



COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Warsaw, 21 May 2016

**Adam Bodnar**

**H.E.  
Paul W. Jones  
Ambassador of the United States  
to the Republic of Poland**

It is with great sorrow that I learned about the death of Mr Michael Ratner, President of the Center for Constitutional Rights in New York City, American citizen, outstanding activist and eminent teacher who trained many successful human rights lawyers. His passing is an exceptionally sad circumstance for the whole human rights defenders community worldwide.

We have lost a great man who inspired thousands of lawyers in different countries. I will remember him not only as the man who was victorious in the fight for constitutional right to *habeas corpus* for Guantánamo prisoners and who spent his life contributing to the closure of this prison, but also as the ardent opponent of war, torture, hate, limiting of civil rights and prominent author of numerous books.

With his charisma, he has attracted the crowds. He is considered to have the courage to defend the most vulnerable among us and to be the one who was never afraid to sue influential people even when he knew that he would lose the case. Mr Ratner strongly believed in the social impact of such cases, as confirmed by hundreds of activists who voluntarily joined him in the fight for constitutional rights of those who are not able to defend themselves effectively.

I am deeply convinced that his remarkable commitment is invaluable and he should always remain an example to follow. The death of Mr. Ratner, man who always inspired me, has left me in deep sadness.

Please, Excellency, accept my sincere condolences.

(signature: Bodnar)