

Preface

Tadeusz Mazowiecki's *Reports from Yugoslavia* are being published on the 30th anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide. It was in protest against the passivity of the United Nations and the powerlessness of the international community – factors that also contributed to the Srebrenica tragedy – that Tadeusz Mazowiecki resigned from his position as Special Rapporteur, an act that was unprecedented in the organization's history.

Although not a specialist in Balkan affairs, Tadeusz Mazowiecki was exceptionally well qualified for this mission. He had been a leading figure in the democratic opposition in communist Poland, been Solidarity leader Lech Wałęsa's closest advisor, and served as the very first non-communist Prime Minister (1989–1991) in the whole Soviet bloc since World War II. In 1992, when he was appointed as UN Special Rapporteur, he embodied the success of Poland's peaceful transformation under his time in office: from a communist authoritarian state to a democratic state governed by the rule of law and with an independent judiciary; from a devastated shortage economy to solid foundations for a market economy; and from subordination to the Soviet Union to sovereignty and opening up toward the West.

He was a man of principle, who had paid a price for his commitment to human rights in communist Poland, being imprisoned and later barred from employment. Yet when he later served as Prime Minister, he did not seek revenge but instead made sure that his former political opponents were guaranteed equal rights and opportunities under the new state – an approach he was criticized for within his own camp.

During his mission in the former Yugoslavia in the capacity of UN Special Rapporteur, Mazowiecki became, above all, a defender of those who had been harmed and of their fundamental rights, especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is how he is remembered in the Balkans.

This volume, *Reports from Yugoslavia*, is the third in the series *Tadeusz Mazowiecki – Writings and Documents*, published since 2023 by University

of Warsaw Press.¹ It presents the 18 reports that were drawn up during Mazowiecki's mission from 1992 to 1995, along with the most important related documents and press materials.

These reports are an important source for studying the history of the conflict and persecutions that ensued following the breakup of Yugoslavia, as well as the atrocities committed during that time. They were later utilized by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in the trials of war criminals. The reports also document the struggle that Tadeusz Mazowiecki had to fight in advocating for human rights, to ensure that they would be recognized as a priority in international efforts to resolve the Balkan conflict.

Complementing the reports, the main supplementary documents in this volume include a Memorandum that Mazowiecki sent to the UN Secretary-General at the outset of his mission, just after submitting his First Report, as well as several speeches he delivered at various UN forums – the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Geneva Commission on Human Rights, and at a meeting with the then newly established High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The Memorandum expands on the agenda Mazowiecki set for his mission, already outlined in the First Report, and offers insight into his initial expectations regarding the capabilities of UN institutions. His speeches, in turn, reveal which of the issues raised in his reports he particularly prioritized. They also show how consistently he tried, unfortunately without success, to persuade the UN and the international community to take effective and immediate action to defend those facing persecution in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as in Croatia and Serbia – among other reasons, in order to uphold the authority of international institutions.

Also included are materials documenting the work of the Special Rapporteur's team in the former Yugoslavia, such as notes taken during field operations by Roman Wieruszewski, Mazowiecki's closest collaborator, and a financial settlement report from the field offices in July 1995, when Mazowiecki concluded his mission.

The final chapter contains documents related to Mazowiecki's resignation from the role of Special Rapporteur: his correspondence with the Secretary-General and other senior UN officials, as well as reactions to his decision – as expressed in letters to him and in the press.

Excerpts from various media statements, mostly by Mazowiecki himself, have also been included, alongside certain earlier documents serving to illustrate

¹ The two earlier volumes, published in Polish, are entitled *Premier* [Prime Minister] (Warsaw, 2023) and *Protokoły posiedzeń rządu* [Minutes of Government Meetings] (Warsaw, 2024).

the opinions of the time – often expressed more directly and less formally than in official documents. The final chapter ends with excerpts from two interviews that Tadeusz Mazowiecki himself considered especially important, as they provided his most complete reflection on the mission in the former Yugoslavia, given shortly after its conclusion.

The documents are arranged chronologically and grouped by year.

To date, the full set of 18 reports has been published together only in Bosnian, in 2007.² The first six reports, along with three speeches by Tadeusz Mazowiecki, were published in a Polish edition in 1993.³

This new edition presents the full set of reports in two language versions: both in English (the original language of the reports) as well as in Polish translation.

The main sources for this edition are United Nations documents in English, accessible through the UN Digital Library (UNDL), though not always available in editable format. All of the Special Rapporteur's reports, as well as Mazowiecki's speeches before the Security Council and the Commission on Human Rights, have been drawn from this source.

The reports of the Special Rapporteur were received by the Commission on Human Rights in Geneva, the UN Secretary-General, and the UN Security Council. Formally, two of them were presented to the General Assembly (the Third Report, dated 17 November 1992, and the Thirteenth Report, from 4 November 1994), while the rest were addressed to the Commission on Human Rights. Under the UN's document classification system, more than one reference number may be assigned the very same document, depending on the recipient body. As such, the reports may be referred to using reference numbers beginning with "A" for the General Assembly, "S" for the Security Council, and "E/CN.4" for the Commission on Human Rights. All UN relevant reference numbers are given herein for each document.

Most of the remaining materials – including the speech before the General Assembly, the Memorandum to the Secretary-General, and the correspondence surrounding Mazowiecki's resignation – have been drawn from the Tadeusz Mazowiecki Collection, held at the Central Archives of Modern Records (*Archiwum Akt Nowych*) in Warsaw, Poland. Research in this collection also turned up many important press materials, which are also included here. A few additional documents have come from private collections, such as Mazowiecki's speech at a meeting with the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the

² *Mazowiecki Izvješćaji 1992–1995* [Mazowiecki Reports 1992–1995] (Tuzla–Sarajevo, 2007).

³ *Raporty Tadeusza Mazowieckiego z byłej Jugosławii* [Tadeusz Mazowiecki's Reports from the Former Yugoslavia], edited by R. Hliwa and R. Wieruszewski (Poznań–Warsaw, 1993).

notes on field operations. Nearly all of these supplementary materials are being published here for the very first time.

The book opens with a foreword by Professor Roman Wieruszewski, who provides an overview of Tadeusz Mazowiecki's mission and highlights how much the Special Rapporteur and his team were able to accomplish within the largely dysfunctional UN system – even if this was not really sensed at the time, their efforts being overshadowed by the tragedy of Srebrenica. Professor Wieruszewski's essay reveals many little-known details and insights into the editorial work behind the reports, which he oversaw as principal editor. For this reason, he also served as a scholarly advisor in the preparation of this publication and was the final authority in resolving editorial questions.

The introductory section of the volume also includes the foreword written by Tadeusz Mazowiecki for the 1993 Polish edition of the first six reports. The volume closes, in turn, with a personal, anecdotal, and thoughtful reflection on Tadeusz Mazowiecki by Konstanty Gebert, offering a nuanced perspective on Mazowiecki's work as Special Rapporteur.

The publication is supported by footnotes, most of which clarify the locations of towns and other localities mentioned in the reports. These notes are provided at the first mention of each geographic name – unless that information is already included in the body of the report. Identifying some of these places proved particularly challenging, as many localities share the same name, sometimes not only within Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also in Croatia and Serbia.

Several annexes are included at the end of the book. The bibliography offers a selection of recommended literature on the subject – primarily in English – based on a list of one hundred key works suggested by Konstanty Gebert, most of them with comments from him (this list has subsequently been somewhat expanded). This is followed by a list of United Nations bodies' resolutions mentioned in the reports, complete with UN reference numbers and hyperlinks.

The next two annexes are designed to assist the reader: a Timeline of the Conflict in the former Yugoslavia and a List of International Institutions mentioned in the reports. The latter includes not only intergovernmental bodies (both UN and European) but also institutional mechanisms introduced at the time, such as safe areas. Non-governmental organizations are not included.

Two indexes have been drawn up: an Index of Names and an Index of Places. The former includes short biographical notes for individuals mentioned in the reports, where additional relevant information beyond the content of the reports was available. The latter lists only towns and localities in the countries of the former Yugoslavia. Their locations are given – both in the index and in the foot-

notes – according to present-day borders, as defined by the Dayton Agreement of 1995. A list of abbreviations is included at the end.

This publication is not a reprint of official UN documents, but a critical edition of the materials. In the reports themselves, titles and other references that merely repeated the description of the document found in the opening paragraph have been omitted, as were tables of contents (present in longer reports), reference numbers, and the names of UN bodies to which the documents were addressed.

Obvious errors have been tacitly corrected. The few abridgements made by the authors of the reports in the materials they were quoting have been marked with an ellipsis in square brackets [...]. No abridgements were introduced to the reports by the editors of the present volume. Square brackets have also been used for occasional editorial additions or clarifications, where necessary.

Of the original footnotes in the reports, only the substantive ones have been retained, and to distinguish them, these are marked with letters. All original references, including those within the reports themselves, have been standardized and placed in regular footnotes (numbered). Only cross-references to the same report have been left within the running text. Where the original reports included references to other documents – mainly other reports by the Special Rapporteur – these have been indicated in footnotes.

For all cited documents or publications available online, hyperlinks have been provided; all URLs are current as of 1 July 2025.

Spelling, capitalization and punctuation have been modernized and standardized (e.g., removing inconsistent use of quotation marks). Original spelling of names and place names has been restored to facilitate identification. Obvious typographical errors in names have been corrected without annotation; in other cases, uncertainties are addressed in footnotes.

The term JNA has been consistently rendered as “Yugoslav National Army” (although in some places in the original, it appeared as “People’s Army”). The term “Muslim” is frequently used in the reports to refer to the largest national group in Bosnia and Herzegovina – accounting for over 43 per cent of the population in 1991, alongside Serbs (31 per cent) and Croats (17 per cent).

The original formatting of the reports and meeting records (summarizing speeches) has been preserved: as numbered paragraphs without indentation, with a blank line between each paragraph.

Each document is accompanied by information on its archival or other source. Where the original was not in English, the original language is specified (for newspapers, the country of publication is indicated, which also implies the original language – for example, an Italian daily) and the English translation is by Daniel J. Sax.

The aim of this publication is to bring Tadeusz Mazowiecki's *Reports from Yugoslavia* – along with the most important related documents – into wider academic circulation. Although these reports are cited in specialist literature, they have remained difficult to access. Nevertheless, they continue to be a vital source for contemporary research on the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. Despite the official denials that followed their release, the crimes they documented have since been confirmed by independent investigations and the ongoing discovery of mass graves.

We are deeply grateful to the many individuals who helped improve this publication. We owe special thanks to Eva Klonowski, a renowned Polish forensic anthropologist based in Iceland, who spent many years after the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina conducting exhumations of mass graves and identifying victims. Through her extensive contacts, we were able to access the findings of Bosnian institutions and researchers more easily, and her detailed feedback helped us avoid many errors. Our thanks also go to the staff of the Central Archives of Modern Records in Warsaw, to scholars of Balkan affairs at the Department of Political Systems at the University of Warsaw, and to archivists and librarians in many locations – including Brussels, Geneva, New York, Strasbourg and Warsaw – for their invaluable assistance.