



# Congress of Secularity

Warsaw, October 21-22, 2017

The Congress of Secularity (Kongres Świeckości) is both the name of the cooperation platform for several Polish political parties and secular, human rights NGO, as well as of the general meeting of all those parties, scheduled for October 21-22, 2017 in Warsaw.

The final aim of the meeting - the actual congress - is to adopt the Secularity Manifesto – the document based on our political diagnosis and solutions to the most important problems resulting from the lack of separation of Church and State in Poland.

The Manifesto, to be signed by the representatives of all political parties and organizations taking part in the Congress, provides *inter alia* for the establishment of the Secular Culture Institute to monitor and highlight all cases of abuse related to the lack of secularity in Poland and offer expert solutions in the field of law, sociology or political sciences.

Moreover, in our Secular Manifesto we demand *inter alia* that:

- all human and civil rights and liberties be fully respected with no reference to religion;
- state support for churches or religious associations be based on the same principles as for secular NGOs;
- the secular character of public education be guaranteed by the state;
- all public institutions and state ceremonies be free of religious symbols and rituals.

Both the Manifesto and the very idea of the Congress have been so far supported by more than 20 organizations and 7 political parties, including all main left wing parties, as well as thousands of individual sympathizers. At present, numerous local support committees for the congress are being created all over Poland.

## **Saturday, October 21st**

10:00 Greetings

10:05: On Laicity - Krzysztof Pieczyński (Laic Poland Association)

### Concept and models of secularity

10:15 What is secularity? - Zbigniew P. Szczęsny (Congress of Secularity)

10:35 Secularity in Polish law and social realm - Mirosław Woroniecki (attorney-at-law) in conversation with: Krzysztof Mieszkowski (MP) and Małgorzata Winiarczyk-Kossakowska (political scientist, academic teacher)

11:05 Model of secularity in France - Djemila Boulasha and Jean-Claude Boual (EGALE)

11:35 Model of secularity in Belgium and Holland - Claude Wachtelaer (European Association for Free Thought)

12:35 Model of secularity in Norway - Yvan Dheur (International Humanist and Ethical Union)

13:05 Model of secularity in Italy - Giulio Ercolessi (European Humanist Federation)

13:35 Summary - Mirosław Woroniecki - president of the Congress of Secularity Association

13:40-14:30 Break

### Doctrine and practice of the Catholic Church and human rights

14:30 Introduction - Bożena Przyłuska (Congress of Secularity)

14:40 Social machine of the Catholic Church in Poland - prof. Tomasz Polak (Questions of Boundaries Research Group, UAM)

15:10 The Principle of State Neutrality and the Guarantees of Freedom of Conscience and Religion - Adam Bodnar, PhD (Ombudsman)

15:30 History of depriving women of their rights in Poland - Nina Sankari (Kazimierz Lyszczyński Foundation)

14:45 The position of the Catholic Church on domestic violence - Katarzyna Kądziała (Izabela Jaruga-Nowacki Foundation)

16:00 The secularity of the state as a postulate of the grassroots women's movement - Marta Lempart (National Women's Strike)

16:10 The Problem of Pedophilia in the Catholic Church - Marek Lisinski ("Do not Be Afraid" Foundation)

16:25 Responses of the Polish Catholic Church to legislative efforts to apply the constitutional principle of equality to LGBTIQ people - Krzysztof Śmiszek (PhD) (Polish Association for Antidiscrimination Law)

16:35 Rights of religious minorities in Poland - Lucas Skurczyński (Evangelical Monthly)

16:45 On freedom and secularity - postulates of practical reason - Andrzej Dominiczak (Polish Humanist Association, Centre for Inquiry - Poland)

17:00 Insulting religious feelings and the work of the artist - special guest (to be confirmed)

17:20 The atheists' rights in Poland - Dariusz Kędziora (The Atheist Coalition, Secular Congress), Jacek Tabisz (Polish Rationalists Association)

19:30 The Banquet

## **Sunday, October 22nd**

### State and secularity - state institutions between theology and politics

10:30 Greetings - Krystyna Kofta (writer)

10:35 Introduction - Zbigniew P. Szczęsny (Congress of Secularity)

10:45 Embodiment of domination. Catholic Church and symbolic violence - Anna Zawadzka, PhD (Institute of Slavic Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences)

11:00 Catholic public schools in Poland - Adam Kalbarczyk, PhD ("Paderewski" International High School in Lublin)

11:15 Why public health service should be secular and what it means? - Marek Balicki (National Development Council at the President of the Republic of Poland, Commission of Health Ombudsman Experts)

11:30 Legalisation of euthanasia as a characteristic of civilized countries - Marcin Walter, PhD (Association for Dignity "My Choice")

11:45 Nature - Church - State: toxic relationship? - Aleksander Kluczka (The Greens)

12:00-12:30 Break

### State and Church

12:40 Secular ceremonies in a confessional state - Kaja Bryx (Polish Rationalists Association)

12:55 Catholic Church and national ideology – historical outline - prof. Danuta Waniek (academic teacher, former head of the Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland)

13:25 Legal and financial privileges of the Catholic Church in Poland - Marcin Celiński (Liberal Forum, Liberte!)

13:40 Religious statistics and affiliation to the Church - Zbigniew Szetela (Secular Poland)

13:55 Religion as a factor in political choices - Przemysław Potocki, PhD (academic teacher, political scientist)

14:10 Secularity in the programs of political parties - dr Tadeusz Nowak (Secular Poland)

14:25-15:30 Break

15:30 The way to achieve a secular state - the debate of representatives of political parties

17:30 Signing of the Secular Manifesto