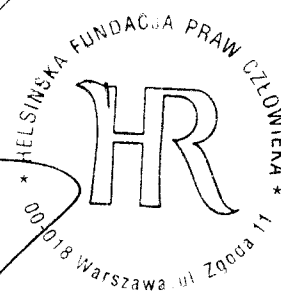
Under these circumstances we ask the Committee of Ministers to perform a thorough assessment of the list of candidates for the CPT presented by the government of the Republic of Poland.

On behalf of the Board of the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights,

Yours sincerely,

Marek Antoni Nowicki

President of the Board



Information to:

Anna Fotyga

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland

Ambassador Piotr Świtalski

Permanent Representative of the Republic of Poland to the Council of Europe