

# WE WON THE FUTURE

10 Years of Presidency of  
Aleksander Kwasniewski



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Aleksander Kwasniewski

addresses, interviews, documents  
(selection)

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# About President Aleksander Kwasniewski

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## Valdas Adamkus

### President of the Republic of Lithuania

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*Aleksander Kwasniewski was the first foreign head of state I met officially when I had began my term of office as the President of the Republic of Lithuania. Our two countries are bound with a beautiful tradition according to which after the election the newly appointed head of states or prime ministers pay one of their very first visits to either Lithuania or Poland, respectively. Therefore, the first of my visits as the head of state took place in April 1998, when I came to Poland.*

*I did know that Aleksander Kwasniewski was a young man, yet at the same time an experienced and master politician who had managed to achieve prestige and respect amongst other global leaders. I did know that he was extremely favourably disposed towards Lithuania; he perceived our country as Poland's strategic partner, and very eagerly supported our efforts in joining the Euro Atlantic structures, along with Poland. I learned more about his initiatives concerning the development of good neighbourhood relations and regional cooperation; therefore, I had high expectations for our mutual and close cooperation in the forthcoming future.*

*I have to admit that our very first meeting validated our expectations. I saw Aleksander as an open, succinct, concrete, and honest politician, leader of a nation, who does not refrain from solving even the most complicated and complex problems, always striving for the best – sometimes even unconventional – solutions. Our mutual relation did evaluate quite quickly, and transformed into a genuine, true partnership and human friendship. What is also important, is the fact that our spouses – Alma and Jolanta – did find common ground with each other and became friends equally fast. And since they both were involved in charity activities, especially with regard to children's help and support, they had managed to implement numerous projects jointly also on this ground.*

*For those six years, on numerous occasions, I had the possibility of meeting Aleksander Kwasniewski more than 50 times. We were even joking that as far as the number of meetings was concerned, we both should have been listed in the Guinness Book of Records. Several volumes could be filled with the description of all conversations,*

*ideas and mutual initiatives of ours. I would like to mention here two important issues. Aleksander was a real advocate in our pursuit for NATO membership; during each meeting with global leaders he would raise the issue of Lithuanian, as well as other Baltic states', membership. When in 1999 we both paid a visit to Washington D.C., to participate in the NATO Summit, where Poland officially joined the structure of the North Atlantic Alliance, it was A. Kwasniewski who said to me in a decisive manner: "Valdas, you will see, in a few years' time, we shall celebrate the Lithuania accession to NATO". Then I replied with confidence: "I do believe so, since having such an advocate as you, we simply cannot lose in this case". And indeed, as soon as in November 2002 in Vilnius we both celebrated Lithuania being incorporated into the NATO structure. A propos, hardly anyone knows that in the period, when Poland had already been the NATO member and Lithuania had been still waiting, together with Poland we established a joint battalion, as the only joint military task force of such kind being set up by a NATO member state and non-member state.*

*Another example of our close mutual cooperation is the support for the "orange revolution" in Ukraine. I do believe that it was Aleksander's initiative and political perspicacity that helped us all find the proper solutions in those, one may say, extremely complicated circumstances, where too many a time we thought we had got a deadlock. From today's perspective, we do see that our involvement and dedication were crucial and much needed.*

*I would like to note that that great, smooth cooperation was established not only between the presidents, but also between the employees of our chancelleries. The Consultation Committee of Polish and Lithuanian Presidents, the sessions of which had been chaired by our counselors, not rarely turned out to be very helpful in finding solutions adequate to particular circumstances.*

*I also highly value Aleksander Kwasniewski's present activities, his further commitment in foreign policy, his initiative for the development of the European policy towards the East. I would like to wish him, from the very bottom of my heart, many successes and persistence in pursuing his own objectives and goals, which, as I believe, shall be beneficial for the whole of Europe.*

Valdas Adamkus

William Jefferson Clinton  
the 42<sup>nd</sup> President of the United States of America  
(1993–2001)

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*Throughout his decade as President of Poland, Aleksander Kwasniewski's leadership secured for his country a future founded on the principles of cooperation, freedom, and unity. He opened doors of opportunity, engineered Poland's emergence as an ally of democracy in the post-communist era, served as a proponent of peace, and added a vital voice to our global dialogue. Alek's achievements are remarkable, and I was honoured to work with him.*

Bill Clinton

## Vaclav Havel

President of the Czech Republic (1993–2003)

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*There are three reasons why Aleksander Kwasniewski is engraved in my memory as the President of the Republic of Poland. First of all, it happened at the time that was maybe less visible, yet of no less importance, since the epoch of the Iron Curtain had eventually ended and the Central European countries joined the European and North Atlantic structures for good. The second reason was the key position of Poland on the international scene as a superpower in the region. Once fixed and set pro-European direction and policy, in line with peaceful and stable political development in Poland, had brought about the stabilization in the entire Central European region, and positively influenced the policy making processes in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary. The third reason was the personality of Aleksander Kwasniewski – his zest and eloquences in addresses, gayety and openness, all those important features of character that are helpful in public life and are valuable in top level policy making and diplomacy.*

*When globally recognized and respected Solidarity leader Lech Walesa concluded his presidential term of office, I was wondering what his successors would be like, how great a respect he would gain on the international agenda. I must admit I was indeed surprised with the pace and certainty he was moving up the ladder in the European politics, actively supporting the necessity of introducing key structural changes in the post-communism world, in uniting Europe.*

*During his term of office as the President, the Polish international policy was open; it had clear directions and the right objectives. I do remember when we jointly signed the NATO and EU accession treaties, and we were supervising and coordinating the diplomatic policy with respect to the Balkan conflict and war in Iraq.*

*Aleksander was capable of strengthening the key role of Poland amongst the Eastern European countries, as well as improving the partnership relations on the Eastern border with the EU. He actively supported and advocated the pro-European aspirations in the Baltic States and democratic forces in Ukraine and Belarus. However, Polish international politic proved itself to be right and proper first of all in the key*

*relations with Germany and Russia, supporting the transatlantic alliance of the EU and the USA. Without any shadow of a doubt, the Polish President has had a share in the attainment thereof. Aleksander Kwasniewski was able to establish and successfully maintain close personal relations with the top level establishment officials representing many countries, still being a very reliable and credible person on the international scene. For me, however, what is especially important is the fact that we both became close friends, and our friendship has managed to survive and continues until today, when we both concluded our offices.*

*The presidency of Aleksander Kwasniewski can be assessed by Polish historiography as a prosperous and well-thought-of period, even if it will take several decades. I think it would be advisable he keeps on continuing his political activities, and his experience shall be used while occupying a high position in one of the prominent international organizations.*

Vaclav Havel

Viktor Yushchenko  
President of Ukraine

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*I joyfully welcome the book of my good friend, prominent Polish and – without any doubt – European politician, President of the Republic of Poland, Mr. Aleksander Kwasniewski.*

*The publication containing the most important and historical speeches, addresses, articles, letters and interviews that all together document the Aleksander Kwasniewski's 10 year presidency is at the same time an invaluable evidence of historical changes taking place on the old continent, of which a direct participant and one of the initiators is the author himself. Through his political skills and wisdom, strong will and persistence Poland has changed beyond recognition. The country we all know perfectly has started to grow rapidly right in front of our very own eyes, progressing in almost every domain of life. The most crucial and significant achievements of Poland were the accession to NATO in 1997 and to the EU in 2004. Consequently, Poland's role and position as an important player in both internal European and foreign policy as a whole has grown significantly. The noble and successful example of our western neighbour shall encourage the Ukrainians, being a milestone and guideline for our behaviour.*

*Ukraine and Poland had managed to establish a unique relationship within the strategic partnership, which are based on genuine friendship, complete trust, mutual respect, support, and effective cooperation. It was not easy to achieve all that, since first of all we had to get rid of harmful stereotypes and prejudices, which the history had burdened us with. Aleksander has been one of those people who had managed to build strong, solid, foundations for the further development of our relationship based on a new, modern, pro-European approach and attitude. With his concrete, actual and breakthrough activities we were able to turn the Ukrainian and Polish brotherhood into a fait accompli on the international scene.*

*Moreover, the Joint Declaration of Presidents "Striving to reach agreement and unification", as well as celebrations of the anniversary of the Volhynia tragedy and*



*“Vistula” Displacement Action, which included the commemoration of memorials in both countries, became significant steps on our way ahead.*

*The episode I personally find as one of key importance in Aleksander Kwasniewski’s political career is his active participation in and support for the Orange revolution in Ukraine. I am fully convinced that it was his voice, political instinct and far-sightedness that have considerably contributed to the victory of Ukrainian democracy and headed off the danger of acute political conflict.*

*In my opinion, this is exactly the way the true friendship and actual partnership can prove themselves. I am honoured that I can call Aleksander Kwasniewski my close and true friend. I would like to wish him, from the very bottom of my heart, numerous successes, happiness and many new achievements both in politics and his creative activities.*

Viktor Yushchenko

## Shimon Peres

President of the State of Israel

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*The long and abounding in successes period of presidency of my friend Aleksander Kwasniewski, former President of the Republic of Poland, merits recognition and special attention. The decade of Aleksander Kwasniewski's presidency was characterised by the strengthening of Polish democracy, consolidation of Poland's international position, its active engagement in global affairs and tightening of bilateral relations between Poland and the State of Israel. He was a president who launched changes in a non-aggressive way. He accelerated the process Poland's modernisation and transition to modern economy. He guided Poland from the margin of European community to the central position in the European Union. He settled relations between the State and the Church to avoid in them religious or anti-religious constraint. He liberated Poland from the yoke of communism and created real democracy. He introduced Poland to NATO and the European Union as a full-fledged member speaking his own, clear voice. He fought anti-Semitism and racism in an uncompromising way.*

*It takes great courage to redress, during barely one generation, the distortions, which piled up for many past generations. A real, moving and valuable courage.*

*There is no doubt that the crowning achievement during Aleksander Kwasniewski's presidency was the finalisation of Poland's accession to NATO and the European Union, however I, in my short foreword, would like to underscore his contribution to fighting anti-Semitism and to the rapprochement between the Polish and the Jewish nations, for one thousand years united with common, specific, complex and profound historic ties.*

*The Jews were present in Poland since the dawn of the Polish state all the way up to the Nazi German occupation during World War II. The entire Jewish world appeared on the Polish territory, the world of major spiritual creativeness, Chassidism, enlightenment, culture – the world, which experienced its “golden age” next to the dark epochs of pogroms, persecution and humiliation. The Holocaust, whose main arena was the Polish territory, ruined this world completely. The years of*

*communist rule in Poland after World War II, characterised by alienation and hostility towards the State of Israel, left a bleeding wound in relations between the two nations. Poland's liberation and its renewed florescence as the homeland of a free nation heralded the reconstruction of the bridge of friendship between us. Thanks to such leaders like Aleksander Kwasniewski – who recognised the development of relations between our nations as the imperative of consciousness and made it the most important moral goal, who took up actions aimed at deepening the knowledge about the Holocaust and perceived the importance of the return of property – thanks to their uncompromising struggle against anti-Semitism, the new “golden age” for our states started. The heritage of the Polish Jews, who played such an important role in the creation of Zionist and cultural foundations of the State of Israel, obtains broad understanding and its knowledge is spreading in Poland. The creation of museums and educational centres in Treblinka and Belzec, next to the Museum of History of Polish Jews to be established in Warsaw, is a proof of it. President Kwasniewski deserves deep credit for his share in the implementation of these lofty strivings.*

*Aleksander Kwasniewski's visits in Israel during his presidency, and especially his last visit, shortly after the moving international celebrations of the sixtieth anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz–Birkenau extermination camp, the words he uttered in the Yad Vashem Institute, his declared engagement in the cause of strengthening bridges and ties between the Polish nation and the nation of Israel, made an enormous impression on us. His steadfast friendship, indefatigable action in favour of our common educational goals and enormous contribution to the development of relations between our states assured him a commendable place in our hearts.*

Shimon Peres



## Introduction

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It is almost three years now since I have concluded the 10 year term at the office of the President of the Republic of Poland. For some time, my friends have been encouraging me into writing a book on those 10 years – being of a personal, author's character. They think I should do a kind of special balance of all my intentions, actions, and achievements I undertook and conducted during my term of office. Moreover, I should present therein my own, subjective assessment and opinion on events that happened, show people the mechanisms of Polish and global politics through the prism of feelings, emotions and experience of a man who, for ten years – had been participating in those politics, who had been personally taking decisions – or at least participating in taking them – that were important both for Poland and Europe.

Such a book shall be published some day. I will write it, when I am fully and entirely convinced that, apart from satisfying natural human curiosity, it shall help the readers understand the past and do something for the future, so when it will simply be useful. Today, in my opinion, yet another book is more needed and suitable – a book that does not simply describe but rather documents the activities undertaken by the President of the Republic of Poland in the years 1995–2005 for the sake of the biggest, most important and crucial changes in Poland and around Poland. This book is needed for one major reason. Polish transformations after 1989, including my term of office as the President, were characterized by three main features: they constituted a breakthrough, a turning point in history, they were possible to conduct thanks to the effort and dedication of the entire Polish society, and, most importantly, they were successfully accomplished.

I think that these three qualities, which are the simplest truth about Polish transformation shall be constantly popularized, against all politically motivated efforts to question them. The best way to achieve this is to present reliable facts – making available documents and materials that are the testimony thereof – in such a form so they not only can reach historians, but a much broader group of readers and constitute the source of their well grounded satisfaction and pride.

It is the reason for which I do hereby present you this book, containing the selection of sources depicting the activities of the President of the Republic of Poland in the years 1995–2005 in the areas of critical importance for Poland. The title of the book „We won the future” reflects the main goal and outcome of this activity, because it was simply the future that was the essence of the program of my first Presidency in 1995. I have tried to carry it out in the ten years that followed, and the most substantial achievements of that period have determined a better future for Poland and Poles now and in the years to come.

\* \* \*

The book on the most recent history of Poland, consisting solely of source documents (inter alia speeches, articles, interviews, letters), must – in my opinion – fulfill three criteria in order to be actually read and absorbed by “ordinary” readers: firstly, it shall be concise and short – limited to one volume; secondly, it shall refer only to the most important problems and decisions made within the particular time frame; and thirdly, this book shall disseminate in a reliable way the important truth about the period it deals with – important also for the future.

The first criterion was fulfilled – documents selected from amongst 14 hefty volumes of source documents, dealing with 10 years of the presidential term of office, all together constitute one book and are grouped into five problems, divided into separate chapters. As far as the second criterion is concerned, I do perceive these problems as crucial for Poland at that time, and the events they concern and the results of undertaken activities have actually imprinted a significant and beneficial mark on the situation of the Polish State and its inhabitants’ life.

The selection of the book’s main subjects corresponds to the strategic objectives and tasks of the programme that guided me at the beginning of my first term of office as the President in 1995 and which I was striving to execute in the consecutive ten years to come, as the President. The objectives were as follows:

- completion of building the state of law and strengthening the institution of a democratic state,
- activities for the sake of reconciliation and cooperation of the entire Polish society in the field of common care of our home – Poland, and joint efforts for the future,
- strengthening the international position and safety of Poland – accession to the North Atlantic Treaty,
- accession to the European Union and preparation for active participation in the EU’s further development and integration process,

– reconciliation and cooperation with Poland's neighbours by implementing the policy of safe and friendly borders.

The three last objectives concerning foreign affairs and policy do not require a broader commentary. Long lasting relationship between Poland and the West, accession to NATO and the EU, guarantee of partnership relations and safe borders with all our neighbours, as well as friendly relations and close cooperation with the majority of them – were all of fundamental character and key significance.

Never before in its history was Poland so safe and secure. Beneficial changes in Poland's economic situation and improvement in the Polish peoples well-being after our accession to the EU are unquestionable.

Documents in chapters concerning the foreign policy clearly prove that reaching the above mentioned objectives called for extremely hard work was not necessarily a foregone conclusion. They also show the role Poland did play in the Central European region, as well as evidence and proofs of Poland's strengthening its position in Europe and the entire world. I would like to draw the readers' attention to two documents No. 26 and 27 in chapter V (speech delivered during the ceremony commemorating the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Volhynia Massacres and the Gdansk Declaration of the President of the Republic of Poland and the President of the Federal Republic of Germany on People Subjected to Displacement, Flight and Expulsion in Europe) that teach us how we can solve difficult issues in foreign relations and how to remove obstacles on our way to the mutual understanding and cooperation, without the need to stray from the way of truth even for an inch.

As far as the first two chapters are concerned, I would like to add an explanatory commentary.

During the first period of political transformation in Poland, in the years 1989–1993, much was done for the construction of the state of law – the rudiments and foundations for the democratic system. Several crucial and indispensable legal regulations were conducted, which introduced the basic rules for the functioning of a democratic state and removed the relics of the communist, totalitarian regime. Numerous new, democratic institutions were established, or the existing ones had been adapted to the new political reality and requirements; what is also of crucial importance – we had managed to construct the foundations for the development of the civic society – independent local governments and authorities. Unfortunately, due to the number of ideological and political disputes and contentions that took place on a very dispersed and

diversified political arena, we failed in reaching a uniform, final shape of the Constitution, in reaching a common consensus with regard to this critical document – which was of key importance for the proper functioning, successful development and continuous durability of the democratic system.

The state was operating based on the hitherto existing constitutional act that had not ensured sufficient basis for strengthening the institution of the state of law and further development of civic society. Such a state of affairs could have endangered young democracy, the more so that after having regained independence in 1918, the tradition of a fully democratic state was limited in Poland to barely eight years.

Therefore, bringing about the passing of the Constitution – solidifying and stabilizing the democratic state of law, ensuring the citizens' rights and the development of the civic society – I had considered being my utmost priority, ever since 1993, when after the elections the political formation I led took over shared responsibility for the rule in Poland. After having assumed the office of the President of the Republic of Poland, I used all my powers and capabilities to successfully accomplish the process of passing the Constitution.

The course of works on the Constitution and improvement of the Judiciary – the guard of the Constitution and Law – as well as the development of local governments and other institutions of civic society is documented in the first chapter and in part of the second chapter. The Constitution was adopted in 1997 and it has been in force ever since. I think it constituted and still does, a good, solid basis for the strengthening and protection of democracy and mastering and developing the tolls of the state of law. Recent years have surely proven that.

The second objective of the presidential programme, in that part referring to Poland's internal affairs, was called "Our common home – Poland" and was of an ideological character, despite the fact that it related to a particular, factual need of cooperation for the development and future of Poland of all who can be useful. This need became an urgent one, since the change of the political system, despite general approval related to the sense of freedom, had revealed deep clashes, conflicts and grudges that remained from the totalitarian past and old arguments and injustices, as well as attempts of using the past for present political fight. Disputes and controversies resulting from the above clashes in most cases concerned the past, not the future, they became increasingly idler and they hampered the development of a better reality instead of contributing to the improvement of the quality of social life.



The presidential programme aimed at focusing the efforts of all the Polish people and citizens of the Polish state on creating a common future and well-being in a free, democratic state and free, unrestrained and self-governing society. Without blurring the past, with condemnation and punishment for proven crimes, yet with focus on joint actions for the sake of our future. Based on just, fair rules and law that is equal for all.

The successful realization of this objective could not be limited exclusively to persuasion. It called for equal dialogue with particular communities, denominations and social groups: with self governments, trade unions, and NGOs; representatives of science, economy and culture, with Polish Diaspora abroad and national minorities, with churches and denominations; with the Jewish community. It also called for actual actions and activities to be taken: initiating important social actions, and long term development projects, solving severe conflicts and undertaking difficult, painful issues that had not been solved in the past, searching for the support of social institutions and esteemed individuals highly valued and respected by the Polish people, using the President's powers for support and control of the government's activities in issues of key importance for state policy and social aspirations.

The second chapter of the book documents the above mentioned dialogue and actions taken. I have no doubt that they were important activities – one of the most important ones. I also believe that they had managed to stamp their mark on reality and the present day; that they did contribute to the increase of the sense of common duty and the ability of working together for the country and other people. Especially amongst the younger generation. Yet, I would not be honest if I said that we had managed to achieve complete success in uniting people around the tasks for the future, since there is still a long way ahead of us in this respect. To put it simply, it is an on-going, continuous assignment. I do recommend it to my successors.

While writing above about the criteria for interest in a book that contains only the source documents I have said that it should communicate an important truth about the time it concerns, important also for future generations. Revealing this truth is of course the task for esteemed readers; yet let me express my own opinion with this regard. I shall start with a short historical reflection.

Poland's regaining independence in 1989 and change of political system to a democratic one, and its economic system into one based on free market economy, were possible thanks to two events of historical significance and importance. The first event was this great liberation movement of "Solidarity" in 1980, which speeded up the erosion and collapse of the totalitarian regime

in Poland, and indirectly in the whole of Central and Eastern Europe and, as a matter of fact, it marked the beginning of processes and changes that eventually resulted in the total collapse thereof on a global scale. The second event is the agreement of the Round Table in 1989 reached between the representatives of the then government and the legalized and reborn “Solidarity” that had managed to survive martial law underground, with the participation of the clergy as moderators and mediators. The first elections that were conducted in line with the Round Table conclusions were actually the first free elections in the state that belonged to the communistic regime; moreover, the elections facilitated and allowed for the first in the history of the world political transformation of a relatively big country – from totalitarian regime in politics and state governed, centralized economy, to a democratic country and free market economy. This exceptional transformation was conducted peacefully, with the initial approval of generally the whole of society (including many members of the former, two million strong communist party) and active participation of its significant part, including the state and local administration and people of different, various beliefs, including the left wing supporters as well.

The success of taking over of power in Poland in June 1989 by the representatives of free society, with the use of democratic tools, without threats and internal and international tensions or clashes, became undoubtedly the impulse and stimuli for the societies and liberation movements in the remaining Central European member states of the Warsaw Pact. In 1989, this success resulted in 1989 in the “Autumn of Nations” that ended with the eventual reunification of East and West Germany and the return of the remaining Pact’s states to the family of European democratic countries based on free market economy.

Of course, I may be wrong, I am not a historian, yet to the best of my knowledge this is the first time in history when, thanks to the human’s strive towards freedom and the political common sense of the Polish people, their ability to unite in action beyond any clashes and disputes, even the most heated ones, it was Poland that influenced the change of the face of the world.

Such a way of behaviour – acting together and being united beyond disputes – was to be repeated several times in the years 1995–2005, in issues of key importance for the Polish people, and it is present in this book. But for mutual understanding and cooperation of different political formations not rarely of completely opposite political views, we would not have had a good, lasting Constitution. Successfully completed processes of accession to the EU and NATO were possible thanks to a uniform, and mutually agreed upon guidelines and directions in foreign policy. The message hidden in this book can therefore be formulated as follows: we can and we should be different, yet

we have to be able to act jointly, in accordance and beyond any disputes in issues important for Poland. Such an approach shall undoubtedly be beneficial and quite often completely successful as well. And this is the most magnificent example of patriotism.

I would like to recommend this book to historians and all those who are vividly interested in the modern history of Poland.

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Several prominent statesmen and state leaders, with whom during my terms of office as the President of the Republic of Poland I cooperated quite closely, and who supported Poland in its strive towards strengthening our country's safety within the Atlantic Commonwealth and accession to the EU, as well as reconciliation and friendly cooperation with our neighbours did me a great honour by sending positive opinions concerning my activities, asking me to place their "reviews" in this book. I am hereby fulfilling their wish with gratitude and great satisfaction; I am deeply convinced that this is their token of friendship, sympathy, and respect towards Poland and its policy. I would like to express my gratitude to the following statesmen:

Valdas Adamkus, President of Lithuania in the years 1998–2003 and since July 2004;

William, Jefferson Clinton, 42<sup>nd</sup> President of the United States of America (1993–2001);

Vaclav Havel, President of the Czech Republic (1993–2003);

Viktor Yushchenko, President of Ukraine;

Shimon Peres, President of the State of Israel.

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Also, I would like to use this opportunity and once again express my gratitude to all my closest co-workers, who within those 10 years of my term of office as the President of the Republic of Poland have been actively and conscientiously supporting me in the execution of the programme objectives. I would like to most heartily thank the consecutive Heads of the Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland: Danuta Waniek, Danuta Hübner, Ryszard Kalisz, Jolanta Szymanek-Deresz and Edward Szymanski. I also cordially thank the Secretaries and Undersecretaries of State at the Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland and the National Security Bureau, who performed their duties in various periods during both of my terms of office: Jerzy Bahr, Tadeusz Balachowicz, Waldemar Dubaniowski, Marek Dukaczewski, Andrzej Gliniecki,

Krzysztof Janik, Tadeusz Kociszewski, Barbara Labuda, Wojciech Lamentowicz, Andrzej Majkowski, Zbigniew Siemiatkowski, Marek Siwiec, Robert Smolen, Dariusz Szymczycha, Andrzej Smetanko, Jan Truszczyński, Marek Ungier. I also owe a debt of gratitude to the late lamented Secretary of State at the Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland Mr. Jerzy Milewski. I would like to thank all teams at the President's Chancellery and the National Security Bureau for their conscientious and assiduous work, performed with complete dedication and engagement.

Moreover, my words of gratitude go to Jacek Kluczkowski and Stanisław Cwik, who, in turns, managed and headed the works on the editing of source documents of both terms of office. Last but not least, I would like to thank Marek Jaskiewicz, who has helped me in selecting documents and editing the following book.

*Aleksander Kwasniewski*

Address by the President of the Republic of Poland  
Aleksander Kwasniewski delivered on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of December 1995  
on the occasion of the presidential oath taking ceremony at  
the Joint Sitting of the Sejm and Senate (excerpts)

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Honourable Marshal of Sejm, Honourable Marshal of Senate, Ladies and Gentlemen – Members of the Sejm and Senate, Ladies and Gentlemen, my fellow citizens, who are together with me at this moment!

I wish to say that it is difficult for me to conceal my emotion and this is probably natural at a moment such as the one we are now experiencing.

I am extremely happy that I could accept the highest state office in front of the National Assembly – in front of you – as I want concerted action between the President and Sejm and Senate for the benefit of Poland and the Polish people to be a new symbol of the years that are ahead of Poland. I am especially moved because – as one of you – I have been able to take the presidential oath of office, following the will of the nation expressed in the democratic elections of 19<sup>th</sup> of November.

(...) In five years the 20<sup>th</sup> century is coming to an end. We entered this dramatic century enslaved by foreign powers, without any real hope for the restoration of our own statehood. At the cost of countless sacrifices, by the work and prudence of generations, by the power of military actions and due to the vitality of our national culture we have overcome the adversities which Poland and the Polish people have not been spared by history. Today, I am assuming the eminent office of the President of the sovereign Republic of Poland granted to me by the power of the democratic vote. This is a great responsibility. I am assuming the office by the will of nearly 10 million adult Poles. I am aware of the difficult tasks in front of me. Wounds of the past half century have not yet healed over. There comes a time to begin a new chapter. Not with a view of erasing anything from the past – but of letting Poland take a deep breath and look boldly to the future. My prime objective is to make this possible.

No equal footing can be awarded to those who have paid with imprisonment for their beliefs and those who have sentenced them to the deprivation of freedom. Crimes must be punished under the law. The lasting heritage of honest work of millions of people must be spared from contempt and defamation. Errors must be analyzed and condemned, no matter who has committed them and on which side of the barricades of those times they have been made. The last – perhaps the most difficult – chapter was written in the 1980s.

Among its authors there were people of various stances, backgrounds and traditions. It was they who, aware of the painful lessons of history, were the first to raise themselves beyond the level of mutual prejudice and the brooding over the wrongs suffered by them. I pledge respect to my predecessors in the position of the President of the Republic of Poland. I trust my opponent in the recent elections will give material evidence to his attachment to the ideals of democracy. We should not let the divisions – so deep in the generations of our grandfathers and fathers – endlessly burden the future of us all. Young Poles who will vote for the first time in the year 2000 were just being born when martial law was announced. Let them know the honestly presented truth about our entangled history – with all its greatness and villainy.

I believe we will be able to overcome the divisions, find what unites the Polish people and organize them to carry out great and much needed efforts. It has been said that it is possible to do something FOR the Polish people but never WITH them. This is not true. The restructuring of Polish life can only be continued while listening to the voice of the nation – the voice that is unimpeded and undisturbed by the fuss and sulkiness of political elites. I will give my utmost attention to this voice and respect the feelings and opinions of my fellow citizens, of millions of Polish people, as well as their suggestions made for our common good.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

We face enormous challenges in the coming years. It may have been easier in the past to make “green field investments” than it is now to restructure painstakingly what has already been built. One can say that in the area between the Oder and the Bug Rivers there are two Polands. One of them is modern, enlightened, educated and resourceful – already now it attracts the genuine interest of Europe and the world. And alongside there is the other one – a land of poverty, degrading unemployment, functional illiteracy, civilizational underdevelopment, worsening life start prospects, a land of poorly paid teachers and doctors, severely underfinanced culture and neglected science.

I am not becoming the president of a land flowing with milk and honey. But please do not lecture me about patriotism. I have grown up here, I am a child of the Polish “regained territories” [Western and Northern parts of Poland previously occupied by Germany]. I belong to the country which I know is a land of so many dashed hopes, broken promises, bitterness and mistrust.

Yet, I want to tell you that – even bearing in mind all those weaknesses – we have no reason for despair or frustration, as no one can seriously question the great accomplishments of the past six years. No one can honestly deny that over the last few years Poland has changed and it is now facing great opportunities.

All these people who have brought about such a great breakthrough and have demonstrated immense perseverance and capability to work may enjoy the feeling of satisfaction and pride. I pay tribute to them.

So, ladies and gentlemen, do not let us be swayed by emotions of the past elections, the campaign and all that was characteristic of the heated past months and weeks. We should not let bitterness and anger deprive us of the ability to think about the challenges of the future. One may take offence against the present realities for any reason and with any banner over ones head. Yet one who takes offence against future realities, against the next century, would be held responsible for the same sins against Poland as those that were committed before the first partition of the country.

From this stand I declare that, within the limits of the constitutional powers of the President of the Republic of Poland – I am ready to assume responsibility for the part of the process of Poland’s accession to the European structures that will fall within my term of office. I regard this as a great task for me and for the entire generation motivated by the idea that Poland should fit itself in the European structures and become a part of the world that until recently was inaccessible for us, and which now may become our equal partner, in keeping with the position of Poland – a nation of 40 million in the middle of Europe.

We are not accessing the structures empty-handed. Due to the transformation of the past years Poland has become stronger. The dynamics of our economy is recognized worldwide. We have managed to enter the new information civilization. But this is merely the beginning. We are just taking the first steps in many areas which require changes, often difficult transformations. Agriculture is one of the areas that will require a great common effort. The same is needed for the Polish legal system and for aligning the Polish rules of law with European principles and standards. The same is needed for the

educational system, healthcare and the social security system – the reform of which may turn out to be the most difficult but inevitable task to be undertaken in the forthcoming weeks.

Faced with the challenges of the future, I am turning to the Polish intelligentsia – to the open-minded people, creative and full of initiatives. They have a great responsibility to unite the Polish people for the sake of the transformation, to come up with the best solutions, and – above all else – to help overcome the fear of tomorrow and the fear of the costs that need to be incurred in the process.

We also should not hesitate to refer to tradition and practices – to the resourcefulness of the Polish people demonstrated on many occasions by people who have created the foundations of Polish industry and science. We should keep in mind the creativity of Stanislaw Staszic, Eugeniusz Kwiatkowski, Edward Lipinski and Oskar Lange. Let us reach back to the legacy of those who regarded civilizational development as the prime guarantee of the nation's independence. They were right then and they are right now. They deserve the same gratitude and respect as those heroes who sacrificed their lives for Poland.

Through the power of politics, prudence and readiness to compromise we can create much in Poland. Democracy is a system primary based on the cooperation of citizens of various views and often with contradicting interests. Without the readiness for such cooperation democracy may be an empty word or it may even spell destruction. I am convinced that people of the left and you – Ladies and Gentlemen – sitting in this hall will spare no effort to leave no doubt as to the development of the Polish democracy, that you will strengthen it by the adoption of a new constitution and ensure that there is no doubt as to the democratic intentions and a genuine strive to build a democratic state of law.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

(...) From the stand I wish to present the principles to which I intend to be faithful to in my service to my country, as well as the aims whose achievement I consider to be the most important. First of all, in the choice of my co-workers, social advisors and in the political practices I wish to concentrate first of all on the candidate's qualifications rather than on their party affiliations. In the near future I wish to create the National Security Council comprised of outstanding public figures of various political backgrounds who will tackle the most significant state issues and whose opinions I will regard as significant and having influence on the president's decisions. This will be the only council active in the immediate vicinity of the president, not to yield to the temptation



of creating façade institutions which are not going to be used in practice by the president or his office.

Secondly, I intend to permanently introduce the principle of negotiation and dialogue to Polish political life. Only those can afford to engage themselves in dialogues that represent both social backgrounds and programs that may be appreciated in the dialogue – i.e. in the confrontation – because of the strength and merits of both the backgrounds and the programs

Thirdly, I wish my presidential term of office to be well remembered by my contemporaries, and well recorded in the history of democracy as effective, pragmatic and rational. For this reason the door to my presidential palace will be open to the citizens, to everybody, who has an idea on what we should be doing in Poland. This is no longer going to be an ivory tower with its hidden court where decisions are made. I believe that in the months ahead the president should primarily engage himself in radically improving both the external and internal security of Poland and the Polish people. Ladies and Gentlemen, we cannot be the first generation to enjoy external security and at the same time the first one to experience instability and fear in the streets of our towns and cities. External security means, first of all, Poland's participation and presence in, as well as its membership of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. I have made numerous, unambiguous and clear statements on this matter. From this stand I restate that, as the Commander-in Chief of the Polish Armed Forces I will not neglect anything that can practically serve the purpose of the modernization of the state's defence system. Here no ambiguity is allowed and I am confident that the Polish aspirations to become a part of the North Atlantic Pact will be fulfilled in the near future. This is not solely a matter of security guaranties for Poland – this is about the new Europe, an undivided Europe, where we seek mutual cooperation, engage in dialogues and do not recreate old divisions or impose new ones.

I want to assure all our neighbours with whom we have for centuries shared our good and bad historical experiences that the independent Republic of Poland is never going to be a threat to them.

The growing crime rate in the country requires decisive action. I will support such moves both in the area of law making and in the form of specific actions to be taken by the state and government bodies.

I wish to ensure continuation of the economic development – which is our greatest opportunity – so that we can take advantage of what has been obtained at a high social price but what is currently our “ticket” to the new Europe. I am

a decisive proponent of all that serves the economy, stabilizes the currency, and strengthens positive development tendencies. And in that matter all those willing to pursue this direction will obtain my due support.

Poland needs foreign investments as they too can accelerate technological changes and the civilizational development. I invite all willing to locate assets in Poland and gain due profits to do this. Poland is a stable country. Poland is and will remain open. Poland is a country whose growth dynamics is not going to be halted. Poland is a country that guarantees its best contacts with all partners. It is therefore an attractive place to locate assets and carry out business activities.

Fourthly, I would like to actively support restructuring of the Polish rural areas. I will not promise any visionary alternatives that are not congruent with the rules of the market economy but I promise Polish farmers that I am going to be their advocate as regards the costs of the transformation and as regards to identifying proper solutions for the modernization process.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Members of Sejm and Senate, my fellow citizens!

Poland is undergoing major changes. We have not wasted the past years. I am telling this to all those who have assumed firm responsibility in Poland since 1989 for the decisions, the changes and the reforms. Today we are once again facing yet another stage in this process. This is neither a breakthrough, a revolution; nor is it a move backwards. This is a way forward. The reforms adopted in 1989 have been accepted by Polish society and this has been confirmed by the results of the elections. Today it is necessary to make successive indispensable steps together. It is necessary for Poland to be a state of law; the Polish democracy needs to be stronger – it must not be shaken by unnecessary sensations and actions that undermine its internal logics. We need a Poland where more powers rest in gminas (the smallest administrative units) and small towns than here, at the central offices. More areas need to be open for the citizen society to be involved as the society has shown in the past six years that it is prudent, responsible and mature.

This is also something I would like to thank the Polish people for. Your patience, wisdom and judiciousness are the best asset Poland has right now, with respect to both its internal affairs and to our European aspirations.

I would like this active approach to be shared by young people as well. They are our great potential but unless they can fulfil themselves through work and studies, the potential may be irrevocably lost.

I am asking you for cooperation to make sure we are able to find an adequate place for the young within the transformation process that we are now carrying out. They will be our great hope; they will boldly fit themselves into the European structures.

A moment ago I have taken the presidential oath of office in front of you, Ladies and Gentlemen, and in front of the Polish nation. I will keep it for better and for worse – tomorrow, the day after tomorrow and at any time when I hold the office of the president. I believe in Poland; I believe in the Polish society. I believe in the future which can be better. I believe that the Polish people are going to use our international opportunities.

I am determined and I swear in front of you to spare no effort to make sure that each Pole can be proud to be a citizen of Poland and I will do everything possible to ensure that the Poles can be proud of their president. I am aware of the magnitude of this effort and of this responsibility, yet I believe that thinking about Poland, a modern Poland, well organized and offering opportunities to each of its citizens is exactly where we can come together and cooperate.

On this special occasion that I am speaking to you on, just before the Holidays, I give my best wishes to all my fellow citizens. I wish prosperity for you and your dear ones, for all of us. Have peaceful and good Holidays. Thank you very much.



# Chapter 1.

Consolidation of democracy – Works on the Constitution of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Republic; amending the law and the judiciary system

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A. Speeches and documents from the time  
before his assumption of the office  
of the President of the Republic of Poland

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1. Speech by Deputy Aleksander Kwasniewski at the sitting of the Constitutional Committee of the National Assembly on 9<sup>th</sup> of November 1993, after he was elected the Chairman of the Committee (excerpts)
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Mr President, Marshals of Sejm and Senate

Today's sitting is primarily devoted to the establishment of the Constitutional Committee. On behalf of the Vice-chairman and of myself I wish to express my gratitude for the trust and the votes cast for us. I also wish to assure you that we will do everything possible to guarantee that this trust will not be wasted.

Shortly we will hold the first sitting devoted to the subject matter. Nonetheless, as briefly as possible, I would like to share a few issues with you now.

First, while presenting me as a candidate, Deputy J. Jaskiernia mentioned my credentials, that is the thing which has given me the courage to apply for this post of eminence – that of the Chairman of the Constitutional Committee. I believe that all of us – including my modest self – are participating in a great transformation process aimed at the creation of a democratic state, formative for the market economy but also sensitive to social issues and the caring of the people. The transformation is multi-dimensional, it develops itself at various speeds and it probably brings us closer and closer towards the extraordinary finale – which should be the enactment of a modern Constitution of the Republic of Poland. It seems that there is a great chance that we will be able to make use of all our experience and to adopt such a Constitution in this parliament.

Second, already now I wish to declare to all of you that the draft I have signed – the draft proposed by the Left Democratic Alliance as of now becomes one of the officially submitted drafts. Thus, it will be treated equally to the draft of the Senate referred to by Senator A. Grzeskowiak, on an equal footing with the other drafts proposed by parliamentary groups in the previous parliamentary term. For the aim is to make our debate as conscientious and open as possible and to assure my impartiality as the chairperson of the Committee – which



I hereby declare. If at any time you feel that I do not comply with the impartiality requirement, please bring this to my attention.

Third, it seems essential for me that so many years of debates and work on the Constitution should be finalized. I think that it would be advisable to adopt a principle which has been developed through history and which – I presume – will be willingly adopted by the majority. This is the principle of “historic compromise.” It was referred to by F. Lassalle in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and he was right about many aspects of the issue. Experience of the European constitutionalism clearly points to the fact that compromise among diverse social interests and public expectations has allowed for the creation of effective constitutions both in developed countries and in developing democracies. Therefore, it would be advisable that we should follow this path and be able to create just this – a Constitution of citizens’ consensus – I repeat: a Constitution of citizens’ consensus.

Achievement of this requires a debate among us – among the groups in parliament. Remarks and suggestions from the president need to be listened to, as well. It is also necessary to open the debate for those political circles which have found themselves outside of parliament but which – due to their existence and real social support should also be allowed to voice their opinions in the debate on the new Constitution of the Republic of Poland – in a proper form and manner. The final decision will be made by the nation. In compliance with the new Constitutional Act on the Procedure for Preparing and Enacting a Constitution for the Republic of Poland, the new Constitution should be enacted by the National Assembly and adopted in a national referendum. As we know, suggestions have been made to hold a partial referendum – on specific provisions. The issue will be debated; as it is much more fundamental than that and right now it is impossible to opt decisively for one or the other solution. The final decision must in any case be made by the nation. This has to be a sovereign decision. It should determine the kind and shape of the Constitution to be adopted.

Mr President, Marshals, Ladies and Gentlemen. I am declaring my readiness to work on exactly this type of a Constitution of citizens’ consensus; a Constitution which will not be created too hastily – as this is impossible – but one which cannot be postponed unduly, as we have waited too long for the Constitution. The Constitution should be modern, mature and open to the expectations of the society. As the newly elected chairman of the Constitutional Committee of the National Assembly, I am declaring the will to achieve this. (...)

## 2. Speech of the Chairman of the Constitutional Committee at the sitting of the National Assembly on 23<sup>rd</sup> of September 1994 devoted to the first reading of parliamentary drafts of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland (excerpts)

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Chairman of the National Assembly! The Honourable Assembly!

I would like to speak first of all in the capacity of the chairman of the Constitutional Committee of the National Assembly appointed to this eminent position nearly a year ago, certainly not in order to take a stance on the first reading of the seven constitutional drafts presented to the National Assembly but to inform you how the Constitutional Committee regards the procedure of carrying out further work.

(...) I would like to discuss a few general issues which I regard as important for the overall atmosphere and for everything that is going to be crucial for our further work. Therefore, I am glad that the word “compromise” has been sounded in this chamber over the past two days as often as the word “Constitution,” which means that one of the preconditions for effective work on the creation of the Constitution may be met. I trust that we have also dispersed all doubts of those questioning the right or the proper representation of this assembly to begin work on the Constitution.

I want to restate what I have already said in this Chamber: I am deeply convinced that work on the creation of the Constitution is not only a privilege for the Assembly. It is also our duty resulting both from the Constitutional Act and (as far as I understand having listened to the debate) from the conviction of a great majority of us that – after five years of building democracy in Poland – it is time to create a stable and modern framework for the democracy. The new democratic momentum is what Poland needs and I think that – no matter how awkward this sounds – it is not as Deputy Eysymont has put it: that we have no more than uneven or unfinished walls after the specific experiences of the last five years. We have many good and bad experience due to which

we are wealthier and more mature. We can use the experience properly and this is one of the reasons for which we are planning to hold a debate within the Constitutional Committee on conclusions to be drawn from the Small Constitution and its application over the past years. For this is a very exact, one could say: tangible experience which requires to be analysed to improve the quality of our work.

I am deeply convinced that if the three principles presented below are going to be used throughout our works on the creation of the Constitution, there is a real chance for the Constitution to become a reality crucial in political, social and legal terms – and to form a modern framework for the Polish democracy.

First: political will. I believe that in the past two days political will has been expressed in this chamber very clearly. It is a political will to adopt the Constitution. It is a political will to fulfil the duty which we bear as members of the National Assembly. I trust that this will is going to be further confirmed in detailed debates, in the search for legal solutions for particular – sometimes controversial – issues which will be raised here.

The second principle is compromise. Undoubtedly the Constitution must be created beyond the divisions. It cannot be a Constitution of the left, of the right or of the centre. It must be a Constitution of the citizens, one which will finally be adopted by a majority of the Polish society. Therefore, this is a principle to be cherished by all, regardless of the number of votes they can summon.

Social acceptance must be the third principle. That is why it is so important for the constitutional debate not to be held in a social vacuum – it should not involve solely politicians, members of the parliament and experts. This needs to be a dialogue with the voters, a dialogue with the fellow citizens on our visions of democratic Poland and on the manner in which we want to respect the laws to be created here. It seems to me that the two days we have spent in this chamber have contributed to the constitutional awareness of the Polish society but this is only the beginning of the journey. For we are talking about constitutional awareness in a country which undoubtedly has little experience of this type and – as it has been remarked by some participants of the debate, to name only my preceding speaker – where law has often been used instrumentally, as a tool for the advancement of one's own goals rather than the interests of the society in its entirety. That is why we must highly value the third principle – that of social acceptance – if we want to create a Constitution of citizens' consensus.

(..) What results from the drafts, if we look at them closely, is (..) that, apart from the dividing issues which have been discussed extensively and which regard, among other, the state's political system, the scope of social entitlements, the relations between the state and the Church and the characteristic axiology of the Constitution, there are numerous issues which are not controversial and which – practically speaking – are already parts of the citizens' consensus. I think that we can see this as a huge success of the five years of democratic experience in Poland that neither in the National Assembly nor in the widely perceived realm of politics, or – which is crucial – in the social life there is any controversy over the fact that Poland must be a democratic state and that the Constitution must protect all the democratic rights and institutions. There is also no doubt that Poland must be a state of law where legal institutions will protect the citizens, create real grounds for the functioning of the executive power and pose checks on the functioning of the latter. It is also indisputable that it is needed to record clearly defined citizens' and social rights, congruent with world standards and the established civilization criteria.

In conclusion, I want to say that there is a broad area for consensus and a great chance to reach a compromise. As I am convinced of this I would like to appeal for the combined effort of all members of the Constitutional Committee, all senators, all deputies, all experts and all citizens who are interested in our work. I believe that we are facing a great opportunity to draft a well structured, modern and reasonable Constitution of the Republic of Poland and to offer it within predictable and short time limits to the Polish society for final approval.

### 3. Speech of the Chairman of the Constitutional Committee at the 33<sup>rd</sup> sitting of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland of the 2<sup>nd</sup> term on 21<sup>st</sup> of October 1994 (excerpts)

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Honourable Marshal! Ladies and Gentlemen Members of Sejm and Senate!

“Having collected constitutional drafts, the Sejm holds a debate on the crucial state’s system issues indicated by the Constitutional Committee” – this is what Article 3 paragraph 1 of the Constitutional Act of 1992<sup>1</sup> says on the procedure and enactment of a Constitution for the Republic of Poland. This is formal ground for today’s Sejm debate. Yet, the aim is not only to hold a formal debate. This is a chance to hold another important stage of parliamentary works aimed at enacting a new and long awaited Constitution of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Republic.

In view of the fact that the Constitutional Act where the quotation comes from has already been in force for two years – the two years encompassing the two terms of parliament – this is the first time when crucial state’s system issues are being debated in this Chamber. Considering that this is precisely about fundamental issues, this aptly illustrates the complexity of circumstances in which we are preparing the new Constitution. The complexity of the situation was also underlined by the fact that the first Constitutional Committee headed by Deputy Professor Bronislaw Geremek (present here right now), the aim of which was to prepare a new Constitution, was set up at the end of 1989<sup>2</sup>. It was not able to finish its work, which – at a certain stage – was extremely advanced.

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<sup>1</sup> The Constitutional Act on the Procedure for Preparing and Enacting a Constitution for the Republic of Poland (Journal of laws of 1992 No. 67, item 336; and of 1994 No. 61, item 251) was passed by the previous – 1<sup>st</sup> – Sejm, which nonetheless did not carry out specific implementation and merely enacted the – so called – Small Constitution of 17<sup>th</sup> of October 1992 – a temporary constitutional arrangement (edit.).

<sup>2</sup> The first Constitutional Committee was set up by the – so called – “Contracted Sejm”, elected on 4<sup>th</sup> of June 1989 in the partially democratic elections held in compliance with arrangements of the Round Table, functioning in the years 1989–1991. The works creation of a Constitution carried out by the Sejm were not continued or utilized by the 1st Sejm functioning in the years 1991–1993 (edit.).

The subsequent parliament of a much differentiated, pluralistic political setup also lacked the possibility – and the time, due to its premature dissolution – to prepare and enact a new Constitution. This Sejm is facing this chance. This is also a chance for the Senate and for us as members of the National Assembly.

I note with certain regret that in the course of our works on the Constitution voices have been raised that this is not the best time to draft the Constitution. Such statements may lead some to think that the works aimed at shaping new and much needed constitutional basis for our country may be dogged by some kind of ill fortune. I am convinced that neither the deputies nor senators may or should give in to this thought and to the feeling of helplessness.

The enactment of the new Constitution is not only a privilege of both Honourable Chambers; this is also our duty. This is a task of the highest-priority that has to be taken up by us as deputies and senators and I believe that our activism and commitment will be much greater than everything we have seen in this respect to date, and what we are observing right now in this chamber.

Intensive economic and social changes in Poland are going to continue for many years to come. Yet we have to create a stable and effective constitutional framework for these changes. We have already made visible progress on the road to achieving this. (...)

Less than a month ago the National Assembly gathered for the first time in relation to the constitutional works with the aim of holding the first reading of the seven constitutional drafts.

Today, initiating the first debate on the crucial state's system issues, it is necessary to look once more at the seven constitutional drafts filed with the Constitutional Committee. An analysis of their contents, the debate in the National Assembly and works of the standing sub-committees of the Constitutional Committee preparing today's debate have indicated a significant level of alignment of the suggested constitutional arrangements, which I am able to say with satisfaction.

We have become used to focusing on differences among the drafts. I think that this is a proper approach because of the level of complexities we are facing. Yet, today's debate is also a good opportunity to talk about what is common to the drafts.

I would like to stress this with conviction that that what is common to the drafts is the republican form of the statehood. The principle of the nation's sovereignty

is shared by the drafts. The respective wordings of the rule that the nation's sovereignty is wielded through indirect representation, supported by institutions of direct democracy, have very much in common with one another.

The fundamental principle of the democratic state of law that has been present in our constitutional system since the constitutional amendment of December 1989 has been approved by nearly all of the drafts, although only two of them associate it with the principle of social justice.

Also with the amendment of December 1989<sup>3</sup> political pluralism has gained the role of the constitutional principle. The general idea of unrestricted creation and functioning of political parties has been reflected in all the drafts; although in one of them it has been formulated in a way that could be hardly regarded as undisputable. We are also to a great extent in agreement as to the need to base the organisation of public authorities in the new Constitution in accordance with the principle of separation of the powers. Yet, as not all of the bill expresses the powers separation principle directly and those which do highlight its various aspects, the committee has decided to make this the subject matter of the first specific inquiry in the scope of the first general constitutional issue, entitled: the political system of the Republic of Poland.

On behalf of the Constitutional Committee I am putting this inquiry to the Sejm: Should the separation of powers and the checks and balances principles be guaranteed in a constitutional manner, how should this be done and – if such a guarantee is needed, what kind of separation of powers should this be?

The second specific inquiry also relates to the structure of the public authorities: should the parliament be composed of one or two chambers? An answer to this question will not only determine the structure of the parliament but it will also be crucial for a number of other issues related to the state's system.

The principle of self-government, especially stressing the structural role of territorial self-government, is a state's system principle recognised by all of the drafts. Though, as the filed drafts differ in the way they present the structural position of the territorial self-government, the committee suggests that Sejm should discuss the following issue in the scope of today's debate: The Position of the territorial, professional and economic self-governments.

What is common to all the drafts is that they tackle the principles defining the relations between the state and the Church, churches and religious unions. Nonetheless, since the formulae suggested by the particular drafts differ one

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<sup>3</sup> An amendment to the Constitution of 1952 adopted by the "Contracted Sejm" (edit.).

from another to a great extent – albeit none of them opts for extreme models of the state’s position on this issue in the form of a state of belligerent atheism or a theocracy. The Constitutional Committee puts forward the following issue for today’s debate: The method of regulating the relations between the Church (churches) or religious unions and the state. We are of the opinion that a reflection and search of a reasonable compromise may be most helpful for the subsequent works of the Constitutional Committee.

Ladies and Gentlemen Deputies! Ladies and Gentlemen Senators! The constitutional drafts filed with the Constitutional Committee present a wide range of solutions regarding human and civil rights and liberty. They also raise the issue of citizens’ responsibilities. As far as the constitutional rules defining the general status of an individual in the state are concerned, as well as with regard to public and political rights and freedoms substantial similarities are visible in the submitted constitutional drafts. I deeply believe that they form a solid basis for working out proper provisions of a uniform draft of the Constitution. Things are slightly different, when it comes to the social entitlements. Working out provisions of a unanimous constitutional draft on this subject will require a concerted effort and time. The Constitutional Committee is convinced that the weight and the complexity of the issues related to social entitlements are so great that they should be discussed in the context of the basis of the socio-economic system.

For this reason, we put forward the second general dilemma to be debated by the Sejm: Social entitlements of the citizens in relation to the principles of the social and economic system of the Republic of Poland. As in the case of the first general issue, the committee suggests three specific lines of inquiries.

The first specific inquiry is the following: should the social entitlements be formulated as subjective rights or should they take the form of the state’s obligations performed in the context of social policies in specific areas? In the filed drafts we find examples of both approaches to the social entitlements.

The second specific question relates to the following problem: Should the social entitlements be worded in the Constitution or merely in parliamentary acts? I think that this is illustrative of the dilemmas we are facing, especially in the view of the need for public appraisal of the draft expressed in the constitutional referendum. We must not forget that still a significant portion of the society attaches formidable expectations to the new Constitution hoping that it will provide for or maintain wide guarantees of social entitlements. Therefore, it is worth stressing that the states which guarantee high level social entitlements to their citizens achieve this almost solely through the plain legislative process.



The third specific question can be summarised as follows: should economic rights and freedoms, as well as rules of the state's economic policy be formulated together with the fundamental principles of the state's system or should they be grouped in a chapter on the rights, freedoms and duties of the citizen? An answer to this question does not relate only to the structure of the new Constitution but first of all it pertains to guarantees of living and social conditions of the citizens.

As I have said, the principle of the democratic state of law is expressed in nearly all of the drafts. At the same time, the current condition of the Polish legal system is a subject of – mostly well-founded – criticism. Acknowledging the role of law creation, the Constitutional Committee suggests that the Sejm should consider the third dilemma: the sources of law. Here we may first of all notice the need to answer the following question: Should the system of sources of law be closed or open? The second specific question is the relation of the international law to the national legislation. This issue is totally absent in the current constitutional principles and crucial in the context of our state's integration with the external structures. (...)

Constitutionalists and representatives of related scientific areas have taken part in the preparation of the issues for today's debate, producing 20 individual experts' opinions on the basis of which the standing experts' team has developed a synthesis entitled: "Basic constitutional dilemma." According to the experts, the basic dilemmas – the contentious issues – regard the nature of the state and the related social entitlements; the relationship between the state and the Church and religious unions, the governance system and transferring the state's prerogatives to supranational structures in relation to the perspective of Poland's accession of the European Union. (...)

Ladies and Gentlemen! After today's debate the Constitutional Committee and its standing subcommittees should proceed to work intensively aimed at preparing a uniform text of the constitutional draft. The works will be primarily based on the drafts directed to the Constitutional Committee and on the results of the previous constitutional debates.

I am of the opinion that our common experience resulting from practices associated with the implementation of the Constitution of 17<sup>th</sup> of October 1992 known as the "Small Constitution" should be an important guideline for our preparation of the organic law. In relation to this and in view of the expectations that our very unique experience will be one of the main guidelines for the constitutional works, I would like to finish by signalling a few issues we should focus our attention and reflection on in the context of the system-related experience of recent years, which are well-known to both the Sejm and to public opinion.

I will start by presenting reflections about the Sejm as, in my opinion, in our constitutional analyses and appraisal of the “Small Constitution” we should not focus on conclusions related exclusively to executive power, but we should carry out a very critical and rational appraisal of conclusions regarding legislative power. Therefore, I would like to start with some comments on the Sejm. The main problem is to rationally weight the results of the adoption of the powers separation principle for the scope of competence of the Sejm and in particular for its controlling functions. Remarks are being directed from executive authorities to the Sejm regarding excessive interference in the executive authorities’ prerogatives. I believe that this issue should be subjected to deep analyses.

The Sejm should also analyse for itself the issue of the legislative function related to the creation of law. Works on constructing provisions regulating legislative procedures in the new Constitution should be used to eliminate weaknesses of our legislative system. It is worth remembering that the submitted drafts include numerous interesting solutions of the problem. We should concentrate, among others on the quality of legislative initiatives and the scope of use of the speed-up procedure.

The disputes over the procedure to be followed by the deputies while proposing amendments to the Budgetary Act are only one example of the problems resulting from the separate treatment of the Budgetary Act in the Constitution. The discussions and controversies which have taken place in the context of the interpretation of the provisions related to the vote of no confidence for the government of Prime Minister Hanna Suchocka are in my opinion sufficient and decisive reasons for a critical appraisal of the solutions provided for by the “Small Constitution.”

The institution of the countersignature is one of the most important institutions – maybe the most important – regulating relations within the two-part executive authority, and they are also crucial for the relations between the parliament and the executive authority. The introduction of the institution of the countersignature was commonly welcomed as one of the most important achievements of the “Small Constitution,” while in practice the procedure has turned out to be a source of conflict and crises. Appointment and dismissal of members of the National Radio and Television Broadcasting Council (KRRiTV) is an example to the point. It is difficult to further accept that – as it was put by a well-know constitutionalists in an expert’s opinion devoted to the countersignature – the situation “is simply that the institution of the countersignature has never been implemented.”

In the light of the practical functioning of the system, the institution of the president's refusal to sign an act, commonly referred to as the pocket veto, requires deep consideration and analysis. The existing requirement of obtaining  $2/3^{\text{rd}}$  of votes needed to reaffirm the passing of a vetoed act is considered by some deputies, as well as by movers filing the constitutional drafts, as too restrictive.

A third problem is also related to the veto. It emerged as a potential source of a constitutional crisis several weeks ago. I am referring to the announcement by President Lech Walesa that he will not sign the act easing the restrictions for the carrying out of abortions. The president has suggested that the newly adopted legislative solution is contrary to the system of moral values he adheres to – which suggest a conflict of consciousness among other heads of state known from both recent and distant history. Therefore, I think that we should consider the adoption of a constitutional solution that would not create problems for the president in relation to the conflict of consciousness and, at the same time, would allow for the finishing of legislative proceedings in compliance with the law.

Yet another problem that has emerged in the practice of using the “Small Constitution,” or taking advantage of its weaknesses is the recently well-publicised and dangerous political conflict over the management of the armed forces. This has clearly shown the importance of legal provisions regulating the basis of the state's security system, although it is also possible that the problem may have more in common with regular law making and, above all, with the style of policy making. Nonetheless, I believe that the crisis over the minister of national defence should prompt us to draw conclusions in other areas such as constitutional regulations.

It appears to me that also the requirement of seeking [the president's] opinions on the appointment of ministers whose actions relate to the sphere of responsibilities and prerogatives of the president also deserves negative appraisal. By the power of creating fact rather than by sticking to the letter of law the formula of the – so called – “presidential ministries” has been developed, contrary to the obvious constitutional rule that no sector of the administration is excluded from the structures of the Ministry Council headed by the prime minister. This is an attempt to disintegrate and divide responsibilities of various members of the Ministry Council in front of the president. Therefore, I believe that this issue should also be settled in the course of the works of the Constitutional Committee, as well as in today's debate. The idea is to identify directions in which we should look for solutions which will spare us conflicts and situations lowering the effectiveness of the government's actions in the future. A situation where provisions of the Constitution warrant not allowing a prime minister,

who is supported by a decisive majority in parliament, to modify the personal composition of the government has also appeared in the practice of taking advantage of the “Small Constitution’s” provisions. It appears to me that the issue should also find a clear and precise solution in the proposals which we will prepare in the scope of our works of the standing subcommittees of the Constitutional Committee.

(..) I would like to ask us to remember while working on the development of the Constitution that we are creating an organic law which will be binding in the Poland of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and by that time the country must free itself from all the historical entanglements and divisions in which we are still stuck. It must be a Constitution spanning across divisions; as only then it will be a proper guidance for the Polish society and the Polish state – which by then will be a fully certified participant of international life and European structures, as this is too going to happen. I am deeply convinced that under the rules of the new Constitution we will become full members of European structures, starting with the European Union. This is also a very important, difficult but attainable goal.

I am deeply convinced that today’s debate, today’s statements will be fully beneficial for the Constitutional Committee. I believe that in this debate we are more often going to seek the things which unite rather than divide us. On behalf of the Constitutional Committee I would like to express a conviction that by mutual action we are able to prepare a draft of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, which we will be submitted to the Polish society in a national referendum and will gain the society’s support, as long as we have enough will, imagination and determination. And the will, imagination and determination are exactly what I am appealing for from you Ladies and Gentlemen deputies and senators.

## 4. Speech of the Chairman of the Constitutional Committee in the final part of the sitting of the Sejm of the second term (excerpts)

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Honourable Marshal! Ladies and Gentlemen!

(...) In my opening speech I appealed for a search of common solutions in order to stress what is common for the various constitutional drafts rather than concentrate on what is divisive. And I can conclude with satisfaction that the voices we have listened to have decisively suggested that it is possible to – I am reiterating this very strongly – reach a constitutional compromise, which will not consist in reaching an agreement just for the sake of convenience but which will promote common constitutional awareness in the widest possible social circles; and will reach the widest possible citizens' consensus.

Having said that three issues present in the drafts are the most complicated, difficult and divisive, after we have had this discussion I can say with much more optimism that as far as the state – Church relations are concerned it seems possible to arrive at provisions which will fully respect the independence of the state and church institutions, their sovereignty and autonomy, and will guarantee all rights indispensable for their functioning. This has been apparent in the statements made on behalf of the parliamentary clubs.

With regard to the political system a compromise is much more difficult to be reached for if the dispute is whether the parliament should consist of one or two chambers it is difficult to settle for a compromise: one and a half chambers or something similar to that, although as we know from the Polish experience, stranger things have happened. But quite seriously, I wish to say that in this area it is also apparent that there are chances to arrive at a solution resulting from our recent experience – the experience of democratic Poland, and which at the same time will be lasting and effective enough not to raise disputes or cause doubts about our future. The discussion still awaits us; it must be very concrete and must specifically refer to the provisions we are suggesting. Yet, my impression is that today's discussion has rather brought us closer to rather than farther from finding common solutions.

The third area of controversies raised during the debate regarded the scope of social entitlements. It seems that here there is no doubt that the entitlements should be recorded but they also must be congruent with both legal and economic realities; we are not going to let a conflict arise between the two axiologies: the normative axiology in the area of law creation and the socio-economic axiology which applied for issues such as the budget and its creation, tax policy, financial policy etc. That is why I believe that here it is possible to arrive at very sensible common provisions which will achieve much more than the required  $2/3^{\text{rd}}$  of votes in the Sejm.

(...) That is why, as the chairman of the Constitutional Committee of the National Assembly, I would like to express my opinion that following the debate we have come one step closer to finding a compromise; to identifying constitutional provisions which may gain not only the support of the National Assembly but also the indispensable support of society.

(...) It seems to me that the coming months will be crucial and for this reason it is necessary to show through the works of the subcommittee of the Constitutional Committee, and then in the subsequent readings in front of the National Assembly that a clear message understandable for the public is being sent by the National Assembly – the Sejm and Senate – we are creating a Constitution in which all citizens should be able to identify their rights and duties. We are creating an atmosphere which will allow us to build legal and constitutional awareness of a democratic state, a state of law which intends to enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

In conclusion I would like once again to warmly thank all those who have presented numerous suggestions, who are already making quite specific contributions to the Constitution and who have expressed their stances on the seven previously submitted constitutional drafts. I want to promise them that in the course of the works of the Constitutional Committee and in the works of its subcommittees all the statements will be conscientiously used and the coming discussions will bring us closer to the goal of creating a modern Constitution for the democratic state. I am deeply convinced that such a Constitution and such a course of works are extremely high priorities for all of us.

B. Texts of speeches, addresses, documents  
and interviews after assumption of the office  
of President of the Republic of Poland

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# 1. Address during celebrations of the National 3<sup>rd</sup> of May Holiday on 3<sup>rd</sup> of May at Pilsudski's Square (excerpt)

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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen, my fellow citizens!

Today we are proudly celebrating the anniversary of the Constitution of the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May. This national holiday is not in remembrance of either a decisive battle or historic revolution. It is in remembrance of the momentous act of the citizens' maturity and a joint striving of the Polish people to reform the Polish Republic.

The enactment of the historic Government Act in 1791 by the Great Sejm was a point to which the modern idea of the Polish nation may be traced back. "A new nation of Poles" was born, as it was put by a publicist of those times. The achievement of the Great Sejm has been for two centuries a crucial point of reference for our patriotism and feeling of national identity.

The National 3<sup>rd</sup> May Holiday refers to the trend of Polish patriotism which has built the strength and efficiency of the state, aimed at the improvement of law and strengthening of democracy. Such a notion of patriotic duties is close to today's needs of Poland.

The Preamble to the May Constitution speaks about the need for the Polish people to grasp the historic moment – "this dying moment that has restored us to ourselves, free of the ignominious dictates of foreign coercion." [[http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/May\\_Constitution\\_of\\_Poland#5BPreamble.5D](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/May_Constitution_of_Poland#5BPreamble.5D)] The current relevance of this postulate is apparent and obvious.

Ladies and Gentlemen

The Polish Republic faces challenges different from those it did two hundred years ago. Yet, just as then Poland urgently requires a new Constitution which will be a prospective and prudent compromise reached by the political elites, and – above all – by all the citizens. An effort to deeply reform the state is what



we need. What we need are such legal arrangements which will solidify the Polish democracy and help us take up our rightful place in Europe.

A Constitution appropriate for the modern times should wisely combine the heritage of our history and national traditions with the legal and civilizational standards which are accomplishments of solid and experienced democracies. The fact that we feel like Poles and are proud of this should not stop us from benefiting from the legacies of others.

I am deeply convinced that the enactment of the new Constitution will be possible in the near future. The year 1996 – free of election battles – creates a great opportunity for this. The opportunity should be grasped. Too many decisions in our ancient and more recent past have been made too late. Too often we have put off to tomorrow what should have been done yesterday. We are not going to lay firm foundations for the democratic structure if the “law of laws” will be postponed for “better times.” For the new Constitution the right time is now.

There are real differences and divisions in Poland. Yet, there is no reason to overrate them. They refer more to the realm of politics and ideology than that of the ideas of the state and of the citizens’ rights and duties. The differences do not exclude the chance of the Polish people to reach a consensus either in matters of daily life or in respect of the most essential matters. If we, as a nation, want to benefit from the legacy of today’s national holiday, we should be able to build a consensus over the enactment of a new Constitution, guarantee the security of Poland and its proper image in the world, as well as maintain economic growth and fight poverty. (...)

## 2. Address on 3<sup>rd</sup> of May 1996 at the ceremonial meeting with the Constitutional Committee of the National Assembly at the Royal Castle

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Honourable Marshals, Respected Members of the Constitutional Committee of the National Assembly, Dear Guests. Ladies and Gentlemen!

Today we are marking the 205<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the day when the “desire for general welfare,” as it was put by Father Hugo Kollataj, prevailed over egoism of the “nation of landed nobility and gentry.” The 3<sup>rd</sup> of May is, nonetheless, not only a day for proper brooding over the past. On this day we should also think about the future – first of all about what kind of a constitutional and legal framework is needed for our country. How should we meet the expectations so that future generations can have respect for the results of work of this National Assembly, which has been entrusted by the nation with the role of the constituent assembly?

The National 3<sup>rd</sup> of May Holiday commemorates public maturity of the most enlightened Poles who lived at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and their efforts to reform the Republic of Poland. It is worth mentioning here that the main authors of the May Constitution: deputies, activists of the patriotic circle and co-workers of King Stanislaw August as late as at the beginning of the session of the Four-Years Sejm belonged to competing political camps. Their achievement was a fruit of a joint feeling of patriotic responsibility for Poland. In the Preamble of the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May Constitution we find the characteristic passage: “desiring to merit the blessing and gratitude of contemporary and future generations, despite obstacles that may cause passions in us, we do for the general welfare, for the establishment of liberty, for the preservation of our country and its borders, with the utmost constancy of spirit ordain this Constitution...” [ibidem]

This sense of patriotic duties is aligned with today’s needs of Poland. The Republic of Poland currently faces challenges different from those it did two hundred years ago. But today as then Poland urgently needs a Constitution which will be a result of foresighted, prudent compromise of the political elites.

Will the contemporary political circles be able today to give their ancestors the same proof of responsibility?

Today our task is to enact a Constitution of the Republic of Poland that would meet the universal standards of a democratic state of law. The constitutional system of Poland is currently made up of standards of various qualities, originating from various times. A part of them is totally obsolete. This does not serve well the respect for law among the citizens.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

The country that two hundred years ago was among the pioneers of constitutionalism has today found itself among the dawdlers. Poland cannot afford a patchwork of ideas and standards of various epochs. Poland must have a new Constitution! Our Homeland is a normal European country which should have a normal, modern Constitution, such as in other European countries. Without this it is impossible to guarantee the stability of public order. What is more, the very existence of the democratic state of law requires us to overcome the still abundant residue of the totalitarian and autocratic rule. It requires the creation of Constitutional guarantees to rule out a comeback of non-democratic practices of the system which was rejected by Poland 7 years ago.

Since the historic breakthrough of 1989 three attempts to formulate a new Constitution for the new democratic Poland have been made – the first one was made during the “Contracted Sejm,” the second – in the previous term of parliament. The third attempt has been made by the deputies and senators present at today's meeting.

The first attempt ended unsuccessfully because of the lack of democratic legitimation of that Sejm. The failure of the second one was brought about by the partitioning of the next parliament. These failures have, though, enabled us to gain some positive experience.

All together, the governing and the governed, the left and the right, the employees and the employers, parliamentarians and constitutionalists, we have been learning for seven years how to live and function in the realities of democracy, pluralism and market economy. Together we have learnt something over this period – as well as from one another. I hope that our experience has helped us to avoid numerous mistakes while developing the future bill.

Also the experience gained on the creation of the “Small Constitution” of 1992 has been important. As we remember, it was passed due to the cooperation

of the biggest parliamentary groups of those times. Today it depends on the agreement and responsibility of all the biggest clubs in the Sejm and Senate if Poland is going to have a new Constitution before the year 2000.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

The works of the Constitutional Committee of the National Assembly on the bill of the Constitution are coming to an end. I have been heading the Committee for two years. This has been a very valuable experience. I am aware of the difficulty of the work done by the deputies, senators, experts and representatives of various governing bodies and institutions working on the preparation of the uniform text

The uniform text of the constitutional bill prepared by the Constitutional Committee covers all the principles of a democratic state of law. It guarantees legal order, as well as both efficient and democratic governance. The bill also accounts for the fact that Poland needs a deep reform of the state. The suggested provisions will facilitate limitation of the state's centralism and stress the importance of local communities and circles. The Republic of Poland must be strong and well-governed but it must also be self-governed.

The issue has appeared throughout the constitutional debates of how to match guarantees for the market economy with providing social security for the citizens. The postulate of social justice must not be identified today with a primitive notion of egalitarianism. To strive for equality is a natural human desire. The wording worked out in this area by the Constitutional Committee are a successful attempt to solve this dilemma.

Soon Poland will be in NATO and in the European Union. Therefore, we need these types of legal solutions which will help our country to take up its well-deserved place in Europe. Also this Constitution is going to bring us closer to this goal set by the Polish *raison d'état*. The bill sets guarantees of the independence of Poland. Yet, it also allows for a voluntary limitation of certain aspects of our sovereignty for and transferring them to the European and Euro-Atlantic structures with which we seek to integrate ourselves.

The Constitution must also guard human dignity and citizens' freedoms. The bill which is currently being prepared guarantees the citizens concrete measures to protect their rights. One of them is the institution of general constitutional complaint. This is a novelty in the Polish practice. I am convinced that this is one of the boldest provisions of the bill. At the same time it is one of the most

needed. Its adoption will create an entirely new quality of relations between the state and the citizen.

I am convinced that the result of the works of the Constitutional Committee is a very good basis for deepened and very precise debates during the second reading of the bill at the National Assembly. I believe that it will be possible to enact the Constitution in the near very future. The year 1996 – free of election campaigns creates a good chance for this. This chance should be used.

A high degree of consensus has been reached by the Constitutional Assembly on some issues. Examples include the finality of judgments of the Constitutional Tribunal and the already mentioned general character of the constitutional complaint. I believe that there is no reason to wait with their adoption to our legal system until the end of the constitutional works. In the near future I intend to use the right of the legislative initiative and put forward a draft of the constitutional act which will allow the introduction of the changes as early as this year.

Honourable Marshals, Ladies and Gentlemen gathered here!

The Constitution created in 1791 was one for the people but it was being formed without the participation of the people. By the way, the founding fathers of the American Constitution proceeded in the same way. Today, on the threshold of the 21<sup>st</sup> century this is impossible. It is necessary to create the Constitution with a wide participation of representatives of various political parties and proponents of various systems of values, in the process of open discussions and under the eyes of the public opinion. This is not to be a Constitution of one parliament but a Constitution of the whole Nation. It is to be a signpost for the present and the future generations. And this is congruent with the public expectations.

The decision of the society made in the referendum must be a conscious one, based on a deepened understanding of systematic questions and familiarisation with the text of the bill. I know that there are real differences and divisions in Poland. There is, however, no reason to overestimate them. They refer more to the realm of politics and ideology than to the ideas and the functioning of the state or on the citizens' freedoms.

A Constitution is not a political manifest, neither is it a poem nor a prayer. Its value will be commensurate with the number of verifiable and workable legal provisions included in it, which will function regardless of the fact that the government is in the hand of the right, of the left or of the centre. The

constitutional debate must be free from short-lived disputes and expedient political controversies. We should concentrate on the functionality and usability of both particular provisions and the whole Constitution (...).

Consensus on the constitutional issues is not only needed. It is also possible.

### 3. Presidential legislative initiative – a fragment of the explanatory statement in the constitutional bill on the Constitutional Tribunal Bill sent to the Marshal of the Sejm on 29<sup>th</sup> of May 1996

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The current state of advancement of the works on the new Constitution of the Republic of Poland and the perspective of an end of this parliamentary term dictates the taking of steps aimed at preparing the state's bodies for this difficult task of the implementation of provisions of the new Organic Law. The Constitution is probably going to include a number of solutions largely diverting from the current regulations. From the moment the Constitution comes into force it will be needed to constantly verify if and to what degree the body of legislation enacted under the previous constitutional arrangements is consistent with the new Constitution. Regardless of how detailed a version of the transitory provisions will be adopted in the new Constitution, it is obvious that the task of determining the constitutionality of the previous legislation and the scope of application of the acts from before the enactment of the Constitution will have to be primarily a responsibility of the Constitutional Tribunal. Meeting this challenge would be, however, difficult for the Tribunal with its current scope of competence; especially that this scope is to be substantially changed in the new Constitution. Thus, before the new Constitutional Tribunal Act is enacted and the needed organisational steps are taken, a substantial delay could occur in the implementation of other provisions of the new Constitution, especially those which will regulate in a different manner the citizens' rights and freedoms.

Therefore, it would be advisable to start by shaping the scope of competence and the organisational structure of the Constitutional Tribunal so that at the time when the Constitution is enacted the institution has already been adjusted to assume the new tasks which will be assigned to it.

Singling out the issues related to the Constitutional Tribunal and addressing them in a constitutional act to be adopted before the enactment of the Constitution is especially reasonable as, in the course of works of the Constitutional Committee of the National Assembly a substantial degree of consensus has been reached

as to the direction in which the reforms of the constitutional court system should be pursued in Poland.

This consensus especially concerns solutions crucial for the carrying out of the idea of creating a state of law in Poland and to align our institutions with standards of developed modern democracies.

The first goal is to guarantee the final and binding character of the judgements pronounced by the Constitutional Tribunal (Article 4 of the bill), that is to liquidate the anachronism of the existent power of the Sejm to reject the Tribunal's judgements. A state of law stressing the primacy of the Constitution should obviously leave it to the Constitutional Tribunal to make final decisions on the constitutionality of all normative acts of a lower degree, including parliamentary acts. Here the bill repeats provisions already accepted by the Constitutional Tribunal for the constitutional bill.

Second, it is needed to guarantee constitutional grounds for the adoption of the procedure of the general constitutional complaint allowing everyone under jurisdiction of the Polish state to directly address the Constitutional Tribunal with a complaint about a legal norm on the basis of which a court or another state institution has passed a final judgement on the civil rights, freedoms or duties specified in the Constitution (Art. 2 paragraph 4 and Art. 3 of the bill). Thus, a procedure will be created of enforcing all the rights and freedoms which the Constitution grants to an individual. The introduction of the general constitutional complaint will be especially meaningful for the protection of rights and freedoms, and for this reason it would be advisable to start by adopting all needed legal regulations so that the procedure becomes applicable immediately after the enactment of the new Constitution. Also in this area the bill repeats provisions already adopted by the Constitutional Committee, and its only new element rests in the re-edition of the provisions so that they are grouped together with the legal regulation regarding the Constitutional Tribunal.

Both the decision to grant individuals the right to file general constitutional complaints and to determine the final character of the Constitutional Tribunal's judgements are fundamental changes strengthening the governance system in Poland.

Introducing them to the legal system already before the Constitution is enacted will allow the citizens to use them sooner in protection of their rights and freedoms. Therefore, there is no reason to postpone their adoption. (...)



## 4. Address to the General Assembly of the Judges of the Constitutional Tribunal – 14<sup>th</sup> of January 1997 (excerpts)

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(...) The text of the constitutional bill which is now being prepared by the Constitutional Tribunal provides for all the most important principles of a democratic state of law. It guarantees legal order and both efficient and democratic governance. Neither the president nor the government or the parliament will be able to place themselves above the Constitution. The bill declares protection of human dignity and citizens' freedoms. It guarantees specific measures to the citizens for the protection of their rights. The institution of the constitutional complaint is one of them. This is one of the most important provisions of the future Constitution. It will allow everyone under jurisdiction of the Polish state to directly address the Constitutional Tribunal with a complaint about a legal norm on the basis of which a court or another state institution has passed a final judgement on the civil rights, freedoms or duties specified in the Constitution.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Motivated by the will to support the constitutional process several months ago I came forward with the legislative initiative regarding the Constitutional Tribunal. The Constitutional Tribunal Bill is inseparably connected to the bill of the new Constitution of the Republic of Poland. It is in fact a part of the new Constitution. (...)

Neither my initiative on the scope of competence of the Tribunal, nor many other solutions included in the bill of the Constitution constitutes a revolution in the legal system. It allows for harmonisation with the standards binding in Europe. This is also my understanding of the essence of the disputes over the solutions. The choice is simple: we can either strive to match the most successful, the best organised states or we can settle for the relics of the past. I have no doubt which of these is the right choice.

Honourable Tribunal, Ladies and Gentlemen!

The Constitutional Tribunal is a part of the new constitutional order which we have been building for nearly eight years in our country. It is you – Judges of the Tribunal – who know best how many mistakes we are making in the course of the works; how difficult it is to translate intentions into legal norms; how differently the principle of the state of law is being interpreted; and how often politicians prove unable to use the law.

We are doing the work of pioneers. Many generations have grown up and developed their legal culture in completely different conditions – in a world where politics dominated the law. It is difficult to get rid of the habit to treat law instrumentally. But it is also necessary to limit the drive for treating it as an absolute. It depends on you to what extent the creation of new norms of social conduct will reflect the spirit of law derived from the high legal culture and awareness of the fact that the letter of the law is not going to properly replace all sources of social norms. (...)

## 5. Fragments of an interview for "Sygnaly Dnia" (Echoes of the Day) – 31<sup>st</sup> of January 1997

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*(...) And are you not afraid that, for example the Solidarity Election Action is going to appeal for a boycott of the referendum and thus the whole thing will simply become ridiculous. This is going to be about how many people will go to the poles to cast their ballots.*

I suggest that we should talk about the Constitution seriously. Well, for me appealing for the boycott is just treating the Constitution in an unserious and irresponsible way as in this referendum one may say no to the Constitution.

This is not as if you come and the only possible answer to be given is yes. Boycotting the Constitution is breaking certain rules of democratic conduct which we should adopt in Poland. I think that it is just necessary to say one thing – Poland must have the Constitution. It has been already 8 years since the Round Table, which has its anniversary soon. We have had 8 years of democratic experience. We are on the threshold of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We have had deep fundamental changes both in the political system and in the functioning of the state and the economy. The Constitution must be a framework for the solid state and for various codifications in the future. As this is such an important document, I hope that the citizens will want to do something good for Poland – that is to talk about the Constitution and adopt it. And political groups will not try use the Constitution as an element of the election campaign.

*And, in your opinion is the discussion on the Constitution before the constitutional referendum already an element of the election campaign?*

Obviously the Constitution is so important that each party should express its attitude towards the Organic Law, it is also an important element of the political game. (...) I headed the Constitutional Committee for 2 years; we worked hard in a very broad circle with the participation of all the powers represented in this parliament – including Solidarity. All the drafts, including the public bill, were together a starting point so that the Constitution which is a result

of the works of the Constitutional Committee makes reference to each of the drafts, and if you look at the more than 230 articles of the Constitution, it will be apparent that a great majority of it is congruent with what was written in the drafts. Some issues, on the other hand are controversial. People simply have diverse opinions and the decisions must reflect the will of the majority. (...)

*Then, Mr President when is the constitutional referendum going to be held?*

A lot depends on the course of the second reading. If it turns out that there are numerous amendments the Constitutional Committee must take more time to put them in order and of course the works will be prolonged. I would like the referendum to be held in the first half of the year. I would like it to be held separately from the parliamentary elections which will probably be organised in September. Why separately? Because, I would like it to be possible to focus public attention on the Constitution (...). But we must also take into consideration the possibility that the works will proceed slower and the only realistic date for this will be after the summer holidays. Then, if only for the sake of economy, it will be also necessary to consider the option that these two may be held together. For the Constitutional awareness of the Polish people it would be undoubtedly more important if we could talk about the Constitution separately. Ladies and Gentlemen, the Constitution does not only cover the most publicised and controversial issues such as the relations between the state and the Church, protection of life etc. (...)

The Constitution covers civil rights and it provides for measures to enforce them. There is quite a new institution – the Constitutional complaint, which so far has been reserved for the state's authorities and as of now will be also an entitlement of each citizen, who will be able to claim the incompliance of any act with the Constitution in front of the Tribunal. So the Constitution really introduces many rights, principles and rules important for every citizen and it would be beneficial to find the time to talk about this and to concentrate on this, and not solely on the publicised, controversial issues which have been raised for a long time.

*Mr President will you try to persuade the public opinion to adopt this Constitutional bill or generally to take part in the referendum to express an opinion?*

Certainly, taking part in the referendum seems obvious to me. I assume that we are taking ourselves seriously. What I am saying is that it is possible to say yes or no to the Constitution in the referendum but it is necessary to say something as we are creating the Organic Law for ourselves. This is not an act for the left or the right; it is an act for the citizen, for a Kowalski, Kwasniewski,

and Tomaszewski – for everybody. It is possible to familiarise oneself with the Constitution – almost every newspaper has already published the text. I believe that this is a good Constitution. Certainly my attitude to it is very personal—for two years I was the head of the Constitutional Committee. I have recently had a conversation with experts in the area of the constitutional law from Europe, they have stressed that this is a good and modern Constitution. I reject the point which sometimes is being made in this heated atmosphere that this Constitution could as well be enacted in any European and, as someone has even said, an African country. First we respect each continent. Second if, due to the universality of its provisions, the Constitution could be accepted in any other country this means that it is congruent with the standards considered worldwide as democratic, in compliance with human rights and providing good protection of the rights. This I would consider to be more of praise than criticism. This is especially true as – wherever a reference to tradition was needed – it has been made; I believe that we are referring to the tradition of the Polish state and the institutions formed in it over the past years. It is also my opinion that the Constitution combines modern elements with the Polish traditions and that most certainly the Constitution is congruent with modern legal standards binding in Europe. (...)

## 6. Address to the General Assembly of the Judges of the Constitutional Tribunal – 20<sup>th</sup> of March 1997 (excerpts)

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(...)

Poland needs a Constitution that will define the basis for the functioning of the state and its democratic institutions. We are finalising this work. I think that the National Assembly will start its sitting on Friday and then the second reading of the Constitution will be held. The bill prepared after three years of the arduous works of the Constitutional Committee is a wise compromise by which the national interest has prevailed over particular interests. This is not only my opinion. It is also shared by representatives of the scientific world, publicists and many politicians.

I see a chance for the constitutional referendum to be held on the 25<sup>th</sup> of May, Enactment of the Constitution would be good news for Poland. It would close the long period of reforming the Polish state and its legal system.

The great constitutional debate which arouses so many emotions and passion is coming to its successful finale. I am glad that representatives of all the political groups and of many circles – including yours – voice their opinions on a matter so important for the state and that the issue finds such a big response from the society.

I believe in the prudence of the Polish people. I trust that we are not going to miss the opportunity that has appeared to us for the first time after so many years. A modern and prudent Organic Law is needed by all of us – also to the legal circles – the judges and public prosecutors. It is needed by the Republic of Poland.

Provisions included in the Constitutional Bill account for public expectations and the tasks that are to be taken up by public courts. They strengthen the position of the courts within the system and improve the independence of the judge. They elevate many norms defining his status to the level of constitutional principles.

Examples include the conditions of work and remuneration of the judges commensurate to the rank of the office and the scope of duties. The position of the National Judiciary Council which guards the independence of the judiciary and the judges. The Constitutional draft provides for the implementation of the principle of two-instance judicial proceedings in administration courts which undoubtedly is going to increase control over public administration.

A democratic state of law requires a well-developed system of measures for the protection of freedoms and rights. For the first time in the history of the Polish constitutionalism the institution of the general constitutional complaint is going to be provided for by the Constitution. Every individual whose constitutional freedoms of right will be breached will be able to claim in compliance of a parliamentary or other legal act on the basis of which a court or a public administration body has pronounced a final judgement on his or her rights, freedoms and duties. The legal solution related to the Tribunal itself and determining the finality of its judgements is also of a great importance for the system.

I am convinced that in the near future we will obtain the most important legal act – the organic law of the sovereign and democratic state.

## 7. Speech at the conference "Constitution of the Republic of Poland – History and Reality" – 22<sup>nd</sup> of March 1997 (excerpts)

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

Today is a special day and I have the feeling that we are all participating in a great historic event. The passage of the Constitution by the National Assembly and directing it to the president who now has the time to suggest amendments is an event we are going to remember. There is a symbolic dimension to the fact that I am publicly meeting young people on the issue of the Constitution and I consider this to be a good sign. If the Constitution is to fulfil its role it will do so providing that you – who are in your twenties and younger – come to the conclusion that this is a Constitution that strengthens the state and shapes the law and the relations between the state and the citizen in a way which is simultaneously neither going to impede the state nor limit civil rights. I am glad that you have read the Constitution. On my part, I am declaring the readiness to put forward amendments which may change something but, of course, the changes cannot be too deep or far reaching. The Constitution has gained 90% support in the National Assembly which means that it has really overcome the limits of party divisions and disputes. It can become a Constitution that would unite rather than divide. (...)

After seven years of waiting for the Constitution the word haste is a misunderstanding. A procedure of the works has to be adopted that guarantee that the third reading at which the president's amendments will be decided on could be held soon and the constitutional referendum could take place on the 25<sup>th</sup> of May. And this has nothing in common with the visit of the Pope. It is solely related to the fact that the Constitution needs to be finally adopted. If it is not adopted now, we will inevitably entangle it in the election campaign. And getting the Constitution entangled in the election campaign will mean that hardly anyone will discuss the Constitution and what is written in it but everyone will discuss the politics and the question of who will profit more from the enactment or rejection of the Constitution. And this is the main reason why the constitutional referendum should be held on the 25<sup>th</sup> of May.



Second, this is a Constitution of compromise. Created in this parliament and supported by such various political groups as SLD, PPS, PSL, the Liberty Union, the Labour Party, it is probably the Constitution of the greatest consensus imaginable in Poland at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The compromise decides on the strength of the document and it is also proof of the wisdom and strength of those who have decided to opt for it – from the left to the moderate right.

Third, this Constitution meets European standards, it is modern and it guarantees both human rights and the rights' protection; social entitlements and the entitlements' enforcement. It is an organic law which fully accepts what is the legacy of European democracies after the Second World War. This is also a great asset of the Constitution.

Fourth, the Constitution passed today makes use of Poland's experience after 1989. This is very important as we do not have a feeling of inferiority – albeit ungrounded – that would stem from the fact that, from the institutional point of view, we were the first to initiate the reforms in 1989 – sessions of the Round Table took place in this Palace – and all our neighbours have already been able to prepare their Constitutions, while Poland has not. (...)

Fifth, the Constitution, Ladies and Gentlemen brings new important legal solutions which strengthen the position of the citizen, his or her political influence and impact on the relations with the state – on the possibility to seeking enforcement of his or her rights. In this Constitution we have introduced the principle of the general constitutional complaint which means that every citizen will be able to challenge specific parliamentary acts or regulations if in his or her opinion they interfere with his or her rights in a manner not complying with the Constitution. This is a powerful weapon which we are giving into the hands of every citizen. Until now this right was restricted to the Sejm, the President and the government. I believe that also the scope of the citizen's and civil rights which we have written in there is such as to eliminate all doubts. This Constitution does not provide for the state's omnipotence. This is a Constitution that really accepts the citizen and his or her individual rights. It does not include discriminating provisions which would eliminate the rights of any group on account of national, racial or material status – this is particularly important for the Socialists.

In this Constitution we also find a range of social entitlements which are practically enforceable and not just a set of wishes: to guarantee accommodation, work and the possibility for everybody to obtain education. It also provides for specific means to enforce the entitlements (...).

It is worthwhile to get involved in the defence of the Constitution. I am sure that after so many years, when so many decisions were being explained as the choice of the lesser evil, a time is coming for Poland to stop choosing the lesser evil and to start doing something good for Poland, for all of us, and especially for you – the young generation. All the disputes about the democratic state without the organic law are in fact fictional. How should we create the law and traditions of democratic conduct, how should we create relations among the specific elements of the governance structure if we are missing a framework defining all of this? That is why I would like to warmly ask all of you to make your presence felt in the campaign that is ahead of us. It is very important to make good use of the coming weeks and bring the Constitution to the public awareness, so that it is present not only in the newspapers or on the top of political events.

Obviously you need to remember that no Constitution is going to amend human characters, none will automatically guarantee 100% obedience of the law. But one must try. With a Constitution it is easier to build the democratic state of law. Without it this remains wishful thinking or an illusion. The slogan for the constitutional campaign is to be: do something good for Poland, vote for the Constitution. (...)

## 8. Address to the National Assembly – 2<sup>nd</sup> of April 1997

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Honourable Marshal of Sejm, Honourable Marshal of Senate, Honourable Members of the National Assembly of the Republic of Poland, Ladies and Gentlemen!

In a most unusual, moving moment such as this which we are now experiencing we may – referring to Adam Mickiewicz – say: *“you will by this much improve your souls by which you will improve your laws.”* A historic event has just happened. By the decision of the governed the parliamentary stage of the creation of the new organic law has been completed.

The idea of the Constitution is of the defining factors of the common awareness and memory of the Polish people. The modern notion of the Polish nation may be traced back to the enactment of the “Government Act” by the Great Sejm in 1791. For over two centuries the achievement of the Great Sejm has been a reference point for our patriotism and the feeling of national identity.

Our tradition cherishes also the word of the Constitution of the Great Duchy of Warsaw: “The servitude is being abolished. All the citizens are equal before the law,” as well as the fact that the Constitution of the Congress Kingdom of Poland written by Polish patriots was the most democratic act of this type in contemporary Europe of its time. We have also inherited the great message of the compromise reached in March 1921 over the parties divisions. We also cannot forget about the April Constitution of 1935 – although it was enacted in a manner causing doubts and objections, it has covered the idea of the independent Republic of Poland through the years of the Second World War.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

“We, the Polish Nation – all citizens of the Republic” establish the Constitution, “desiring to guarantee the rights of the citizens for all time and to ensure diligence and efficiency in the work of public bodies.” These words of the solemn introduction to the recently enacted Constitution have a special meaning for

the Polish people. Just as in the momentous May of 1791 we may say that we have used the historic moment, which “has restored us to ourselves.”

Poland is now a democratic and stable state. The economic transformation is proceeding successfully. Democratic procedures have become an obvious standard of political life. The right to rule is not assigned to one political camp. The rotation of the groups and individuals in power are a result of the will of the nation, expressed in the elections held in a manner regulated by the law. These are the gains which will not be taken away from the Polish people by anyone.

The constitutional system of Poland is currently made up of standards of various qualities, originated in assorted times. A part of them is totally obsolete. Since the historic breakthrough of 1989 three attempts to formulate a new Constitution for the new democratic Poland have been made. The first two of them were not successful. Yet they have enabled us to gain appropriate experience. We have been able to prepare a text which is better and more mature, taking into account the good and bad experiences of the past seven years of the transformation.

Honourable National Assembly, Ladies and Gentlemen!

Poland needs the Constitution – one that is a fruit of the consensus among the political elites, whose norms and values are accepted by the nation. The value of a Constitution is commensurate to the number of verified and enforceable legal norms included in it. What is of special importance is that it remains close to the individual for years and decades. I am convinced that this will be true of the Constitution which has just been enacted by the National Assembly. By the power of it we guarantee universal values of a democratic state of law; we guarantee the legal order and both the efficient and democratic governance system; we strengthen the principle of the balance of powers; we strengthen the independence of the judiciary and of the judges.

The new Constitution provides us with the possibility to change our attitude to the state. The governments have always spoken of the need for a strong state; today we may be in more need of it than we have ever been before. Yet, it needs to be remembered that a state is strong primarily by the power of the support of its citizens. That is why in times of crises democracies have proven stronger than dictatorships. A strong state is one whose citizens are not afraid of it. A strong state is also not shaken by internal conflicts over power. Its functions are subsidiary in relation to the citizens' initiatives, do not restrict them. The new Constitution creates precisely this kind of state.

With the enactment of the Constitution human rights in Poland will no longer just be declarations. They will become a basis for claims the citizen will be able to make towards the state, for the Constitution provides for court proceedings in cases of a breach of the constitutional rights. At the same time it grants the right of the constitutional complaint to everyone whose rights have been infringed by a normative act, including a parliamentary act. The constitutional complaint has also one additional dimension – it opens up quite new possibilities of the citizens' participation in law creation.

On the eve of the opening of the negotiations on Poland's accession of the European and Euro-Atlantic structures the values and principles have been confirmed that lie at the basis of the North Atlantic Alliance and the European Union, which are common to democratic states of the Western civilization.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

There are real differences and divisions in Poland. There is, however, no reason to overestimate them. They do not preclude the possibility of finding an agreement for the Polish people. Probably the most important ability we have gained in the course of the constitutional works is the act of compromise. It rarely happens that people of diverse backgrounds and views, coming from various political wings can meet one another halfway. This confirms my deepest conviction that – when guided by good will and awareness of the needs of our country – one can always achieve success.

The success has been reached by members of the National Assembly. A well-balanced compromise is the gist of the freshly enacted text of the Constitution. For this I am deeply grateful to you. I am grateful first of all for your ability to find a partner in every proponent of views which differ from your own and for having put public interests and welfare of the state beyond the party ideas and your sets of personal beliefs.

The idea of compromise has guided the very preparation of the text of this organic law. The Sejm and Senate elected in 1993 functioned by the power of the act passed in the previous parliamentary term in 1992. The works engaged state authorities both inside and outside of parliament. Representatives of the Church and social organisations listened to them. The possibility was created for groups of citizens to file their drafts. All the drafts were taken into consideration in the course of preparing the uniform text. The compromise is a proof of strength and not weakness. The compromise has been an expression of prudence, not fear.

The introduction to the organic law is an effect of the consensus reached in spite of the divisions. It reconciles the Polish national tradition with modern challenges. Values and ideals close to the whole nation have found their place in it. There is a reference to God understood as the source of Humanitarianism. There is respect for the people who do not believe in God but share the same idea of the essence of human existence. There is a reference to the thousand year long tradition of our nation and statehood. I do not exaggerate the importance of the preamble. But I have no doubts that every Polish citizen will find there what is best and the most needed for the common sense of citizenship, as well as what defines our sensitiveness towards our country.

Issues concerning diverse outlooks have become an area of constitutional compromise. The relations between the state and Churches, especially the Catholic Church, the protection of human life, the neutrality of public authorities, the right to keep silence about the matters of faith – these have been important steps on the way to the national consensus. The progress along the way will be measured by the practice, tolerance and respect which we will show one another.

The issue of social entitlements is located between the state's abilities and the citizens' aspirations, between the visions of a liberal and a welfare state. The problem of how to match guarantees for the market economy with providing the sense of social security has often been an element of constitutional disputes. To strive for equality is a natural human desire. The postulate of social justice must not be identified today with a primitive notion of egalitarianism. And although probably not all is going to be in compliance with the sometimes mutually excluding social expectations, the declaration on the social market economy – binding for all governments of the Republic of Poland – has been made.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

There are times and events which may not be anonymous or orphaned. As the President of the Republic of Poland and the former chairman of the Constitutional Committee I have a special reason to express my respect to the people whose patriotism, expertise, responsibility and the ability to reach compromise have allowed the finalising of the works on the Constitution. I thank the Chairman of the National Assembly Mr Jozef Zych for the persistent search for consensus. I thank both Marshals for the excellent chairing of the works of the National Assembly. I thank the chairmen of the Constitutional Committee Marek Mazurkiewicz, Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz and Stefan Pastuszka for

effectively bringing the works to a finale. I pay respect to the heads of the parliamentary clubs, the coalition and the opposition for having been able to raise themselves beyond divisions and to reach a prudent constitutional compromise.

This Organic Law, this Constitution has its fathers. I am not going to name all of them. Let me express my respect to the deputies and senators, who – despite their diverse opinions – have put much effort to assure that Poland has a good Constitution.

Senator Piotr Andrzejewski, Deputy Wojciech Borowik, Marshal Marek Borowski, Deputy Jerzy Ciemniewski, Senator Kazimierz Działocha, Deputy Maria Kurnatowska, Deputy Irena Lipowicz, Senator Jerzy Madej, Deputy Janusz Szymanski – these are most certainly not all the names which should be mentioned now but I am convinced that, although they may have finished their work on the Constitution with mixed feelings – they deserve our memory and gratitude.

I am directing words of special gratitude to Mr Tadeusz Mazowiecki, a man who has made for himself a permanent place in the modern history of Poland. From his participation in the creation of Solidarity, through the Round Table accords from exactly eight years ago, through the deep economic reforms of the government he headed, he has been consistently making the brave effort of building the constitutional consensus beyond the divisions, prejudice and unjust criticism. I am convinced that not only we gathered here today in this chamber but also Poland will remember this determined work.

History would not forgive me if I do not thank the experts without the expertise and patience of whom the quality of the act would most certainly not match the social expectations. I thank Ladies and Gentlemen Professors, both experts of the Constitutional Committee and government experts representing various social organisations, as well as Churches – Mr Piotr Winczorek, Leszek Wisniewski, Pawel Sarnecki, Maciej Zielinski, Maria Kruk-Jarosz, Wiktor Osiatynski, Jerzy Bralczyk, Stanislaw Gebethner, Andrzej Gwizdz, Father Jozef Krukowski, the late Janina Zakrzewska, as well as those who at the beginning of the constitutional works formulated the “Charter of Rights and Liberties,” a significant part of which has found its place in the Constitution enacted today, that is Professors Andrzej Rzeplinski, Michal Pietrzak, Lech Falandysz and Andrzej Ajnenkiel, as well as Doctor Wladyslaw Kulesza. All of you, dear Ladies and Gentlemen have your place in history and I thank you dearly for your assistance.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Today a number of people have reasons for well-deserved satisfaction. They may feel as co-authors of the historic Constitution; find a trace of their own influence – including the circles supporting the draft originating outside of parliament. Their stances have led to the adoption of a number of important and needed changes. Therefore, we should not compete as to who has made a bigger contribution. History is going to judge us all as one generation – a generation which, for the sake of great matters, has been able to raise themselves beyond the divisions or one which has buried chances for securing the development of the Republic. Let each of us judge if the rights guaranteed in the Constitution are those he or she would expect. We are close to the final and most important point, which conditions the success – putting the Constitution forward for the judgement of the social opinion. This is a test of the political will and the readiness to compromise presented here in the parliament in the course of works on the draft.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May last year at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier I said: Too many decisions in our ancient and more recent past have been made too late. Too often we have put off to tomorrow what should have been done yesterday. We are not going to lay firm foundations for the democratic structure if the “law of laws” will be postponed for “better times.” For the new Constitution the right time is now.” I am repeating the words: for the new Constitution the right time is now.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

I am going to order the constitutional referendum on 25<sup>th</sup> of May this year. The Polish people have often been tied by history with the necessity to choose the “lesser evil.” Now we are facing the opportunity so rare in our experience, to choose the common good – that is the Constitution that supports the Republic on a solid foundation. The choice of date is neither proof of haste nor political reasons. After 7 years of works and over 3 years of disputes both within and outside of parliament an accusation of haste would be misplaced.

The constitutional referendum held ahead of the parliamentary elections is a guarantee of separating what is the most important for Poland from the inevitable connected with the election campaign and party rivalries. I am convinced that the Constitution that comes into force three months after its signature makes it possible for the future parliament and the future government to function in compliance with the organic law passed today and accepted by the society.



Poland needs a clear separation of what divides and unites us. The Constitution defines the border. Ladies and Gentlemen, the more common issues, the stronger is the position of our country and the bigger is the esteem for the Republic both home and abroad.

Today, after the historic decision of the National Assembly, I turn to the Polish nation, to all citizens of the Republic.

Let us do something good for Poland – let us vote on 25<sup>th</sup> of May in favour of the Constitution for the free, democratic and modern Third Republic.

## 9. Letter to the Citizens of the Republic of Poland – 6<sup>th</sup> of April 1997

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am presenting you with the Constitution of the Republic of Poland – the highest charter of the citizens' Rights and Duties, a proof of the sovereignty and independence of the Polish state.

There are no ideal people or ideal laws – the noblest intentions of lawmakers are verified by the practice and the varying conditions. Outstanding politicians and experts have worked on the text of the Constitution. It is a result of a wide political and philosophical compromise, respecting the diversity of our society. I am convinced that the constitutional standards are going to meet the requirements of the Polish realities – both the current and the future, which are ahead of us.

I trust that in the Constitution you find a reflection of your hopes and expectations; that it will assure you that precisely YOU – the Citizens of the Republic of Poland – creating common welfare are the most important subjects of the statehood and sovereigns. That together we are creating a strong and secure country, capable of meeting the needs of all the Polish people, one which the current and the future generations are going to be proud of.

I wish you all, my fellow citizens that the new Constitution becomes a unifying factor gathering all of us together for the sake of the only real common good – the good of the Republic of Poland.

## 10. Address at the meeting with residents of Leszno (excerpts) Leszno 30<sup>th</sup> of April 1997

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A very important day is coming for the contemporary and the future Poland. The referendum is going to be held on the 25<sup>th</sup> of May. In it you, Ladies and Gentlemen, are going to say yes or no to the Constitution passed on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April by the National Assembly.

It is the first time in the history of Poland that the citizens of the sovereign state will say through their ballots if they accept what has been created over the past few years with so much effort by the deputies and senators, with the participation of many experts, in the course of persistent work. I want us all to realize the importance of this day. The referendum is not just another parliamentary or presidential election. The referendum asks you, Ladies and Gentlemen, the following question: are we able to assure a good, wise and just legislation body for Poland, not attainable without the organic law, without the Constitution?

In three days we will be celebrating the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May – a day commemorating the great effort of wise Polish people who over two hundred years ago decided to put forward the modern constitution for Poland – the constitution that rejected the damned liberum veto, strengthened the state, gave rights to the citizens and was meant to bring Poland into the upcoming century. Yet, it did not prevent either the partition of Poland or the enslavement that was to be the fate of Poland for the long 120 years. The subsequent constitutions: of the Great Duchy of Poland and of the Congress Kingdom of Poland were adopted in the conditions of a rump, not sovereign Polish state.

We had to wait for a considerable length of time for another constitution adopted in March 1921. The Polish people – full of enthusiasm – were able to reach a consensus spanning over divisions, over differences and diverse experience. Yet, unfortunately, the constitution did not spare Poland from government crises, partition of the parliament and the May Upheaval of 1926.

The next Constitution, adopted with the bypassing of democratic procedures in April 1935 was aimed at strengthen the executive power. It did not save us from the tragedy of the Second World War. The Constitution of 1952 was passed in the conditions of a state which did not enjoy full sovereignty. This was not the choice of Poland. Such was the decision of the Great Powers made over the heads of the Polish people in Yalta and Potsdam.

And thus, Ladies and Gentlemen, for the seventh time the National Assembly has passed the Constitution which you will either adopt or reject.

For the seventh time Poland is going to have its Constitution – albeit this will be for the first time in a sovereign state and for the first time in circumstances of no external threat. The Polish borders are peaceful; the neighbours have a friendly disposition towards us, and vice versa. Poland has good partners, both near and far. Poland has not enjoyed such a good international situation for hundreds of years.

This is very important as the decision we are making on the 25<sup>th</sup> of May will be a conscious decision, one which will reflect our sense of the historic character of participation in the referendum. The Constitution I am putting forward to you has been preceded by extensive and far reaching work.

One may even say that the works on the Constitution have lasted since 1989. Seven drafts were examined in the years 1993–1997. The discussions of the drafts have resulted in the text passed by the National Assembly. For two years I had the honour and the pleasure to head the Constitutional Assembly. I may tell you with complete conviction that no draft of the Constitution developed in Poland has been left unexamined or without discussed – be it the one of Solidarity, KPN, the Polish Peasants' Party, the Liberty Union or the Senate. The result of the works in the form of the text passed by the National Assembly will be offered to you.

What are the main assets of the Constitution?

First, due to the Constitution, Poland may have solid foundations of democracy. Because of the systematic solutions it has adopted, the Constitution defines relations between the specific governing bodies and, thanks to the fact that it defines sources of law, it is directly applicable. In my opinion the Constitution is gong to be a firm foundation for the democratic state of law and it will guarantee future stability and development of Poland.

Second, the Constitution is undoubtedly a complete catalogue of the citizen's freedoms and rights. The position of the citizen versus the state's institutions is not only congruent with standards of European developed democracies – in the Constitution the citizen gains important instruments for seeking the rights' enforcement. He or she may sue administrative decisions in court. If the court decides that the citizen is right in a dispute with the authorities, he or she is entitled for damages. The general constitution complaint, by the power of which the citizen gains the right to file the complaints with the Constitutional Assembly, is even more important. Up to now the complaint has been reserved for, for example, the president. Now each citizen who feels that a parliamentary act is not in compliance with the Constitution and it infringes his or her rights will be able to turn to the Constitutional Tribunal. Bad law will be eliminated. Judgements of the Constitutional Tribunal will be final.

Third, this is a Constitution of historic compromise. It is not a coincidence that nearly 90% of members of the National Assembly from a wide array of parties – PSL, SLD, Liberty Union and Labour Union – have voted for the bill. During long months of discussions we sought solutions which would specifically point to the fact that everyone may feel comfortable with the rights written in the Constitution, irrespective of the natural differences of views.

The Constitution shows that we can reconcile expectations of believers and non-believers, as well as define the relations between the state and Church, and reconcile the tough rules of the market economy with a whole range of social entitlements, so that they jointly form what is defined as a social market economy. It has emerged that a compromise is possible in relations between the government, the president and the parliament. Such areas, where it is obvious that compromise solutions have been found are numerous. The compromise is by no means proof of one's weakness – it is proof of strength, imagination and responsibility of the authors who have been able to build this kind of historic compromise. I do not believe that a Constitution imposed by one group or one man can be good. I do not believe that a Constitution may be good if it reflects the expectations of only one, even if numerous, social group.

The Constitution gains value when it can become an organic law accepted by everybody. In the Constitution there are the rights of a woman and a man, a rich and a poor person, a young and an old person, a person who is physically fit but also one who, due to his or her illness or disability, needs support. It also provides protection for those who for various reasons are in the minority and fear discrimination. (...)

Finally, my most eager request to you: I strongly wish for all of us to have a sense of ownership of the Constitution – to spare it the fate of a solemn act, nicely printed, bound in pretty covers and put in a place of honour. A good Constitution lives in our minds and we want to respect it. (...)

I am very glad to see so many of you have gathered for the meeting. I strongly wish our today's meeting to become a part of a national debate.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of May you will make the decision. For the first time in history the fate of a Constitution will be determined by the citizens. I urge you not to see the act of voting as a political one. Among others, for this reason I wished the constitutional referendum to be held on a date other than that of the parliamentary elections. Parliamentary elections are by their nature a contest of parties, people and programs. The decision regarding the Constitution, unlike those regarding parliamentary elections, is not a political one. This is a patriotic decision which will prove our responsibility for what is happening in Poland now and what will happen at the time when our children and grandchildren are adults. (...)

# 11. Address during the celebrations of the National 3<sup>rd</sup> of May Holiday at the ceremony in Warsaw at Pilsudski's Square (excerpts) – 3<sup>rd</sup> of May 1997

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Ladies and Gentlemen! Fellow citizens!

*“If we wish to be one nation – it is needed for us to be absolutely free and under good laws, unanimous for all the people”* – wrote a priest, a thinker and a politician Hugo Kollataj two hundred years ago. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May 1791 such a constitution was made thanks to the consensus of the elite and the enthusiasm of the people, thanks to the effort and the despair of those, who put the country's welfare before the interest of themselves and their social groups. In dramatic circumstances both home and abroad, the attempt was made to amend the political system of the most cherished country, and first of all to save its threatened independence.

The authors of the Constitution were not able to save their country from the final attack of the partitioners and the loss of its independence. Nonetheless, they left a political testament which has helped to save the nation – its identity and self-awareness.

It was the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May Constitution that for decades kept reminding the Polish people of the highest values – independence, freedom “of the ignominious dictates of foreign coercion.”, as well as the value of the well-organised, efficient state as the guarantor of the political existence of the nation.

Today, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May 1997, the Constitution from 206 years ago not only remains an important national symbol – its contents, commands and warnings, as well as the dashed hopes related to it are gaining a new dimension and significance.

In three weeks from now, on the 25<sup>th</sup> of May we will decide if the 3<sup>rd</sup> Republic is going to have its new Constitution. For the first time in the history of Poland the final voice on the matter will belong to the Nation –to all the citizens of the Republic of Poland. Not only the elite, political groups and experts but

each of us, Ladies and Gentlemen, is going to make the decision on whether to accept the organic law passed by the National Assembly after so many years of work, numerous discussions and disputes!

To strive for the best wording of the organic law, which would guarantee civil rights and assure efficient functioning of public institutions was a dream of numerous generations of the Polish people.

Over the past two centuries the Polish people have had six Constitutions. The place of each of them in the nation's collective memory has been different one from the other. (...)

The Constitution of the Great Duchy of Warsaw was imposed on the Polish people from outside, by the Emperor Napoleon. It was binding for only six years on an area of only a part of Poland. The Constitutions of the Congress Kingdom of Poland although it was written by Poles was also imposed by a foreign ruler.

The March Constitution of 1921 was passed in the atmosphere of joy stemming from the regained independence of the Republic and the agreement among the parties. Yet, merely five years later it revealed its weakness, when the political crisis of 1926 was resolved with the use of force. The April Constitution of 1935 was enacted in the days of national grieving after the death of Jozef Pilsudski – the leader for the calibre of whose it had been shaped; and it was unable to divert the tragedy of 1939. In July 1952 decisions regarding the Organic Law were made by the authorities who did not have the democratic mandate, in a state whose sovereignty had been largely limited by the will of the great powers over the heads of the Polish people.

Initiating the great reforms of 1989 Poland also started works on the new Constitution. For many years it seemed that this is a task beyond the powers of the reviving democracy. And yet, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April, due to persistent dialogue and to the use of our own and experience in general, thanks to the great will and responsibility of the participants of the constitutional creation process, the organic law of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Republic was enacted.

The seven constitution drafts prepared by various political powers together served as the starting point. People of diverse experience and from various backgrounds put their efforts to the text. Apart from politicians and the most renounced Polish lawyers, representatives of churches of various denominations, professional and social circles, trade unions and publicists significantly influenced the course of works. As a result of the works the Organic Law has



been created which shapes the modern and common state. It shapes the truly democratic Republic where not the authorities and their bodies but the citizen is at the centre of attention.

The Constitution covers all basic civil, political, social economic and religious rights and duties. But what is most important, the citizen has been given efficient means to protect their rights – and the means are new solutions in our constitutional tradition. Everyone whose rights and freedoms will be breached has the right to use the services of an independent court and to seek damages for the wrong done by the authorities. Each provision which infringes upon our rights may be reason for a complaint to be filed with the Constitutional Tribunal. This, coupled with the public legislative initiative, accounts for a new quality of the state-citizen relations, different from what we have today.

The wide participation of the citizen in the execution of power is coupled with the model of an efficient and subsidiary state. The Constitution provides for a balance of the legislative, execution and judiciary powers, it strengthens the territorial self-government and limits the omnipresence of the central authorities, it defines the scope of competence and responsibilities of the parliament, the government and the president, it facilitates efficient governance and it should prevent conflicts among the governing bodies.

The Constitution formulates principles of the social market economy which should guarantee economic development, independence of the central bank, as well as the state's partial responsibility for the job market, healthcare, housing policy and culture.

The observance of law is guarded by independent courts, by the constitutional norms regulating court proceedings, and primarily by the Constitutional Tribunal – strong by its independence and position in the structure.

Thus, you are receiving a mature fruit of the long-lasting work. It is worth and indeed needed to familiarise oneself with it in order to be able to make an equally mature decision of voting “yes” or “no” for it in the referendum on the 25<sup>th</sup> of May. (...)

Ladies and gentlemen!

If history teaches us anything – and the history of Poland is full of meaningful lessons – it is that in the life of the nation and in the life of the state there are some extremely important matters for the sake of which it is necessary to turn a blind eye on the expedient political differences. For the sake of them it

is worth to seek consensus and reconciliation with a political competitor and rival. Such matters include the provision of stable democracy, prudent laws, economic development, security and international competitiveness for Poland. Yet, I have no doubts that the matters also include the Constitution. The works on it have proved that the Polish people are constantly willing to seek compromise – not by giving up ones beliefs but seeking a common ground. This is not a sign of weakness but evidence of strength and wisdom. Only the law may be the foundation of a modern state and modern society that can reconcile the rights of the majority with those of a minority, the rights of people of diverse faiths, material status, age or political views. Without consensus and compromise it is impossible to create this type of law. To have the Constitution enacted everyone must resign from something so that we all may gain a lot. Those who have understood this and put the state's welfare before self- or group interests – the way it was done on that historic 3<sup>rd</sup> of May – deserve respect and a place in our memory.

Ladies and gentlemen!

For the first time in history a referendum will determine the fate of the Constitution. The decision should not have a merely political dimension. Let us suspend rivalries among parties, people and programs for the time of the parliamentary elections. Now it is time to decide what kind of democratic Poland we want what kind of law we want for Poland, and what compromise we are ready to reach for the sake of the public good. This should be our decision – primary a patriotic one – which we the Polish people, the citizens of the Republic will make together.

## 12. Television appearance – 23<sup>rd</sup> of May 1997

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

There are days on which we make history.

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of May we will jointly decide what kind of state we will live in, which law will be binding, which freedoms we will enjoy and which duties we will bear. We will decide if the 3<sup>rd</sup> Republic is going to have its Constitution.

The decision is to be made by all the Polish people. It may not be inspired by expedient needs or emotions as we are responsible for this in front of the future generations of our children and grandchildren.

I have sent a copy of the Constitution to every Polish family. I have done this out of the conviction that the Polish people would like to make the decision regarding the future of their country based on good knowledge of the text and having deeply considered the basis upon which we wish to found the statehood.

I am glad that my intentions have been well understood. Out of the 12 million copies which were sent out, only a few thousand have been returned to my chancellery. I have been to twelve provinces (voivodeships), I have attended 26 major meetings and I have had an opportunity to hold a number of individual conversations to explain things and to correct obvious misrepresentations. I was asked for my opinion on the Constitution – on its advantages and disadvantages. Today I will repeat what I said then: this is a good constitution, one that is adequate for our future and enables us to meet the aspirations of the nation.

It includes a wide catalogue of civil rights and it guarantees their efficient enforcement. These are the following:

– the general constitutional complaint granted to everyone whose freedoms and rights have been breached;

- the opportunity to take the recourse of law to have breaches of the rights and freedoms probed;
- the public legislative initiative enabling the Polish people to co-create law.

This Constitution clearly separates the scopes of competence of the particular governing bodies. It strengthens the courts, precisely defines tasks of the government and the parliament and gives the President of the Republic of Poland the position of an arbiter of the state's functioning.

The Constitution balances the state's functioning: it creates the balance between efficient central government and the growing power of self-government; between the market economy and the tasks of a welfare state. Between the principle of the individual's freedoms and the duty of public authorities to support the weakest.

This Constitution, Ladies and Gentlemen, will be the foundation of the strong state. Our sovereignty is not going to be impeded. Our accession to the European Union and NATO will require the support of the same number of deputies and senators as the amending of the Constitution. A consensus will always be needed between the government and the opposition, and our accession to the European Union will require the will of the whole nation to be expressed in the referendum.

Thus, the most important decisions regarding the state's future will always require a national consensus. Also the text of the Constitution is a result of such a compromise. It has been passed by the National Assembly with a clear majority of votes. Among its authors there have been people of diverse ideological and political outlooks, various backgrounds and walks of life, of various temperaments – but all of them have more than proved their merit through their contribution to the democratic changes in Europe.

I am deeply convinced that in the text of the Constitution everyone is going to be able to identify a share of their ideas regarding the statehood, as well their hopes and desires. My fellow citizens, let us raise ourselves beyond the level of short-lived disputes of politicians. Let us make the bold decision, thinking about the Poland of today and the one we will have to leave to our descendants.

While making the decision remember that your voice does not denote support for any party, it does contradict your faith in God. There must be a place in Poland for the majority and the minority, for various denominations and political options, for every man. This is a defining trait of a modern state which must be home for everyone.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

In the past few weeks much has been said. Great and beautiful words have been uttered about our country, responsibilities and values. We have also had our share of lies and distortions, quite often resulting from bad will and faith. But let us remember that this Constitution has not been created in a vacuum. For eight years we have been building our lives and laws in Poland, trying out new political and economic solutions under the rules of various parties and formations. Poland is moving forward. We are strengthening the beneficial transformation of our country.

The time has come to sum up our experiences, successes and failures. Years ago Hugo Kollataj directed the following words to the makers of the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May Constitution: “Poles! For once be bold and daring to be a nation, a truly independent nation! (...) And if we wish to be one nation – it is needed for us to be absolutely free and under good laws, unanimous and common for all the people.”

We are once again recalling these words: Poles! Be bold– as we are facing unparalleled decision, unprecedented in our history. This is not just another election! This is not a vote the result of which will be verified in the coming four years. This is a decision whose results are going to be far reaching for Poland, which has never been made before by all the Polish people by means of a national referendum, in the conditions of a democratic, sovereign state!

Poland has a long constitutional tradition, but none of our organic law has given us stability or peace for many years. Today the situation is different. None of our borders are in flames, we have numerous friends – both near and far; Poland faces real opportunities to make its lasting presence in the co-operational Europe. We do not need to defend our sovereignty but we are making the decision if we are to catch up with the modern times, if we are going to meet the challenges of the technological, economic or civilizational progress.

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of May each of us will participate in one of the most significant events in the modern history of Poland. This is not an exaggeration – this is a fact.

While making the decision, let us remember that it does not have a political character. We are facing a patriotic, citizens’ choice. Let us be guided by our conscience, prudence and life experience rather than by political likes and dislikes.

Let the voice of young people not be absent from this – the voice of people who will be for the first time able to use their right to vote.

The weight of the decision will be comparable to that from 206 years ago. However, currently we need more than even the most outstanding but lone individuals. We need more than the Kollatajs, Potockis or Poniatowskis who will assume for themselves the whole burden of the preparation and enactment of the Constitution. Today their role must be taken by each of us making the decision on behalf of ourselves but also bearing responsibility for the whole Nation.

# 13. Statement after the announcement of results of the constitutional referendum – 27<sup>th</sup> of May 1997

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

We already have the official results of the constitutional referendum. A majority of the citizens voting on the 25<sup>th</sup> of May has spoken in favour of the organic law passed on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April by the National Assembly. Our country, the Republic of Poland has the new Constitution.

This is a momentous event. After eight years of political and economic reforms carried out in our country, we have the organic law which not only puts into order the constitutional system and shapes the legal framework of Poland but also acknowledges the lasting character of the Polish transformation. The new Constitution leaves no doubt as to the fact that Poland is an independent and democratic state which safeguards the liberty and dignity of an individual, human rights and civil freedoms. This is a Constitution that wisely balances the scopes of competence of the supreme authorities and facilitates the efficient functioning of the state. This is a Constitution for a modern Poland, one which will serve all its citizens.

On this very special day I wish to thank you. I thank the millions of Polish, men and women, who the day before yesterday took part in the referendum and have expressed their opinion on the matter of such importance for our state and nation. Not dismissing the rights and emotions which have directed some to vote against the text of the Constitution, I wish to express my special gratitude to those of you who have supported the new organic law and enabled its coming into force. I think that future events, which are going to be beneficial for Poland, will also allow its opponents of today to see the advantages and merits of the new Constitution.

Over forty percent of citizens entitled to vote have expressed their opinions on the Constitution. Nearly 60% have renounced the right of choice given to them by democracy. There is no reason to see anything appalling about this

but this is good food for thought for all of us. We need to answer the question of what to do and how to co-operate to encourage people to be more interested in the matters of the country as a whole, to implement the idea of the citizen's society.

Yet, the doubts and questions should not overshadow the most optimistic news – that we have the Constitution. This is a clear success of Poland and the Polish people, a success of the social dialogue that has been preceding so well, the success of our wisdom, perseverance and maturity. Undoubtedly the success is going to be marked in the world and it will strengthen the prestige of Poland in the family of free nations. Ladies and Gentlemen, we can be proud and congratulate ourselves. Let this success bring as much as possible of the spirit of May and spring to the Polish homes and our lives.



## 14. TV appearance after the signing of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland – 16<sup>th</sup> of July 1997

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

The signature of the Constitution marks the finale of the whole proceedings related to the creation of the organic law. Today the text will be published in the Journal of Laws. Exactly in three months time, on the 16<sup>th</sup> of October 1997 the first complete Constitution of the Third Republic will become effective. This marks the end of the seven-year period of provisional, transitional arrangements.

This is the Constitution of free and democratic Poland. It restates respect for the country's history and its roots. It will serve us all, as well as the future generations. The Constitution is a matter of special importance for Poland. This is a defining factor of our attitude towards our country, to our patriotism, our tradition.

For the first time in the history of Poland the enactment of the Constitution has been not only the matter of the elite and political groups. The document enacted by the National Assembly has been supported in the referendum by a majority of voters.

This Constitution is not meant to serve politicians or parties. It was written for the citizen and for the community of citizens – the Republic of Poland. Each of us will benefit from the new regulations, for they are formative for the modern state, which guarantees all the fundamental civil rights and freedoms. The citizens have obtained efficient measures for protection of these rights. The general constitutional complaint is one of them. We have obtained a new character of the relations between the state and the citizen.

This Constitution will aid the development of Poland and the Polish economy. It also acknowledges the state's partial responsibility for jobs creation, education, and healthcare, housing policy, science and culture.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

It is not possible not to refer today to the dramatic situation experienced by Poland in these days as a result of the flood which has affected the southern and western parts of the country. This may seem as an issue from another realm, another dimension, yet, all these things are interconnected.

The tragedy of thousands of people, the casualties, the unimaginable material losses are for all of us, for the whole of Poland a new and harsh experience and an extremely difficult test. I am deeply shaken by what I have seen in the area affected by the flood. I pass my sympathy and solidarity to all the victims.

I will do everything in my power to mitigate the results of the disaster. I thank all of those who in these dramatic days are fighting the flood and its aftermath. I thank the thousands, tens of thousands of soldiers, fire fighters and policemen. I thank the local groups that are organising themselves.

When the levels of both the water and the emotions pass, the time will come for an analysis of what has happened – an analysis of the results and causes. I believe, though that it is beyond doubt that we need to amend the law and the scopes of competence resulting from this so that they provide for taking action in cases of emergency. The new Constitution provides for the possibility of announcing a state of emergency and sets a legal framework for action in such cases.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Despite the tragedy which affects us all, all fundamental state matters must take their course, they must be attended to. There is an ongoing need to cater for Polish matters and care for the future of Poland.

We are faced with crucially important forthcoming months. We will be removing the effects of the flood. We will elect the highest Polish legislative authorities, already in compliance with provisions of the new Constitution we will form the new government and we will start negotiating our membership of NATO, and beginning next year, also our accession to the European Union.

We will demonstrate to ourselves and to the world that we are able to meet the challenges; that we can take these kinds of decisions and actions which are needed by Poland.

## 15. Address at the meeting with judges of the Constitutional Tribunal (excerpts) – 1<sup>st</sup> of December 1997

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(..) Today the Constitutional Tribunal opens its proceedings composed of new members. The nominations you have received are distinctions yet the honour is not greater than the responsibilities which are ahead of you. Today you are assuming a share of responsibility for the most important Polish matters: constant stabilisation of our democracy, solidification of its legal basis and also for strengthening of the public comprehension and acceptance of the constitutional principles and for obedience to the rules of law. It is your sense of responsibility and duties which will be decisive for the place and the position of the Constitutional Tribunal in the nearest future. I extend my congratulations to the newly chosen members of the Constitutional Tribunal on the occasion of assuming this important role and I trust that you are going to be guided by the law and welfare of the Homeland and its citizens – as you have before.

The Constitutional Tribunal enjoys great respect in Poland which is not always the case of other similar institutions in the world. The position of the Constitutional Tribunal may be in my opinion attributed to two main reasons.

First, in a country which is undergoing constitutional changes it is only natural that differences arise as to assessments and visions of optimal solutions to the problems. Responsibilities of various institutions and relations among them are being defined. Therefore, a body is needed to act as an impartial arbiter to clear doubts and resolve disputes, not guided by immediate interests or views.

Judicial decisions of the Constitutional Tribunal have often been decisive for directions of changes of the relations among the ruling bodies and relations between the authorities and the citizen, as well as for the usage of new regulations. The position of the Constitutional Tribunal stems, therefore, from the utility of its direct participation in the strengthening of democratic principles.

Its position is also well-deserved by the members of the Tribunal. Their personal characteristics, educational backgrounds and experience place them in

a position to pass judgements on issues most important for all the citizens. It is your personal prestige which creates the position of the whole Tribunal. It is also an additional responsibility towards all the judges. The trust placed in you makes you guardians of democracy.

Despite the fact that judges of the Constitutional Tribunal are not chosen in direct elections they also have the right to assess works of the parliament. This is one of the reasons why for the first time the oath of the new judges is going to be held according to the new procedure, in front of the President. The right to verify decisions of the parliament gives one a great power and it is a sign of special trust. Yet it needs to be remembered that the citizens are the ones who are the real guardians of laws and they are going to assess works of the Tribunal. My wish to you is that in the years to come the prestige of the Constitutional Tribunal may grow in the society in recognition of its role as the guardian of democracy.

The coming years are going to be crucial for the strengthening of the state's constitutional foundations and they are going to bring much work for the Tribunal. In my opinion in the coming two years the number of the tasks is going to be the most numerous.

First, we are in for the implement of the Constitution. We have worked for several years to create its provisions and finally we have presented a solid, good and open bill. Many of the solutions have been a result of experiences from the first years of creating democracy after the year 1989. We have tried to amend regulations which impeded the functioning of the state bodies. We have confirmed the legal basis of the solutions which have been productive. The Constitution has often been described as a compromise and this characteristic has been made both a virtue and a vice. I am personally convinced that namely this compromise nature is going to be decisive for the durability of the organic law – the compromise is its success. We may not let the disputes which have accompanied discussions of the particular provisions get a new lease on life, or let them undermine the compromise we have reached. It is necessary to move forward. It is necessary to develop the constitutional practice and – while interpreting provisions of the new Constitution – it is necessary to remember that this particular bill has gained public support in the nation-wide referendum. In the process the role of the Constitutional Tribunal as that of the guardian of the Constitution and the role of its judicial decisions are going to be crucial.

Among the constitutional provisions the one regarding the possibility to lodge constitutional complaints is going to be especially important for the citizens. This

is a new possibility but in my opinion, despite the formal and legal requirements, the number of the complaints is going to rise quickly. (...)

I trust that the Tribunal is going to work out an appropriate procedure in a short time so that the really important issues do not have to wait too long to be resolved, which is a problem with other judicial institutions.

Second, I deem it necessary for strengthening of the state's constitutional foundations to immediately begin drafting parliamentary acts envisioned by the Constitution. I believe they should come into force in a period of less than two years. I have filed the first such bills in the scope of the presidential initiative. The acts accompanying the Constitution will largely define its practical functioning and for this reason they should not be postponed. In my opinion the Tribunal may participate in this process as well, for example by continuing its educational role.

Third, for Poland the coming years will mark another step in the harmonisation of its regulations with norms of international law and the law of Euro-Atlantic organisations. It will be, therefore, necessary to amend many acts and agreements. New regulations will be accepted, patterned on solutions adopted in different models of legislation. In relation to that motions will most probably be filed with the Tribunal regarding compliance of the amended acts and the entered international agreements with the Constitution. This will require special expertise and responsibility as the judicial decisions on these matters will be crucial for fulfilment of European aspirations of the Polish people.

The coming years will also be a period of intensified work for all state bodies, including Courts and the Tribunals. We have a chance to enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century as a democratic state with a growing economy. Whether this is going to happen – it depends on our will to cooperate and our shared efforts. On my part I will keep trying to maintain the best possible contacts with the Constitutional Tribunal and, as previously, I will aim at strengthening its position. I regret that my opinion against postponing implementation of the conclusiveness of the Tribunal's judgements has not gained support. I congratulate you once more on the assumption of this new prestigious but also very responsible role and I wish you that – safeguarding laws and not particular issues – you may build up the position of the Constitutional Tribunal as an impartial guardian of the Polish democracy – to make it possible for the newly composed Tribunal to achieve such successes as did the Tribunal directed in the previous years by Professor Andrzej Zoll.

## 16. Address at the Conference of Polish Judges (excerpts) – 27<sup>th</sup> of September 1999

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Mr Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen!

The debate opened here is an important part of the serious discussion which has been held for over a decade by Poles engaged in the creation of the democratic state of law. It is a good opportunity to reconsider what is good for Poland, what may be treated as its success and what is still in front of us.

The success of Poland depends primarily on safeguarding the state's security, the economy's development and the stability of state structures, as well as on providing good laws and efficient judicature in public life. (...)

While opening this session I wish to restate this once again with full authority that I consider building a significant position of the courts and protection of values related to the judicature as a very special task of the President of the Republic of Poland.

As a result of the breakthrough political changes which have occurred since 1989 and have been confirmed by the Constitution, the judicature has become an independent power in the state. Over the recent years the judge's profession has gained high public recognition. Today no one doubts that courts have become a real emanation of the state and its social order. That is why their functioning must also be taken into account while assessing the efficiency of the whole state's structure.

The creation of the democratic state of law still continues. We are still looking for optimal solutions for all the three powers constituting the state's pillars, as well as for relations among them. We are searching in particular for such solutions which will practically define and guarantee the position of courts and judges – ones which will strengthen their position and shape it following the patterns accepted in judicial systems of Western Europe.

Ladies and Gentlemen, you know the best that the condition of the third power is not satisfactory. I have learnt your opinions on – mainly financial – barriers impeding your efficient work. I am aware of the reports on the condition of the judicature and opinions of practicing lawyers who are raising alarm bells arguing that the threat of the judicature's collapse is real. I expect opinions of the judges gathered in this hall will pinpoint these areas which need most expedient intervention.

In the public eye tardiness is the biggest weakness of judiciary – the drudgery of the long proceedings before the final and binding sentence is pronounced. There is another part of the story: the hardworking judges who are doing their job in extremely difficult – often critical – conditions.

Among them there are people who do their job with passion and flare but first of all there are those who are chronically overworked and made to work with tools from the previous epoch. The situation must not continue for an indefinite time. It is harmful for the state and its citizens.

The judiciary is heavily underfinanced. I believe that this state of affairs is going to change for the better. This should be aided by introduction of thorough organisational changes and simplification of the penal and civil procedures.

We are facing, among others, changes related to the new administrative division of the state, introduction of the two-chamber judiciary system, as well as the usage of standards of international law in jurisdiction and abolishment of the misdemeanour boards.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

I have been following the discussions on the drafts of parliamentary acts on the structure of courts of common justice and the National Judiciary Chamber with interest. I know that the debates on the drafts involve strong emotions and they are accompanied by equally high expectations. Important questions are being posed which demand answers: what should be the role of the judges' self-government and the position of the Minister of Justice in relation to it? How the status of judges should be defined? How should the judiciary's budget be composed? Who should plan the budget and control expenditures, and how? What criteria and directions of changes should be adopted for the functioning of the courts of common justice?

In my opinion, the provisions of the Constitution which regard respect for the principle of the judges' independence and their sole subordination to the

Constitution and parliamentary acts should be a starting point. Judicial circles should be protected against the influence of politics. Solutions are also needed which would augment the position of judges and the ultimate trust placed in them.

With regard to mutual relations between the judicial, legislative and executive powers we should aim at the creation of a partnership relations based on mutual respect for their positions and differing roles in the state – based on cooperation which acknowledges the triple division of power and the nature of the tasks designed for each of them.

It is also necessary to remember the role of the National Judiciary Chamber – the guardian of independence of the judges – and about its accomplishments. The Chamber should be treated as a credible representative of the judges' circles and their opinions on each matter regarding them. As far as this is concerned, I am your ally.

Only if the changes are introduced in consultation with the judges' circles there is a chance that the regulations worked out in this way will be free of excessive formalism and they will provide the expected efficiency of the proceedings.

Here a reference is only natural to the recently implemented penal codifications. As results from many assessments, including those coming from judges – they are less than perfect. In my opinion solutions which hamper effective use of law should be removed. But changes should be introduced in a manner ensuring that the model on which the current penal law is based will not be diverted from. (...)



## 17. Policy speech at the conference "Safe Citizens: Effective Law, Functioning of the Judiciary, Functioning of the Police, Precautions and Prevention" (excerpts) Olsztyn, 28<sup>th</sup> of August 2000

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

The right to live is one of the elementary entitlements of a human being. This is a matter of great importance for all the Polish people. Safe citizens. The safe society. The safe state. These notions are translatable to various legal categories, regulations and standards but – what is more important – they also reflect the subjective feeling of every Pole that he or she lives in a safe town, village and country. The feeling regards so many elements of our life that it would be difficult to single an area out of it. It regards the belief that – going out of our home – we can safely walk down the streets or drive a car. This is also the belief that our children are safe at school and they will return home healthy. Based on my conversations with people, as well as on the numerous letters I receive, it may be concluded that the Polish people feel less and less secure. Most of us are troubled by the perceived deficit of good and efficient law which should be an effective protection against threats. We do not have the feeling that if our safety is violated, the doer will be quickly and fairly judged. We do not have the conviction that our state and its institutions will rise to our defence making use of all available means. Only when we get the impression that these perceptions have changed, we may feel safe and secure in our state.

Since the political breakthrough in 1989 we have achieved much in the development of democracy and the creation of a free market economy. While taking advantage of these achievements, we – as the state and as the citizens – also quite often find ourselves helpless when we try to fight accompanying threats. We perceive major discrepancies between the growing expectations of people and the real state of public order and security. Even with the naked eye we can see weakness of the state's bodies and the judiciary. Additionally, many people

are constantly bothered with the threat of loss of their jobs, limited access to social benefits, education and culture. (...)

No one is under the delusion that evil and threats may be totally eliminated from our life. Yet, it should be the main task of a democratic state to eliminate these threats and limit their sources. The tasks should be first of all carried out by schools, the media and churches. Teachers, journalists, priests and catechists, guardians and parents should be aware that the state's structures will support them in this process and – if needed – also provide them with protection.

But we must also remember that not only equipment and efficiency of the judiciary bodies are decisive for the crime rates. These are also decisively affected by the access to sport, culture and jobs for the young generation. Strengthening of the police forces must be accompanied by increased expenditures on sport, culture, education and leisure for young people. This requires good law and its consistent enforcement. We must have a national consensus on this issue, reached both by the political powers and the citizens. For the sake of the good cause – safer life in Poland – all of us should agree to limitations resulting from subjecting ourselves to the rigor of good law. This needs to be our conscious choice.

Here I agree with many postulates raised by non-government organisations representing families of the victims. We may not and we do not want to tolerate such a regulatory environment where the offender enjoys more protection than does his victim. That is why these organisations should be supported as they play a positive role in raising public awareness and mobilising citizens' self-defence. Their dramatic statements awaken the consciousness of others and provoke them to take action. I believe that this is going to bring a good effect. Let us not be afraid to aid them.

The law is not severe for the individual who lives following his or her consciousness and commonly accepted moral and social values. The law must be severe for all those who act against the accepted standards. Let us remember that we – the law-abiding citizens of the Republic of Poland form a decisive majority. The right and the power are on our side. Let us make use of this. This numerical and moral advantage matched with the efficiently functioning state and the citizenship society must overcome the impossibility syndrome.

What is forbidden must be clearly defined as such and the state must not make any exceptions in enforcement of these bans. This especially relates to corruption. Nothing undermines the citizen's trust placed in his or her state more effectively than a corrupted judge, public prosecutor, politician or local

councillor. There is no public acceptance for corruption. We are declaring war on it. What we need is further changes of regulations but first of all, a change in ourselves – let us not treat a bribe as something natural.

I do not think that the state of affairs may be solely blamed on the existing regulations although truly the practice of their implementation and opinions of scientific circles point to significant drawbacks of some of the regulations and the penal procedure. One of the criticisms is that the new penal law is too lenient for the offenders. Such opinions may not be disregarded in the continued works on further changes to the penal code.

The inevitability of punishment and its prompt dispensation depends on the work of the courts. We may not agree to prolonged procedures, queues, postponing trials. The courts may not finish their work at four p.m. In case of emergency – and the growing threat to the citizens' security is to be considered as such – extraordinary reactions must be adopted. Courts and judges must receive all needed assistance. This regards increasing the judges' remuneration as well as securing their personal safety and providing the needed equipment for the courts. Attacks on the judges and shootings at courts are symptoms of an illness consuming our society.

The citizen's sense of stability and security is not only connected with fighting crime. What are also important are prompt reactions of the state's structures and self-government bodies to the citizens' needs. This includes fast and effective assistance to victims of road accidents, as well as those affected by natural disasters, fires, floods and high winds. At the same time those who provide this assistance: thousands of volunteer members of rescue teams including volunteer fire fighters, mountain and water rescuers and the network of rescuers using CB radios – report the existence of serious formal and legal barriers hindering their future activities. Representatives of such volunteer rescuers' organisations turned to me a year ago for assistance in solving their problems. I have come up with the initiative of drafting a parliamentary act on volunteer life-saving. The works are in progress. The act will help us solve very complex problems of volunteer rescuers, the issues of their legal protection, compensations and conditions of their participation in rescue operations.

The climate changes occurring in the world are causing more and more frequent natural disasters. The Polish people have experienced them on a grand scale in 1997; the recent weeks have also surprised us with the intensity of adverse weather phenomena. The system of reacting and providing help in case of natural disasters also requires adoption of new standards. In October 1997 I directed four presidential bills on the states of emergency. The acts have

not been enacted so far. Still an all-encompassing, integrated communications system for the rescue services is missing. It is necessary to speed up works on implementation of the possibility for every citizen in case of danger to call one number – 112. Thanks to the coordinated effort of rescue and security services we will get the needed assistance in a faster and more efficient way. (...)

# 18. Address at the session of General Assembly of the Judges of the Supreme Court (excerpts) – 22<sup>nd</sup> of April 2002

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(...) Ladies and Gentlemen!

The reform of law has been taking place in Poland for several years. Great reform efforts should, nonetheless be guided by thinking about the true nature and significance of the jurisdiction, the place of the judicial power in the state system and the magnitude of tasks which the Constitution poses for the courts. That is why its reform is not only an internal matter of the jurisdiction and the judges. Certainly, no one understands the growing needs of the jurisdiction in the context of the political, economic and administrative changes better than them. Yet the process also demands good will and partnership cooperation of all political powers in Poland.

Finalising the nearly two year long legislation process, on 20<sup>th</sup> of June last year The Sejm enacted the law on the structure of the courts of common jurisdiction. The jurisdiction system received its own constitution regulating the principles of its functioning. Legislative works continue on the act reforming the administrative judiciary. Not much time is left as the constitution requires the two-chamber courts structure to be implemented by 17<sup>th</sup> of October this year. I hope the deadline will be kept.

There are also proposals lodged with the Sejm regarding a change of the penal codifications prepared, among others by the special commission appointed by me. Its works have also been participated by the Supreme Court judges: the President of the Penal Chamber Lech Paprzycki, as well as Mr Wieslaw Kozielkiewicz and Mr Stanislaw Zablocki.

Using the opportunity, I would like to congratulate you, Gentlemen on your effort and express my appreciation for the fact that within less than three months you have been able to prepare an extensive plan of changes aimed at removing the previously noticed shortcomings of the codes from 1997, as well

as speeding up the procedures and increasing effectiveness and inevitability of penal punishment.

My experience regarding cooperation with the Supreme Judges encourages further actions. Your exquisite expertise, rich experience and in-depth knowledge of the current law guarantee the highest professionalism. That is why I believe that they should be used in the legislation process to a greater extent than they have been.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

In the nearest future I am going to file a bill on the Supreme Court with the Sejm. I agree with the opinion that the still binding Act of 1984 is obsolete and has been enacted under completely different social and political circumstances. Truly, it has been amended several times but it has not been fully adjusted to the current realities. The Constitution dictates reform of the state's bodies taking account of the tripartite division of powers and in particular independence of the judiciary. Adoption of the new act on the Supreme Court is also directly connected to the reform of the administrative jurisdiction. Respect for the principles resulting from autonomy of the judiciary in my opinion does not raise any doubts.

Unfortunately – which I regret somewhat – this will result in a loss of the magnificent commentator of the law being created in the state. I am referring to the regulation included in the bill on the Supreme Court, according to which the Supreme Court will only pass opinions on drafts of acts regarding judiciary.

Qualifications required from the Judges of the Supreme Court and the character of their work similar to that of scientific research warrant expectations towards the body also at the stage of creating law.

The suggestion that the judges should be involved in passing of the opinions should not be understood as an attack on the principle of the triple division of power or as an encroachment on the separateness of the judicial power. Making use of the judges' expertise in this scope is in the interest of all citizens of the Republic of Poland. If I am encouraging representatives of the third power to signal gaps and shortcomings in the system of law – this is out of my care for the quality of the newly created law, for its effectiveness and clarity for the recipients. (...)

Ladies and Gentlemen!

There cannot be a democratic state without an efficiently functioning jurisdiction system, independent from the other powers and institutions. There is no citizenship society without a guaranteed access to impartial, independent court proceedings for everybody and the possibility to pursue one's entitlements. There is no safe society without the public awareness that each offender is going to face fair and inevitable punishment.

This is guaranteed not only by clarity, consistency and readability of regulations but also by their consistent implementation, which should be reflected among others – and even primarily – by judicial decisions. The decisions made in the Supreme Court on this matter serve this cause in the best way. (..)

# 19.

Address at the ceremonial conference on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the entry into force of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland of 2<sup>nd</sup> of April 1997 – Warsaw, Royal Castle, 17<sup>th</sup> of October 2002 (excerpts)

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

It has not happened so often that the Polish people have had an opportunity to enjoy such an anniversary – one certifying to the stability of the state, durability of the constitutional framework and the legal system, and maturity of the democracy. The five years' period which the Republic of Poland has lived under the rules of the new, still unchanged, organic law has set a record in the history of our democratic constitutionalism. This gives rise to satisfaction – as a great success of modern Poland. Yet, it also inspires reflection on Poland's history; on the chances which have not been given to us and on those which we have not been capable to take an advantage of.

We remember that first and legendary constitution enacted here at the Royal Castle – the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May Constitution – did not come into force at all. The March Constitution was formally binding for 14 years but in practice this was only for three and a half years, until the entry into force of the main provisions of the August Amendment. The April Constitution of 1935 lived only for the four remaining years of the Polish independence, and it is debatable if it can be considered completely democratic. The constitution of July 1952 was admittedly in force for the long period of over 40 years but it is difficult to forget that it had been personally proofread by Joseph Stalin; the constitution did not express the idea of democratic pluralism and numerous rights and freedoms written in it were guaranteed only on paper. Therefore, it is worth not only to mark the fifth anniversary of the entry into force of the Constitution of 1997 in a proper way but also to treat it as an opportunity to reflect more broadly on the modern Polish constitutionalism and the role of the organic law in our legal system, as well as in our political and social life.



Ladies and Gentlemen!

Constitutions may be compared to outfits put on by societies. There are constitutions which have the role of a ceremonial robe – or one's Sunday best – and there are those which serve one as a comfortable suit worn every day and indispensable. The first ones are rarefied acts demonstrating good intentions on the part of the government; to be quoted but not necessarily applied. The latter are tools for the individual's self-fulfilment and for modelling the position of an individual in the state. This is precisely the case of the Polish constitution of 2<sup>nd</sup> of April 1997.

The enactment of the Constitution has been one of the most important achievements of Poland since we entered the transformation path. It was born as a result of sharp debate, among disputes and controversies but the difficult attempt was finally crowned by a wise and beneficial compromise. Today once again I wish to pay my gratitude and respect to all those who have co-created the Constitution and – bringing themselves to rise above immediate political or ideological entanglements – have contributed to our common success.

The organic law enacted five years ago is currently accepted by all political powers. Even those who, at its birth, were sceptical towards many of the constitutional provisions, now often refer to them. Currently no one demands amendments to the Constitution on the grounds that it does not provide for the state's stability; it is destructive or divisive for the Polish people.

We have all concluded that the organic law has clearly and effectively introduced an order to the powers division and the checks and balances systems. Since 1997 we have not had a serious conflict among the state's authorities over their respective scopes of competence. Before that time we had such conflicts – some of them quite fundamental. This certifies to the quality of the new Constitution.

To each of us, living in the society, the Constitution guarantees rights and freedoms. It has grown out of the heritage of European democracy and rules of law, inspired by the European Convention on Human Rights. It acknowledges that many rights and freedoms serve not only the citizen but the individual as such, on the grounds of the freedom and dignity inherent to every human being. The Constitution contains tools which enable enforcement of its provisions – such as the possibility to appeal against parliamentary acts and other regulations to the Constitutional Tribunal whose judgments have gained the final rank, or the institution of the constitutional complaint. These advantages of our Constitution are also highly valued abroad and by distinguished specialists.

The Helsinki Human Rights Foundation even points to the achievement of the Polish constitutionalism and presents it as an example for countries undergoing their political transformation.

Very important provisions have been placed in the chapter “Public Finances.” They discipline the authorities’ performance in this area, which is so important for the state, as it separates politics from the economy. The constitutional mechanism of limiting the public debt and the independence of the Monetary Policy Council are of great importance. Despite some controversy over its functioning, the Council is an important and much needed decision-making body in the Republic of Poland.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Over the past five years numerous questions regarding the Constitution have emerged. Most often this was not about what the Constitution lacked but how its provisions and messages should be interpreted. Some issues have also emerged which currently demand consideration. (...)

It must be disturbing that the knowledge of the Constitution in our society remains insufficient. A far more active approach on this matter is needed on the part of the state and non-government organisations, the media and the judiciary circles themselves. It is worth remembering that common knowledge of the rights and duties provided for in the organic law is decisive for the development of the civil society.

Article 8 which states that the provisions of the Constitution shall be applied directly still waits to be implemented. It is my hope that provisions of the Constitution will be more actively referred to by judges of courts of general jurisdiction and administrative courts, as well as by all civil servants.

A separate issue related to the understanding and application of the constitutional provisions regards an especially sensitive area – that of social entitlements. While we still have so much to do in Poland in respect of poverty and unemployment, people tend to regard “the right to” as an entitlement to make enforceable claims. This is their understanding of the right to work, the right to have an accommodation, as well as the right to enjoy decent social security and a healthy natural environment. Yet some provisions of the Constitution – and the social entitlements are among them – have been worded only as tasks to be pursued by the state or as an agenda. The discrepancy between what has been provided for as an enforceable right and what – according to some expectations – should be treated as such is quite often decisive for the social

reception of the Constitution and for the criticism towards it. This is an issue we will have to reconsider.

Let us mark it with satisfaction, though, that whereas the sense of law among the Polish society still leaves much to be desired, we are witnessing a meaningful evolution in this area. The concept of the law as a shield gains popularity and starts to overshadow that of the law as a sword. In line with modern European doctrines, the Polish people, to a growing extent, start to perceive the law not as something imposed from above or a tool of the authorities, but as a blueprint for the state's functioning and an instrument of the protection of citizens' interests. This also results in that all shortcomings of the system are even more irritating, to name only the imperfect legislation, tardy court proceedings or unfriendly bureaucracy. The list of problems related to the Constitution may be extended but this is not my intention today to do this. Instead I have quoted some examples as a backdrop for a description of more general issues regarding the nature of modern Polish constitutionalism. When we look closely at them – we will see the path taken by Poland and the one emerging in front of us. (...)

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Despite the certain shortcomings of the Constitution, today we can see that the organic law of 1997 has passed its practical test. I am marking this with satisfaction, as it is my constitutional duty of the President of the Republic of Poland to watch over obedience to the organic law. Therefore, I am trying to closely monitor the “maturing process” of our Constitution, as well that of our constitutional awareness. My legislative initiatives have mainly served the purpose of implementation of constitutional decisions – as in the case of the parliamentary acts on the states of emergency, the acts regarding the system of two instances of the administrative courts, or the recently presented initiative regarding national referenda.

Like other participants of the Polish public life, I am trying to take notice of both advantages and vices of the Constitution. I realize that it is not an ideal act. I understand some proposals of its amendments. Yet, I wish to make it clear that I do not believe they should be implemented at the moment. We need to let the Constitution congeal, this takes time. We have to wait for the constitutional mechanisms to take their full shape. The durability and the invariability of our organic law – preserved for as long as it is possible – are values in themselves. The Constitution should serve stabilization of Polish public life, and it should not be a cause of any imbalance or conflicts. Therefore I am convinced that the changes which will result from critical analyses of the Constitution of 1997 as

well as from the changing political and social environment should be postponed until a later time. We should not initiate a constitutional debate right now, although the Constitution should be discussed all the time. (...)

Ladies and Gentlemen!

The new Constitution has been functioning for five years, and the functioning brings strength: it strengthens our democracy and the statehood; it is strengthening for the development of the citizenship society and for the development and promotion of the modern legal culture.

We view the way we have passed in the past five years with satisfaction but also with realism. Our Constitution calls Poland a state of law. Though, we are aware of the fact that this does not automatically guarantee us that we are a state of law in all aspects and forever. We are becoming such a state; this is a process, a goal which may never be attainable, but which sets a direction we may take. Becoming a state of law is possible due to the mechanisms encoded in our Constitution, which are also a significant source of inspiration for the process. And I hope that, through a joint effort of all those present here and all involved in creation of the body of Polish legislation, as well as in law enforcement, we will be able to build in our country first a higher and then a really high constitutional culture. We have created conditions for this; what is needed is the will to act, the courage and a vision for the future! I am convinced that on the fifth anniversary of the Constitution's coming in force we may state it, with complete satisfaction and confidence that we have not wasted the past five years. Yet, the distance we have to cover on the way to creation of the democratic state remains long and work consuming. I trust that none of you will be missing from this journey.

## 20. Speech after signing of the Act on the Amendment of the Act-Penal Code and some other parliamentary acts – 27<sup>th</sup> of June 2003

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

I have just signed the Act on the Amendment of the Act-Penal Code and some other parliamentary acts. The newly adopted act – which is an effect of the Parliament's works on the government's bill submitted to the Parliament nine months ago – comes into force on 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2003.

The weight of the act rest in that its provisions give the judicature effective weapons in combating the extraordinary misdeed – corruption. This phenomenon is universal: it exists in all countries, also the most developed ones, it is present in public and private life and it can even be observed in non-profit and charity organisations. This is evil in itself; nonetheless corruption in the public administration sector has a special character, as it threatens the very foundations of the state, shattering the citizens' trust in its bodies.

The World Bank defines corruption as abusing public posts for attainment of private gains. According to a survey held by the Stefan Batory Foundation in the scope of an anti-corruption program, over 90 percent of the Polish people are of the opinion that the phenomenon is a big or a very big problem. The respondents also believe that bribes are taken most frequently by politicians and medical doctors. Further places in the ranking are occupied by central level officials, public prosecutors, judges, policemen, communal, district and province officials. As can be observed – no one is missing from the list.

Venality, that is the offence of passive bribery, may be committed only by an individual holding a public post. The question has kept reoccurring in the practice whether, for example, a medical doctor or a president of a housing cooperative who accepts an extra financial gain may be treated as an offender. In the view of the body of judicial decisions a proper definition has been introduced in the Penal Code. When the amendment enters into force the term “an individual holding a public post” will denote a public official, a member

of a self-government body, an individual disposing of public funds on account of his or her post or function, as well as an individual taking actions of public significance on the basis of a parliamentary act or an international agreement binding the Republic of Poland.

The act signed today also introduces new deeds into the catalogue of offences. The first of them is paid protection – the aim is to penalise the active side of influence-trading. Making these changes we are fulfilling requirements of penal law convention of the Council of Europe on corruption. The second penalised act is election bribery and election venality. The third is corruption in economic turnover. In the course of the accession talks with the European Union Poland has declared that it would penalise corruption in the private sector. The offence of passive bribery will be one committed by an individual holding a managerial post in an organisational unit running business activities or having a significant influence on making decisions on account of his or her position or function. The fourth act is corruption with respect to professional sports events, i.e. to unfair bearing which may effect the outcome or result. Introduction of this provision is a reaction to pathological phenomena in professional sport. Newspapers are full of such events also in Poland.

In response to public expectations the new act increases also the possibilities of depriving offenders of the gains they have achieved as a result of illegal activities. In a nutshell – proven bribery is also connected with obligatory loss of gains coming from it.

I extend my gratitude to all members of the Sejm and experts who have participated in the works on the preparation and enactment of the act. This has been good and useful work well-serving the citizens. My satisfaction from the adoption of the new regulations is special because as the President of the Republic of Poland I have repeatedly expressed my care for an as effective as possible functioning of the judicature. I would like to remind you that in December 2001 I submitted three bills on the amendment of penal codifications to the parliament. The act amending the criminal procedure based on it will become effective as of 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2003. The Act on amendment of the Executive Penal Code prepared on the basis of the presidential bill is being examined by the Senate and will most probably be effective as of 1<sup>st</sup> of September. The amendment of the material criminal law – the Penal Code – suggested by me is a subject of works of the the Sejm sub-commission led by Deputy Ryszard Kalisz.

By adopting the Act on the amendment of the Act-Penal Code and some other parliamentary acts we have once again strengthened the structures of the state worthy of respect of its citizens. I hope that the conviction will be confirmed by everyday practice and that – as of the new act's entry into force on 1<sup>st</sup> of July – we will be truly able to fight corruption more effectively and face it in a battle which is long lasting, uneasy but necessary. I would like to thank you very warmly – Minister, Marshal and Ladies and Gentlemen Members of the Sejm for work on this parliamentary act.

## 21. Address at the ceremony of awarding nominations to judges of provincial administration courts (excerpts) – 29<sup>th</sup> of December 2003

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

(..) You are pioneers, Ladies and Gentlemen Judges. It is you who have initiated activities of the institution supervising the functioning of public administration bodies in provinces (voivodeships). Let me remind you that this is going to be so due to the reform which has implemented the two-instance system of administration courts as of 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2004. The legal acts constituting the reform are a result of the parliament's works on the bills which I submitted to the Sejm in October 2001. I am referring to the Law on the structure of the administration courts, the Law on proceedings before the administration courts and introductory provisions to both of these acts. I congratulate you, Ladies and Gentlemen on these nominations. I know that they have been preceded by many efforts, great perseverance and talents – I am especially happy to be able to submit them. At the same time I wish you that you may find as much satisfaction as possible from this precursory work and that you may be able to state it with a clear consciousness that the idea of the two-instances structure of administration courts written in the Constitution works well in the everyday practice. This is going to depend on you.

Ladies and Gentlemen

The establishment of the Chief Administration Court in 1980 constituted a breakthrough in the “absolutism” of the administration authorities and was an important step towards the state of law. Gradually increasing its competence – as a result of subsequent legislative changes – the institution has gained control over the whole public administration and assumed a very important role in shaping proper relations between the authorities and the citizen.

Judgements passed by the Chief Administration Court and the adopted resolutions have influenced changes occurring in our legislation and in the whole Polish administration system. The establishment of provincial administration



courts takes some burden off the Chief Administration Court and, at the same time, it makes the whole structure of the democratic state of law more modern, for the reform which is being implemented right now significantly augments the role of administration courts system. I am convinced that it also facilitates fulfilment of the citizens' needs as regards enforcement of their entitlements.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

I am convinced that you are properly prepared to perform the tasks which are in front of you and that the nominations are being granted to highly qualified individuals possessing extensive knowledge of the law – to people who are conscientious and responsible. The public appreciation of the newly created provincial administration courts will depend on the quality of your work. I believe that you are going to face the challenges successfully and the courts at which you will enter judgments are going to earn as much appreciation as is currently – and for a good reason – enjoyed by the Chief Administration Court.

We have taken another important step towards reform of the judiciary. I hope that increasing expenditures for the courts system (this year the outlays for this purpose have been higher by 30 percent and according to next year's budget they are going to rise by a further 11 percent) will help accelerate modernisation of the Polish courts and enrich their staffs. They will help adjust the courts to the EU standards. (...)



## Chapter 2.

Poland – home to us all;  
uniting of Polish society  
around the future tasks

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## A. Development of civic society

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# 1. Address during the 9<sup>th</sup> All-Poland Conference of Presidents, Mayors and Village Heads (excerpts) – Poznan, 17<sup>th</sup> of May 1996

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Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

It will soon be six years since the launch of the self-government reform in Poland. It has initiated the actual decentralisation of the state. The Small Constitution adopted in 1992, thanks to the agreement and understanding of the then biggest parliamentary groupings, confirmed this direction of the transformation of public administration.

Today, local self-government on the commune level is something obvious. Positive effects of its existence can be seen with the naked eye. Self-government employees representing different political and social options work together for the welfare of their commune. They share the care for the economic development, for the development of the communal structure, for improvement of the citizens' living standard.

Our today's meeting is a perfect occasion to thank all of you present here and all the communal employees, for their estimable work in favour of local communities. I would like to say here that I am a declared supporter and ally in the striving for their interests.

Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

The real possibilities of implementing tasks by the communes are first decided by the affluence of their budgets. The financial situation of a local self-government, the financial situation of the state and the situation of citizens is a system of communicating vessels. It is impossible to improve the situation in one of them only. Decentralisation of the state must cover the authority, the tasks and the competences, but also problems and dilemmas. However, the continuation of the practice of entrusting tasks to communes on the basis of lower resources than were in the disposal of government administration is inadmissible.

Declarations by politicians concerning the growth of local self-government's share in managing public finance should become a fact next year – through an honest estimation of costs of the tasks implemented by communes resulting in their growing share in taxes. I will do my utmost for it to happen. Also problems connected with the law on big cities must be univocally identified by the self-government communities, the government and parliamentarians and corrected in a comprehensive way. The Council of Ministers and the Sejm could, still this year, start work on the extremely necessary communal finance code.

It is also necessary to start the discussion on the concept of direct elections of village heads, mayors and presidents.

I perceive in this idea the possibility of strengthening the position of the commune's executive organ. There is no doubt that the character of electoral campaigns in communes would change then. It would have to have a substantial and programme character. Direct elections of village heads, mayors and presidents would be an element of professionalisation of the public administration personnel.

Combined with other elements of the reform of public administration, such as the introduction of districts and state civil service would finally allow for a natural flow of personnel and lessen the dependence of promotions on political support.

Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

A discussion about self-governments in Poland's current conditions is also a discussion about the character of the state.

The reform of the public administration structures both on the central and local levels is still far from being completed. In the opinion of numerous experts our state is poorly organised. Multi-level government administration of vaguely divided competence, multi-instance procedures, predomination of central management, are the basic features of our system. In such conditions, public money is spent ineffectively, because our administration is costly and little effective. The system of "clientism" is flourishing, there is a background for corruption phenomena and – which is most important – the sight of the citizen is lost.

The economic transformation carried out at such an enormous social cost starts to yield visible effects. All the more important are the questions appearing ever more frequently on the daily agenda. These are questions about the mechanisms

of strengthening the positive trends in the economy and particularly about the thrift and effective spending of public funds. The entire public services sector – health service, education, and social assistance – requires rationalisation and profound reforms. Without the acceptance and active co-participation of local communities, these challenges will be hard to meet.

Poland is the only country of this size in Europe, whose citizens elect the authorities closest to them, that is the commune council, and the farthest, that is parliament. In between there is the dominion of the central government – susceptible to political shocks, crises and bargaining. As long as it will be so, as long as we do not fill in the gap – the Polish democracy will be deficient.

Thus, it is necessary to quickly establish new local public administration centres, which would take over some competences and tasks from the government. Decentralisation is not a simple transmission of tasks and competences “downward” at the authority’s discretion. It is a process of returning the citizens their authorisations, which the state once robbed them of. It is no time today to investigate whether it was done in a good or ill faith, under pressure, or voluntarily.

Today it is necessary to meet half-way the budding aspirations of citizens to assume responsibility for themselves and their environment. (...)

The new constitution will settle these issues. Constitutional solutions must consolidate the self-government’s position. I believe this is one of the most important duties of the future Supreme Charter. It is a precondition for the construction of a civic state. The idea of civic state and civic society is common for all meaningful political groupings. (...)

Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

The formulations of the draft of the future constitution adopted by the Constitutional Commission of the National Assembly envisage that local self-government will have a three level structure – commune, district and province. It seems to me that this is the most appropriate model. The arrangement, however, cannot be based on the hierarchical and mutual subordination principle.

The self-government district will never replace the commune and neither will be its superior or competitor. It should take up only those tasks, which are too heavy for the communes. I am in favour of introducing districts, because they will allow widening the structures of the civic state in a natural way, based on local cultural, historic and social traditions.



We should more energetically seek solutions concerning provinces and the character of public administration on that level. It is impossible to put off open discussion on this subject ad infinitum. This problem can be solved! There are convincing reasons for the liquidation of the province's current political system – deprived of civic authority, with slim financial possibilities, asking ministers for financing. I am in favour of a broad discussion on the regional policy in Poland, on the establishment of a dozen or so strong provinces-regions of government-self-government character. (...)

Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

The course of social and parliamentary discussion and the attitude of the society will decide about the continuation of the process of decentralisation of the state. I count on the active participation of self-government communities in this debate.

I am aware that this grand reform of the state will end up in the limitation of government authority. But in my conviction, the government should not worry about it. It should rule – and not govern. It should take up strategic problems, rather than minor administrative questions. Support those who need it and not those, who are the loudest.

2. Legislative initiative of the President of the Republic of Poland – bill – electoral law to the commune councils and village heads, mayors and city presidents (justification) Warsaw, 10<sup>th</sup> of March, 1997
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## JUSTIFICATION

The bill presented to the Supreme Chamber is aimed at putting in order the existing electoral law regulating elections to commune councils. Especially important from the point of view of the electoral technology, is the unification of the electoral apparatus and procedures within the framework of one model. Suggested is the electoral law to the Sejm of the Republic of Poland. This will allow achieving two goals: personalisation of the steps undertaken and minimisation of the cost of running the election.

In the elections to the commune councils carried out hitherto, raised was the problem of the identification of candidates and the seeming ties with the subjects proposing them. That is why, proposed is the limitation of the number of subjects authorised to put forward candidates and more stringent criteria they have to fulfil.

The principles of creating constituencies remain unchanged in relation to the state currently in force. The basic change is the lowering of the threshold according to which communes are divided into the ones in which elections take place in the relevant one-mandate or multi-mandate constituencies.

It is proposed to lower the threshold from 40,000 to 20,000 citizens. This postulate has been put forward many a time and, among other things, proposed in the electoral law to commune councils adopted in 1994 and vetoed by the President of the Republic of Poland, Lech Walesa. The widening of the circle of communes covered by the principle of proportional election is justified by the growing interest of citizens in the election of local authorities. This solution ensures unambiguous identification of candidates and the representation of interest groups.

The most important solutions are connected with the introduction of direct election of village heads. The right to put up candidates, unlike in the case of the system of putting up candidates to the councils, is up to the political parties only. The election of the village head is patterned after the system of electing the President of the Republic of Poland as the best embedded in social awareness. The release of the village head from his post should depend on maximally objectified premises or procedures.

The proposal of the introduction of the institution of direct election of village heads, mayors and presidents is based on the following assumptions:

- systemic – further strengthening of the position of the communal executive organ in relation to the political and lobbying representation, which the commune council is,
- stabilisation of the executive power and administration in the commune,
- change of the character of the electoral campaign in communes, which currently, in the elections to commune councils is political and general, and in the election of village heads, will have to be of substantial and programme character because of the one-person responsibility for the realisation of the electoral programme,
- direct responsibility of the village head before the voters and not before the council, will greatly reduce village head's dependence on the changeable political and personal arrangements within the council,
- direct election of the village head will be the basic element of the professionalisation of public administration personnel and, combined with other elements of the public administration reform like the introduction of districts, will allow for unsealing the vertical flow of personnel in the administration at the same time lessening the dependence of promotions from political support,
- no less important is the strengthening of the social position of public functionaries, which has never been too high.

The consequence of the introduction of direct election of village heads is the reform of the internal structure of communes and the introduction of a new division of their tasks and competences between the council and the village head. The commune board, as the executive organ, is lifted and the village head takes over the scope of its tasks and competences. The village head becomes the only subject authorised to run personnel policy in the commune. It is proposed to strengthen the position of the commune secretary and treasurer, which should find its reflection in the future new law on self-government employees.

Special attention should be paid to the reversal of the general principle regulating the peculiarity of organs deciding about the communal matters. At

present such matters are decided by the council in accordance with Art. 18, item 1 of the law on local self-government. It is proposed that the village head be competent on all matters concerning the commune unless detailed regulations state otherwise.

Recognising the right of the village head to a free selection of the managerial personnel in the commune, it should be borne in mind that it is necessary to guarantee solid foundations and stabilisation for the most important apolitical self-government employees. The commune's secretary and the treasurer are usually regarded as such persons. They, to a considerable extent, decide about the level of professionalism of personnel and the reliability of running financial economy.

Hence, the proposal on making the recalling of those persons from their posts dependent on the consent of the commune council in relation to both posts certain systemic solutions to the concept of civil service are proposed. However, a new law on self-government employees will be required in the future.

The village head will remain to be authorised to appoint his deputies in order to ensure continuous and efficient functioning of the commune. The deputies, however, will be deprived of the protection applied in the case of the secretary and the treasurer of the commune.

A special expression of the strengthening of village head's position is the amendment of Art. 18 item 2 point 9 letter a, which regulates the principles of communal real property turnover. In its current shape it is an expression of the legislator's distrust as regards the reliability of the executive organs entangling the commune council in the sphere of management and administration in the commune, which should be the domain of the executive body and not the legislator or controller. It is necessary to equip the executive organ with an efficient instrument of the implementation of the strategic policy and creation of the current economic policy.

In case the village head's mandate expires before the lapse of his term of office, suggested are analogical solutions as in the case of state authorities. The chairman of the council takes up the post of the village head for the period of the interregnum, which cannot last longer than 6 months, according to Art. 136 of the electoral law.

The adoption of the concept of direct election of village heads results in the removal from the law on local self-government of the hitherto procedures of recalling the board of the commune. The institution of exoneration should not

be reduced to checking the commune's ledgers but rather to the assessment of the policy carried out by the village head. The failure to grant exoneration would be tantamount to the motion addressed to the board of the commune for carrying out a communal referendum on the recalling of the village head.

The principles of the commune's representation in legal relations with the third parties undergo changes, though only in an indispensable degree. Essential is the limitation of village head's independence in the field of incurring financial obligations by the community. The commune treasurer will no longer be obliged to give counter-signature for the village head's written order. The commune council will settle the matter.

The bill does not incur any cost for the state or community budgets.

### 3. Address during the meeting devoted to the reform of public administration (excerpts) 25<sup>th</sup> of March 1998

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Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

(..) The discussion on the shape of the reform of public administration is entering its decisive stage. The government is gradually sending consecutive bills to the Sejm. Some elements of the government's vision of changes are becoming ever more transparent. I think that in the weeks to come – weeks literally – we shall know the comprehensive and final shape of the government-proposed reform. The public opinion is expecting decisions regarding the competence, the presentation of a comprehensive concept of financing tasks and expenditures of the newly created government and self-government structures. It also expects the mechanisms of levelling the existing or future developmental disproportions, so very important for many regions. (...)

Important arguments in favour of the public administration reform can be found in the provisions of the new Constitution. It requires a new look at the internal order in the state. It also maps out the direction of the changes in the structure of the state towards – and I underscore it – towards decentralisation, towards strengthening the subjectiveness of local communities. The principle of balance, which, in the Supreme Charter, is the main idea organising the state, means, among other things, that the authority of the government must be balanced by strong self-government structures. Competitively and financially strong.

The mechanisms of citizens' co-responsibility for the state are still underdeveloped in Poland. Too small areas of public life are directly subjected to social control. On the contrary – the reform of public administration should bring citizens legible and noticeable profits. A citizen should fix all his problems and needs on the local level. The province should be the subject of regional policy, manage a sizeable part of the national property, and take up tasks, which the local communities could not cope with.

Another argument in favour of the administrative reform, which I fully share, is the necessity of carrying out basic changes in the social sphere. Public services such as the health service, education or social assistance still do not have their own host. It is difficult to reform them without the acceptance and active participation of local communities. The level and accessibility of those services evoke social criticism, justified in the overwhelming majority of cases. Rendering them by the government organs is not conducive to the effective spending of public money.

Local and regional communities must take the co-responsibility for changing the situation. And, in my opinion, they are prepared to do so. It is necessary to win them over for the reform. The planned changes must be carried out in cooperation with them and not near to or in spite of them. I will repeat that thought because, it seems to me that there is still much to be done in this respect.

I would now like to raise yet another argument in favour of the reform, which I share, the last but not the least important. In several days' time we shall start negotiations with the European Union. Despite everything else, this means that we should, to an increasing extent, resemble the other European states also in terms of the shape of public administration, including the self-government, mechanisms of democracy and the way in which the state is organised. Today's Europe is based on regional cooperation, profound decentralisation of public authority, and financial independence of local communities. We all can see how far from it we are.

As you may know, both in my electoral programme and after taking the post of the President of the Republic of Poland, I, many a time, declared myself in favour of widening the competence and responsibility of local self-governments, for the establishment of yet another level of self-government authority. Today I would like to repeat this opinion with the conviction, which stems primarily from the undisputed success of the first self-government reform in 1990. If today we are to seek the reasons and pillars of the Polish success since 1989, next to the Round Table and the major political change that has been made, the economic reforms known as the Balcerowicz Plan from the turn of the 1989, it is precisely the self-government reform that has been the pillar of success, whose profits we start to gradually but ever more clearly feel. The 1990 reform was also an important step in bringing public administration closer to the citizen and, by the same token, closer to the real socialisation of the state.

When profound systemic changes in the legislation occur, the special role of the President of the Republic of Poland, in a natural way, makes him an addressee

of various expectations. I am aware of this, as I every day receive numerous statements, letters, protests and petitions addressed to me. Self-government communities often treat the President as the participant in the reform more seriously than those who work on the drafts. I would like us all to recognise that the idea of a civic state is common for all of us, common for the important political groupings and for intellectual elites, that there is no difference between us as regards this strategic, important state and civic goal, which the decentralisation of the authority is. Whereas we discuss about the methods, means and the time of reaching that goal. (...)



## 4. Address during the session of the 4<sup>th</sup> Congress of the All-Poland Alliance of Trade Unions [OPZZ] (excerpts) – 29<sup>th</sup> of May 1998

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

Four years ago I had the pleasure to be the guest, though in a different character, of the previous OPZZ Congress. A lot has changed in Poland and in the trade union movement since then. I want to assure you that my kindness and sympathy for your alliance has not changed. Neither did my view on the main challenges facing Poland, on the methods of carrying out politics and on the role of the trade unions in this country.

It was with pleasure that I accepted your invitation to take part in your Congress. The All-Poland Alliance of Trade Unions is the strongest and the most important trade union movement for working people in the Republic of Poland. The OPZZ has an important role to play in the life of the country. Whatever you decide here will be important not only for you. It will be important for all of us. (...)

I have been observing the style of your work for some time now. I appreciate, that despite numerous adversities, the unions making up the OPZZ did not depart from their social mission. Trade union activity is often entangled with politics. The OPZZ is no exception to the rule. I have the impression, however, that you are well aware that the union should stand not by politicians but by the people of hired labour. Also by the pensioners and young people starting their professional lives. It is chiefly they who need the trade unions and their umbrella.

You have always been advocates of the effectiveness of operation. Collective bargaining and strikes have never been the goal in itself for you. You carry out discussions with the government and employees using reasonable arguments, without resorting to the use of nuts and bolts, cans of paint or Molotov cocktails. You defend employee rights in a decisive way without undermining the economic condition of the Polish economy or state budget possibilities.

Many a time you have given evidence of responsible thinking. You know the hierarchy of values. You have been presenting such an attitude, full of responsibility and deliberation constantly, independently of what political force was steering the government.

The progress of recent years incurred enormous social cost. The working people were patient, though. During the past four years there was no social unrest in Poland despite the still difficult – sometimes even dramatic – situation of numerous employee communities. You have a commendable share in this. Without this social calm it would be impossible to attain the impressive economic growth we recorded in the years 1994–1997. It would be impossible to curb inflation and unemployment; neither possible would be the growth of real wages or such major foreign capital investments. For this you deserve the words of esteem and thanks.

Today's Poland is a dynamically developing country. We are about to join NATO. We have started negotiations on membership in the European Union. We are proceeding towards a United Europe – a rich, modern, well organised social Europe. The stable state and the developing economy must be our strong points.

Let us not forget about our problems though. They exist independently of the changes of top echelon authorities. We have entered the tenth year of our profound political, economic and social transformation. The years of numerous stormy discussions and difficult decisions are behind us. We already know how necessary is consistency in action, how indispensable is the ability to continue the deed of our predecessors even if they were our rivals.

I have repeated it more than once: there are no other sources of improving the situation of Polish families than maintaining a high economic growth, curbing inflation, privatisation and restructuring of industry, the strengthening of the zloty and public finance discipline. The experience of the past years proved that the state is able to carry out active development-oriented economic policy. That is does not have to resign from active social policy.

It is impossible to build a modern, stable state on the huge areas of poverty, unemployment and lack of perspectives. Although one million new jobs were created in recent years – we still have much to do in this respect. I am convinced that the idea of social justice has not lost its importance as the value mapping out the goal of public activity, as the motive of politicians' activity.

The trade unions in Poland enjoy a strong position. They are an important element of democratic social structures. They are facing new challenges. Today we are no longer asking questions in the order: Should privatisation go ahead? Should restructuring be continued? Should the system of social assistance be changed? Should the system of health care be changed? We are asking one question today: How to do all this in a civilised way? In a democratic, European country one cannot count on carrying out reforms against people, or just next to them. The changes cannot serve the few only. The reform-oriented slogans cannot be a smokescreen for the lack of esteem: for human work and for the working people, for the citizens' social rights.

A modern economy is a partnership arrangement. Remember – no one has the monopoly for reason: neither you, nor your partners. They also have the right to their own point of view. It is always worth to consider this, demanding the same from ourselves.

Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

The government has proposed draft changes in many areas. Carrying them out requires a serious public debate with the participation of the main political parties and social partners.

The role of the opposition is to criticise the government. The trade unions are to fight for employee issues. This, however, does not mean that one can stop at just saying “No!.” Poland needs cooperation and compromise of all participants in public life. I have experienced it myself, that occasionally it is difficult and sometimes painful. Nevertheless, I am convinced that it is indispensable.

It is necessary to talk about the most important issues; it is necessary to listen to the opinions of those with whom we do not agree. Let us not deprive others of the right to just intentions. Different reasons often supplement themselves. That is why I think that the opposition and the trade unions should regard every government as a partner rather than an enemy.

I also think that all the trade unions should be esteemed by the government and treated on a par. They are a social force to be reckoned with, one that is necessary to talk with. If the reforms are to succeed, if they are to bring benefit to people, it is necessary to think about the conclusion of a sort of a new social contract, like the pact on enterprise so as to quietly seek the road to an effective launching of self-governmental, social insurance, health service and educational reforms.

We all need a well-organised, citizen-friendly state. A state in which the democratic governing of the elected majority would mean common action – wise compromise wherever possible – always the right to the defence of ones own reasons and esteem for the views of others – wherever necessary.

Let us disregard the seals stamped on the projects. The important thing is whether the projects are good, whether the laws passed on their foundation will serve people well.

Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are on the threshold of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is going to be a century of fierce competition. We have to take advantage of this chance. Let us not plunge in fruitless controversies. Let us build a just and modern state – a Poland common for all, a country in which the Polish people from the left, from the right, from the OPZZ and those from the Solidarity movement, could be proud of.

I wish you successful deliberations, and the authorities of the Alliance success in your work.

## 5. Address during the meeting with the inhabitants of the city of Kielce (excerpts) – Kielce, 14<sup>th</sup> of June 1998

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

(..) In recent years Poland went through numerous changes and reforms. Today, in 1998, we have reason to be satisfied. Poland is developing its economy. We are a country that increasingly counts in the world. We enjoy positive opinions and are often regarded as a pattern for what is happening in Central Europe. I would like to take this special opportunity to tell you that the progress which has occurred in Poland was possible not only thanks to the efforts of reformers, politicians, parliamentarians, but first of all thanks to the work of the Polish people here in Kielce, in Czestochowa and in Poland as a whole. Today it is necessary to thank for it and remember it when we are talking about yet another grand Polish reform. (...)

I have listened to many experts in recent months. I have listened to discussions in the Sejm, in the Presidential Palace I received specialists from Poland and abroad with whom I talked about the administrative reform of the Republic of Poland. And I decided to come to Kielce and also to other cities where voices of doubt and incomprehension are raised, disregarding the expertises, to look in your eyes, to see your faces and to ask what kind of a reform you want and what kind of reform you want to join.

Poland needs administrative reform, decentralisation of the authority, stronger citizens enjoying their full rights and the possibility of deciding. I am convinced that our today's satisfaction from Polish reforms started in 1989, among other things, stems from the reasonable decision of introducing self-government communes and the reform we started in 1990. Travelling through Polish towns and villages, seeing the Polish communes, observing the activity of self-governments, numerous organisations established with the idea of self-government in mind, for supporting local initiatives, I can say with full conviction, that this is the right direction. The Polish society is mature enough to take matters in their

own hands. Local communities are ready to take the responsibility for what is happening in their towns, in their commune, in their village. (...)

In order to ensure Poland progress, ensure Polish families safety and welfare it is necessary to reform also the state administration, to strengthen local self-governments, to make the citizen a subject of whatever is happening in our homeland. This is what the reform should serve and this is its sense.

I would like the meeting in Kielce and your commitment to the issue of the Staropolski Region be an engagement in the grand reform which is to serve Poland and build up the force of our country in Europe. I would like the effort of numerous self-government organisations and your endeavours to become a sound foundation for strong districts, for strong regions and for the development of Polish self-governments. (...)

During my numerous talks I have heard arguments favouring various variants of Poland's administrative division and I want to say that no matter of the variant, be it 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, or 17, the number of those "for" and those "against" was the same. But for me, the argument that cannot pass unnoticed is the readiness of local communities to take the responsibility for their region, for their fate and for their development. That is why I am asking Polish parliamentarians, Polish politicians to look in the faces of people who want to have the Staropolski Region, listen to their arguments and notice that they want to create the region for Poland's benefit and for their own well-understood advantage. This is how it should be. This is the sense of the reform we are carrying out.

Here lies great industrial and scientific potential, here are the historical and contemporary accomplishments we should know and remember about. Here is the human potential. Here are the great patriots of this land, this region, who are ready to take up work and effort. I ask the Parliament, the Senate, and later the Sejm, while taking up decisions on the regional division, to consider all those arguments.

I will talk, I will convince, I will do everything I can to make your arguments heard so that the decisions were not taken above your heads, so that those taking them do not turn their backs on you. You are the most important in this reform. Let the unity of the political forces of the Staropolski Region be an additional argument. Let everyone who will decide about Poland's administrative division remember that these are not decisions about the maps – they are decisions about people. I will always remember about people!

## 6. Address during the handing out of decorations for the activists of the National Union of Farmers, Circles and Agricultural Organisations (excerpts) – 15<sup>th</sup> of October 1999

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am glad to be able to host in the Presidential Palace representatives of the organisation so merited for our agriculture. The first agricultural circle was established on Polish territory 137 years ago, two years later – the Housewives' Society whose heir today is the Rural Housewives' Circle.

These two dates make us realise how deeply enrooted is the tradition of agricultural trade union movement, how rich heritage and accomplishments it can boast of. Its goal went beyond the defence of the interests of the Polish countryside. Also active participation in the life of its inhabitants and the changes occurring within this community. You, dear ladies and gentlemen, are the heirs and continuators of that beautiful tradition. The decorations, which I had the pleasure to hand out to you a while ago, are an expression of the recognition for your devotion to the matters of the Polish countryside and thanks for the daily farmer's toil.

I know that they are of symbolic dimension. The Polish countryside is awaiting concrete actions augmenting the feeling of security and stabilisation. I was told about it by representatives of agricultural organisations, with whom I met several times recently. (...)

Agriculture is this sector of economy, which owing to its social, environmental and economic functions requires special protection and support. Introducing mechanisms correcting the loss of incomes and boosting the development of rural areas, we must remember that they took into account the economic and regional differentiation of rural areas. One kind of agricultural policy elements should be directed to the developmental households increasing production and caring for its quality, another kind, for sustaining households and creation of new jobs and still another kind – for social households.

I would like your Union to actively participate in the ongoing discussion around the solutions proposed in the government programme and contained in the “Pact for agriculture and rural areas.” Today’s agricultural organisations are not only the spokesman for the interests of the countryside but also an important partner in shaping the programmes and agricultural policy instruments.

I do care about it that in the shortest time perspective possible we could see civilizational and economic progress of Polish agriculture. That is why I support such solutions that would ensure future for rural youth, would facilitate it equating the educational chances; create conditions for acquiring education and profession, which would decide about the material existence of rural families.

The countryside cannot remain the area of poverty and lack of hope. The place where unsolved social problems concentrate. One mustn’t leave people without an alternative. Especially young people. (...)

I am sure that your organisation, cultivating the traditions of agricultural trade union movement, will strengthen its role in the shaping of a modern face of the Polish countryside. The rural community needs the faith that positive changes are possible and real. Necessary is the conviction that own activeness and entrepreneurship are the keys to positive changes. (...)

On the Day of the Organisation of Agricultural Circles I wish your Union numerous success in the work for the good of the Polish countryside. I wish its activists and members health and all prosperity.



## 7. Address during the meeting with representatives of the cooperative movement (excerpt) – 12<sup>th</sup> of November 1999

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Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased that on the eve of the Second Congress of the Polish Cooperative Movement I can host in the Presidential Palace the most merited representatives of that community. You represent a social movement whose roots on the Polish territory date back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Our country has not yet returned to the map of Europe when in 1904 the first Polish General Unions became full-fledged members of the International Cooperative Union.

You, dear ladies and gentlemen, are the heirs of that beautiful tradition. The decorations I had the honour to hand out to you a moment ago are an expression of the recognition for your commitment to the issues of the cooperative movement and thanks for the long years of work, multiplying its achievements and accomplishments.

The more than one-century-old history of the Polish cooperative movement is proof that this is an attractive idea, tested even in the difficult economic conditions. During the centrally planned economy the cooperative movement constituted a true oasis for human initiative. It allowed for developing own ingenuity. It was a chance for active and enterprising people.

It became possible because the principles and values, which the cooperative movement has been following since the very beginning of its existence, are universal and timeless. There is no exaggeration in describing it as a good school of democracy, the hotbed of self-government and civic education.

The care for the needs of members and local communities, the release in them of the spirit of enterprise and the feeling of ties, propagation of independence and economic resourcefulness, was and is its precious value. That is why it should find its due place in Poland's new reality. In the free market conditions private firms and companies, cooperatives and state-owned enterprises can function

together. The example of the European Union countries is evidence that the cooperative movement can be an important subject on the economic scene, a partner to be reckoned with in solving difficult, local problems. We should emulate this example using somebody else's experiences and tested solutions.

A strong cooperative movement has a positive influence on the country's economy and spurs the development of economically weaker regions. Creating new jobs is also an effective way of curbing unemployment. Invalid cooperative movement, offering the disabled a chance for employment and agricultural cooperatives, which can and should play an important role in the changes, which are and will be occurring in agriculture together with our forthcoming membership in the European Union, has a special task to fulfil in this respect.

Aiding the cooperative movement is in the interest of the state. Launching such credit and taxation mechanisms, which would allow overcoming the profound crisis, which affected it at the beginning of the 1990s. The cooperatives must not be discriminated. The state and the government should ensure them the same operating conditions as other economic subjects.

I am also in favour of legal regulations, which would strengthen the cooperative form of management. Poland is currently putting its legal system in order. I know that another amendment of the "Cooperative law" is being prepared. I think that the solutions contained in it should be universal, should consider the already practically tested Western European experiences.

But even the best law will not fix everything. The cooperative movement must be attractive, must be able to attract young people seeing in it a chance for the realisation of own ambitions and aspirations. A contemporary cooperative is a modern enterprise employing marketing, managerial administration, skilful gathering and use of capital.

Let us not be afraid of taking advantage of somebody else's experiences; let us learn from others how to solve difficult problems. On my part, I would like to assure you that you can count on my goodwill and kindness. I will support any good initiative, which would serve the Polish cooperative movement and contribute to its strengthening and development. (...)

## 8. Address during the meeting with self-government employees (excerpts) – 26<sup>th</sup> of May 2000

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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

The date of the tenth anniversary of local self-government in Poland commemorates a major step on the road to democracy. Still during the Round Table discussion we did not realise the chance, which self-government could bring Poland. When I am asked by my numerous foreign interlocutors, inquiring observers and analysts of the Polish political scene, I stress that the Polish success, which differentiates us from other states undergoing political transformation, consists in the fact that, in a short period of time we found and created three strong pillars of changes which have taken place in Poland.

The first pillar was the Round Table debates and the unprecedented decision to make the change of the political system in Poland in a bloodless and agreed upon way. The second process of immense importance are the economic changes proposed by Prof. Leszek Balcerowicz accepted by the then parliament at the turn of the 1989. The third pillar, which is least often mentioned, and which in my conviction, is the key to the understanding of the Polish success, is the introduction of self-government as the political principle and launching the process starting from communes, carrying out self-government elections to communes in May 1990 – barely one year after the conclusion of the Round Table debate. The countries, which failed to make the third step, which confirmed the political changes with the economic ones but did not decide to decentralise the authority and build a strong self-government, are living through incomparably greater difficulties until this very day. They do not take advantage of the great potential, which we managed to activate at the very outset of the Polish changes. Then, in May 1990, we awakened social activeness, started to create the foundations for the civic society, in which people directly decide about their environment, man posts with people, whom they can observe, assess, criticise and accept. In the communes we created the possibility of taking decisions, which picked up able and active people, which were a chance for economic initiatives and which brought effect in the form of changing the image of Polish

cities, towns and villages. Without those decisions from more than 10 years ago, Poland would be a different country.

I want to express my esteem and recognition for all those people on the Solidarity side, who held on to the idea of local self-government from the very beginning, since the time of the Round Table debate. I want to thank all the experts, specialists, who ardently worked on the then adopted laws. I want to thank the hundreds of thousands of self-government employees, who appeared in the Polish communes and towns and who took part in this major, universal self-government movement. There is no doubt that without local self-governments we would not be able to build a civic society. There is no doubt that the Polish reforms would sink in bureaucracy and mutual dependences. There is no doubt either that without local self-government it would be much more difficult for us to create political elites of people, who gradually, through gaining self-government experience are preparing to fulfil public, parliamentary and government roles. I am convinced that this is only the beginning of our road. Ten years after the establishment of commune self-governments was a time of heated debate. I do not want to assess whether some decisions were taken in proper time, too early or too late, but let me observe that the Constitution adopted in 1997 contains provisions, which not only adequately determine the role of the self-government but strengthen it immensely. Today, in accordance with the Constitution of the Third Republic of Poland, the self-government is a major force and an important element in the political structure of the Polish state. After many discussions we managed to launch successive local self-government levels: districts and provinces. I had an opportunity to talk with representatives of districts and provinces in recent months. My impression is that it has succeeded. Despite all the difficulties and criticism, it was a correct decision, one that undoubtedly modernises Poland, decentralises the authority and augments the share of citizens in decision making.

A short time has elapsed since the establishment of districts and provinces. Maybe we have not yet gathered all the experiences but let me remind you that, on my initiative, among others, we included the provision in the law that by the end of 2000 it would be necessary to sum up and verify experiences, change regulations which are ineffective and which evoke negative effects so that the Polish self-government could enter the new millennium as a strong structure, adequately equipped, enjoying merited esteem of the citizens and dwellers, public opinion. I am convinced that independently of all the troubles we are observing and living through, the parliament of the Republic of Poland will make such an analysis towards the end of 2000 so that in 2001, before the planned election, the indispensable corrections could be made in the legal system concerning local self-government. (...)

The changes we have carried out are also very important because they are in themselves the first step on the road of Poland's joining the European Union. The self-government system in Poland greatly matches what is adopted in the EU. Today our regions fulfil all the conditions to cooperate with regions in Western Europe. The principles, which concern self-governments, are totally comparable with the EU standards. We can say that in the great process of preparing Poland to enter the Union, which we want to achieve in 2003, the local self-government, Poland's administrative structure has fulfilled its tasks almost completely, although the details will require some more work. However, it is not so that everything is as it should be and that on today's holiday we can speak about the positive aspects only. I must tell at this juncture about the phenomena, which worry you and me, that is the re-centralisation, a departure from what had been promised. It was promised that we seize power in order to give it to the people; it was promised that decentralisation was of an irreversible character, that the self-governments would have a greater number of instruments and opportunities to act. It is impossible to say that all these promises are fulfilled and one can say that some of them are glaringly undermined. In the financial decisions there is a lack of balance between the tasks and the duties, which the self-governments received and the financial resources earmarked for them. There is an essential employment disproportion between the government, the province and self-government offices justified neither by the scope of responsibility nor the matters these offices deal with. There were laws, which partially run counter to the idea of self-government. (...)

Ten years of self-government experience show that the institution is not free from weaknesses. If I were to define the weaknesses I would say this: in some places there is a problem of maintaining the indispensable ties between the elected representatives of local communities and the communities proper. It turns out that very shortly after the election the councillors start to get engaged in the interest of the self-government as such rather than in the interest of the entire community in which they operate. Meanwhile, the ties are very necessary because without them we shall not be able to build a civic society. It would be very bad if it turned out that a citizen, who has no political or self-government ambitions, who is only a voter, finds out after another election that his vote does not mean much and that the persons whom he had trusted betray the trust and are not even ready to keep up the indispensable link with the community. I accentuate it because it is on this that the quality of the civic society in Poland and the quality of self-governments will depend. Like the state administration, also the self-governments are not free from bureaucracy, which causes detachment of self-government authority from the voters.

Poland is living through a period of major changes, which, by definition, are often connected with the play of big interests, with money of different provenance. Corruption is not a problem of political parties only but is a general problem, which concerns human attitudes, the morality of people fulfilling top functions rather than their political views. Corruption can be a disease, which will ruin the democratic Polish state as such and will ruin its prestige. Already now it is highly worrying when one hears in the world how very much the opinion about us is the opinion about corrupt people, who without bribes or forms of pressure will not fix anything. I therefore give a warning, in order to prevent corruption becoming a standard, it must be a phenomenon with which we struggle and the struggle is possible only when those who give, will stop giving and those who take will stop taking or demanding gratification of this type. Corruption may be a disease, which will ruin our high opinion in the world and which will be strong enough, that regardless of the successive teams – no matter whether in the commune or in the voivodship, any legal rules and any principles will become no longer obligatory. I warn against it, maybe I am using too strong a words, maybe it is not yet the moment to sound such a decisive alarm but I am convinced that the sooner we sound the alarm now, the better we shall be able to cope with this virus, which, apart from being contagious, is very dangerous. (..)

## 9. Address during the ceremonial session of the Municipal Council of the town of Wyszkw (excerpts) – Wyszkw, 26<sup>th</sup> of March 2001

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Esteemed ladies and gentlemen,

I wholeheartedly welcome all of you gathered here and want to express my joy that we are meeting on the day, which marks the beginning of the celebrations of the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Wyszkw. An extraordinary town, picturesquely situated on the Bug River at the outskirts of Biala Forest. Five hundred years of that town means a whole wealth of history and tradition, but also contemporaneity. The contemporaneity embedded in the history of the Mazowsze Region and Poland. I believe that the celebrations we are starting today will serve not only the remembrance of the rich history, but will also be an opportunity to ponder about the future of the town, its dwellers and all the generations, which tie their fate with this town now and in the future. (...)

I would like to say something about the future. For more than two years now Wyszkw is the seat of a district. In effect of the administrative reform, many important decisions were transferred to local communities. I think that this is one of the basic stages of developing democracy. This is a foundation for the formation of civic society in our country. And here we still have a long road to cover. But already today we can see that among the recently launched reforms, the self-government reform is assessed best. It brings the most tangible and well-appraised results. This is primarily the merit of people, their support and enormous contribution of work in the efficient operation of the new institutions. More and more things depend on the very dwellers. Self-government in Poland will succeed if it enjoys social support. Thus, we have to stabilise the legal situation of self-governments and consistently eliminate the committed errors and negligence.

The hitherto experience shows that local communities care for their interests best, that they most rationally treat the development of their towns and communes. This is only natural. Who will know the local problems better, who will

be able to make a better use of the available resources? The local communities best perceive the chances and opportunities facing them.

I am talking about the development of self-government because I am convinced that this is one of the most important tasks, next to Poland's joining the European Union, next to the strengthening of Polish democracy and ensuring economic growth for our homeland in the decades to come. The development of self-government, bestowing the real competence on the dwellers, the construction of civic society and the inclusion of an ever broader circle of people to co-responsibility for what is happening in Poland and in local communities, is our duty in the years to come. (...)



# 10.

Address during the meeting with persons who suffered in last year's flood, representatives of self-government authorities, rescue services and donors (excerpts) – 14<sup>th</sup> of January 2002

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Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our today's meeting is a reaction to the tragedy of the flood, which happened in Poland last year. This is a meeting of people who understand the word solidarity literally – as the necessity of meeting half-way those, who found themselves in a dramatic situation, granting them help both that organised one in order to save lives and also that in the repair of the material losses, which have occurred. I would like to wholeheartedly thank all those, who got engaged in helping the flood victims and say at the same time, that such an attitude should be our everyday approach. We never know when we shall again have to be ready to help people affected by a tragedy. Since that summer flood we saw horrible things happening in the world such as the terrorist attack in America and vexing and difficult things like the latest harsh winter in Poland. That is why we need our presence, readiness and cooperation constantly, because thanks to it we shall have the feeling of greater safety, thanks to which people in Poland would be certain that they are not left alone in difficult moments.

Let me thank, esteemed ladies and gentlemen, first of all those who fulfilled their duties in a most dedicated, very professional way, thanks to whom last year's flood was not as dramatic as that of 1997. (...) Also good cooperation with self-governments, whose representatives we are hosting today, meant that in organisational terms, in the transmission of information and taking rational decisions this time, it was better than four years ago. Words of sincere thanks should be addressed to mayors, subprefects and all self-government representatives.

We can honestly say that we became wiser after the loss. The conclusions we drew from 1997, especially as far as the operation of civil defence is concerned, allowed for achieving better results than in the past. But we are not always wiser after the loss. Once again I must express my regret that the laws on the state of

emergency, which were to help in such situations, have lain in the Sejm for four years and have not been adopted. I hope that during the forthcoming weeks or months we shall see the conclusion of that work. They are necessary not in order to add yet another law, but in order to provide a solid legal foundation for well-organised and coordinated action of all the indispensable services so that the self-governments could exploit the authorisations contained in it.

I want to sincerely thank all of you once again for your effort and devotion, which has not been without loss. I am sure that in every difficult situation we can count on our army, the police, border guards, the firemen and civil services. I also want to thank wholeheartedly all those, who guided by human solidarity, regardless of the cost and difficulties, helped the flood victims and later in the process of removing the destruction. Yesterday, all of Poland took part in Jurek Owskiak's charity collection, and I think that it is a great idea to collect a considerable sum of money once a year to help children. But what you have done during last year's flood is proof that, as a matter of fact, this type of action is going on in Poland the whole year round, whenever necessary. I want to thank all of you, entrepreneurs, sponsors' representatives, for your response, for your absolute readiness of rendering help from the very first moment, be it in the financial form or in the form of goods you have provided. It is really heartening, it makes one believe that, for the entrepreneurs profit, diagrams, success of their companies, profitability are not the most important things but that they are blood-and-flesh people with hearts, who never refuse help when it is really necessary and expected – as we heard from self-government representatives a moment ago – is highly valued. (...)

# 11. Television address in connection with self-government elections (excerpts) – 25<sup>th</sup> of October 2002

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Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Compatriots,

Self-government elections will take place the day after tomorrow, on the 27<sup>th</sup> of October. We shall elect hosts of the Polish towns and villages, districts and provinces. I appeal to you to take part in these elections. In the past, the situation in this respect varied; please do not play the role of bystanders this time. It is an important day. We shall decide about the fate of our “small homelands”, about the quality of our democracy and the future of our country.

Self-government is one of the most important pillars of the Third Republic of Poland. Launching the self-government reform we were the first country to do so in this part of Europe. It was a wise and farsighted decision, which liberated in the Polish people enormous energy, resourcefulness and the feeling of responsibility. One, which helped many local communities to regain their identity and take effective care of the issues of their environment. One can safely say that self-government has socialised and democratised the authority in our country. It was a milestone in the construction of civic society. Without this pillar, the structure of our homeland would not have been stable. Most self-governments passed the test. I remember the joy of the inhabitants and my satisfaction when I took part in the opening of: bridges in Warsaw, new universities in Bialystok, Rzeszow and Zielona Gora, housing settlement in Kielce, airport in Poznan, ring-road in Boleslawiec, water purification plant in Hel, new investment projects in Gliwice, Opoczno, Tubadzin, Wolomin and Wronki, sports hall in Chelm and many, many other places. A richer, safer, cleaner village, town, commune or district, means a richer, safer, cleaner Poland. For this enormous effort, for the commitment and work, I would now like to sincerely thank all the self-government employees, who did their job well. Serving the communities you live in with devotion, you served well the entire Republic of Poland!

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On Sunday we shall vote according to the new principles. For the first time we shall directly elect councillors, commune heads, mayors and town presidents. Not political arrangements, but the will of voters will decide about those posts. It is a chance of departing from partnership and anonymity in favour of personality and responsibility. The number of councillors has been reduced. This should improve the effectiveness of action. Thanks to it, our local democracy will become more transparent. Let it be an encouragement to take part in the election, because much depends on the turnout. On whether our new councillors will be elected by a small group of inhabitants or whether they will feel broad social support making them feel real hosts. We shall decide about this. The deal is simple: the more of us go to the polls, the greater is the chance of electing the best! Giving stronger support we can expect and demand more, and be convinced about the councillors' greater responsibility!

I am convinced that in fourteen months' time Poland will become a member of the European Union. This community links not only states but also regions, provinces, districts and also communes. Numerous local communities availed themselves of its aid funds and established cooperation with partners in the EU countries. It is on Polish self-government employees, whom we shall now elect, that depends what fruit this experience will bring in the future and whether we are able to take good advantage of the new prospects and opportunities. I also believe that the newly elected self-governments will keep those officials, who can make a professional use of the chance.

There are many candidates. The proposal is unusually multicoloured. The decision on whom to vote for is up to you, ladies and gentlemen. I would only like to be able to safely say after the election that local issues are in good hands. That we entrusted them to honest, not corrupt people, immune to temptations, which the authority brings in its wake. That they will be people determined to take up the difficult struggle against poverty, unemployment, crime, drug addiction and alcoholism. That they will be people susceptible to the needs of the elderly, the disabled, sick or lost. I know that these expectations are very demanding but I am convinced that such people – ready to take up this effort – can be found on the lists. (..)

I recently returned from my trip to Central Asia. I saw how difficult it is to build democratic institutions, how long is the road to civic society. It takes years to build democracy. It is extremely easy to destroy it. These elections will show what kind of Poland we want. Democracy is not a matter of a decree; it must be accompanied by good will and action, respect for the law and for other

people. Everywhere – in the state, in a commune, in a town or in a district. Let us stake on those, who will serve those values.

Poland wants, Poland can and – I promise you – Poland will be a democratic legal state.

I encourage my compatriots: let us take part in this election; let us elect wise people!

It will be better for us, for our “small homelands”, better for Poland!

## 12. Address during the signing of the Law on voluntary service – 20<sup>th</sup> of May 2003

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Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today's celebration is of solemn character, because I am convinced that the Law on public benefit and voluntary service – tabled by the Sejm on 24<sup>th</sup> of April 2003 – merits special attention. In my opinion, the law is an appropriate and important step in the development of Polish democracy. Another legal act of structural character of capital importance for the building of civic society in Poland has been added.

The law will enable the implementation of important goals and values in social policy. It will consolidate the awareness of citizens' deep ties with the state. Its provisions underscore the existence of interdependence between civic co-responsibility for the functioning of the state and the duties of the state towards its citizens. In practice, this means a new stage in the development of the tertiary sector. The cooperation of state institutions and non-government organisations assumes a truly partner-like character. The relations between the volunteers and the institutions availing themselves of their services will eventually be regulated.

The preparation of the law lasted for a long time, but the final effect was surely worth the effort. The adopted formula of work on its final shape can constitute a very good example of an effective action based on the principle of social dialogue. Words of great recognition are due to the government and personally to Minister Jerzy Hausner, whose merits in the process of creating the law I would like to stress particularly. I also address my words of esteem to non-government organisations, which, within the framework of the Contact Group, were actively engaged in the process. (...)

Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

About thirty thousand non-government organisations operate in Poland, jointly employing a staff of 200,000. Some two million volunteers help these organisations. Many areas of life would not be able to function today without the work

of the non-government organisations. This enormous potential of civic activeness has for years been waiting to be harmoniously included in the legal system.

The law signed today has pioneering merits in this respect. It, for the first time, in detail, regulates questions connected with the activity of the voluntary service. It also defines the operation of public benefit institutions run by the non-government organisations in accordance with the constitutional principle of subsidiariness also taking into account the experiences of democratic states of developed market economy. And – what is especially important – it indicates the minister, member of the Council of Ministers, responsible for matters connected with the operation of public benefit institutions and the voluntary service. So far, there was no organ to which these matters were entrusted legally.

In the countries of Western Europe and the United States non-government organisations have a long tradition of partner-like cooperation with the government constituting a meaningful economic force. They employ tens of thousands of people creating new jobs. Social activeness implemented in the form of operation of non-profit organisations and in the voluntary service helps solve a number of important issues. Especially in the case of people less resourceful in life, the elderly, ill, those who struggle with the difficulties of everyday life – the hand extended by a volunteer may make the surrounding world friendlier.

That is why I hope that the adoption of the law on – and I stress it – the European level will contribute to the improvement of the quality of life in our country. I also believe that, thanks to the adopted regulations, it will be easier to take advantage of the resources from the European Union structural funds in Poland.

Ladies and Gentlemen – it is a great success of the Third Republic of Poland that it managed to adopt this important, modern legal act civilising in the spirit of democracy this important field of our life. I once again congratulate the authors of that law. Using this occasion I would like from the depth of my heart to most warmly thank all the volunteers for their effort, devotion, selflessness and readiness to help other people. I know that they do not expect either praise or orders but they are just such because their activity stems from the need of their hearts. Our duty, the duty of our state is to make good use of their energy and kindness and create such legal framework that would make their activity easier. You are wonderful, you are necessary! I wish you persistence and I believe that the law will help not only those who have undertaken this important activity but will also encourage other people, especially the young to take up the difficult task of helping within the framework of the voluntary service and also to participate in various forms of civic life also in social and non-government organisations. Thank you once again.

# 13.

Address during the meeting with representatives of the National Union of Farmers, Circles and Agricultural Organisations and Rural Housewives Circles (excerpt) 5<sup>th</sup> of June 2003

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Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

(..) I would like to welcome all of you very sincerely, both the representatives of the National Union of Farmers, Circles and Agricultural Organisations celebrating their 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the Rural Housewives Circles celebrating their 135<sup>th</sup> anniversary. You are an extremely numerous representation of rural communities: nearly 26,000 housewives circles, 22,500 agricultural circles and 1,200 cooperatives jointly affiliate more than one million one hundred thousand people. I am aware of the fact that your 140 year old tradition has found its lasting and meaningful place in the Polish countryside and I would like to stress its very important place in Polish history and Polish statehood.

Ever since the very outset of the existence of agricultural organisations, their members learned modern management, resourcefulness, support in times of need, conducted educational and cultural activity, actively represented agriculture and the countryside before the state organs. It is so now and it should be so in the future. This means that the idea of the establishment of the first Peasant Agricultural Societies is still alive and necessary. And although during nearly one and a half centuries, the situation of farmers and countryside dwellers changed dramatically, although the forms of your work are different today – the basic principles of activity adopted by Juliusz Kraziewicz, founder of the first society on the Polish territory in Piaseczno near Tczew in Gdansk Pomerania, have lost nothing of its freshness.

Actions you have undertaken after the breakthrough year of 1989 aimed at protecting agriculture from the negative effects of a quick economic transformation are the best evidence that you can catch up with the spirit of time. I know that today you are engaged in educational actions in the countryside devoted to the most topical matters. I have in mind the activity of the European Education and Information Centre, which offers advice on how to operate in



the new, extended Europe. I know that you promote modern solutions you saw in foreign countries thanks to the contacts you have established with farmers' trade union organisations in other countries. I approve the fact that for two years now, the National Union of Farmers, Circles and Agricultural Organisations negotiates with the manufacturers purchases of the means of production, machines, tractors and cars at preferential prices – the system known as Line R. These are heartening examples of wise actions, which make competition with farmers in Germany, France or Spain, easier. I congratulate you on your activeness! I am glad that you have your fingers on the pulse. Thanks to your foresight, not only certain agricultural products are already present in the EU countries, but also the very National Union as of October 2002 you have your representation in Brussels.

I am glad to see your readiness to join the process of law making. Several bills have been sent to the Sejm at the initiative of the circles, including the Pact for agriculture and rural areas, and a bill on the abolition for the organisers of farmers' protests. Thanks to your effort, the programme of mending the Polish agriculture and improving the situation in the countryside known as "Priorities for agriculture" was developed. The rank of those documents is even higher, due to the fact that your community knows best what legal solutions the countryside and agriculture need most. Thank you for the initiatives you have undertaken and I encourage you to continue following those legal regulations, which concern you and your issues in the first place. The changes in Poland are and will be very fast. This is what always happens in times of dynamism. We have to do everything we can to make law catch up with the changes.

Trade unions and agricultural organisations are not only the advocates of agricultural interests, but also important partners in shaping the programmes and instruments of agricultural policy. It is so in other countries and it should be so in Poland. The process has been started – the National Union of Farmers, Circles and Agricultural Organisations take part in the government-appointed teams working on the future of agriculture. I realise that the task you are facing is difficult. The point is to find such real solutions, which in the shortest possible perspective would guarantee the countryside and agriculture a visible civilizational, technical and economic progress. The point is to find solutions ensuring a future for the young generation, equating the educational chances, the possibility of guaranteeing them education and knowledge, which will, to an ever greater extent, decide about the material existence of rural families.

# 14. Address after the signing of the law on incomes of local self-government entities (excerpts) – 28<sup>th</sup> of November 2003

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Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

The law I just signed a while ago is of capital importance for the shape of public finance. However, I would especially like to underscore the role, which this legal act will fulfil in the development of civic society. This is the financial constitution of local self-government in the Republic of Poland.

We are doing away with improvisation. We are introducing new systemic solutions. The law on incomes of self-government entities hitherto in force dates back to 1998. It was to be valid for two years only, but it was prolonged many times. We are now replacing it with new regulations not only more stable, but also much more future-oriented, coherent and favouring development. In accordance with the standards adopted in the European Union.

Local self-government will now, to a much greater degree than hitherto, take advantage of its own incomes, among other things, from public tributes, and will receive fewer funds from the state budget. At the same time, it will be entrusted with more tasks – such as the self-government can execute best. Decentralisation of finances means decentralisation of tasks. We shall, therefore, comply with the very important principle of subsidiarity. Local democracy is becoming increasingly independent. This is conducive to the building of civic awareness and better management.

Experts say there are too many communes in Poland, which, by the same token, are too small and too poor to be able to cope with all their tasks. The new law introduces a tempting encouragement for such communes to group together. Let us underscore: encouragement and not an obligation! The communes, which after agreed resolutions, will emerge after grouping two or more communes, will have more resources. Their share in receipts from income tax on physical persons will grow by an additional five percent.

The law does not abolish budgetary subventions and subsidies altogether. However, their mechanism changes radically. Tying subsidies with macroeconomic indexes such as the gross domestic product and unemployment rate is a new, very important solution. The sums, with which the budget will support the local self-government entities, will also depend on the density of the population in communes, districts and provinces and on the area of roads per one inhabitant. These standards are commonly applied in the European Union.

In order to prevent the consolidation of the harmful division into Poland “A” and “B”, an equating system is being introduced, which will protect the economically weakest local self-government entities of the smallest income. (...)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am convinced that we are opening up an important and promising chapter in the history of Polish self-government, one of the pillars of our development since 1989. The fact that at the beginning of its democratic transformations Poland decided to build independent self-governments, offering them relevant instruments, brought effects, which we today recognise as one of Poland's successes others envy us. If the law signed in November 2003 can support the self-government, I think that this is the construction of strong foundations for our homeland. I think that the self-governing Poland is a developing Poland, safe and happy, and this is what we all wish ourselves.

# 15. Address during the meeting with local self-government representatives (excerpts) – 7<sup>th</sup> of June 2005

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Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

I most wholeheartedly welcome you in the gardens of the Presidential Palace. It is yet another occasion for me to host the representatives of the numerous groups of Polish self-government entities. The Local Self-government Day is an occasion for such meetings. Today's ceremony is of exceptional character because this year's holiday converges with the jubilee of the fifteenth anniversary of the reactivation of local self-government in Poland. On the 27<sup>th</sup> of May 1990, Polish people went to the polls to cast their votes for their representatives to commune self-governments in the first free election of this type in our country's post-war history.

From the perspective of the past fifteen years I can say with full conviction that the establishment of self-government, barely one year after the conclusion of the Round Table talks, was a decision of a breakthrough character and, who knows, maybe the most important for Polish democracy. The self-government reform turned out to be the first successful and consistently implemented structural reform in Poland. It ushered in to public life a number of new and precious values initiating the difficult process of restructuring the state. Local authority, especially the commune, became closely connected with the will of its dwellers. Local communities started to live their own lives. A strong impulse for the creation of the foundations of civic society emerged.

And although the young self-governments failed to avoid illnesses of the still budding democracy such as excessive engagement of political parties, lack of transparency in decision making, financial troubles – it should be said that the balance of the accomplishments of Polish self-government is positive and really worthy of recognition. And although not everywhere the self-governments operate the way we would like them to, a decided majority of communes and districts in an imposing way used the chance of becoming independent. This is evidenced by the thousands of kilometres of roads built, water and sewage

systems, telephone lines, undertakings serving environment protection, modern sports and recreation facilities.

I observe with satisfaction that people quickly started to learn being hosts on their territory. Heartening is the growing number of persons who want to work for the benefit of their “small homelands” every year. (...)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The first year of our membership in the EU community is behind us. An extremely important year, which was a practical test of our preparation to the accession and readiness for competition. Sceptical forecasts did not come true. Poland's debut in the European Union was an unexpected success. The presence in the EU exerted a positive influence on many areas of life. Also for the development of Polish self-government. Considerable sums of money from the structural funds were channelled to communes, districts and provinces as well as various non-government institutions. The money was not granted “for love”. It was necessary to have good ideas and demonstrate activeness.

Polish self-governments of various levels proved their ability to manage these funds. This is a good forecast for the future. The community aid will not end here. A new common policy – the Policy of Development of Rural Areas, is being developed within the EU, with which the European Agrarian Fund for the Development of Rural Areas is connected. Poland can become its biggest beneficiary. I believe that the self-governments will be well prepared for using that money.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

There is no doubt that decentralisation of the state and consolidation of the role of self-governments should proceed in Poland, among other things, through increasing their authorisations, financial resources and the scope of decision making. I am convinced that this is the correct path, because matters concerning local development, spurring entrepreneurship, creation of new jobs, education should be solved on the lowest level taking into account local possibilities and interests.

I would like to strongly stress that the consolidation of self-government structures does not depend only on the rate to which the state is decentralised. Strong and competent self-governments, substantially well prepared to fulfilling their functions, reflect the activeness of local communities and their engagement in the matters of their region. Even the best laws and creative concepts will not

suffice, if they do not meet people, who have the feeling of responsibility for their small households. People, who can reach an understanding with others independently of the political options. I am talking about this because we all bear the responsibility for the quality of work of the self-governments. We have an influence on them through the election of appropriate people, who later represent our interests and who, on our behalf, execute the authority and take up all decisions concerning their commune, town or region.

Travelling across Poland, I noticed that the best situations are in those localities, where councillors stay away from political games. For whom public wealth is more important than party arrangements. That is why I hope that the increasingly stronger self-government will be a place for cooperation and dialogue, and only later – for politics. I believe that we can afford the situation, in which ideological controversies will not overshadow the will for cooperation, which brings the greatest benefit for our villages, provinces and districts.

I would like to wholeheartedly thank all of you present here and all self-government employees in Poland for your work and for the heart you put into it. Please, do not slow down the tempo. Let Poland's self-government be the source of both the successes of local communities and of the prosperity of the Republic of Poland at large. Let it also be a great help, a bridge of sorts in the construction of a strong Poland in a solidary, united Europe. There is a chance for this as can be seen viewing the accomplishments of the past year. I am convinced that you will neither lack the ideas, the will or the support of your communities to make this happen – that we were a good example of the development and excellent ideas not only here in Poland, but also in all of Europe 25 and in the future of an even bigger group of states. I thank you once again and my congratulations! I would also like to thank the Senate of the Republic of Poland, because it was at its initiative that the Law on local self-government was adopted in 1990.

## B. Roads to the future – economy, science, education, culture

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# 1. Address during professorial appointments (excerpt) – 20<sup>th</sup> of February 1996

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(...) On such occasions one usually talks about the role of science, of the mission you are fulfilling, of the importance of everything that you are doing. However, I have the odd impression that you have heard very many words on that subject and that you have the right to a specific frustration or doubts stemming from the fact that facts confirming those declarations rarely stood behind those words. There seldom were adequate outlays for science; your activity was seldom appreciated in the financial sense, seldom there were such conditions for scientific or professional activity that would be satisfactory.

That is why I would not like to repeat lofty words, ones that would be declarations only, but I would like – maybe even addressing it to you, who, together with me are on the same side and those who are not present in this hall but cooperate in the creation of Poland's political and economic reality – to appeal to move from the words about the rank of science and higher education to actions, which will really show that we treat your activity in the most serious way possible.

I would like to convince those, who are today responsible in Poland for taking decisions, to understand that we are now in a completely new moment of history in the world. The end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is no longer a slogan to which we refer but a fact, which will soon become visible as we are on the verge of entering the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We live in an epoch, in which physical effort, the hours spent in the work place count less than the ideas and the ability to create new values. Scientific and technical progress, people's creativeness count much more than the effort alone. Obviously enough, it is necessary, but today, the effort is a supplement for the ideas and concepts you introduce as the world of science, as the creators of science, as the creators of progress in various fields.

Therefore, if we in Poland, towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century are thinking, and we have to think about cutting down our distance to the most highly



developed countries, if we are thinking about how to be more competitive vis a vis what is happening in the world, thinking about being better educated, more flexible towards whatever is new, what the science, economy and social phenomena create – the more so we should appreciate science, the more so we should appreciate the world of science and you, dear ladies and gentlemen. Not only in declarations, but in very concrete actions.

Thus, if we want to think about Poland's economic development, which is in progress and which can become our lasting accomplishment, think about the social phenomena, which are completely new today and also are analysed and investigated, but also require care; if we want to talk about building a democratic state, in which democratic institutions operate effectively, democracy and law – we have to bear in mind that science plays a vital role in this process. Thus, your achievements, dear professors, your activeness, ideas and new concepts, your research and experience are the biggest capital, which we can put on the scales of our strivings to attain the envisaged goals.

I would like your appointments to become yet another proof of our appreciation for the importance of your work. However, I would also like that another proof of this be the guarantee of adequate outlays for science, scientific research and higher education, so that you could do what you are doing until now in better conditions, using the accomplishments of others and ushering in your own experience and concepts to this common civilizational attainment.

You play an extremely important role in the life of our country. The fate of the young generation is in your hands. It is you, who reach the young people with your visions of the modern world, with the prospects for the development of science, the fields in which you are active. I would like that the current trend of the growing number of students in Poland be maintained. That Poland be a country of ever better educated people and that it be something more than a mere declaration or intention, but concrete action, which the state authorities will take up in the shape of outlays for higher education, in the creation of access opportunities to institutions of higher education for young people from different communities.

I would very much like to be able to cooperate in this way with the government, with parliament, with the institutions dealing with problems of science and higher education.

I, on my part, as the president of the Republic of Poland, will spare no effort to make it so. So that on the occasion of the successive professorial appointments

one could utter not only the beautiful words paying you homage, honour and esteem for everything you have done, but to these words, one could add concretes about how we can recognise and understand, that today, science is this field and this element of our social life, which, who knows, may be the most important one and which will decide about our position in Europe, about the international competition we are currently experiencing. (...)

## 2. Address during People's Holiday (excerpt) – Zakroczym, 26<sup>th</sup> of May 1996

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(...) Poland needs an imaginative and wide-flung programme of transforming the countryside and agriculture. The situation in the Polish countryside and agriculture is very difficult today and if we delay the changes, the prospects for the young generation will also be bleak. More than 900,000 jobless people live in the countryside. Covert unemployment is much higher. We have enormous civilizational backlogs and the structure of Polish agriculture is ineffective.

The programme of the changes cannot be easy. It will incur costs in its wake – also social costs. It should be said openly that it would be difficult for all of us. For the society and for the state because, in the name of the improvement of our compatriots' fate, it will be necessary to channel a bigger stream of money, larger intellectual potential and investment effort for the transformation of the countryside. It will be difficult for you because it will require not only production effort but also enormous civic activeness to reconstruct the social life, create new forms of economic cooperation and develop the infrastructure. It will often be necessary to change the profession and the hitherto way of life, care for raising qualifications; seek new sources of subsistence and development.

Dear ladies and gentlemen,

Many politicians still hide before rural dwellers the necessity of deep restructuring of agriculture, spreading the visions from the past, deluding that things will work out themselves. It should be stated openly today that we are facing the necessity of changing the structure of farmsteads. We have two million one hundred and fifty thousand farmsteads in Poland now. The area of more than half of them does not exceed 5 hectares. Given such a structure of farmsteads, it is impossible to achieve high profitability of agricultural production.

I am aware that such a statement is painful for many farmers. Experts are agreed that about 800,000 rural families enjoy the prospects of gaining incomes

allowing for a decent way of life, for investments in the development. I said families because family household is and will remain the foundation of Polish agriculture. But it must be a highly specialised one, adequately invested, modern in terms of technology and qualifications of people working in it. The rest will have to supplement their incomes with other, non-agricultural sources of subsistence.

New jobs in the countryside must be created. This cannot be done without investments. The Polish countryside needs sizeable investment capital from outside sources, including foreign capital. Those who really have the good of the countryside at heart understand this perfectly.

The reconstruction of the Polish countryside means primarily a multi-functional development of rural areas. Thus, next to the modern agriculture, a modern industry, especially the processing one, should be created. Required is a network of production services. It is necessary to develop a trade network. It is necessary to accelerate work on major investment projects like the construction of motorways, for example. Many thousands of people will find jobs in their construction. It is necessary to boost eco-tourism, modern ways of food turnover, the policy conducive to the location in the countryside of new investment projects from outside the scope of agricultural production. It is necessary to use all the non-production values of the countryside.

We should stake on the improvement of the quality of life in the countryside. The point is to develop telecommunications, road network and connections. Also rural education. It should be borne in mind that the roots of Polish culture, largely, stem from the countryside. There is also rural sport, which brought up the names familiar to every sports fan and which gave many moments of joy to millions of amateur sportsmen.

The success of transformations in the countryside is connected with the continuation of the reform of the state. Connected with the widening of the prerogatives of communes, with subjecting the regional administration areas, the creation of government-self-government provinces to self-government control. Today it is no longer possible to carry out a uniform agricultural policy on the scale of the entire state. It must be regionally differentiated, must take into account the local developmental resources, and must be based on social initiative. In all that, your wisdom and resourcefulness is necessary. This is what we expect of local self-government and farmers chambers. We shall support the cooperative movement, help agricultural organisations and unions. State authorities will, with sympathy, support women's and youth organisations, whose contribution to the construction of the quality of life in the countryside is undeniable.

The state must not and will not evade the responsibility for the transformation of the countryside and the development of agriculture. In this respect, state interventionism will continue to exist for some time yet. But the government must focus on the long-term programmes of aid for agriculture, on its modernisation, creation of new jobs outside agriculture, on supporting Polish farmers in the struggle against European competition. The consolidation and development of the banking system and government agencies functioning in the area of agriculture is to serve this goal. The countryside and farmers must find their due place in the major programme of reform in the health service, social insurance, pension system and education.

Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

Nearly 15 million people in Poland live in the countryside. Your chances are primarily imbedded in the success of changes, in maintaining the economic growth rate, in the inclination of companies to create new jobs and in curbing inflation. I would like town dwellers to equally well realise that also their chances for decent life depend on the lasting success of the Polish countryside. The fate of all Polish people – those from the towns and those from the countryside – depend on how we solve your problems.

I would like to assure all of you gathered here that matters of agriculture and the countryside would be the subjects of my permanent care while fulfilling the duties of the President of the Republic of Poland. I treat the support received from the nation in general elections as an obligation to work on solving the difficult Polish problems. I will always support any initiative, which leads to a change of the quality of life in the countryside and which promotes modernity.

### 3. Address during the session of the Cabinet Council (excerpts) – 27<sup>th</sup> of January 1998

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Mr Prime Minister, Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

(...)The fact that I decided to carry out all procedures connected with the formation of government in accordance with the new Constitution, stemmed also from my deepest conviction that it would serve the consolidation of legal order in Poland. It would eliminate the possible ambiguities concerning these procedures, which should be legible not only for outstanding constitutionalists but also for each and every citizen. I treat the changes, which were made in recent time as far as the penal code and the code of penal procedure are concerned, though shifted in time to become effective as of 1<sup>st</sup> of September of this year, as a very important thing on the road to strengthening the lawful state. I am convinced that both the consolidation of the Constitutional Tribunal and the Polish legislation, Polish law as a whole is the road, which we can cover together and on which no essential controversies between the president and the government should occur.

The other issue is the economic growth, which I treat as the main thing. The past two years were a period of economic growth and I am convinced that Poland can afford its continuation and make it a sound foundation for solving the numerous problems we are facing. Considering this, I am open to all proposals, which will consolidate the economic growth in Poland, which will change the structure of the economy into a more effective one. I am open to the proposals, which will augment the competitiveness of Polish economy, which will help solve our social problems especially such as unemployment, poverty or bridging the civilizational gap, which still exists between the highly developed countries and Poland. An extremely important thing – and I mentioned it in my election programme and will assess government proposals from this angle – are the costs of the reform and spreading them so that no social group could have the feeling of being deprived of chances or handicapped. (...)

As far as the economic issues are concerned, I would like to assure you that I would cooperate with the government also in case of those decisions, which raised controversies in recent time. As I said, I am ready to seriously talk about the social insurance system and its reform, which will take up the difficult problem of uniformed services. I think that 1998 offers enough time to think about such a formula, which would be acceptable from the point of view of the comprehensive social insurance system and which would not be received by the uniformed services sector as budgetary saving done at their cost. I realise that the problem has many economic and social aspects. I reiterate my offer of a serious dialogue on this issue.

The situation is similar in the case of other laws, which will consolidate the economic growth and which will spur the indispensable restructuring of the Polish economy. I inform you that a team of economic advisers headed by Prof. Marek Belka will cooperate with me. I think that this is a good place to elaborate such standpoints, which would not raise controversies on the government – president line. My most sincere care is to maintain the economic growth and take up such actions, which would protect Poland against crisis phenomena, which are known also in our part of Europe. (...)

I would also like to inform Mr. prime minister and all ministers about my special interest, stemming from the role the president plays in the system of the state, in such areas as social policy, education and culture. I would like to count on cooperation with competent ministers in seeking solutions, which would modernise these areas. It seems to me that Poland, after the great success of the eight years of transformation should now start realising a more ambitious and difficult task: to be competitive, cope with the competition, which, in my opinion, will be a major sign of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. And we, without good education, education in the first place, without high level of science, high level of culture, will be in a difficult situation. That is why I think that independently of all the overwhelming current problems it is necessary to deal with things of such cardinal importance as the educational reform. It seems to me that here we should focus our attention and invite different social communities and political groupings to cooperation. If we want to be competitive, we need a grand reform of the educational system; the strengthening of Polish science and recognition that culture may also be an element of the Polish image and Polish competitiveness. This is not a supplement; it can be a strong point and the main argument we shall usher in to the European structures.

This requires not only discussion but also outlays in the first place. It requires understanding when one talks about money, about the organisational structures and about people. I would like to assure you that, in this respect, there will be support

on my part. Esteemed ladies and gentlemen, I understand social policy broadly not only as a reform of social insurance and health service system but also as the problem of housing, the handicapped and poor communities and the problem of imbalance, which in Poland is an undeniable fact. I proceed from the Koszalin province and I observe how this level of imbalance is intensifying instead of dying out. It seems, therefore, that the current social policy in Poland, especially in the context of the administrative reform must take into account this major problem of growing imbalance between the individual regions and communities. Without finding statutory, economic solutions we shall soon – I stress soon – find ourselves in a situation far more dramatic than Italy, where there is the rich north on the one hand, and the still backward south, on the other. In Poland, the differences are growing rather than diminishing. I would like to know the opinion of the government what could and should be done in this respect. (...)

Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

(...) Democratic rules envisage that the president can have a different political background and the government another political background. The Constitution and the democratic rules envisage that independently of such a fact, normal cooperation is maintained. And that both the government and the president can, although it is not always easy, to separate what is state-owned and concerns basic issues, from what is political and party-related. I declare such a readiness. (...)

I would like to assure Mr. prime minister and the government that on my and my collaborators' part there is readiness for cooperation because this is the way we understand our duty. Assuming that we are realising our mandates, this cooperation will not concern days or months, but years. It seems to me that the creation of precise formulas of cooperation will be exclusively, I underscore exclusively, for the benefit of the government, for the president and – first of all – for Poland. This is the point. I, therefore, appeal to the prime minister that while listening to various opinions he picked those, which serve cooperation and disregard those, which focus on party and prestige rather than on the state. The political parties are an important part of democracy, but it so happens, that you, Mr. prime minister and I are responsible for state matters. It sounds strong and lofty but it is true. All those politicians, who at a certain moment turned too much attention on party issues, later often lost their positions in the party. And those who managed to fix important matters concerning the state, gained high opinion and a place in history.

Having such a choice, we know what we should choose. And with this statement, dear Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to conclude my address.



## 4. Address during the meeting with the creators of culture (excerpts) – 12<sup>th</sup> of March 1998

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Ladies and Gentlemen, Esteemed Ministers and Parliamentarians,

(...) Welcoming you all most wholeheartedly I would like to say that the time, which has elapsed since our previous meeting was important. I know that everyone has the feeling of unfulfilled problems and various doubts. However, as the president of the Republic of Poland I would like to state clearly and express you my gratitude for the fact that the year that passed was an important period for Polish culture. It was an important year of the presence of Polish culture in our life and, I think, also in the broader European and outside-European dimension.

I am not able to enumerate everything that should be said and what should be indicated as the visible signs of Poland's cultural presence in the world during the past year. I am aware that I will incur the displeasure of those whom I will not enumerate, but I would like to mention some events of vital importance. There is no doubt that the 12 months that have passed, were a very meaningful achievement. As a matter of fact, in all areas of Polish culture and art. (...)

Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

I, and people representing various fields, am often asked what Poland, in its fortunately new situation, can offer Europe. What will Poland do as member of the European Union; with what Poland will enrich the contemporary world after joining the North Atlantic Alliance. I would like, without courtesy, but with profound conviction, to tell you that there is no doubt that the new Poland in the new Europe, the new Poland in the new Europe of the 21<sup>st</sup> century means not only a 40 million-strong market, not only a good geographic location, not only able people, who can take up jobs in various companies or international concerns and not only our history and the values dear to our hearts and of which we are justly proud.

The contemporary Poland in Europe also means an enormous potential, enormous opportunities and dynamism, which we should offer the common budding Europe. Culture plays a major role here. It is not a platitude to know that Poland's value, the symbol of our presence in Europe will be the cultural maturity of the Polish people, Poland's great artistic accomplishments and this what you, esteemed ladies and gentlemen, create. This is our strong point. This is a fact.

The question we should ask ourselves today and which also the president of the Republic of Poland should answer reads: what should be done to make the best use of this enormous Poland's strong point, the strength of Polish culture, accomplishments, the potential of Polish culture for the construction of our homeland's strong position in the integrating Europe. Today we should say what we really want to do in practice to guarantee Polish culture the feeling of surety, the feeling of perspective, the awareness of the mechanisms of state and private patronage, what should be done to ensure the people connected with culture certainty that they participate in the process of integration with European structures.

I made such an attempt last year. It was the Charter of Culture meant to spur the discussion: how to manage culture today, what should be done to make the freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution be able to find their finale, find their materialisation in concrete deeds. Dear ladies and gentlemen, I would not like this discussion to hang in the air. I would very much like to try to provide this extremely important answer, independently of which option is in power. Let us together take up the attempt to defend what Polish culture ushered in to our contemporaneity and our past.

## 5. Interview for "Polityka" – a Polish weekly (excerpt) – 20<sup>th</sup> of June 1998

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*(...) Mr. President, a controversy about the sequence of reforms is going on in Poland. After the reform of the administration, there will be insurance, health service, education, and heavy industry, including mining. Isn't it too much? Isn't a moratorium required somewhere?*

Reforms are necessary, but the logic of those reforms is also very important. There is no doubt that the administrative reform must become effective because such is its nature. Once started, it must be finished because otherwise its effects will be highly destructive. The other one is the reform of the social insurance system, maybe even more important from the point of view of the interest of the state and citizens. It must become effective on 1<sup>st</sup> of January 1999, because the degree of tension in public finance has reached an alarming state. I do have doubts as far as patients' funds are concerned. (...) The problem is that two major political forces, the Solidarity Election Action and the Left Wing Democratic Alliance, supported this solution and it will be difficult to hold up the reform or change it in any basic way. However, the educational reform needs further consideration.

There are also problems connected with the restructuring of the mining industry. The government has adopted one of the most civilised but also very costly programmes of this restructuring. However, it is not known how it will fit in the state budget. Budgetary provisions envisage cutting down the budgetary deficit and struggle against inflation. It is a very stringent economic policy. If all this does not fit in the budget, the government and parliament should adopt a plan of phasing in all those major reforms step by step.

*Mr. President, we are talking at the halfway point of your presidency. How do you personally assess the balance sheet of the first half?*

There were clear and distinct points during those two and a half years: the adoption of the constitution, change of government made swiftly and in accordance

with the democratic standards, the conclusion of the NATO issue, the invitation to the European Union, active relations between all neighbours and in the region, sustained and high economic growth and even ever more quickly changing Warsaw, which I observe with steady satisfaction along with a number of other towns, communes and villages. One should bear in mind the unsolved and new problems – unemployment, poverty, crime, aggression and pathology among youth. But, all in all, it was a good time for Poland. Sometimes I am afraid that we could commit a typical Polish mistake of excessively concentrating on ourselves starting to lose chances.

*What will be your priorities for the second part of the presidency?*

I can see two overriding goals in the internal policy. Maintaining the high economic growth, which is the foundation for just social policy and counteracting the sick concept of the current authorities consisting in dividing the society according to the historical and political criteria. I agree with Rev. Pieronek, whom I respect very much, and who told me recently that in contemporary Poland tolerance is far too little, that cooperation is necessary. (...)

Moderators:

*Janina Paradowska, Jerzy Baczyński, Władysław Władyka*

## 6. Address during the signing of the law on student loans and credits – 19<sup>th</sup> of August 1998

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Mr. Prime Minister, Mr. Minister, Mrs Chairperson of the Sejm Committee, Esteemed Representatives of Student Self-government Organisation, Mr. President, Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would, first of all, like to express my joy over the signing a while ago of the law on credits and student loans prepared after consultations with student communities and having passed the entire parliamentary procedure. This is really an important event in the field, which I regard as neglected and under appreciated in Poland. Poland is facing enormous chances connected with entering the European structures. The dreams will not come true, there will be no possibility of fully exploiting these possibilities if we do not treat education and science in a very decisive, consistent and rational way on the one hand, and generous, on the other.

The 21<sup>st</sup> century ceases to be a symbol, it is becoming reality. It will be a century of competition. Our place will be determined by the intellectual force of the Polish society, our ability to compete with others in the economy and in social processes. It will not be possible to make it without an educated society. It will not be possible to make it without strong science, without developing technology, without the ability of thinking about everything that is happening in the economic processes and in politics and the Polish society.

I am glad that recent years witnessed an enormous drive of Polish youth to education. We have never had such a great number of students and let it grow even further. This law allows to suppose that the number of students coming from poor families, who could not afford this type of investment, will continue to grow. We shall ensure them support. That is why I want to wholeheartedly thank all those, who joined the work on the law so that it could become effective as of 1<sup>st</sup> of October of this year. Thank you Mr. Prime Minister, Mr. Minister, Parliamentarians headed by Ms Staniszewska and representatives of student self-government organisation, who took part in that work from the very beginning.

I think that in several months' time we shall be able to share the satisfaction that the system is operating. Expressing my thanks once again, I hope that I will have the opportunity to sign more laws, laws reforming the Polish higher education and showing that we do not neglect this enormously important field, which will decide about Poland's position in the future.

I know that similar declarations were often made in the past, that the words uttered were reasonable but there were too little facts. That is why I would like to show, through facts, that the education of youth, the high level of the development of Polish society is something that we are able to implement in practice, something that will undoubtedly be the most important in the construction of Poland's position in the years ahead. Thank you and I hope that as of 1<sup>st</sup> of October the young people and students will be able to feel that a reasonable law on student loans and credits very helpful for them and very profitable for the Republic of Poland came into effect. Thank you very much.

## 7. Address during the meeting with representatives of Polish science (excerpts) – 3<sup>rd</sup> of November 1998

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Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Minister, Mr. Chairman of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Esteemed Ministers and first of all the Invited Guests, Your Magnificences, Representatives of the Polish Academy of Sciences, higher schools, including private ones,

I welcome you all in the Presidential Palace. We are meeting at the very special moment, not because something extraordinary is happening, which would require such a meeting, but I think that we all have the feeling of, on the one hand, the history, which is behind us, in several days' time we shall be celebrating the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Poland's regained independence and, on the other hand, we have the feeling of great challenges and the time ahead of us. The turn of the centuries. The turn of the millenniums is an event, which only not numerous generations can experience. We did. That is why I wanted to meet with you today and would like to use this occasion to think about what should be done as regards the needs, necessities and challenges facing us. (...)

We are talking in the Palace, the place, where ten years ago the coordinated transformations in the form of Round Table decisions started. The changes, which affected Poland's entire social, political and economic life, including the world of science and higher education. Some of you have participated in that debate. We have the reasons to state that also in this field, which we would like to discuss today, that is science, education and higher education, an essential progress has been made. Today there is no problem of the freedom of science, the freedom of education, freedoms and full democracy in the operation of the institutions of higher learning. There is no problem of the openness of the world of science, the world of education to the outer environment. We possess very different forms of organisations; we have public, state-owned and private schools. We can enjoy the fact unprecedented in our history – the great number of students and the undoubtedly growing level of education in Poland. Thus, there are many reasons to recognise that we have to deal with a different quality, a different situation of science and higher schools' community in Poland.

On the other hand, it should be stated clearly that those fields, that is science, education, higher education, suffer from a permanent scarcity of means, that we are experiencing a clear underrating of those fields in the development of Poland in recent years. This is not only the feeling of underrating on the part of the scientific community. It can be recognised as a psychological state characterising this community. Indeed, as compared with other countries, in Poland we deal with clear under investment and underrating of the developmental force embedded in education, higher education, science and scientific implementations. The statement is all the more important that all of it takes place in conditions of ever more severe competition, taking place in the contemporary world. The competition manifested not only in purely economic actions, but also in the technological race, in the readiness to take up new tasks and seek places on the markets, which are very demanding in every field, also in the field of science. (...)

Why is it so important for us to tell public opinion in Poland about the role and rank of science? I already mentioned that we were on the threshold of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and whatever is to be the symbol, the sign and the reality of Poland today and in the future, must be democracy, which we are strengthening, the rule of law, which is under construction and to which the road is still long and the construction of civic society aware, active and taking part in social processes. I would not like now to discuss, which of these elements is closer and which is more distant, but there is no doubt that each of them is still distant and requiring enormous effort, the effort focused on building the awareness and knowledge of those, who will create this civic society, strengthen democracy, protect and create law. This is the task for education and science.

For several years now Poland is living through a real economic development appreciated in the world. (...) What must be done in order to use this potential, which in Poland is for long-lasting and very high economic growth rate, because it is one of the most important roads to bridge the civilizational gap, which separates Poland from the most highly developed countries? This is a question about the sources of the development of culture, so that Poland's contribution to world and European culture and to the construction of own national identity could be on the highest level. Poland is on a good road to ensure itself security in the form of adequate alliances, but this security will never be real if it is based on external guarantees only. This security is sensible only when based on the economic strength of the state, on national identity, on high cultural values, democracy, law and conscious society. At the turn of the centuries, most probably in the first years of the next century, we shall witness European integration. For us it will be a chance if we join it with a strong position both in Europe and in our region of Central Europe, if we are competitive.



There surely will be no delving into the past that is determining the position of states according to the past merits. These will be chiefly merits and the position worked out today and tomorrow. Also against this background, a question arises what should be done to make the position of Poland as a state and as society, as strong as possible? Against this background, esteemed ladies and gentlemen, in view of those challenges I would like to ask you how do you perceive the role of science and education and the role of your communities?

We should spare no effort, that in order to achieve these goals; we could use the scientific potential, the potential of Polish technology, culture, education and higher education. We should not be ashamed of following the example of those who are richer than us, those who have already coped with those issues, and who, during the past years staked on the educational reforms, on science and on the outlays for it. I have in mind here the United States, the entire Western Europe, the programmes now being implemented in Great Britain. I am thinking about the less populated countries having history similar to ours – like Finland for example – where outlays for scientific research amount to 2.5–2.6 percent GDP, resulting in their position on numerous markets.

I would like to ask you and seek your advice on what can we do, that what began in Poland so well, and of which we have the right to be proud during the past ten years, not to lose its developmental impulses, not to become a seasonal adventure and could be based on very strong foundations, very strong sources. In my opinion, these sources include education, science and technological progress. I would like to listen to your opinion about what could be done, what should be done not to lose those matters from the sight in our everyday rush. (...)

## 8. Declaration in connection with the refusal to sign the law on income tax on physical persons – 28<sup>th</sup> of November 1999

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Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

Taxes are one of the most important factors determining the economic prospects and the standard of living of citizens. It is good that the amendments of taxation laws were accompanied by considerable interest of public opinion. It means that we are maturing as a democratic society. We treat Poland as our common household. We count every penny having in mind both the interest of the state and the interests of our social groups and our professional community,

I regret that, due to the misunderstandings in the government coalition we again have to settle the problem of basic importance at almost the last moment. This government stresses with pride that it has worked for the longest period in Poland since 1989. This, however, does not mean that there is a justification for the delays in adopting new laws according to the relevant procedures and the best legal standards.

Meeting government's expectations halfway, I did not use up all the time, which the Constitution reserves for the president to review the laws adopted by the Sejm. I understood that the government's request stemmed equally from the need of additional time for internal agreements within the coalition and the care that the parliamentary debate on taxes had a substantial character and could proceed in accordance with the democratic rules.

Before taking the decision, I studied all points of view and arguments. I tried to consider all arguments with special attention. I had consultations with the minister of finance, the governor of the National Bank of Poland, the chairman of the parliamentary public finance committee, and representatives of the political parties, the trade unions, employers' organisations and experts.

According to the government, the proposed changes are of a comprehensive character and match the current tendencies in the world. I was acquainted with

numerous reservations and doubts. Despite limited time I weighed all the arguments very carefully. For many years I have been supporting the simplification of the taxation system in our country and gradual, prudent lowering of rates. I gave expression of this both in 1996 and last year while signing the proposals presented to me. I appreciate the effort, especially of the minister of finance, ushered in to attempt the modernising of the Polish taxation system.

The dilemma I faced was exceptionally difficult. That is why, being convinced that the law on VAT and excise duty brings us closer to the solutions adopted in the developed countries, liquidating the errors, which occurred in the solutions applied hitherto and ensuring security of state budgetary incomes – I decided to sign it.

The reduction of tax burdens for entrepreneurs favours development, offers the economy favourable impulses and augments its competitiveness. According to the ministry of finance and most economists, the lowering of CIT rates is more profitable than maintaining the hitherto abatements. There were also contrary opinions. With care for the development of Polish entrepreneurship in the difficult time of the forthcoming years I mind – I decided not to sign the law on the amendment of CIT.

Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

Most reservations concern proposals regarding the income tax on physical persons. I notice the effort of the minister of finance and the legislator to simplify the tax and remove all kinds of mistakes in it.

It should be stated, that the arguments, which made the coalition support the rates only for those, who earned most are not legible for all. The current growth of the unemployment rate and the insecure market conditions do not create the best conditions for such changes. The vast majority of those, who would benefit most from it, are not the investors, and they do not create new jobs. It is worth remembering that the group of persons with incomes exceeding two-and-a-half-times the national average, still this year, benefited from the lowered social insurance rate. It is impossible to disregard the warning sounded from various quarters that Poland needs more social solidarity and further diversification of the society bears in its wake an enormous threat for our reforms and our democracy.

Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

Modern Poland must be a legal state. The nation so much affected by iniquity, contempt for legal standards, political and bureaucratic breaking of human

rights wants – and deserves – that law meant the law, and the Constitution was a real SUPREME Charter.

The preamble of the Constitution adopted in effect of a broad consensus reads: “we institute the Constitution of the Republic of Poland as basic rights for the state based on the respect for the freedom and justice, cooperation of authorities, social dialogue and the principle of subsidiariness strengthening the rights of citizens and their communities. We appeal to all, who for the welfare of the Third Republic of Poland, will apply this, to do it, taking care of the inalienable human dignity, his right to freedom and the duty of solidarity with others and regard the respect for those principles as the adamant foundation of the Republic of Poland.”

As the president of the Republic of Poland, in keeping with art. 126, I keep watch and ward of the Supreme Charter. In this context, I understand the doubts concerning the compatibility of the proposed lowering of rates – leaving the rate for those in the lowest income bracket unchanged – with the principle contained in art. 2 of the Constitution, that Poland is a country, where the principles of social justice are maintained.

However, the basic argument for me was the way of carrying out the procedure in the Sejm negating another formulation of art. 2 of the Constitution: describing Poland as a democratic lawful state. The institution of the minority motion was introduced to the democratic parliaments to ensure the MPs voted in the committees, the possibility of appealing to the entire parliament and present their arguments to all parliamentarians and the public opinion.

The ruling coalition has been discussing the reform of the taxation system for 15 months now. I have never commented on this fact in a critical way. I regard as unjustified and infringing the seriousness of law, making the ploy proposed by one of the coalition MPs, to reject their own project to shorten the debate and make the review of opposition motions impossible. If I agreed to resign from using the 21 days to eight, which the parliamentary majority gave me, I would have waited still two, or three days if necessary.

Poland is successfully building its parliamentarism. But the deed is far from finished. One must not introduce the principles or customs endangering democracy, which fully respects the right of the majority to decide, and the right of the minority to publicly defend its views. The breaking of this fundamental principle can cause rotting of the parliamentarism, the abuse of the strength of the majority, using comfortable trick-based shortcuts for fulfilling their goals.

No law in Poland should be made in this way. Regardless of what political forces would constitute the majority and what matter it would concern. I have to say no to this ill practice. That is why I decided to reject the signing of the law on income tax and ask the Sejm to review it anew. I realise that the decision has its consequences and I take full responsibility for this.

According to the government, the new system, which comprises of three amendments, constitutes a coherent entity. I do not disregard this argument, but I would like to remind that such incoherence still appeared this fiscal year as an effect of last year's amendment forced by the current coalition. The difficulties, which stemmed from this situation, turned out to be resolvable.

According to my experts, headed by Prof. Marek Belka, my decision is neutral for next year's budget and it does not complicate the work on it. Neither do I see reasons that it could destabilise the arrangement ruling the country at present. As the president of the Republic of Poland I fulfilled all conditions to make next year's taxes known to all people in Poland on 1<sup>st</sup> of December.

I anticipate questions. I did that neither against anybody, nor for anybody. I did that convinced that I am fulfilling my duty of respecting the Constitution – now and in the future.

9. Address in connection with the decision of the President of the Republic of Poland on refusing to sign the law on general enfranchisement – 11<sup>th</sup> of September 2000

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Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

Each law in the Republic of Poland must fulfil three conditions. First – it must regulate the difficult Polish problems in compliance with the Constitution and be impeccable legislation-wise. The law on enfranchisement is legally defective, it contains inapplicable proposals. Outstanding lawyers share this opinion. The legislative services of the Sejm and the Senate protested against many of the proposed solutions. Second – the legislator should present the economic and social consequences of the adopted solutions. The cost of the law on enfranchisement is not known. I insist that it is inadmissible that the law of such an important character and scope was not accompanied by a precise, tested and government-approved economic calculus.

Third – the law should respond to the social need of just solutions. The law on enfranchisement presented to me shifts all the costs of repairs and modernisations of houses on their occupants. In effect, it affects the least-off people, who will not be able to afford additional expenses. Those, who thanks to their own effort and resourcefulness bought their flats, the law offers the so called enfranchisement bond of symbolic value. The law lures farmers with deceitful promise of giving out land, which is simply not there.

The law on general enfranchisement is legally defective, economically unaccountable and socially unjust. I inform you that I have decided to refuse signing it.

I would like to say that I know the situation of poor people, living in difficult conditions, who have been waiting for support for years. This law gave illusions only. Work carried out in the Sejm on the status of flats owned by plants and cooperatives is a much better solution. It is better to recognise that the enfranchisement fund envisaged in the law on the commercialisation and

privatisation of state-owned enterprises should serve the equation of chances for the weakest communities that is rural youth and the disabled.

Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

There are moments when one has to choose between long-term interest of the entire state and all citizens and the pleasantly sounding election clichés. Deciding to veto the current shape of the law on enfranchisement I know that not all will be eager to share my arguments, but I am doing it with the conviction that the signing of such a law would cause bigger social and economic losses than the promised advantages.

The President of the Republic of Poland cares for the observance of the Constitution, which in article 2 reads: “The Republic of Poland is a democratic legal state, materialising the principles of social justice.” Due to the fact that my duty is to observe the Constitution, I refuse to sign the law on enfranchisement. The struggle for electoral votes does not release me either from the presidential oath or the constitutional duties.

# 10.

Programme address during the conference “Modern Poland: education, IT society, science and technology” (excerpts)  
– Szczecin, 12<sup>th</sup> of September 2000

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

Education is the key to modernity. It is our strategic reserve, which we must use today in order to be among the best tomorrow. Knowledge, innovativeness and general technical culture should be the areas of our expansion. In the contemporary world the intellectual factor is of cardinal importance for the economic and social development, which is why it is worth to invest in education. It is worth to make it a long-term driving force of civilizational changes in Poland.

How to achieve it?

I suggest three areas of activity, which investing in knowledge and education can transform into an effective developmental impulse for the whole country: first, common primary and secondary education. Second, support of higher education and research and development activity. Third, general IT education.

The decade of education is our duty. The eleven years of reforms used up the simple reserves we had. Our task is to activate the more complicated reserves. We shall not be able to do that if we do not stake on education, development of technology and technique. Only in such a way can we count in Europe and effectively compete with our partners.

Starting the reform of the educational system we made an important step towards its modernisation. It is a pity that the reform was badly prepared and in many areas – incompetently implemented. I had numerous talks during which I was assured that everything had been done. Unfortunately, an error was committed. That is why let us retrieve our mistakes and introduce corrections.



Polish school enjoys a very high grading but we must continue to improve the educational level of Polish people. I would like to sincerely thank all the teachers. I wish them to be treated with due respect and that schools were equipped with adequately modern equipment.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Another important level of acting in favour of modern Poland is the support for higher education and research and development activity. Today, higher education in Poland is living through the period of true efflorescence.

Currently there are nearly 1.5 million students in Poland. The Polish educational boom is a good example of an individual understanding of education as an investment in the future.

The success of modern Poland will largely depend on the innovativeness and flexibility of Polish science and the skilful transposition of scientific accomplishments to the economy. Meanwhile, outlays for this domain are inadequate. It is necessary to create better conditions for our inventors. It is worth to consider whether some resources from the privatisation of enterprises should not be systematically earmarked for research and development. Many unused opportunities are also imbedded in the cooperation of institutions of higher learning with business. Let us remember, without a quickly developing higher education and boosting research and development activity we shall not be able to catch up with Europe.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me now devote some more attention to the common introduction of computer science and IT education. At the turn of the centuries, we are witnessing basic changes being a sort of a new technological revolution. They result in the development of industrial branches using modern means of communication, data transmission and the Internet. Services consisting in selling goods, technical know-how, works of art and, soon, books and films through computer networks are quickly becoming important elements of the richest economies in the world. If Poland fails to join this process, our country's effective economic growth, and especially the growth of export, will not be possible. We shall remain as only the sales market and the consumer of imported goods and services.

In a special resolution of July 14<sup>th</sup> of this year, the Sejm stated that the legal system currently in force and government policy do not create sufficient conditions to make full use of the development of the information society. It is

difficult to undermine this opinion. It is necessary to accelerate immediately. We have to join the global information network faster. This is one of the most important measures of our modernity. Alas, according to research barely 32 percent of people in Poland can use computers! Still less, because 12 percent, declare their ability to use the Internet. That is why let us consider the necessity of creating a national programme of common computer science knowledge. Drawing on the rich experiences of the most highly developed countries of the world, such a programme should be based on three pillars:

The first pillar: general access. It is, first, necessary to create a comprehensive infrastructure for the development of the information society. It would be an ideal if every family had its own computer and access to the Internet. This is our goal. Today, however, it is necessary to ensure access to information and subjectively unlimited possibility of using modern techniques to a greater number of people. Legal regulations are required such as, for example, allowances stimulating the development of computer networks, encouraging employers and families to purchase computer equipment. It is necessary to seek possibilities of lowering the cost of the Internet. Such programmes are being successfully realised in Scandinavia, in Finland, for example. The European Union spotted such a need, too. That is why I highly value and support all initiatives disseminating the Internet in schools and the application of computer science in everyday learning and work.

The second pillar: common computer science education. Primary school programmes should take into account learning how to work with the computer and the Internet on a par with learning reading and writing. We should now set the date when we would like to achieve this goal. It is a chance to use in the educational process the resources of the world's best and largest libraries, conduct Internet lessons, and have direct contact with museums, institutions of higher learning and scientific centres. I think this can be attained very soon. The European Union is already implementing a similar project named Gutenberg. Polish Internet books and manuals are no longer a fantasy, but close reality and real necessity. The introduction of the Internet education to primary schools will allow for bringing up a generation, which will be able to compete with their peers from the developed countries without any problems and complexes. It is worth to remember that information society means new, attractive jobs and a chance for small localities. In many countries the tycoons of computer science industry have their seats in small centres. However, before we become the information society, the state and its institutions must fulfil certain conditions.

The third pillar: use of computer science in the economy called “the new economy”, by some. The point is to create many new, attractive jobs in servicing common access to computer science. Polish computer scientists, without leaving the country, can render services for foreign companies. This is a chance for boosting the export of Polish know-how and the impulses for regional development. This type of activity does not require a complicated or capital-intensive infrastructure or access to the raw material sources. Investments are not excessively costly and they offer a guarantee of quick return. It will allow small towns and localities in which the chance for the creation of new jobs using the traditional methods are slim, to develop faster. The biggest companies in the world connected with this branch of the economy were established in small centres or simply in the country. (...)

# 11.

Address during the ceremony of swearing in the President of the Republic of Poland before the National Assembly (excerpts)  
– 23<sup>rd</sup> of December 2000

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(..) Mr and Ms Marshall, Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

Five years ago my electoral programme was symbolised by the slogans “Let us pick the future” and “Common Poland”. For me, they were an inspiration to act above the political divisions. Wherever possible I was seeking allies encouraging them to understanding and cooperation. I acted so, in the conviction that the Polish people could use their historic chance only acting together and concentrating on the challenges of the future.

The year 2000 ends in eight days. The millennium is nearing an end. I said some time ago in this Chamber, that the question of how our 21<sup>st</sup> century will look like should not be addressed to futurologists. Let us direct it to us, because it is on us that the answer depends.

We have managed to achieve much in recent years together. We have strengthened our state and democracy, our independence and security. We have a modern and democratic constitution. We have developed and modernised the economy. Creating successive local self-government levels, we have made an important step in building the civic society. We have joined NATO. We have strengthened the links of good neighbourhood around Poland. These are the reasons to be proud of, satisfied and joyful.

But from the same perspective of the past five years, I must say that many problems have not been solved. What I have in mind is the scale of poverty in Poland; high unemployment rate; developmental disproportions; drop of the feeling of safety, and corruption. In each of those domains the social patience has been put on trial. We failed to find adequate solutions and did not show the necessary determination. And this must be the reason for reflection for all those, who feel responsible for the Polish state.

People in Poland appreciate the accomplishments of the past eleven years. They are full of good will. But at the same time, our society expects progress and changes. From the President of the Republic of Poland, from parliament and from government, it expects a new quality in ruling the country, better effectiveness in soliciting problems. The fulfilment of this social expectation is my supreme obligation for the new term of office.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I count on common activeness and dialogue of the Polish people. I count on cooperation in the implementation of our common goals. Let me remind them once again.

We have to stabilise and accelerate our economic growth, improve and finish the reforms, mitigate the social tensions they evoked. The latest example of this is the current dramatic protest of nurses. We know the threats – growing unemployment, problems with the balance of payments. Despite the economic growth, our needs grow faster. The distance separating us from many European countries causes that we have to redouble our effort. This requires new developmental incentives, which will make our economy more dynamic, effective, more competitive and more effectively competing on the international markets.

The implementation of the national educational development programme and computer science knowledge is an urgent task. The forthcoming century will require comprehensive, constantly updated knowledge and the ability to use the latest know-how. One who understands it faster, who masters it faster, will have greater chances for taking a strong position among the group of highly developed countries. Poland has a strong point in this respect because we do not have to repeat anybody else's way. We can immediately start learning how to use the latest technology in the digital world of the future. We should only correctly appreciate the role of education.

We have to remember about the importance of culture, which is a measure of human sensitiveness. Without the development of culture, without the reconstruction of cultural life outside big cities, without a breakthrough in education, including cultural education, it will be impossible to develop the intellectual life. And this is a precondition for the construction of modern Poland, the precondition for the collective and individual success of the Polish people. Culture not on the margin but in the focus of interest. Culture as our necessary, desired environment in which we live. This is the goal I would like to attain together with you, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I want to say that we must not let excessive inequalities and contrasts happen. Currently, in many places they exceeded the limit of social acceptance. We must take up actions restoring the balance, equate the chances of people from various social groups and regions of the country. The point is to help poor youth, able young people, ensuring equal rights for women.

I want that the duty of improving the level of the feeling of justice and personal safety of citizens be another matter of importance for the world of politics. The matter is the effectiveness of the operation of the courts of law, prosecutor's offices, and the police. The matter is the common lack of consent for corruption. The matter is to break with the practice of mastering the state, restoring respect for competence, legible principles of promotion. (...)

Ladies and Gentlemen MPs and Senators,

In the legal sense the area of the President's activity, his prerogatives and competence, are spelled out in the Polish constitution. They are not small. The constitution imposes on the President the duty to care for the stability of the state. The President is obliged to take part in solving the country's most important problems, to react on crises, support actions aimed at social and economic development. I want to say that I will be present wherever the interest of the state and its citizens requires it. (...)

## 12. Address during the 12<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the Union of Polish Banks (excerpts) – 9<sup>th</sup> of May 2001

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(...) Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would not like to talk about specialist matters because I am not an expert here and I accept what governor Topinski said a while ago as important proposals, which will be assessed and discussed by my collaborators. Wherever presidential support will be necessary – I declare it.

I would like to talk about something that interests me as the president much more and what I regard as the most important in the coming decade, because we have closed the previous one with success. Not only a major political but also economic transformation was made, which, in the most spectacular way means that if still 10, 11 years ago, 70 percent of the Polish gross domestic product came from the state-owned sector, today, more or less the same, comes from the private sector. If a dozen or so years ago, 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of Polish export went to the East, today, more or less, this is the share of Polish export to the European Union. If we mention the banking system, financial services and institutions, which were established, such as the stock exchange or Securities Commission, there is no doubt that we have not wasted that decade.

However, there is a serious problem where to seek today more complex reserves and developmental impulses for another decade. If I were to say very briefly where I see the main challenges facing the state, Polish economy and the banking system, I would enumerate the following four.

Of course, the goal at hand's reach and undoubtedly the most important one for the coming years, a goal of immense consequences, is the accession to the European Union. The negotiations are under way but I think that on the matter of negotiations the public opinion is often being misled because they are presented in the "victory or defeat" category. Negotiations, by definition, end in a compromise. Negotiations that would end in a full triumph of one party and full defeat of another would not be negotiations but rather capitulation.

Hence, the negotiations we are conducting now are entering their most difficult stage and it is necessary to reckon with the fact that we shall repeatedly have such difficulties, which will engage the Polish public opinion but which should not discourage us from consistent action in favour of joining the EU. The discussion on when Poland will join seems of little value for me because negotiations envisage that two sides must meet. It depends on many factors whether such a meeting will be possible in 2003, 2004 or 2005. We should accentuate that on our part we shall spare no effort to be prepared for the year 2003 because this will also be important and will enforce concrete reactions on the part of the EU. The date, however, will appear when the two sides meet together having both the negotiations finished and possessing a certain political plan acceptable both by us and the EU. There is no doubt, however, that during the coming years the EU matter will be of capital importance, hence all postulates aimed at putting in order the Polish legal and banking system, the preparation to the perspective of the presence in the EU are of top importance and I count that the Union of Polish Banks will also support such actions and projects. We have to be ready not only in declarations but also in the practical aspect.

Another challenge, which is also connected with your activity, ladies and gentlemen, is to ensure Poland economic development. In fact, the economic development is a "to be or not to be". We must create for it conditions in the sphere of economic and financial policy and also combining to an increasing degree the scientific and technological progress and this additional, intellectual value because the economic development will decide both about our place in the EU and about the possibility of solving tens of problems in Poland. The coming years will not be easy in this respect. Hopes for a very rapid economic growth must be postponed in time. Now, we have to ensure at least several-percent economic growth and, first, build the foundations for the acceleration of the development when there are good internal conditions and favourable external business outlook. The care for economic development, consistency in it and even determination is a matter of extreme importance and here, on the part of the world of Polish finance understanding, consistency and hardness are required but also flexibility whenever necessary. When I mention flexibility I look at the members of the Monetary Policy Council.

The third challenge concerns competitiveness of the Polish economy and exports. It is highly dangerous that the second decade of the Third Republic of Poland we shall conduct in conditions of weak competitiveness of Polish enterprises and in conditions of highly inadequate export as compared with the potential. All mechanisms must be used to change this state of affairs. Of



course, this cannot be done overnight, no single decision will help; it must be a comprehensive activity. Yet, we must take up this effort. It is saddening that the 40 million-strong nation cannot boast of any export article, which would be associated with Poland. Other, smaller nations have such goods; I repeatedly mentioned the Finns and Nokia. We do not have such or even a similar product. Fiat remains to be Poland's major exporter. Hence, the support for competitiveness, for export, for small and medium-size enterprises, the availability of credits and such difficult policy, cautious as far as it is necessary but also active, is undoubtedly one of the most important tasks during the coming years. I count on the understanding and on serious proposals from the side of the Polish banks and the Union of Polish Banks.

The fourth challenge, which should not be neglected in any way, is unemployment. We have reached the unemployment level that is dangerous and I differ from other participants in the political life in that I am not trying to say which government bears responsibility for it. There are very many factors both historical, contemporary and demographic. Let us remember that a new generation is entering the scene. It was said during the conference devoted to Poland's strategy until 2020 that during the coming 15 years more than eight million people will reach the age of maturity – 18 years. These are at least medium-size European nations. We have to be aware of the fact that this is not the problem of workplaces, it is a problem of education, housing, concluded marriages, children, etc. Therefore, we cannot treat the issue of unemployment exclusively as an effect of the indispensable restructuring and modernisation of Polish economy. We have to view it as an enormous social problem, which requires taking up integrated and decisive efforts on the part of all participants in our public life starting from parliament and politicians, economic communities and ending on banks because if we do not give the impulses, which will facilitate creating new, effective workplaces, especially in small and medium-size enterprises, in my opinion, we shall not be able to meet the challenge. Of course, there are buffer methods. I am personally glad that nearly 1.5 million young people in Poland are students. Although, when I asked rectors of 160 private universities in Poland how many of them meet the standard of decency, they said that 2/3<sup>rd</sup> do and 1/3<sup>rd</sup> do not. However, studying in even a mediocre school is a far more advantageous solution than the allowance. But this is only a buffer, only a temporary measure in order to find solutions to this enormous social, economic and political challenge, which unemployment is.

These, dear Ladies and Gentlemen, in my opinion, are the most important challenges we are facing. I am convinced that in the already second decade of the existence of the Union of Polish Banks, we can count on good advice, on

very important opinions from your side. I am also convinced that on the issues within your competence like the development of the banking system, financial services, the construction of confidence in banking institutions in Poland – and it is considerable – according to a public opinion poll – 70 percent – control activity, elimination of such banks or institutions which undermine trust in the banking sector, you will take the only right decisions. (..)

# 13.

Address during the ceremony of summing up the programme  
“Internet in schools – project of the president of the Republic of Poland”  
– 24<sup>th</sup> of January 2002

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Esteemed Ms Minister, Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are starting the third year of the implementation of the presidential project called “The Internet in schools”. If we maintained the hitherto tempo, within a few years we could fully meet the expectations of young Poles ensuring each and every one of them access to the Internet and modern computer techniques. I know that such a rate will be hard to maintain. It is, therefore, necessary to express one’s joy that already today there are more than 100 school computer workrooms used by more than 60,000 pupils and students.

Thanks to you and your commitment, we have made an important step in the right direction. But in order to make you realise the scale of the necessity I want to say that – despite what we managed to achieve and despite the more than 100 computer workrooms, which, according to plans, we shall open in 2002 – 700 schools applied for this type of support and help. I count on the understanding of this fact and on support no less generous than until now.

As a state and as parents, we have the duty to ensure our youth the best possible education and access to modern techniques and technologies. If Poland seeks developmental opportunities, it must tie them, first, with the new generation, with its education, with the fact that it would be able to move in the contemporary world without limitations also in acquiring new abilities. The Internet plays an enormous role. It is a road leading not only to good education, but also to accelerated education, which quickly ushers in to the world of free market, the intellectual values, banking system and management. The Internet offers a possibility of deepening the knowledge – there are virtual schools and universities. Thanks to this technique, the knowledge accumulated in libraries and scientific centres is generally accessible.

The Internet revolution is marching on victoriously. I am convinced that it serves civilization well. We must have our share in this revolution. The programme “The Internet in schools” is such – limited for the time being but already important and observable – share in the changes and in helping the Polish youth to join the IT society. The main burden of preparing the young people to use those techniques and participate in the IT society, obviously enough, rests on the educational system. I am glad that the strategic goals of Leszek Miller’s new government include the computer science education and computerisation. I join the words of thanks for Minister Krystyna Lybacka and the employees of her ministry. I also thank those, who supported us during the previous terms. Thanks for all that we managed to achieve in the IT education sphere. I believe that the cooperation will continue to progress very well.

I want to sincerely thank all the sponsors. I hope that being with me and my collaborators in various places where we opened computer workrooms you shared the mood prevailing there. The mood of enthusiasm, joy, the zeal to work, the interest of the young people in what is happening. I doubt whether in one’s professional activity one could enjoy greater satisfaction and reward seeing young people using computers and simply being happy. I thank all the persons, companies and institutions, which not only understood the assumptions of the programme but also really helped in the establishment of – more than one hundred – computer and Internet workrooms. Today we have handed out our sponsors and media patrons diamond, golden and silver awards. I would like them – apart from this symbolic crowning of their effort – to feel great satisfaction. This is something that cannot be converted into statuettes. This is something that should guarantee you certainty that you are taking part in ushering in the young generation of the Polish people into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, that you give them a chance for the future.

As promised, the money saved by the electoral staff last year was earmarked for computer workrooms. We want to use every financial reserve that appears for just this purpose. Concluding, I would like to sincerely thank members of the team implementing the programme. These are mainly students, volunteers, and very able young people. Their invention, commitment and organisational talents mean that “The Internet in schools” programme is developing, that there are new ideas, that the competition – attended by hundreds of school teams – for websites showing the accomplishments of our regions to the European Internet users ended successfully and that the Banking Academy for students enjoyed success.

We are starting another edition of the competition “EuroSchool on the Internet”, this time under the motto “European Union – closer to others”. “The Internet

in schools” project will be expanded by the school stock exchange academy realised in cooperation with the Warsaw Stock Exchange. It will be a simulation of a stock exchange game aimed at popularising the economic knowledge and acquainting secondary school students with market mechanisms. I hope that the words uttered here will become a fact and that one hundred more workrooms will be established. They will be mainly addressed to primary and secondary schools. We shall be installing specialised workrooms in institutions of higher learning.

Once again, dear ladies and gentlemen, thank you for the hitherto cooperation. I am astonished that so many persons accepted our invitation to cooperate. I am convinced that we are making one of the most important things we can offer our children and youth, the young Polish people at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The road is long, we must do much more, but the beginning has been made and it is impressive. Once again, thank you all for everything.

# 14. Address after sending to the Sejm of the Bill on higher education (excerpts) – 11<sup>th</sup> of February 2004

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Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before I join the sincere thanks for the preparation of the grand draft of the law on higher education, let me make several initial remarks.

Starting my presidency I decided to patronise the preparation of bills of structural character. I have my share in the preparation of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland and carrying it out through a national referendum and in other important laws, which determine Polish reality. Deciding on the invitation and formation of a team for higher education I was convinced that we were talking about one of the most important structural laws in the Republic of Poland.

Today I can express my conviction that a mature work has appeared, which, of course, will require further work, but which fulfils many expectations. We have the law of capital importance for higher education, essential for the future and complying with the challenges, which our imminent presence in the EU brings us. Thanks to this bill – and I believe soon the law – we shall join the Bologna process, which so strongly underscores the importance of science, higher education and youth education in the European Union.

The law on higher education does not question the legal regulations, which were in force until now and which were adopted in effect of grand political transformations in Poland in the 1980s and early 1990s, but is a response to the exhaustion of certain possibilities embedded in those regulations. The higher learning, scientific and student communities addressed motions for changing them. The attempt of filling up the entire enormous legal space of higher education with contents adequately matching the current situation seemed to be an excessively ambitious task. I am glad the more so that it succeeded and that soon this important law will be adopted.

During the past 15 years Poland scored many successes about which we rarely talk. The Polish people much more often and eagerly talk about the defeats, but

there is no doubt that one of our basic successes is the development of higher education, both public and private and the extraordinary number of students. I represent the baby boom of the mid-1950s and I remember that at the time we were studying, the maximum number of students in Poland amounted to some 340,000. Today, another baby boom – that is our children – amounts to two million students in state and private institutions of higher learning. This number makes an impression on all in Europe because, related to the population, it shows that in today's Poland there are more students than, for example in Germany, which is an event in itself and which is a great hope for me. Many of my partners asked me what constitutes our special force at the moment of joining the EU. Of course, many different arguments might be sought but if we were to answer the question honestly it is just the young people who understand that the future is connected with education and that the competition must be based on the best possible knowledge, preparation, ability to take up the challenges of the contemporary world, the economy and global processes.

As the president of the Republic of Poland I am proud that young Polish people crave so much for learning and want to take advantage of the chance this country offers them. However, in order to sustain this trend we need adequate legal regulations – modern, competent, eliminating the visible weaknesses. The new project strengthens the force of the institutions of higher learning, their autonomy, the internal possibilities and at the same time proposes solutions, which will offer further opportunities for development and fulfilling the requirements Poland is facing together with the accession to the EU. The opportunities, which will also fulfil the requirements, connected with our interests and the demand for development.

I want to assure you that I will present the bill to the Sejm of the Republic of Poland as soon as possible. I believe that the legislative process will start immediately. I want to assure all the critics of the bill – because they are there and wrote many letters to me – that their remarks will be reviewed and discussed during the legislative process and I do not exclude that they will be taken into account. The deed is in the making. We participate all the time in this process. I would like Minister Lybacka's forecast that maybe we shall succeed to adopt the law by the start of the new academic year on 1<sup>st</sup> of October, come true.

Let me, Ladies and Gentlemen, share one more reflection with you. It is essential that we managed to come to an understanding on such a difficult matter in this group. I want to thank the entire team and Mr. Prof. Woznicki, who headed it. Maybe the fact that the initiative came from the president of the Republic of Poland, that we discussed it here in the Presidential Palace, in which 15 years ago the Round Table debate came to its successful end, affected the work of

the entire team and the effect presented to me today. I would definitely like to, while solving many difficult issues in Poland, adopt such a mode of operation and thinking as the team for the law presented. Prof. Woznicki was right when he said that a compromise might be more important than individual interests, that something can be done together, despite all differences, that really our activeness should animate action in favour of the public good because this is crucial. It is not important who will play the upper hand, the point is to create works which will really rationalise and modernise Poland and which will create foundations for good action in the future.

I want to sincerely thank all those, who worked on the law and thank for the fact that the student has become its subject. This, against all appearances, is very important because it can even better encourage Polish youth to treat education as an excellent investment for the future. (...)

Thank you for your work, for the time in which it was done and for your devotion. I know that you were not rewarded for your work, which is why I appreciate it all the more. I want to thank Ms Minister Krystyna Lybacka and all persons connected with the Ministry of National Education and Sports, who took part in that deed. I also thank the representatives of other ministries, who supported the activity of the team. I want to thank institutions and organisations for their consultations and suggestions. I thank student self-government, because your share was important and meaningful for the entire procedure.

(...) I am convinced that thanks to our common effort for our common good, we achieved a project, which can yield a truly excellent effect for the institutions of higher learning and the academic environment and Poland – a strong Poland in a strong Europe. I would like this slogan to overshadow certain martyrological conceptions voiced by some people and connected with our accession to the EU. I would like our contribution to strengthen the European community in which we shall participate on equal rights as of 1<sup>st</sup> of May of this year and that a well organised, modern Poland could enter it. This will be possible only when we shall have educated people, excellent institutions of higher learning, good education, when we will be able to compete on this level with others, when we will be able to enrich them – because the competition serves the enrichment of our entire Community. I am convinced that the preparation and future adoption by the Sejm and the Senate of the law on higher education is the fulfilment of one of the most important postulates of the strong Poland in the strong Europe concept. (...)

Thank you and my congratulations once again. I am glad that I could take up such an initiative and that I can continue patronising it.



# 15. Address during the conference on the National Development Plan (excerpts) – Royal Castle, 20<sup>th</sup> of January 2005

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Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

There are moments in the life of every state and of every politician, when it is necessary to look back at one's achievements and think what to do next. What we have accomplished, where we are and where are we heading to. Today is just such an occasion because we are inaugurating the discussion on our country's National Development Plan for the years 2007–2013. We are starting to talk about really the most important issue for Poland – its future.

But we are not talking in detachment from what has already happened, from what we have accomplished. We have our attainments behind us and the scenario of positive events, one of the best visions of the future Polish history, ahead of us. We have accomplishments, which gladden us, although sometimes we criticise them, but we also have a unique chance to raise our country onto another, decisively higher level of civilizational development. (...)

Enormous chances are opening up before Poland today. After the period of the painful slowdown of business trends, the economy has again entered a stage of rapid development. The coming years will bring a strong drop of the unemployment rate, wage increases, the improvement of social moods. Investments will grow quickly and the process of the modernisation of the country will be accelerated. Alas, the past several years did not record well in our memory. But memory is one thing and the strengthening of the foundations on which the development of the country rests is another thing. There is a discrepancy between the everyday state of the country and that what happened in the economy, finances and indexes most characteristic for the assessment of the country's situation. Front-page articles attack us with scandals, misfortunes, corruption, affairs, but at the same time – and this is no longer front-paged but written on the last pages – we experienced a growth of labour productivity, our export doubled and inflation dropped. The economy has gained the developmental rate on a level higher than in

the EU. We have investments and many premises that everything that is happening will yield good effects in the coming years.

It is necessary to think what should be done in view of such generally imposed state of discouragement; the rejection of what is the basic element of Polish economy and what is happening in Poland. Should we depart from the way we have chosen? Should new experiments be sought? Should we question the accomplishments of the Third Republic of Poland? Should we recognise that it was a general failure? Should we replace things that passed the test and which brought positive results with risky concepts, experiments and often pure demagoguery and populism? As the president, who is finishing his ten year-long activity, I want to tell you clearly and decisively – no, we cannot do that because these are false recipes, erroneous conceptions, which will lead only to a waste of time and many negative phenomena, which will take years to make up for. We must take advantage of what is before Poland – the unique chance. From this developmental chance, the presence in the EU, the instruments that start to be accessible for us we must create an effective plan. A concrete, real, national plan above the divisions, which will tie the actions of new generations of presidents, parliamentarians and governments and which will eventually strengthen our position in the European community. Briefly speaking, with all the criticism of the phenomena, which we generally reject and regard as the illnesses of our social and political life, I say openly – there is no place in Poland for any irresponsible, risky experiments. There is a place in Poland for using the opportunity, which is strongly supported by our presence in the EU and NATO and which should – following national consent – allow us to take advantage of everything which is opening up before Poland in the shape of the financial means, the modernisation projects and cooperation with other European countries. But I decisively say “no” for Poland, which today, for its ideological reasons, would like to return to the history, to divisions, courts and vetting, to everything that, on the margin of life should undoubtedly go on, but which cannot become the main current of Polish social and political life for the coming years. There is really no justification for wasting those chances and opportunities we are gaining at the moment. (...)

The years 2007-2013, which the National Development Plan covers, are especially important. These are the years, when the future of the European integration can be decided and especially the scope of the principle of solidarity. These are the years when Poland can achieve much on the road to lessening the differences in the economic development and affluence of citizens in relation to Western Europe.

First, it is necessary to realise that the EU budget in 2007-2013 will be the best possible for our country. We shall be the main recipient of EU funds. The plan envisages that by 2013 the per capita GDP level in Poland may grow to two-thirds of the average GDP in the European Union. Thus, we shall still be a country having the right to structural aid, but probably will not be by then the country that needs such aid the most. If after 2010, Turkey, which is much poorer than our country, joins the Union; its needs will exceed ours. The same, even more clearly, refers to Ukraine.

Thus, we have seven years of a comfortable situation, which, however, will not last eternally. It is necessary to make good use of these years. The National Development Plan mentions the sum of 142 billion euro, which during that period, could be earmarked on the development of infrastructure, human capital, for lessening the disproportions in the development of regions and solving problems connected with restructuring of rural areas. These are sums completely incomparable with the means we had at our disposal in recent years, allowing to boost modernisation expenditures and public investments. If we spend this money in a thrifty way, it is possible to change the image of the country.

The first problem is how to spend those means effectively. Public institutions of all levels – especially voivodship self-governments, whose role will be to wisely spend one-third of the sum written down in the National Development Plan – must be strengthened. The more so, that it is also necessary to take into account the potential threats such as the risk of corruption or the lack of people with adequate qualifications, for example.

Secondly, looking at the enormous sums contained in the National Development Plan, we must not forget that we are talking only about actions, which are to facilitate quick growth and not to replace the economic activity of the Polish people. A more rapid economic growth can be realised only thanks to bigger investments in big and small-size enterprises. The National Development Plan is to create incentives for investing and make Poland a more attractive production site. The moment, in this respect is special: we have an enormous competitive advantage in relation to Western Europe, stemming, primarily from lower cost of labour. But as I said, this is a momentary goal and that advantage will fade away gradually. That is why it is so important to create the best possible conditions for performing economic activity, for investing and for boosting export during the coming years because a chance once wasted may never recur.

Thirdly, the years 2007-2013 will be especially important for the Polish labour market. This, it seems, will be the last period when a considerable growth of

the accessible labour resources will occur. Paradoxically enough, this which should be one of Poland's strongest points, seems to be a threat owing to the unsolved problem of unemployment. Unemployment in Poland results from various factors both on the side of the demand and supply of labour. Applying the means accessible in the National Development Plan, it is necessary to make the maximum effort in the coming years for the development of the quality of labour resources, which we possess. Improved must be the quality of education on all levels and the scale of the access to it. It is necessary to seriously deal with fighting structural unemployment. It is necessary to ensure the accelerated growth to be accompanied by incentives for the creation of new jobs. Without using Polish labour resources we are wasting the biggest chance for development, which will exist in the years to come.

There is yet another dimension of the challenges facing us in the years 2007-2013. Poland must gradually join the group of innovative economies, largely based on knowledge. Our main competitive advantage does not lie in unqualified labour – here we shall not win either with China or with Asia or even with Ukraine – our advantage lies in our engineers, doctors, scientists and lawyers. We must fully use this enormous opportunity and the Lisbon strategy – adapted to our needs – which cannot be an unknown or empty slogan in Poland. This, however, requires effort also on the part of the world of science, which will bring this world and us closer to the needs of the economy.

The years 2007-2013 are important from yet another point of view. It is a period when Poland can and should decide to introduce the euro currency. Doing so, we shall not only join the countries, which are in the forefront of the process of integration, but will obtain direct advantages of economic nature. Once and for all we shall get rid of the inherited fears from the past concerning the strength and stability of currency, we shall eliminate the uncertainty painful for the Polish enterprises as regards the shaping of the currency exchange rate. In this way we shall encourage greater investments and faster development of the country.

In my opinion, the introduction of the euro will be possible in 2009 or 2010. This requires taking an immediate political decision as to the direction and the scale of the reform of public finance and close coordination of government and the National Bank of Poland's efforts in the field of the implemented economic policy. I will soon propose a discussion attended by all the interested social forces on the best possible calendar for launching the euro in Poland and on the economic policy, which will serve that goal. The euro, after Poland's joining the euro zone, should be another challenge, which after the presence in NATO and the European Union, we put before ourselves. (...)

There is no alternative for the concept of a strong Poland in a strong Europe; this is a measure of the contemporary patriotism, of responsibility for a contemporary Poland. I am convinced that the great majority of our citizens share this way of thinking. The point is that those Polish people, who in the 2003 referendum declared themselves in favour of joining the EU and those who understand the sense of that presence, were not shouted down and pushed to the margin, that they were fully convinced that the right is on our side and that there are more of us than those who talk poppycock and propose totally ridiculous concepts. Lest they stay at home when election comes, lest they be mute when it is necessary to take the floor that they had the strength to manifest their European-oriented attitude, that they go to the polls when it comes to vote for the Constitutional Treaty and also when it comes to voting in parliamentary and European elections for the solutions, which will serve the grand idea of a strong Poland in a strong Europe. I am convinced that we can encourage to this idea not only the already declared Euro-enthusiasts, but also many people of the young generation and I treat it as my and yours, ladies and gentlemen, task.

I say this also as the president, who in 2005 will complete his ten-year, two-term office. There is no greater satisfaction for me than what happened in this field that Poland, in good condition, is in the EU and can play an important role there. We have returned to the European family and no one can take away from us the emotions, which we lived through on 1<sup>st</sup> of May at Pilsudski Square, where historic justice was made, that Poland was again among the biggest European states as a participant and partner. I appeal to all of you present here not to waste this accomplishment in the least degree so that we could take advantage of everything that could be made for Poland to occupy a worthy and strong position in a solidary Europe. (...)



C. Struggle for the Image of the Past  
– the Truth that Does not Divide but Unites

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# 1. An Article For "Gazeta Wyborcza" – a Polish daily (excerpts) – 1<sup>st</sup> of July 1996

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(...) It is the right of editorial staff to keep a discussion on the retrieval of threats across the newspaper's columns. Undoubtedly it is more important than the formulation of positive visions, which, we have to admit, might be somewhat boring. However I would like to make an appeal to, at least some of the Authors, who expressed their opinions across the columns of "Gazeta Wyborcza". Let us stop frightening each other. Thank God there are more opportunities for Poland than menaces that might threaten the State. Foreign armies are not going to invade our territory, and the Polish government was not formed outside the country. Polish society is not unwell and the State is not in crisis. The economy is developing, relations with neighbours are more than correct, and the prospect of integration with European and Euro-Atlantic structures is more and more clear. (...)

There is not any threat for the independence of Poland. Therefore tracing the "fifth column" is a barren action, of the persecution mania type. The conviction that the future of Poland and the future of Europe shall be defined by the eagerness to cooperate and the fact that we will be eyewitnesses to international cooperation on isolationism as well as the spirit of conflict which is more important than spy-obsession ought to be the inspiration for our patriotism. Certainly, in the future it may not be like that, still there are arguments and a lot of doubts ahead, but what shall be really decisive for the future of Poland is how we will cope with challenges brought about by economy transformation and integration with Western Europe. If we do not focus on those problems we can most certainly create many troubles for ourselves.

These are only words. But they also have their practical dimension. We have to answer the question of whether modern patriotism that aims at modernisation of the State gets the better, whether we could be able to limit the social cost of transformation, whether we will be able to eliminate the remaining national egocentrism, localism, xenophobia and the sense of historical mission? And also if we allow an ideologised vision of history to control the collective



imagination. From the point of view of Poland the most important thing is not to be pushed aside to the third division, and not to be placed on the margin of global processes of a civilization character. (...)

The main threats to Poland, as I can see them at present, are of an internal dimension and their sources are first of all in the State. Suppression of economic growth and the triumph of euro-scepticism would have far-reaching consequences. Suppression of growth would avert the vision of the most painful social problems from us to the next generations, and disruption of integration with Europe would deepen the civilization gap between us and developed countries. Disturbance of growth and contacts with Brussels is possible, if the view that obtaining safety and wealth does not require the continuation of transformation and undertaking of practical steps towards integration – but some “awakening” of Poland, a moral shock among Polish people or reconstruction that is not specifically specified, is imposed on social opinion. Actually, we do not need much to materialise those threats.

They are threats to Poland that are as menacing as those that would bring the possible deterioration of the international atmosphere in Europe. The problem that is ruining our public life, that is expressed in the desire to destroy the political opponent and to make each public discussion ideological as well as the inability to reach a compromise, is a fact even today. It may influence, or maybe it is influencing now, the course of economic processes and legislative procedures related to integration. (...)

A great revaluation of reality assessment and radical revision of practical attitudes is taking place in Poland nowadays. For some, it is difficult to rationalise everything that has changed in recent years in their workplace, family and society and introduce the changes into their own living plan. People look for new truths and rules of behaviour. Sometimes it is expressed in the crisis of awareness, when the whole world of previous values undergoes revision. Therefore susceptibility to pathological phenomena is greater. However it is not a collective psychosis yet. Polish people were prepared to live in free market conditions and democracy which was the best of all the countries of the Eastern block. The society neither lost the ability of rational reasoning nor the ability to make decisions. I agree that a generation change is necessary, but changes in the awareness of the Polish people take place fast, faster than the change of generations.

The charge of the lack of patriotism addressed to a large number of Polish people that is supposedly expressed in “improper” voting in election and lack of concern towards anniversary celebrations, is hard to be considered serious. In fact, they do not have a lot in common. We ought to oppose the charges

of the lack of patriotism and lack of ideological content of the whole social groups and environments. (..)

I cannot accept questioning the right to patriotism of the people who were active in various structures of the People's Republic of Poland. Could one be a patriot in after-war Poland only in one way? After all there was no real choice between the Soviet Republic of Poland and the London government. They never managed to sovietise Poland, and London "Castle" did not have enough respect to dominate over at least political emigration. Were not October of 1956 and the attitude of Gomulka towards Khrushchev the reason for the pride of the Polish people independently of their attitude towards the system and the Yalta order? Was the opinion that the opening of Poland to the world in the 70s extended our range of freedom and that it is worth acting in this direction unacceptable? (..)

Pluralism means accepting the fact that arguments are divided and biographies of public people are not the same. Political victories are not achieved in the sphere of words. Where does such a great longing for "moral and political unity", for the vision that will arrange order and specify targets, in social and political journalism come from? Politics is not only a competition of vision, but also the ability to find social and political support for them. Why did people in Poland vote for the left wing? Because they could elect and they knew from among whom they elected.

The question of the moral right to win in elections and presence in public life of some politicians is nonsense. In fact, what was to be a consequence of refusal of that right? When I read and hear discussions on this subject, I always wonder why a part of post-solidarity elites accept the method of elimination of "post-communists" from public life, as the main subject of their analyses. Is it really the expression of their moral power and policy superiority and love for democracy? Is really Poland in question here?

My idea of "a united Poland" does not signify the pursuit of unification of the nation around one political programme, a political power or a leader. However, I am convinced that there exists an area of superior and common problems that decide on the realisation of national interest. Anyway, in the society there are not any significant differences in opinions in those most important matters. People do not surround themselves with entanglements just because of their views or biographies. Pursuit of communication and dialogues is a usual and natural social need. Politicians of all orientations, as well as media, have to play an obvious part here. In fundamental matters political elites should look for understanding, talk to each other, even if they have different points of view. (..)

## 2. TV New Year's Message (excerpt) – 31<sup>st</sup> of December 1996

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(...) Ladies and Gentleman!

Recent years have brought us all new experiences. We have understood that rights are divided, and that we cannot refuse the right to patriotism to anyone, and that various points of view are not mutually exclusive but complementing. Questioning continuity of our individual and collective biographies is an unproductive activity. We have realised that politics is not only a competition of visions but also the ability to realise them. I hope that the conviction that politics is not, and should not be everything, is the lesson of 1996.

I also know that the past is an obstacle in collective activity for many of my fellow countrymen. We are not able to change it but we have to do our best not to allow the historical argument to destroy our future.

It is true that “much divides the Polish people. How important is the attitude towards the past and the communists’ heritage. It is a gloomy heritage. It is a tragedy of our history as well as its glory. The tragedy of those involved and the glory of those who could oppose. We must not forget about that time if we want to be true to Polish tradition” as Adam Michnik has written recently.

In fact the pain that was brought to many of our co-citizens by history cannot be relieved but people’s harm ought to be satisfied as much as possible. It is necessary not to be a prisoner of the past. But in order not to be that prisoner, it is also necessary to realise the words of the Pope, John Paul II, who, in his message for the World Day of Peace wrote that “the point is not to forget past events but to observe them in the new spirit, learning just from painful experience, that love creates and hatred brings destruction and ruin. Lethal routine of revenge has to give way to the liberating newness of forgiveness.”

Historians argue about when Poland had a better economic situation than today – 400 years ago? It was truly obliging for the Polish people. Great responsibility is rested with us – to use the time of Poland in history. There may not

be any justification for any omission, the lack of consistency or adventuring. We have to secure a stable democracy, a modern constitution, wise law, high economic growth, strong currency, security of citizens, competitiveness in the world, presence in the European Union and NATO and friendly relations with neighbouring countries to our common Poland.

In the New Year it will depend on us if there are more workplaces and cooperation, dialogues and compromise or negligence, arguments and loss of time in Poland. In the year that begins tomorrow, the Polish people shall use again the right that was regained together with democracy and independence. I hope that, as usual, they will do this with caution and responsibility. The enormous effort in recent years must not be wasted. The Polish people should never learn the lesson too late. We have a great chance for a future better than ever! Let us not look only around us: it really depends on us!

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Thank you very much for all you have done for the common good and for Poland in 1996.

In the New Year, I want to wish you much happiness, love and satisfaction at your homes in Poland and abroad. My wish for all of us is to make 1997 another important step towards a wealthy and secure Poland.

3. Legislative initiative on the law of the establishments of Civil Archives and of making the documents produced between 1944 and 1990 by State security bodies generally accessible to parties  
– 13<sup>th</sup> of November 1997<sup>4</sup>
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## JUSTIFICATION

In clause 51 act 3, the Constitution of the Republic of Poland ensures every person the access to formal documents and collections of data related to them. The purpose of the planned law is to make it possible for Polish citizens to have access to the documentation produced and collected about them by the State security bodies in the period between 1955 and 1999. Passing the law in the suggested wording shall meet social expectations and, through making documentation accessible, shall allow interested people to become acquainted with the influence the former security services had on their private and professional life.

It has been acknowledged that real access to documentation shall only be possible after separation of existing material and its delegation to the institution that is substantively and financially prepared to manage such resources. In the draft of the law, they suggested the establishing of Civil Archives as State archives that shall be nationwide and have the main office in Warsaw. Postulated delegation of documentation, that is kept in The Ministry of the Interior and Administration at present, National Defence and in the State Defence, shall ensure the realisation of two important purposes. Firstly, it shall make it possible to record and work out the transferred documentation by professional archivist services, and secondly, through the separation and delegation to Civil Archives it shall integrate archival materials that are included in the State archival resources and are dispersed at present.

Documentation that is to be transferred to Civil Archives under the law drafted is at present included in separated State archives. The organisation of separated

<sup>4</sup> This project has been rejected by the majority of votes of the ruling coalition of AWS – UW (edit.).

archives is specified by appropriate ministers, and regulations related to State archives have a limited application in this sphere, that is exclusively to matters that are not regulated by law issued by the ministers. According to the law from 14<sup>th</sup> July of 1983 on national archival resources and archives, archival materials that are placed in resources of separated archives are subject to transfer to State archives of central nature only after 50 years from their production have passed, if it does not violate legally defended interests of the State and the citizens. In the draft of the law, a modification of the above principles has been suggested, including the amendment to the law from 14<sup>th</sup> of July 1983 on national archival resources and archives and placing the Ministries of the Interior and Administration, National Defence and the Head of the State Defence Office under the obligation to transfer the documents to the Civil Archives, within the period of 12 months from the day of the law coming into force, in the way specified by the Prime Minister and after taking advice of the General Head of the State Archives.

Making the documentation, that was transferred to Civil Archives, accessible, shall take place on the interested person's application in writing. A sample application and a detailed procedure for making the documents accessible shall be specified by the regulation of the Prime Minister. Making the documents accessible shall be free of charge, only obtaining a copy shall require a payment in the amount specified by the General Head of the State Archives.

In the draft of the law it has been suggested that making the documentation accessible shall take place in the offices of Civil Archives in the form of originals, microfilms, copies or in the system of computer information. The range of making data of third parties and information, the discharge of which might cause violation of legally defended interests of the State, illegible is specified respectively by the following regulations: from 14<sup>th</sup> of December 1982 on protection of the state and official secrets and from 29<sup>th</sup> of August on protection of private data that shall become effective in April 1998, that is, before the time in which interested parties may place applications to make the documentation accessible.

The person, who is interested, after being informed by the head of the office about the absence of documentation in the Civil Archives concerning the person, shall be able to apply to the Commission of Public Confidence to reconsider the application. On the other hand, the person who is not satisfied with the form or range of illegibility of provided documentation shall be entitled to apply to the Commission to change the form or cause legibility of data or information. The Commission of Public Confidence shall refuse to make the documentation accessible only if they recognise that making it accessible in the form and

range suggested by the applicant may cause menace to the security of the State or public order, or violation of freedom or rights of third parties.

The Commission of Public Confidence should only be made of people who are characterised by indefectibility of character and impeccable reputation, who are called for a four-year term of office by the Sejm, Senate and the President of the Republic of Poland. It has been suggested that members of the Commission of Public Confidence, as people who perform public functions, shall undergo inspection procedures under the regulation from 11<sup>th</sup> of April 1997 on disclosure of work or service for State Security institutions or cooperation with them between 1944 and 1990 by the people who perform public functions.

In the draft of the law they have included a suggestion that Members of the Commission shall not be allowed to be members of political parties, trade unions and also they should not run political activity that cannot be compatible with the principle of independence of the Commission. Violation of the above ban shall form grounds for dismissal of the Member of the Commission by the body authorised to appoint the members.

Undoubtedly, the adoption of the regulation in the suggested wording shall bring financial consequences, however, stating its amount is not possible at present because the size of resources of documentation that is subject to transfer under the suggested law is not now possible. Stating the size of resources is a necessary ratio to specify costs related to provision of appropriate storage conditions and costs related to salaries of employees of Civil Archives.

## 4. Speech made at the ceremony of laying the cornerstone for the Polish military cemetery near Kharkiv – Kharkiv 27<sup>th</sup> of June 1998

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Dear Mister President, Ladies and Gentlemen!

Words are always too little in the face of tragedy and pain. Here one would only like to remain silent in deepest pain and deepest honour. But this place, similarly to Katyn and Miednoye – cries out for words. The ceaseless proclamation of truth about the Katyn crime and the promise that we will always remember about it is a responsibility of each of us who live today as well as an important collective responsibility of the independent and democratic Republic of Poland.

Murder committed on over twenty thousand Polish army officers, the soldiers of Frontier Defence Corps, judges and policemen was one of many crimes of Stalin's bloody system. The human mind is unable to embrace all the pain, inflicted upon millions of people by this ghoulish machine of terror. All the vast area of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus conceal bones of countless victims, who were tormented and murdered. "Golgotha of the East", "inhuman land", "GULag archipelago", we try to use these words to express in words all that cannot be understood and embraced. A voiceless scream of all the victims of murder, this terrifying memento of our twentieth century will be heard for over many centuries.

However the Katyn murder occupies a very special place in the collective memory of the Polish people. It is just like a large wound which we need to talk about constantly just to let it cicatrize. Because the range and perfidy of this crime will always be terrifying just like the cynicism and hypocrisy with which they tried to hide the truth of martyrdom of the prisoners of Starobielsk, Ostaszkw and Kozielsk. Let us remember that the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, that inscribed itself in our history in such an ominous way, put them behind the barbed wire. Let us also remember that the truth about the Katyn crime was hidden for decades and that this truth was concealed and blurred not



only in the East but also in the West. The tragedy of Katyn is a symbol that describes Polish history.

I want to express the greatest respect for those who did not remain silent, those who looked for the truth and who shouted out the truth to the whole world. Those who are reminded by this Kharkiv cross and the crosses in Katyn and Miednoye were prisoners of war, of the war which was not declared by Poland. The judgement on them was pronounced although they were not informed of the charges against them and they were not tried. Stalin, Beria and other members of the Soviet leadership ordered them to be shot only because the prisoners were wearing Polish uniforms, because they were faithful to the soldier's oath and because they were the elite of the independent Republic of Poland. While NKWD executioners were killing Polish officers with a shot at the back of the head, in May 1940 the Nazis were building a large camp in Oswiecim (Auschwitz) to which representatives of Polish intellectuals were sent with the first transports. This coincidence of dates is the symbol of the darkest moments of our history. Therefore Katyn, Mednoye and Kharkiv, as the necropolis and sanctuaries of collective memory, shall always unite the Polish people in the perception of our identity. They shall also be a call to other nations, a voice against the evil, violence and humiliation of a human being; a voice that calls for the truth, reconciliation and a new Europe.

Dear President of Ukraine!

In this land the deathly remains of over four thousand three hundred Polish officers are buried. In the same place, sixty common graves conceal the ashes of over two thousand other victims of Stalin repressions. They are mainly the inhabitants of Kharkiv and the Kharkiv district. For many years, along the same "black road" they were transported and placed in nameless graves. This is the place of pain and despair also for Ukraine; it is the symbol of everything that its nation had to suffer under the totalitarian system. Imprisonments, deportations and executions hit millions of inhabitants of this land. The memory of famine in Ukraine that was caused by the Stalin authority's shall always be kept in memory. After these tragic experiences the war front and the terror of Nazi occupant swept across this place. The obelisk that commemorates over five thousand victims who were killed in the struggle against the aggressor is not far from this cross. History was cruel to both of our nations. This cemetery is the testimony of our ordeal, of our similarly tragic history. This place of common reflection over the wounds of the past, over the history of our part of Europe and over challenges we have to cope with in order to overcome the fate of past time.

Dear Listeners!

We have come here with the sense of moral obligation towards the victims of this terrible crime. No person can say if there is any compensation of such great evil, the memory of which still moves us. However, we do and we will keep on doing the best we can.

The truth leads towards compensation. Now we know a lot about the circumstances of this crime, its perpetrators, actions that were to hide it and cover it with silence and oblivion. We are depositories of this truth and we want to share this with other tragically experienced nations of Eastern Europe. We contribute to compensation if we execute what is so meaningfully called the “last offices”. Unfortunate ashes are provided with proper burial, we bring the names and surnames of victims back from anonymous non-existence to everlasting memory, we put crosses or signs of hope of other faiths on their graves. Let no one be forgotten! Today, placing here the cornerstone that was blessed by John Paul II, the Polish Pope, we want, at the sixtieth anniversary of the Katyn crime, to have cemeteries where the flames of candles will prove our memory, built here in Kharkiv and also in Katyn and Miednoye. We have the comfort that the present time, so different from the past, might also be the compensation. We live in a different world, in a new Europe built on pillars of freedom, law and democracy. They are neither the violence, nor totalitarian ideologies that threaten the fate of people and nations but the fate is lit up by the common effort towards reconciliation, benevolence and good neighbourhood. Everything that has been achieved in partner cooperation and closer friendship between Poland and Ukraine serves a good example. Therefore, in this place and at this moment I would like to thank our Ukrainian neighbours who helped us fulfil this collective responsibility of Polish conscience.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Katyn, Miednoye and Kharkiv are names that our memory will always associate with pain. However we all share the wish to find sense and hope even in the depth of evil. Therefore here, on this cemetery graveyard once again we shall pronounce the thought that so many times has had to consolidate Polish people: “Gloria victis!” Glory to the defeated because moral victory is theirs.

We bow ourselves to the martyrdom of the victims. Independent Poland will never forget them. Worship to their memory! Let them rest in peace!

## 5. Speech made on Independence Day. Warsaw, Pilsudski Square, 11<sup>th</sup> of November 1998 (excerpt)

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Ladies and Gentlemen, Fellow-Countrymen!

In the first days after Poland regained independence Jozef Pilsudski found “facilitating common people the work of organizing themselves” as the most important obligation of reviving the Republic of Poland.

It was also the most important conclusion drawn from historical experience of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century by Polish patriots of various streams in 1918. In order to survive, Poland could not just be a dream of intellectual elites. It had to become a concern of the widest social strata, an issue common to all orientations, parties, districts and regions.

Today we pay homage to all the insurgents and positivists, visionaries and realists as well as our national bards. The contribution of the Catholic Church in perseverance of the spirit, culture and tradition in the years of captivity is great and imperishable. We can appreciate those who fought and those who established Polish schools, Polish culture, science, Polish economic organisations, and newspapers. We understand how important were the actions and works of Polish socialists for the Polish matter, how necessary people’s movement was. Neither then nor later were various political attitudes and various paths of life mutually exclusive while serving Poland.

We bow ourselves with respect to the “founding fathers” of the Second Republic of Poland: Jozef Pilsudski and Roman Dmowski, Wincenty Witos and Wojciech Trampczynski, Ignacy Daszynski and Ignacy Jan Paderewski.

Their will has to be fulfilled as best we can!

Dear Listeners!

Independence Day reminds us that history is a continuity. There was courage but also weakness. There were actions as well as omissions. Nothing ever starts from scratch. On this special day we remember milestones of the 80 years of the latest history of Poland.

The great victorious Wielkopolska uprising is among them. The heroism of the Lviv Eaglets. Three Silesian uprisings started to have the right "We are Polish." There is a war with the Bolsheviks of 1920 that helped to save the identity of Europe. There is the building of Gdynia and the Central Industrial Region. There is a tragedy of the Second World War, the defeat of September 1939, heroism of the 62 days of the Warsaw Uprising. Among those symbols there is also the reconstruction of Poland after war damages, bringing Western land into cultivation and elimination of illiteracy.

There are hopes for social justice and crimes of non-democratic system. All of these have happened. All of these are our wanted and unwanted property.

And among all these signs we are proud and remember how important for transformations in the world were, for the defence of human dignity but also for Poland, its prestige, success of our changes the pontificate of John Paul II, the Polish Pope, who helped "to revive the character of the land, of this land." Our identity is defined by the memory of a great spurt of Solidarity from 1980, that is symbolised by the name of Lech Walesa. The Polish August claimed the freedom of man, protection of working people and democratic State. We still remember a crucial meeting at the Round Table, which changed the history of Poland and Central Europe. It proved our ability to keep a dialogue, to come to an understanding for Poland regardless of political divisions and above individual biographies.

Dear Listeners!

Polish history is full of tragedies, victims and failures as well as praiseworthy deeds and exhausting everyday work.

Achievements of our economy, science, culture and art as well as sport were reasons for condign pride in the 80s, the years that separate us from that November. Their variety makes it impossible to mention them all. Let me just refer today to the following symbolic signs: the efforts of Władysław Grabski, Eugeniusz Kwiatkowski, Michał Kalecki and contemporary architects of Polish economy, Nobel prizes for Władysław Reymont, Czesław Miłosz and Wisława

Szyborska that prove the world position of Polish literature, the achievement of the Lviv school of maths associated with the names of Stefan Banach and Hugon Steinhaus, scientific world-wide achievements of Leopold Infeld, Janusz Groszkowski and Hilary Koprowski, accomplishments of outstanding visionaries of the theatre Juliusz Osterwa, Leon Schiller, Kazimierz Dejmek, Jerzy Grotowski, works of distinguished film-makers of “Polish film schools”, Andrzej Munk, Andrzej Wajda, Jerzy Kawalerowicz, works of Karol Szymanowski, Witold Lutoslawski, Mikolaj Gorecki, Krzysztof Penderecki that were so important for the musical culture of our century. Olympic medals of Polish sportsmen brought us enormous pleasure.

Our history has had many heroes. They are known with their names and surnames and we also have a countless number of nameless heroes. In our memory we keep our fellow-countrymen who are scattered all over the world, not always by their own choice, but always dedicated with their hearts to the old Homeland. We want to thank them all today! Thank you.

## 6. Speech made at the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the beginning of the session of the Round Table – 6<sup>th</sup> of February 1999

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

It is very nice to meet you all, here in this historical hall. Here, 10 years ago at 2.06 p.m. the meeting at the Round Table commenced. It was the time of transformation. The time that changed Poland. But also a turning point in the latest history of this part of Europe. And not only. That, what happened then in Krakowskie Przedmieście, started a whole series of successive, important and often incredible events, including the breaking down of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Soviet Union.

The autumn-time of nations of 1989 started on the 6<sup>th</sup> of February in Warsaw. I am sure that for the next generations it is going to be one of the most important dates in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

I am convinced that for every person who took part in the Round Table session it was one of the most significant events in their public life. A new school of political thinking came into existence then. The wall of hatred and distrust consisting of tragic experience of the past was replaced by a dialogue; the place of street confrontation was replaced by partner-like talk about Polish problems, a former enemy started to become a political opponent.

However, first of all a common feature, the responsibility for Poland, was apparent among the participants in the session. It was stronger than ideological differences that separated them. It enabled the gaps between political camps to be covered. The word “Poland” became the key that was opening even the coldest or most wounded hearts. Therefore today, I claim with real conviction that it was not geopolitics, nor fear or cunning, but purely the responsibility of politicians of those days for Poland, who were convinced that it could not go on like that, became the groundwork on which the structure of agreements of the Round Table was built.

## Ladies and Gentlemen, Your Excellency!

As far as I remember from my own memories, two fundamental feelings accompanied the people who gathered ten years ago. Sometimes, one of them got the upper hand, and then, the other.

The hope that from then on the dialogue between the Polish people should always take place while using the power of arguments and not the argument of power was the most important. There was also hope that these negotiations would allow the desired transformation of the homeland to begin. The hope that the enormous potential of our proud, entrepreneurial and ambitious nation, would not be frozen in inefficient, centralised and non-democratic State.

There were fears. They were related to the stability of structures of the State and economy. We were scared whether all social groups would accept the pursuit of compromise. We were afraid of one another. However we knew that we were moving along a one-way path. The failure of the Round Table would not be a common return to the past. It would bring painful consequences for the State, especially for its economy. It would make the international climate even worse. Therefore we had to succeed and come to an agreement. And we achieved just that!

## Ladies and Gentlemen, Your Excellency, Bishop!

We were not the first. Earlier, before us, in the mid 70s the Spanish negotiated pacts with Moncloa the breakdown of the authoritarian system. After us, obviously inspired with our example, the Czech people did this. The Polish method of covering the gaps was also applied in the Republic of South Africa. They analysed our experience in Northern Ireland. So we have many reasons for pride and satisfaction from which we achieved with common efforts in the pillar hall of this Palace.

The leaders were judged not only by the revolution they were leaders of but also by which revolutions they managed to avoid while achieving what they had intended. The Round Table showed that important national purposes of the Polish people might be achieved without bloodshed, revolution or upheaval. At present it is also a very important message.

We have achieved much during the ten years since the Round Table. Certainly more than most of us expected. We have a Poland that is truly sovereign. We have a democratic State of law. We have a good modern constitution. We ensure and abide by human rights. The Polish economy has been developing

and is presented as an example of difficult but successful transformations. Our politicians can vary, but whether as nicely, as Norwid used to wish is another matter. But having different opinions they can reach an agreement in matters that are crucial for the State.

We have secure borders and eternal Polish dilemmas became outdated. Today we are not considering what is more important, freedom or safety. There is the former and the latter. Soon we will be a card-carrying member of the North-Atlantic Alliance. Step by step we are approaching the zone of economic safety and development, the European Union.

I think that we have used our time properly. It is the merit of a many people. Those at the Round Table and those who later on took up the effort of governing, implementation of reforms and creation of democracy. Some of them are present others are absent here. We regret that many of them cannot celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Round Table with us. They have passed away. Let me remind today of Mikolaj Kozakiewicz and Jerzy Turowicz, the outstanding creators and promoters of the Polish school of political dialogue. Thanks be to them.

The Catholic Church also deserves the words of respect for well-wishing patronage over the debates at the Round Table and spiritual support for Polish reforms. I think that the pilgrimage to Poland of the pope, John Paul II, in June will be a symbolic crowning of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Round Table. It was here, where 20 years ago he talked about the need to change the face of the land – this land. In his messages we always find an appeal for dialogue, respect for human dignity and renunciation of violence. The Polish Round Table was certainly not a perfect but real form of realisation of all those visions.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Is the Round Table only a part of the past? Do, at present, such political methods have any sense and application in the face of unfortunately existing divisions and conflicts, that people cannot overcome in a democratic State?

We cannot replace democracy, its institutions or instruments. The Constitution is in force. Step by step Poland is becoming a more and more mature democratic State of law. This is an important satisfaction for those who started this process 10 years ago.

In this meaning the Round Table is a piece of historical furniture, a method used once, which was necessary to start democracy but not to replace it later.



But the method of the Round Table has also another dimension because it is related to the belief of importance and necessity of running a social dialogue.

A dialogue not only between the government and the opposition. But a dialogue between the government and trade unions, social organisations and representatives of various circles. Also between the employers and employees, between local governments and local communities.

It is also a reminder of an important weakness of our democracy, of civil society that is formed with difficulties. Of the role of a citizen in decisions that are directly related to them.

It is not a coincidence that in the presence of tensions and conflicts in agriculture, medical services, light or arms industry there appear appeals for a Round Table.

It is the result of experience gained 10 years ago, of the conviction that a dialogue is better than confrontation and the compromise we reach serves us all more than wasteful controversy.

The Polish Round Table has become an inspiration for many quarrelled groups all over the world. Up to and including the present, for the international community, it has been the symbol of Polish maturity and responsibility, “wisdom before harm” But at the same time it was a stone that started the avalanche of democratic changes.

I believe that also we, here and today, in Poland shall be able to assess properly and fairly the historical significance of the events from 10 years ago and also to remember the most important message that emerges from there: the concord attained even with the greatest difficulty is constructive! It is constructive for us and constructive for future generations.

## 7. Speech made at the ceremony of the 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Warsaw Uprising – 31<sup>st</sup> of July 1999

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Soldiers of underground Poland, Insurgents, Ladies and Gentlemen!

We are celebrating one of the most important Polish anniversaries. Fifty five years ago the capital city that was war-tormented, squeezed by terror and marked with crime started a heroic deed, brought their fists into fight to tell the aggressors; that's enough! They did it to scream to the world: Poland is not dead yet! We are here, on Polish land, we live and fight. Just like in 1939 we are ready to oppose the evil. Even if the powers are not equal, even if the enemy is close and friends far from us, we are still unbeaten. This is a Polish tradition. Independence of our Homeland is the most important for us.

Warsaw insurgents: adults, young girls and boys, soldiers and civilians, those who were called on to fight by an order and those who started fighting voluntarily. They were united by one thing: the thirst for freedom. They were patriots of the highest standard. When it was decided that the city had to die they did not accept it. They did not become frightened when enemies plotted against them. They were creating the history of Warsaw and the history of Poland with heroism and unprecedented determination. They paid the highest price: hundreds of thousands people died. But their sacrifice was not wasted, their sacrifice was not forgotten. The importance of this sacrifice can clearly be seen especially today when, as it was predicted in one of the insurgent songs, "Poland burst out free like a bird."

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Nowadays, we live in Poland that is a fruition of insurgents' hopes. The State that is independent, sovereign and democratic. The state that observes human rights, that shares authority with local communities and that takes care of the rapid development of the economy. The position of Poland in the world is strengthening and we are respected in Europe. It might be proved by our partici-

pation in the North-Atlantic Pact and advanced negotiations related to joining the European Union. Also, by friendly relationship with our neighbours.

Not everything is as we would wish it as yet. We have numerous unsolved problems in Poland. We have much poverty and feeling of wrong. But we also have many successes and achievements and we are admired by other States. Many consider us the leader of changes in Central and Eastern Europe and also many try to follow us. Therefore today we can be proud of our Homeland. We can look forward to the coming of the 21<sup>st</sup> century with hope and confidence.

In particular the Veterans can be proud: the Warsaw insurgents, Polish soldiers of various fronts of the Second World War, people who fought for freedom and sovereignty of our Homeland. We owe them our life in peace. The Europe of free nations was created out of their sacrifice. We owe them memory, honour and respect. We shall always surround the places of Polish remembrance with honour. Both here, on the Vistula river and on a foreign land, in every place where history has traced the paths to the Homeland for them. Let us not forget about those who made generous sacrifices of blood while rushing to help the insurgents, and about heroic allied pilots.

Our gratitude cannot be limited only to ceremonial words. Combatant circles have to be surrounded with special care by the State. The soldiers of heroic struggle deserve a proper life, care for the ill and support for those who are in need. It is our constitutional obligation and human duty.

Dear Listeners!

As the President of the Republic of Poland I feel truly honoured that I could take the honourable patronage of the celebrations of the Warsaw Uprising. It was a lofty and moving moment for me. But it was also an obligation to work even harder for the benefit of the Homeland, for the benefit of happiness and reconciliation of the Polish people. The reconciliation about which our great fellow-countryman, John Paul II, the pope, talked during pilgrimages to his homeland. Reconciliation that comprises of forgiveness and solidarity and the love of one's neighbour. As history shows, divided and innerly quarrelled Polish people become an easy prey for their enemies. But united, they have the capability of outstanding deeds.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

We have a great opportunity to change our world, to be separated from the curse of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, that is, wars, aggression and hatred. We have the

chance to build a new Europe: united, secure and open. Poland takes an active part in this process. As the State that especially suffered all the horrors of the war, we want to create such an order in which conflicts shall be resolved at the negotiating table, in which there shall not be “iron curtains”, closed borders and markets or division into better and worse States of the continent.

I think that while creating such an integrated and loyal Europe we will fulfil the testament of the Warsaw Uprising in the most proper way. We will implement the idea which the inhabitants of the capital city were fighting for fifty five years ago.

## 8. Declaration at ceremonies in Katyn and Kharkiv in commemoration of the victims of Soviet aggression against Poland, 17<sup>th</sup> of September 1999

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Sixty years ago, on 17<sup>th</sup> September 1939, the Soviet Union, invaded the Republic of Poland without any formal declaration of war, while violating the pact of non-aggression and realising the agreements of the secret protocol of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact. The Red Army entered the territory of the Polish State that was involved in defence against the Hitler invasion.

Remembering this tragic history I am going to Katyn and Kharkiv to pay homage to killed and murdered Polish people, the victims of Stalin totalitarianism. On behalf of the Third Republic of Poland that remembers the martyrs of our history, I want to pay homage to ashes of Polish officers and prisoners of Soviet prisoner camps, killed in the Spring of 1940. I shall also put flowers on graves of citizens of the Soviet Union – Russians, Ukrainians and other nations who died or were killed during the Second World War, those who were victims of Nazism and totalitarianism.

I want my visit in which I am accompanied by representatives of the Polish parliament, clergy and families of murdered victims to carry a message for the present and future generations saying that only consistent strengthening of democratic changes and friendly relationships are a warranty that tragic experiences from the past shall never occur again.

Let the memory of love of liberty, of courage and determination, of sufferings of nations in the period of terror, of people who undertook the fight against evil and of the heroes of struggle unites us and not separate us; let it be the ground for reconciliation and cooperation.

9. Speech made in the Institute of National Memory at the historical session devoted to the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the introduction of martial law in Poland – 13<sup>th</sup> of December 2001

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

This speech is very important and, at the same time, very difficult for me. I am a politician who has always claimed that we should choose the future that we have to think about tomorrow. However my political experience, the period of six years' presidency, and experience of the passing year in particular, has shown that you cannot escape from the past. It will come up sooner or later. We have to draw conclusions from history. We have to observe it with appropriate understanding and sensibility. I want to dedicate these very personal words to all the politicians who act here and now.

People who used to be on the opposing sides of barricade, the victims of martial law who were tried at court and interned, people of the underground opposition and those who considered martial law the lesser of two evils are meeting here in this hall twenty years after the 13<sup>th</sup> of December. Also people who were not directly engaged in the conflict of that time, who were not "Solidarity" members or who did not belong to the governing camp.

Let us remember the enthusiasm and hopes that were released by August of 1980. Liberty, freedom of speech, human solidarity, arousing consciousness of the civil society. Let us also remember that at the end of 1981 Polish people who participated in public life differed even more. The attitude towards authority, liberty and civil rights, towards social justice. We also understood the sovereignty of the State in a different way; we saw enemies and friends in different places. There was probably only one thing we were unanimous about: it was harder and harder to live, the economy was declining and the State was disintegrating.

All these created the sense of tension, conflict or a psychological civil war to have it said more strongly. We had the feeling that the events that were taking

place in our country were spinning out of control of both the State and the Solidarity authorities. We were afraid of where it would all end.

In these circumstances, on the night between 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> of December martial law was introduced. I was 27 then. For a month I had been the editor-in-chief of ITD Students' weekly. Suspended and then disbanded. After a long fight we managed to re-establish the paper but divisions in the team were very serious. They were strengthened by verification of journalists. I do not feel a veteran or a cause of martial law. Using this memory I only want to stress that I am here not only as the president but also as one of many participants and eye-witnesses of history.

I am delighted that the group of people who are meeting today is really diversified. There are people of various historical experience here. After all such is the truth about the time we want to talk about today, the time of martial law. This truth is exceptionally complex. It is made of individual experience. It is that kind of situation in the life of the country and the history of a nation in which a subjectively understood good of the State and the feeling of patriotism brought about domestic conflict. Therefore it is worth listening to the reasons and arguments of all the parties. It pays to make an effort to understand those various points of view.

I am grateful to the President of the Institute of National Memory, Leon Kieres for organising the session today and inviting me to take part in it.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

No sensible person has any doubt today: martial law was evil. It has also been admitted by those who decided to initiate it. Evil, because it was aimed at freedom that was reviving. Evil, because suppression of awoken hope for dignified life, civil rights and democracy were its consequences. And finally, evil, because it turned millions of Polish people against each other, intensified internal discords and divisions and wasted the enthusiasm for the creation of a civil society. This enthusiasm, this energy has never again revived on such a scale which may be proved by our further problems with election turnouts. Martial law also intensified isolation of our country on the arena of international politics and caused economic sanctions.

Martial law meant: internment of thousands of "Solidarity" activists, pacification of factories, hundreds of political trials, searches, wire-tapping, imprisonments, persecutions, dismissals and battues aimed at activists of underground opposition. So many talented, hard-working and honest people were made to emigrate

as a result of repression. Harm rendered at that time cannot be compensated for. And losses that Poland suffered cannot be made up for.

Martial law is the death of coal miners in the “Wujek” coal mine. It was the most moving incident of that time. Let us remember the names of those young people who, while coming up against history, had to pay the highest price for their aspirations:

Jozef Czekalski  
Krzysztof Giza  
Ryszard Gzik  
Bogusław Kopczak  
Andrzej Pelka  
Zbigniew Wilk  
Zenon Zajac  
Joachim Gnida  
Jan Stawisinski

Today, the oldest would be 68 years old and the youngest 39!

Martial law was also the time of breaking of characters. Many people felt frightened, were made to behave dishonourably and were morally maltreated. Those people did things they didn't want to do, things that brought inner objection. It was felt on both sides of the barricades of that time and was related to many circles.. Activists of “Solidarity”, advocates of changes as well as young soldiers and employees of many public institutions experienced tragedies and psychical dilemmas.

There are no doubts today. History accepted the argument of those who did not approve of martial law as a form of State functioning. Of those who made an attempt to fight and offered resistance. Also of those who were wrongly considered opportunists, who tried to save something in various spheres of our life, who tried to “do their own thing” and opposed the logics of confrontation and hatred.

All the people who used to fight and were in pain, those who suffered severe losses, families of killed and persecuted victims, deserve today, on the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the implementation of martial law, the words of sympathy, but first of all they deserve the words of thanks from the Polish democratic State. As the president of the Republic of Poland I want to express the words of profound respect for their attitude and gratitude for everything they did for Poland. If



the Polish people are proud of their Homeland now, they ought to remember how much they owe to the people, how much they owe to You.

On the anniversary of martial law we owe thankfulness to the Catholic Church in Poland. Undoubtedly the attitude of the Priest Primate, bishops, priests and laics assembled around the Church reduced social tensions, soothed emotions and restrained violent reactions. The church provided help to those in need, offered support and shelter, it also organised missions of good services between representatives of authorities and opposition. Let us remember about the contribution of the work of Stefan Wyszyński, the Primate, about the merits of Jozef Glemp, the Primate, Henryk Gulbinowicz and Franciszek Macharski, the cardinals, Bronisław Dąbrowski, Jerzy Dąbrowski, Alojzy Orszulik and Bronisław Dembowski, the bishops.

The attitude of the Church at that time was of a great importance for the mitigation of the course and political form of the termination of martial law.

We owe thanks for the attitude that demonstrated solidarity with the Polish nation in the period of martial law, to many countries, Polish diaspora, international organisations, charity organizations, anonymous organisers of aid actions who, in various parts of the world, spared no time nor expense in order to support the Polish people in their difficult times.

Dear Listeners!

The authors of the decision on instituting martial law call it “the lesser of two evils”. They claim that the internal situation in Poland at the end of 1981 was getting out of control and leading to the unavoidable explosion of social conflict and economic disaster. They say that it was not possible to reach an agreement between the government and the great social movement of “Solidarity”. They also refer to the existing international situation and the menace of invasion of the army of the Warsaw Pact, in particular. And from this point of view they treat their decision on martial law as a desperate step enforced by historical circumstances that aimed at saving fundamental structures of the State and protection of its sovereignty.

There are historians and politicians, not only Polish, who question those premises while claiming that it was just a protection of the government of that time. At the assessment of causes and legitimacy of martial law, this division has existed until now and will continue to exist, as professor Kieres says. Because not only the assessment of facts but also the physical atmosphere, social tension or political situation comes into play here.

We have to remember that general distrust and lack of trust on all levels of public life are, just like in each totalitarian and authoritarian system, the communist fault. In those times, the society did not trust the government and the government did not trust the society. “Solidarity” did not trust the party, and the party did not trust “Solidarity”. There were no instruments of transparent checking, testing the intentions of the participants in political life that we know so well from democracy. There was no freedom of speech and criticism, no openness of decisions and plurality of assessment. There was also no space for honest, open and sincere debate. This distrust was one of the original causes for such an event as martial law. But it also concerned the relations between the so-called allies. There were often deception and hypocrisy hidden behind grand words of friendship, brotherhood and alliance.

On 29<sup>th</sup> of July 1968 in Czerna on the Cisa, Leonid Brezhnev kissed Antoni Dubczek in front of TV cameras from all over the world and three weeks later tanks of the Warsaw Pact entered Czechoslovakia. The same climate referred to relations between Poland and the USSR. Polish authorities had the right not to trust the neighbour from the East and expect the worst from them independently of declarations and words that were said. Wojciech Jaruzelski had to remember about his stay in Siberia. The memories of many thousands of Polish patriots executed in Stalin places of torture. Those who were younger than the general knew and remembered about bloodshed in Budapest and the suppression of the “Prague Spring”. Was it possible, in such circumstances, to exclude the incursion of “friendly” troops?

Anyway, they did not have to march in, because they were in Poland. I am telling you this as an inhabitant of Bialogard where troops were deployed. I can perfectly remember Soviet troops and tanks that in 1968 set out to Czechoslovakia. So the truth about martial law is made not only of facts but also decisions and documents and those Brezhnev’s kisses as well as the climate created by the imperial doctrine of the Soviet Union.

I have read the latest book on martial law written by Andrzej Paczkowski. He summarises the analysis of tremendous factual evidence from that period with the conclusion that practically “Poland was doomed to martial law or some other form of crushing or subordination of independent trade movement to the government”. There was no approval in Warsaw or in Moscow for as fast changing of the system and re-formulation of allied relations as “Solidarity” wanted. “Solidarity” paid the price of the forerunner. But was there any other way out? The author answers: “nevertheless, somebody always had to lose – Solidarity, the party of Jaruzelski – the general, the hard-headed or the Soviet Union...”

So there was no confidence, but there was no imagination either. On both sides. Please, do not treat this as an accusation but as a reproach that refers to what was happening in the past but also to what is going on nowadays. Politicians very seldom manage to predict the future although they have a great influence on its shaping. What is more, the reflection on what would have happened if everything had gone in a different way is of no significant value. But just for the sake of an intellectual debate maybe it is worth considering what our country would be like without martial law.

Think what and when would have been a turning point?

Would the Round Table have been possible in 1982?

Would “Balcerowicz’s plan” have been possible on the level of expectations and claims of that time, or would we rather have experienced a kind of socialist economy in class and utopia option?

Would we have advanced Gorbachev’s way to authority or quite the contrary then?

Would, in 1982, Poland have been a Finland of Central Europe?

Could we have been safe and efficient in a world divided both ideologically and military?

Let me remind you that I am talking about the year of 1982. And considering the dynamics of historical events that we were observing at that time we would have been confronted with those problems and challenges.

Obviously I know that there are no answers to the above questions. Similarly, we will never really know whether, let me express it colloquially, “the Russians would have entered and when?”

Analysing the matter after 20 years it is worth considering what really was possible and workable in 1982 and whether the year of 1989 could have really happened earlier without the bitter and tragic experience of martial law.

Would the participants of the drama, all the Polish people, have been mature enough then for an understanding that demanded self-limitation, patience and will of dialogue as well as, what I have already mentioned, a minimum of confidence and maximum of imagination.

I do not feel myself an attorney of Wojciech Jaruzelski. However, I want to stress that I understand the dramatic circumstances in which he had to make this difficult decision. I believe, and I am convinced that he made it being guided by the good of the country and the feeling of patriotism. I also respectfully accept his words when he says: "I feel responsible for everything that was happening in the country, even if I did not know about something or had no possibility to influence that. While instituting martial law they made a lot of mistakes and even wickedness that I define as the lesser of two evils. But evil is always evil" these are Wojciech Jaruzelski's words.

Unfortunately what was a patriotic gesture or a dramatic choice for some people, for others it was an opportunity for dishonourable careers, for meanness and humiliation of vulnerable people. Those who did not accept that can also feel like patriots. This is the value and tragedy of the historical experience of the Polish people and the whole complexity of our history.

Dear Listeners!

There is some tragic, repeated note in the history of our nation. Here, I mean wars, annexations, uprisings, occupation and domestic conflicts. The circumstances and crises, in which the decline of the Republic of Poland starts, reappear with the power that has not yet been explained. Unfortunately, martial law from 1981 is recorded in this sad series of events.

But there is also another repeating plot in the history of our nation, the ability of rebirth, reconstruction and growth. It gave us power then, and it gives us power now. We have the country of 1000 years' history. We have a common home, the Homeland and the Nation that is proud of their past. As Norwid wrote, we could find on the floor of ashes of destruction "a starry diamond, the dawn of eternal victory."

Without any doubts, the debate of the Round Table was this diamond after the night of martial law. In these circumstances, full of animosities and divisions, prejudice and hatred we could find the road to compromise. We proved to both ourselves and the world that we are the nation of people who can overcome their weaknesses. Owing to this, in the following years we managed to move from hostility to cooperation, from real socialism to democracy, from Warsaw Pact to North-Atlantic Pact and from the Council of Mutual Economic Aid to, which I hope will become soon, the European Union. And rising from this we managed to shape relations with all our neighbours, overcome historical prejudices and stereotypes and establish sincere partnerships. From "the sick man of Europe" or "European trouble"

we became a symbol of its health and vitality, a State which is often presented as a leader of transformations in its region.

In a way the year of 1989 was a test of the intentions from 1981. External circumstances changed radically, Brezhnev's doctrine disappeared and Poland started to regain sovereignty. And then, the test went unusually well. We found power, the necessary confidence and imagination that broke walls, also those in Berlin. Lech Walesa and Wojciech Jaruzelski, the enemies of yesterday, became co-architects of the Polish agreement. One lesson for us comes out of it: we have to talk, we have to agree on how to defend our freedom, sovereignty and the right to democracy.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Our fellow countryman John Paul II, the pope, said in December 1996 in his message for the 30<sup>th</sup> World Peace Day that "it is not the point to forget past events but to observe them in a new spirit learning the lesson from painful experience, which only love has a creative power and hatred brings destruction and ruin." These are grand words. The memory of martial law has to be saved. We have to do as much as we can to explain all the circumstances of those events, retain or reconstruct documents and bring justice to people.

I approved with understanding, the initiative of the Institute of National Memory to commence their own investigation in the case of the "Wujek" coal mine. The truth has to be attained, for truth and not for revenge. I appeal to all State institutions, to courts, public prosecutor's offices and other public institutions for diligence and help at works the prosecutors of the Institute ask for. Those who are responsible for the death of coal miners from "Wujek", if only their guilt is proved, shall bear the consequences of their deeds. Because we need not only the memory of the victims, sympathy for their families but also certainty that such a situation must not happen again in democratic Poland.

At the same time I would like to ask all the harmed people and victims to martial law: retain your memory of those times, look for justice but do not pass your trauma to younger generations. Let us not divide them according to our experience, pain and dislikes. Let young people communicate and differ beautifully for their common benefit and for future generations.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

While discussing martial law at history lessons young people sometimes ask a simple question: who won this "war" ? I think that we can answer them with

full conviction: the war was won by those who wanted to have Poland free, sovereign and democratic. Therefore today, in spite of various courses of life and diversified political choices, we are united by the State, the Republic of Poland. We are united by democracy, law and order, freedom of speech, respect towards human being, political and trade union pluralism, freedom to form association, the fundamental values of our State.

Over twenty years ago under these banners the democratic and independence-oriented opposition was being organised and “Solidarity” came into existence. Such was its vision, wishes and a political plan that was not yet completely specified at that time. And “Solidarity” convinced a vast majority of the Polish people to such a vision, while paying a high price. That was why it was possible to build collectively, let me say that again, collectively, a new Poland in which we live today.

At the same time we are all aware that this new Poland, our Poland, has disappointed many people. Those who do not have work, who cannot afford to buy bread or who sometimes simply have no hope for the future. This is a challenge we have to cope with, for which we are jointly responsible. Let us remember that human dignity at work, social dialogue and solidarity with those in need is the testament of those to whom we pay homage on the 13<sup>th</sup> of December every year.

While retaining the memory of the victims of martial law we should work in such a way that no emergency law would ever be instituted in Poland again because of political reasons. We are on the right track: we have been building civil community, strengthening democracy, aiming at making our economy based on strong and free market grounds. We have ensured real independence of the judiciary. We have implemented a new Constitution that was approved by the Nation. Also, the conditioning related to our external security. We have secure and friendly borders. We are a member of NATO, a military alliance of democratic countries. We closely cooperate with almost all countries of our region of Europe. And finally, in just two years we can become a member of the European Union. I have no doubts that these are the best external and internal securities against the return of any form of dictatorship or at least weakening of democratic principles and values.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

There is time of dispute and time of agreement, there is time of division and time of reconciliation. How can we understand today, after 20 years from the instituting of martial law, the signs of the times? Let me quote again a moving message for Easter this year, made by John Paul II:

“Forgiveness is the only way to peace. Acceptance and offer of forgiveness allows for giving a new quality to relations between people, breaking the spiral of hatred and revenge, crushing the chains of evil that tie up opponents’ hearts. There is no other way than forgiveness, accepted and offered for the countries that aim at reconciliation, and for all who want peaceful co-existence of people and nations.”

Twenty years after martial law, after the difficult road to freedom Poland deserved reconciliation. With great attention I have read the words of the hero of Polish democracy, the prisoner of martial law, Adam Michnik, who writes: “The assessment of Jaruzelski should take place not in the court room. Let me appeal to the President and the Parliament to find a legal formula that shall ensure that.”

I am observing the results of CBOS (Public Opinion Research Center) research that were published two days ago as an important sign of the spirit of our fellow countrymen. 51 percent of those questioned considered the implementation of martial law as justified, and 25 percent had an adverse opinion. In the presence of these and many other facts I turn to you, who are present here but also to all my fellow countrymen with the question of what we should do and what the President of the Republic of Poland ought to do, what initiative he should take to make peace set in our hearts. To make it possible for all of us to forgive one another.

Dear Listeners!

I know that the greatest words will not dry the tears of the orphans or rectify the wrong. But in order to prevent such tragedies as martial law we have to arrange our life more wisely, more honourably and we have to respect one another more.

I am the president elected in democratic elections. Nearly 10 million people, those who were for the martial law, and those who were against it, and those who were not swept by the wind of change trusted me twice. I want to serve them all. I want to serve historically Poland, I want to serve heroic Poland and the everyday and common Poland. I want every citizen of our country, regardless of his past, to find their place in the Homeland, to be able to create a democratic Poland that was, is and shall be our common home.

And as long as there is at least one person harmed in this home by that time, we owe justice, apologies, the feeling of dignity and solidarity to that person. But we also owe that person a Poland to be proud of.

## 10. Speech made at the official concert closing the ceremony of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the outbreak of the Warsaw Uprising, Warsaw, Powstancow Warszawy Square, 1<sup>st</sup> of August 2004

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Dear Respectable Soldiers of Warsaw Uprising, Inhabitants of the Capital City and You Honoured Warsaw – the Unbeaten City! Dear Guests of today's ceremony from near and from afar, from neighbouring countries and from any place where the Polish people are scattered and where the memory of this event can be found.

It is this very memory of the Warsaw Uprising that is an element of Polish identity. Sixty years ago with its armed act Warsaw spoke on behalf of the whole nation. The Uprising was the proof that independent Poland was still alive; that it firmly claims an appropriate place in the group of independent countries. Aware of the fact that during those days the future of the country is being determined, the Polish people went into the fight with full responsibility and firmness.

It was not a single episode; it was a consistent attitude of the Polish nation. The Second World War broke out at our borders, we were the first to oppose the felonious machine of Hitler. The Polish people, even defeated never took up collaboration with the Nazi invader. They persisted in resistance and hope. They created underground a State with its own authorities, structure and army, on a scale that was unprecedented in the whole of occupied Europe.

There are moments in history when you have to make a difficult choice. The Uprising in Warsaw was neither an act of despair nor bravado of desperadoes. It was a deliberate decision that specified military and political purposes. The Polish people had the right to hope for the success of their plans and for significant support from the anti-Nazi coalition. We think with respect about the representatives of the Underground State, about commanders of the Home Army who had to bear the burden of this dramatic decision. Although they could not overcome history and although the expected help did not come,



they sent a clear message to the world on how much the Polish people were determined in their fight for freedom and independence.

On behalf of the Republic of Poland, on behalf of all the fellow countrymen I bow with great respect to the heroes of those sixty three bloody days, to the soldiers of the Uprising and to the heroism of hundreds of thousands of Warsaw inhabitants, to the sacrifice of those who made an attempt to come to the rescue from the other side of Vistula. We are your debtors and followers. Warsaw fell, but won. The Warsaw Uprising entered history as a call of the deepest patriotism and an imperishable legend. A free, independent and democratic Republic of Poland, our fulfilment and our pride, comes out of this message.

The standards of values and attitudes that make an exemplar to follow for contemporary youth also come out of this message. They are the love of the country, faithfulness to ideals and the ability to sacrifice for others. These values are alive and can be observed among young people. Nowadays they are expressed in a way that is different from the way of the past years, we can see them in the general wish to study, to improve qualifications, openness to others and at the same time, care of historical heritage. We can even see them here, at this ceremony, in the scouts' conduct, young people who help to organize these events, in helpful kindness that is full of respect. I want to thank all these young people. You carry this tradition of patriotism and loyalty in Poland!

I think that Warsaw insurgents can be proud that over here their testament is being fulfilled, that Polish youth want to continue their work in a proper way. They do this in their own way, in the style of their times but while aiming in the same direction, that is glory of their common Homeland. Let such attitudes find many followers.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

We appreciate that at this moment, which is so touching for Poland, there are guests, friends and allies among us. I want to express the words of welcome to the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, Mr Gerard Schroeder, the Representative of the President of the USA, the Secretary of the State, Mr Colin Powell, the Representative of the Prime Minister and government of the United Kingdom, Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott. On behalf of the Republic of Poland I would like to welcome all foreign guests. We are delighted that we can go through these important and touching moments.

I would also like to render thanks to those soldiers, some of them are here but not all as fate and time are inevitable, who made air-drops over the fighting

city. In its grateful memory, Warsaw retains their dedication and courage. We welcome you at today's meeting and we express thanks for this support. The sixtieth anniversary of those events is a good time to thank all who supported the Uprising. You can be sure of our highest homage and I want to tell you, on behalf of the generation that did not experience war, that you are those who were with us, those who were on our side and who helped us. You are our brothers; you are the heroes of the collective fight in defence of liberty.

I want to stress the significance of Chancellor Schroeder's presence. A moment ago, together, we paid homage at the "Killed but Undefeated" monument. Homage to all the inhabitants of Warsaw who perished during the Uprising. There, in the common graves, 104 thousand Warsaw inhabitants, civil population that joined the Uprising were buried. This gesture, dear Chancellor, is of historical importance. It is another important sign of reconciliation between our nations.

We were separated by an abyss, the abyss full of pain and blood. Today, we welcome you in Warsaw as the representative of a neighbouring and friendly country; an ally and a partner. Our common triumph, the triumph over evil is included in the symbols. This is the measure of historical road that the Polish and German people covered towards each other.

Dear Chancellor, we appreciate the critical and straightforward position expressed by you and the Government of the Federal Republic related to claims ensuing from property rights towards Poland that appear in Germany. We are glad that we are unified by a common view on commemorating European resettlement and expulsion. We treat you as a true ally in the fight for historical truth! For truth about the victims and wrongdoers!

I am convinced that the painful past we have behind us, shall be a lesson and a warning for our nations, for Europe and for the world. Let us try to come over and understand it. Let us not try separating past phenomena and events from their tragic context, let us not tear the consequences away from the causes and let us not confuse the wrongdoers and victims. Showing historical truth in its full complexity is still our common challenge.

But first of all let us search for understanding with a view to the future. Let us complete the mission that is laid on us by the history. These Warsaw days of the year 2004 are an important step in this case! They are achievements the next generations will be able to make use of.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Let the message of reconciliation and hope be sent from here, the capital of Poland, from Warsaw, that was reconstructed from ruins and the place where we pay homage to the insurgents of 1944! Sixty years ago, the Polish people wanted to win a space of liberty between two totalitarian powers. Today this wish has come true, far outreaching our expectations.

A free and independent Poland is surrounded by friends and partners. Together with Germans, Americans, British people and other nations we are a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, that ensures peace and security not only in our region, but in each place it can reach with its values. We also participate in an important form of cooperation and partnership, in the European Union. This is an important chance for the future. That is a great hope for the new generations of the Polish people.

Remembering experiences, the tragedies of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, together we make efforts for the world to be better, to make the values the Warsaw insurgents fought for and that you, Ladies and Gentlemen, fought for in those days in August and September of 1944, that is, for the right to liberty, right to happiness, right to peace and the right to a dignified life to be dominating.

This our Poland of today that creates its future in a wise way, constantly extending cooperation with other countries and working better and better, that can modernize itself and overcome everyday problems in spite of all hardships, is our common achievement and the triumph of many generations. It is the effect of struggle, hardship and sacrifice, and above all of the love for our Homeland!

And you are the people who suggested such a style of thinking and acting for the glory of the Homeland for all future generations. In history there are just a few of such glorious victories of the spirit! It took place then. Thank you Insurgent Warsaw! Thank you heroic Soldiers of the Warsaw Uprising!

# 11. Speech made at the ceremony of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ending of the Second World War (excerpts) – Wrocław, 7<sup>th</sup> of May 2005

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(...) Ladies and Gentlemen!

Memory of history is didactic and creative only if it expresses the truth. On our land almost without concealment, without cloudiness of some plots and whitewashing of others. We must talk about the years of war and of the Day of Victory itself in such a way.

Two hours ago I laid wreaths on graves of Polish and Russian soldiers who were killed in fights for Wrocław. On our land 600 thousand fighters of the Red Army were killed in struggles. Ordinary frontline soldiers who heroically paid with their soldiers' blood, who faithfully fulfilled their soldier's obligation in the march for Berlin; those who wished us the best. Each additional month of war and occupation of Hitler meant pain and death for the Polish people. The Red Army saved many Polish human beings. That good we really owe to Russian soldiers shall never be forgotten. We shall always remember about their sacrifice with the greatest respect. Respect to you and your friends who were killed!

But the Day of Victory did not have only a bright colour and did not only bring liberation and hope. Just as in other countries of our region. There was a contrast of mixed feelings in the collective memory of the Polish people. Differently from London, Paris or Washington, where the joy of victory was undisturbed. We also felt happiness and relief, but also pain and fear. The end of war did not mean the recovery of full freedom and sovereignty.

Because the twentieth century was a century of not only one, but of two totalitarianisms. And Polish people experienced the cruelty of both maybe most fully. As it was rightly stated by a British historian Norman Davies: "The space between Hitler and Stalin was the most uncomfortable place on the globe." We became convinced about this in September 1939 when the completion of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact became the fourth partition of Poland, and later,

also the enslavement of Baltic countries. These are facts that cannot be forgotten. Just as we cannot forget the photographs in which German and Russian soldiers were marching past together after the suppression of Polish resistance. Just as it is hard to take away from memory the odious words said on 2<sup>nd</sup> of November 1939 by W. Molotow that here Poland, the hideous creation of the Versailles Treaty, vanished from the maps. We need a great will and power of the States, nations and us, ordinary people, to overcome the memories, and to move towards agreement but the truth is the beginning and the sense of this process.

The list of Nazi crimes is long and terrifying. Horror can also be seen in Stalin crimes. The wounds of the massacre of 22 thousand Polish army officers whose ashes are hidden in cemeteries in Katyn, Miednoye and Kharkiv is still incurred. Vast areas of the USSR are covered with a gloomy shadow of Gulag Archipelago, which was the place of martyrdom for numerous nations, especially for the Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians themselves. Ethnic cleansing and punitive resettlements used to be a standard. Maybe even up to two million Polish people were sent deep into the USSR. A lot of them remained in this “inhuman land” for ever.

Yalta was also painful for the Polish people, mainly because of the breaking of promises for an independent and democratic Poland. We have to admit honestly that, thanks to the Yalta and Potsdam agreements, our country came back to the territories in the west and north. However, we had to leave the eastern borderlands, which was accompanied by a gigantic wave of resettlement. The city of Wroclaw is a special witness of these painful experiences and the great post-war migration of people.

In that period, Polish patriots, the leaders of the Underground State related to the government in exile in London, did not keep their eyes closed to the facts. They thought that talks with the Soviet Union had to be carried on in order to search for as wide as space as possible for freedom for the country. In good faith, they accepted the invitation to Moscow. However they were deceitfully kidnapped and imprisoned. With disgust and indignation we remember that while fireworks were being fired in the sky over Moscow to celebrate the victory in war, sixteen leaders of Underground Poland were being kept in Lubianki dungeons. Three of them were murdered.

After the war, Stalinism spread its totalitarian power over the whole of Poland. Europe was cut by the “Iron Curtain”. Successive independence spurts in Hungary in 1956 and in Czechoslovakia in 1968 were bloodily stifled. In Poland we remember the victims of June 1956, December 1970 and the years between 1980 and 1981.

We needed the faith and strength of John Paul II, the Pope, who called to us: “change the face of the land” and showed that Europe had to breathe with two lungs and that the east and the west should integrate.

We needed decades to tear down the walls that divided nations. This process was started by Polish “Solidarity”. The thirst of liberty inspired by it resulted in the great “autumn time of nations” in Central and Eastern Europe at the beginning of the 90s. And we experienced a true crowning of those changes on our continent. It was made by the enlargement of the European Union by new States that, in the past, did not have the chance to utilize the post-war benefits.

Today, here in Wroclaw’s main square I pay homage to all who had the courage to start fighting for dignity and human rights. To those who contributed most to our current enjoyment of liberty and democracy.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

In two days, on 9<sup>th</sup> of May international ceremonies on the occasion of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ending of the war shall take place in Moscow. I am going to be there together with Polish veterans, on behalf of the Republic of Poland. We shall be there to pay homage to those who fought courageously, and those who contributed to the victory over Nazism. We shall be there to emphasise Polish Work and the Polish contribution to the victory.

We want soldiers’ and veterans’ efforts to be appreciated. And I believe that this history from 60 years ago will not happen again, since you have already paid a high price for the game of interests of world powers and cynical geopolitics. Today we cannot let anyone either here in Poland or abroad, play with another historical truth, heroism of soldiers and sacrifice of civil populations. It cannot also happen that it is more important who and where shall be celebrated the victory and not who won and who is a true hero.

We will not change history. However, we can overcome its consequences. Poland did so much for tearing down the walls in Europe, for great victories of freedom and democracy. We consider what happened between 1989 and 1991 a success of sovereign nations, a triumph of human rights and the opening of the road to an integrated, prosperous and safe Europe. We want to create such a future in the group of the European Union and NATO. Also while cooperating with Russia as partners.

We respect Russian sensitivity. We know Russian pride and spirit. We do not hold a monopoly to interpret history. We are ready for peaceful and honest

talks in search of the truth. We know that in Russia we have partners for such a dialogue, which may be proved by the letter from the Russian PEN Club to Polish people and also the activity of the Memorial Association, the representatives of which I had the chance to decorate with honoured Polish medals. I told them then: the Polish people are not a nation of historical obsession although they are marked with martyrdom and pain. We want to look into the future. We want to undertake the challenges of the new time in opening and integrating Europe.

Difficult and bad history may be overcome; it depends on us, on people of good will. And it is possible and it is necessary. During last year's anniversary ceremonies at the Polish cemetery at Monte Casino I said: Today, when anger and hatred have disappeared, we are standing in a pensive mood also over the graves of German soldiers. This place of bloody conflicts now becomes more and more a place of forgiveness and reconciliation between former enemies. More and more hands offered ready for reconciliation finds return nowadays.

I want to evoke this message also now and today in Wrocław. The idea included in it guided Polish foreign policy after 1989. This was the leading thought of my 10-years' presidency. I wanted reconciliation with neighbours on historical grounds and close cooperation for a better common future. Being guided by this principle, we have done a lot of good in relations with Germany, Ukraine and Lithuania. I believe that we can also achieve more than we have so far in our relations with Russia. It is just on the groundwork of truth, respect for the partner and above all on the will of agreement. We ought not to let history restrain our thinking about today and limit the development of good-neighbourly relations. I believe that owing to good will it can come true.

I feel honoured that today on behalf of the Republic of Poland I can present promotion to the rank of general to outstanding veterans, military officers: Tadeusz Andersz, Mieczysław Baka and Zbigniew Sciborski-Rylski. They fought at various fronts, in various formations but they are united by their courage, bravery and patriotism of the highest rank. Let these promotions symbolise our memory of your achievements and your loyal service for Poland.

You, the veterans are this bridge that joins the heroic past with contemporary achievements of the Republic of Poland. You are heroes not only for Poland but for the whole of Europe. Integration of the Continent would not be possible without your fight and victory over the felonious Hitler machine. Owing to you, the road to freedom opened and it was possible to make the European dream a reality.

It is hard to pay back this enormous debt that the Republic of Poland owes to you. It is not possible to bring life, or lost health or years taken by war back though. But as the President of the Republic of Poland and Head of the Armed Forces I turn to you with the words of highest esteem and gratitude. On behalf of the Nation, please accept warm thanks for your sacrifice and soldier's hardship. Please accept the wishes of many years of good health and well-being.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Remembering is something more than reminding and celebrating. Remembering is understanding the history. Drawing conclusions and live after its lessons. For us, who live nowadays, it means never allowing for evil, never agreeing to the lack of respect for what is different and never letting ideology of hatred speak. It means opposing with determination and at the right time to those who are ready to trample human life and human dignity.

We turn to the nations of Europe – let us build a common future while remembering the evil, monstrosity, victims and heroes of this war also with an order of dialogue, cooperation and partnership. Such an Europe, that remembers history, demonstrates solidarity and is integrated around common values shall be the Europe of peace. And let us create the world in which every person, every family and every nation shall feel themselves safe. The world of peace, the pillars of which should be, as John Pauls II used to teach us, the truth, justice, love and freedom. The world in which each of us shall always be able to find meaning and their places of happiness.



## 12. Declaration made after placing flowers at the plaque that commemorates General Leopold Okulicki and Stanislaw Jasiukowicz at Donsk Cemetery – Moscow, 8<sup>th</sup> of May 2005

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

We pay tribute to the graves of our heroes and martyrs. They were heroes because they sacrificed long years of war to actively fight for a free Poland, that had been insidiously invaded by Hitler and Stalin in 1939. They were martyrs because for this fight, as the leaders of Underground State of Poland, they were considered enemies by Stalin. Deceived with the hope of talks about the form of government in the post-war Poland, they were enticed into a trap, abducted to Moscow and there, they were imprisoned, unfairly accused and in the famous, unlawful “trial of the sixteen” they were convicted of crimes they had not committed. The plaque at this cemetery reminds us of two of them: General Leopold Okulicki and the last leader of the Home Army and deputy delegate of the government of the Republic of Poland, Deputy Prime Minister Stanislaw Jasiukowicz. They were killed deceitfully in the Soviet prison and buried here, in a collective grave.

For sixty years the historical memory of Polish people has been yielding to the burden of this and other Stalin crimes, it is the whole era. Generations that had never experienced the horror of those times entered the age of maturity. First of all, naturally, they think about the future. But just because of it, we cannot discard those events from memory. We have to remember. We remember!

There are numerous harms in the latest history of the Polish and Russian people. They put a shadow on mutual relations. Reminding of them, we are not guided by hatred or the desire of revenge. On the contrary, we search for roads for understanding. Historical truth should be its groundwork. We want to create reconciliation on its grounds.

Let us remember the words of an outstanding Pole, John Paul II, the Pope “Forgiveness is the only road to peace. Accepting and offering forgiveness

breaks a spiral of hatred and revenge and breaks the chains of evil that tie the opponents' hearts. Love for those who harmed us can even change the battlefield into a solitary place.”

Let us remember the lesson. Let us use the wisdom included in it!

- D. Speech made during visits of John Paul II to Poland, letters to Him and meetings with the Pope; cooperation with Churches of various religions for uniting the believers and non-believers at work for the future of Poland
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# 1. Letter to John Paul II, the Pope – 9<sup>th</sup> of January 1996

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Your Holiness,

I want to thank you sincerely for the wishes and words of comfort sent to me at the entering upon the duties of the President of the Republic of Poland.

I want to ensure Your Holiness that while holding the highest state office in our common Homeland, I will try to serve all my fellow countrymen. I hope that in my work for Poland I can count on their help and support, both in the country and in emigration. I believe that the concern about the good of the Republic of Poland shall integrate us all in the work for creating a new, common and successful future.

I know how much Poland owes to Your Holiness. I am convinced that the authority of the Holy Father will still be needed to it as a moral and spiritual power.

Once again with all my heart, I want to express my thanks for your well-wishing words. Let me use this opportunity and send Your Holiness the words of the highest respect, and enclose the wishes of good health and well-being with it.

## 2. Speech made during the reception of the Pope, John Paul II in Poland, Wroclaw 31<sup>st</sup> of May 1997

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Your Holiness!

With great pleasure and respect I welcome Your Holiness in the Homeland. I welcome You on behalf of the authorities of the Republic of Poland. I welcome You on behalf of all the fellow countrymen!

We are delighted with the arrival of our Fellow Countryman, the Pope, John Paul II, Poland is so proud of. To whom the whole world and all of us owe so much.

Thank you for all this!

Today, Your Holiness can be proud of your Homeland. Poland has been building a stable democratic State, strengthening the law, developing its economy and it is safer now than it has been over the last centuries.

Eighteen years ago, the Pope –the Polish person, said outstanding and touching words. The words of calling, to change the face of the land. This land! Poland has changed since then! Has changed for the better.

Few believed then that we would achieve so much in such a short time. And we have managed! It happened thanks to those who truly took to heart the words Your Holiness expressed then: “You have to be strong! You have to be faithful! So that you would never doubt, never grow weary and never become disheartened.”

The people of democratic opposition, Workers’ Defence Committee, Solidarity, the co-authors of the Round Table agreements, initiators of economic reforms and reforms of local government, people of various formations from left to right wing who took over the responsibility to move Poland through the storms of changes. And first of all, to millions of the Polish people who undertook

this effort. They were not afraid of sacrifices; they showed wisdom, realism, diligence, consistency as well as the ability to come to understandings above and beyond historical experience, trauma and prejudice.

Let it be expressed clearly today: we would not have this change without Your Holiness and the Catholic Church in Poland.

A Poland that is truly independent and democratic welcomes today the Polish Pope. A Poland, that independently chooses its highest authorities, allies and roads of development. A Poland of reborn local, professional and economic government. A Poland of economic growth that brings appreciation of foreign partners and a Poland that does not slow down the pace of reforms. A Poland, the economy of which gives work and satisfaction to more and more people and good prospects to more and more Polish families. A Poland of human rights, political and religious liberties with stronger and stronger law and democratic institutions.

You are welcomed by a Poland of faith and enthusiasm of young people who, while being free of past tragedies, are ready to respond to challenges of the changing world.

A Poland that is aware of its historical and Christian origins, faithful to universal values and aiming at modernity at the same time.

Your Holiness is coming at an extraordinary time. In front of our eyes, the Europe, of which Poland was, and still is, an inalienable part, finally is breaking away from all divisions, with Yalta and Potsdam and with the heritage of wars and totalitarianisms.

At this moment, the presence of Your Holiness in the magnificent, extraordinary Wrocław at the Eucharist Congress, at the jubilee of the Jagiellonian University, at the ceremonies of the 1000<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the martyr death of Saint Wojciech, the patron of Christian Europe come into symbolic prominence.

It also takes symbolic meaning that in a few days in Gniezno, the heads of States of Central Europe that were still torn and divided not so long ago, and today they are cooperating in harmony for the common good and good of every man, are going to participate in ceremonies related to Wojciech and they are going to meet the Pope.

A new architecture of European Security, political and economic cooperation, enlarged and free of divisions, complete respect for human rights – these are

the pillars of Europe. A Europe that is entering the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The Continent of permanent wars of past centuries, thanks to the community of universal values, should, and may become the place of peace, dialogue, cooperation and friendly competition.

In this significant change we can see the message of Saint Wojciech, the ceaseless efforts of Your Holiness as well as the merits of Poland and the Polish people who started the peaceful revolution of the past decade.

Your Holiness!

Today, Poland is a country of great, new opportunities. Probably for the first time in recent history we do not have to choose the lesser of two evils and freedom, security, democracy and development can be our share at the same time.

We cannot close our eyes to problems and challenges we have ahead. Next to those who tasted the sweet taste of fruit of changes, there are also people for whom the loss of work, lack of the feeling of security and poverty are the grey reality. There are regions and spheres of life which still have not found their places in new reality.

Many times free market, democracy, open borders, which we were aiming at, show us their uglier face. Law-breaking, violence, poverty, homelessness, lack of social sensitivity, selfishness and intolerance are phenomena that cannot be left without a reaction.

We keep in memory Your Holiness's well-wishing interest in these problems expressed during our recent talk in the Vatican.

Overcoming these difficulties, the elimination of evil, reducing divisions that exist have to be our common task. We need reconciliation to let Poland face this, not to destroy its recent work and to use the opportunities that are open.

Past and recent history treated the Polish people in many different ways. Therefore reconciliation requires reflection, effort and courage of each of us and each of the parties of the dispute.

Your Holiness is a tireless missionary of peace and understanding. Not long ago, emotionally, we were looking at Beirut and Sarajevo, the cities that symbolise the greatest tragedies of modern times, the conflicts, the depth of which is unbelievable for us in Poland, from where the Polish Pope sent the truth of

the need of love for peace, brotherhood and understanding between the people to the entire world.

Today we, the Polish people, need bridges that lead us to each other and not walls that separate us. A few years ago, Your Holiness said that we should always appeal to human conscience and awake the feeling of dignity in it; that even very complex problems can be solved by means of a dialogue and solidarity and not through aiming at the destruction of the opponent; that understanding that “does not destroy objective requirements of justice”, that does not blur the differences in philosophy of life or politics, is possible.

Your Holiness!

Many times we have heard from the Pope the words of comfort and encouragement that urged us to overcome our weaknesses. We have also heard from Your Holiness important questions about the shape of the future that is coming into existence at our presence. Today, at the beginning of the next pilgrimage of Your Holiness to the Homeland, we expect that we will be shown the threats to us and our weaknesses, which we, often busy with everyday life, do not always realise; we expect that it shall bring, as always, strengthening of the feeling of dignity of Polish people; that it shall give us the ability to cooperate for the common good, to overcome hatred, injustice and insensibility; that it shall help us build a Poland to our needs and the expectations of future generations. We shall be grateful for instructions, encouragement and warnings.

I want to wish Your Holiness, Your associates and all Distinguished Guests coming with You many happy moments and profound experiences in the following days.

Your Holiness, welcome to Poland, to your homeland!



### 3. An interview for an Italian newspaper "Avvenire" – 2<sup>nd</sup> of June 1997 (excerpt)

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*Mr President, you met the Pope in April during your visit to the Vatican, which had been expected for some time. Is it true that there were some organisational problems with this meeting?*

Contrary to numerous speculations of journalists I did not make endeavours towards meeting with the Pope immediately after I had been elected the head of State. I was aware that firstly it was necessary to find some balance in our home, where the situation was tense enough and full of problems the days after the elections. And I am truly glad that my official visit to the Vatican could take place a few weeks before the Pope's visit to Poland. We had the chance to meet each other in person while talking honestly and warmly about many fundamental problems regarding life in our country.

*... but you represent a Poland that is different from the one represented by the Holy Father: on the one hand a Poland of former communists and ethical and social liberalism, and on the other, a Poland of "Solidarity" and Catholic and national tradition...*

I am aware of this, journalists love simplifications, they are easier to write. But reality is somewhat different.

*Do you mean to say that the Pope is not a Catholic and you are not a former communist?*

Wait a second, it is obvious that John Paul II is not only a Catholic, but he is also critical about too much liberalism. However, he is also a personality that has had, and still has a very significant influence on changes in Europe. It is his merit to a large extent, that now, in Poland we have liberal democracy, that the president is elected by the nation. On the other hand, post-communists do not feel any nostalgia for the past and they are in the first line of social and

economic transformation, soon we will be integrated with NATO, and, let us hope with the European Union.

*In fact, nowadays in Poland there is a clash between two different visions of social ethics, is it true?*

It is the key point of the problem. Divisions that you have mentioned exist in Poland, just as, in fact, in many other western countries. But it is about divisions that go horizontally across society, that are related to attitudes towards economic reforms, privatisation, abortion, social ethics and they cannot be reduced to a common clash at the top, between the hierarchy and the power. I had the chance to talk to the Pope about this, and I told him that acting as president I have to represent the society that is deeply divided and that coexistence demands mutual dialogue and openness. However extremes often prevail from one, and from the other side.

*There are people in the left wing coalition who would like to solve the problem of abortion through a referendum. Do you agree on that?*

I do not think that it is the best way, it may rather bring about a painful conflict within the society. And I, let me repeat this, am for finding agreement through dialogue.

*Are not you afraid that the Pope will use hard words in these matters and will wag his finger?*

The Pope will say what he wants to say and I am sure that the whole of Poland will accept his warnings with great respect and attention. But I do not think that he wants to start the dispute with both laic and liberal parts again. Personally, with great interest, I was observing the recent travels of John Paul II to Sarajevo and Beirut where he expressed a high-minded and touching appeal for reconciliation. Really, who can imagine that he will call for a conflict in Poland?

## 4. Speech made at the farewell of the Pope, John Paul II – Cracow, 10<sup>th</sup> of June 1997

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Your Holiness!

These were important days! This was an occasion for celebration for millions of Polish people.

For all of us these were moments of concentration and reflection of which we have had so few in the recent eventful and difficult years.

Your Holiness saw a different Poland. A Poland that is free and independent. Stronger with its achievements. More certain of its position in the world and our region. More confident in its power and ready to cope with new challenges. But you also saw a Poland that is not free from threats, faults, poverty, loneliness, intolerance and wickedness. And to this Poland you, the Pope gave your advice, recommendations, but first of all great kindness that we have experienced.

Thank you for these!

Thank you for your intentions that moved the community of the Catholic Church, people of other faiths and religions and those who are not believers but are guided by the love of neighbours, sensitivity to human harm and poverty, openness towards others, and who respect and admire Your Holiness.

Thank you in the name of people of good will, for whom Poland is the home of us all, independently of religion, nationality, political orientations and the whole variety of attitudes. Thank you for the words of understanding and admonition as well as the understanding and dignity that were so sincere and full of love for us all, often so imperfect.

In the name of our neighbours and friends who took part in the meeting in Gniezno, I want to express gratitude for the support for our aspirations of participation in the structures of the common Europe.

I am certain that the deliberate and felt words of Your Holiness, shall help us cope with the future and its great requirements, bear the burden of work, learning and service in developing civilization. To set us free from weaknesses, be better towards our friends and those who create such a diversified community. To build reconciliation constantly and not to restart the fires of old and new hatreds. To find the ability to cooperate with everybody, that is, from the left wing, from the right wing and the centre.

Your Holiness!

Millions of Polish people have asked many times “Stay with us”. Today the Pope is leaving but still, I am sure that you are staying with us. The thoughts, words and this particularly disinterested, true cordiality and love for the Homeland of Your Holiness shall be an important part of our everyday life.

Your Holiness!

Wroclaw, Legnica, Gorzow Wielkopolski, Gniezno, Poznan, Kalisz, Czestochowa, Zakopane, Ludzmerz, Cracow, Dukla and Krosno in particular, but in fact the whole of Poland is saying: Thank you!

Your Holiness!

We wish you good health and perseverance! Poland – the home of the Pope – is inviting you to another visit. With joy and hope we are saying: see you again, see you again Your Holiness, see you again soon Holy Father!

## 5. Interview for Catholic Information Agency – Cracow, Balice airport, 10<sup>th</sup> of June 1997 (excerpt)

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*How have you, Mr President, personally been experiencing this pilgrimage?*

Certainly in a different way than the previous ones because I was directly incorporated, to be honest, in three planes.

The first, as the head of the State, who is the host of the visit. With reference to this task, not only good organisation is important, not only ensuring security, but also the usual hospitality that is binding.

Secondly, as a person who appreciates and admires the Pope. I consider Him a really exceptional personality who has been playing a very important role in all those processes of changes that have taken place in Europe and Poland recently, and meeting with the Pope is such an experience, a meeting of the person who is absolutely outstanding and I am delighted that I have had the chance to talk to him so many times. Sometimes the talks were even quite casual, but always full of such subtle sense of humour from the Pope's side, from the Holy Father. This is a truly significant experience.

Thirdly, just like every other Polish citizen. I should say that I have experienced this visit more because I really had the chance to read all the speeches by Pope and I would really like most Polish people to reach the profundity of those speeches.

It would be good if we could also experience what the Pope was saying in such a spirit. Because he was saying very important things that cannot be expressed in just one word. He showed us what we should do, what effort we should make so that everyone would be better, not only as believers or members of the Catholic Church community, but all of us, absolutely everybody.

*Do you think, Mr President that this pilgrimage shall be a turning point? In your welcome speech you were clearly talking about divisions in the Polish community. What can be said eleven days later?*

I can only say that I have hope. I am not a prophet, but I hope that this pilgrimage will serve exactly this role. I hope that the Pope's speeches shall do much as the speeches are full of sensitivity, good-heartedness and love. He also showed his class, an outstanding style of speaking and talking through to other people. For example, in Hala Ludowa in Wrocław, the Pope was talking not only to his believers. He was talking to people of various religions. At numerous meetings with circles, the Pope was talking to people of various attitudes towards religion and at the same time he was trying to draw their attention to fundamental matters such as human beings, such as the fight against poverty, such as the problem of the family and the role of education. There were many such speeches, around 26 in total, I guess.

I would like this visit to have the effect that we could look more deeply into ourselves. (...)

*Are there any words or a sentence that you, Mr President, particularly hold in your memory?*

(...) In each of the speeches by John Paul II there were sentences that are worth considering. I hope that this pilgrimage shall not end at the moment of the Pope's departure and that it shall somehow last. Not in the spirit of attributing the Pope's pilgrimage to some political programme, but inversely, towards drawing conclusions on what we can do to let Poland use its great chance. And just this, in my opinion, was stressed by the Pope. Many times he said that he could see and appreciate what had happened and democracy but he also appealed, to the use of this freedom in the way that is as wise as possible. And I can fully agree with that. It is a very important task for me as the president and these are fundamental tasks for politicians. These are crucial messages.

Now it is very important not to misinterpret the message, so that it would not become an element of fully political games, because then, we shall lose the reflection we all need so much. The Pope came and let us think, let us use this occasion.

Interviewer: *Marcin Przewozowski*

## 6. Speech made at the ceremony of the ratification of the Concordat – 23<sup>rd</sup> of February 1998

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Dear Speakers of the Sejm, Dear Prime Minister, Your Excellency, the Priest Nuncio Archbishop, Ladies and Gentlemen!

In compliance with the will expressed by the Polish parliament, a few minutes ago I placed my signature which signifies the ratification of the Concordat concluded between the Holy See and the Republic of Poland. We are approaching the closing procedures that shall allow the Concordat to become contract effective. We still have the ceremony of exchange of ratification documents ahead and after a month from that moment, the Concordat shall become an integrated part of the Polish legal system.

I want to express a conviction that thanks to the Concordat, good and friendly relations between the Republic of Poland and the Holy See shall develop even more successfully. I also trust that it shall contribute to the establishment of good and clearly specified relations between the State and the Catholic Church in Poland.

I think that we have a very important chance facing us. We can significantly enrich the achievements of democratic civil community in Poland. Without any doubts the Catholic Church is, and shall be, an important participant in public life, not only in a religious dimension. We have to remember that a vast majority of Polish citizens are Catholics. The regulations of the Concordat and clause 25 of our Constitution specify legal grounds for the functioning of the Church in Polish social reality. Harmonious relations between the State and Church and also other churches and religious communities are a very important element of civil community that wishes to unite pragmatism with respect for values. This which can be worked out in this matter, can even be regarded as something like a Polish contribution in resolving contemporary dilemmas that Europe and the world face in their spiritual and civilization life. Public debate on the issue of the Concordat ratification showed that there are differences in convictions and philosophies of life among Polish people. This is obvious just

like in every pluralist society. Therefore the debate was necessary. As it seems to me, it helped disperse ambiguities and doubts equally to the effort made in the proceedings. The care of Polish authorities to specify the interpretation of the Concordat was accepted by the Holy See with understanding. It provided an additional warranty that the Concordat does not violate any rights and liberties of people of other religions and theists.

I would like to express my hope that the chance that is opening to us shall be used appropriately. That completion of tasks related to the Concordat shall bring us all “peace and reconciliation”, which was written about by His Holiness, the Pope, John Paul II, our great country fellowman in such a touching way. I believe that it shall contribute to the development of the attitudes of tolerance and openness as well as strengthening the stability of Poland.



## 7. Speech made at the delivery of decoration to Sawa, the archbishop, – 6<sup>th</sup> of February 1999

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Your Eminence, Metropolitan Priest, Ladies and Gentlemen!

Today's ceremony is the crowning of merits of Your Eminence for the Republic of Poland. It is an expression of thanks for many years' effort of bishop services in the Polish Orthodox Church, that have been taking place in such an important time, full of changes. Today we have the chance to emphasise the importance and achievements of the Orthodox Church not only in contemporary Poland, but also in our whole history once again.

The changes that were undertaken in 1989 made the principles of democracy and civil society an obvious element of our everyday life. It gives religious and cultural communities the chance of more profound participation in Polish public life. To a large extent it is Your Eminence's personal merit that the Autocephalous Orthodox Church is using this chance so skilfully and with the sense of responsibility for the State.

In a special way, we have to appreciate the enormous work of Your Eminence in the service of the Orthodox Ordinariate of the Polish Army. The rebirth of this Ordinariate, enlivening of its activity, glorious reference to pre-war tradition is an outstanding work of Your Eminence, as the first Orthodox Ordinary of the Polish Army in the history of the Third Republic of Poland.

Here, in this hall, the sense of historical continuity among the members of higher orders of the Orthodox Church, among Orthodox priests who wear Polish uniforms with pride is impressive. We can clearly see the relationship between our "today" and the events of the passing century and previous centuries. The Polish Republic shall always remember the achievements of the Polish Orthodox Church, about the sacrifice and civil effort of its inhabitants who were confessing the Orthodox faith. We shall always remember that in places that are the symbols of Polish twentieth century history, at Monte Casino and in Katyn, at cemeteries of our killed heroes, there are also numerous Orthodox graves.

Today, we are delving even deeper into the history, calling up the whole spiritual wealth of the Orthodox Church that is symbolised by, for example, the work of famous monasteries in Supraśl and Jableczna. A visit of Constantinople Patriarch, Bartolomeusz I, to Poland last year was an excellent buckle that put together the history and merits of the Orthodox Church in the Republic of Poland. This festive occasion of the Polish Orthodox Church was also an important event in the life of our whole country.

All this wealth of history and the signs of contemporary time find a worthy depository in the person of Your Eminence.

So it happens that this day is also a memory of an extremely important event from ten years ago, the initiation of debates at the Round Table. The Round Table is the beginning of our changes; it is a dialogue, the search for ways for reconciliation and cooperation of the Polish people for common good. Among the chances that Poland faces nowadays is also the fact that two great spiritual traditions, Latin and Byzantine, the two wings of European civilization meet here. Past history of coexistence of those traditions was not free of tensions and conflicts but today we can do much to make their inspirations our common trump card. I am convinced that dialogue and cooperation of the two Churches, here, in Poland shall bear fruit in what was referred to by John Paul II saying that: He is dreaming of a Europe to breathe in the future, fully with its two lungs, the western one and the eastern one.

I want to wish Your Eminence and the whole Orthodox Church in Poland to be able to enrich Poland and Europe with such a gift more and more successfully.

## 8. Speech made at the welcoming of the Pope, John Paul II (excerpt) – Gdansk, 5<sup>th</sup> of June 1999

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Your Holiness!

It is a great pleasure and the highest honour for me to welcome Your Holiness in Your Homeland. I welcome you on behalf of the Polish government. I welcome you in the name of all the Polish people. I want to express the common delight of all the citizens of the Republic of Poland.

We have been waiting for this visit. We have been preparing for it. We are happy that it is going to be longer than the previous ones and that we will be able to feel the joy of the meeting with the Fellow Countryman who, the Polish people are so proud of, who they consider the greatest moral authority of our time, who although for 20 years he has been living “far from here does not stop feeling himself a son of this land and there is nothing about the land that might be unknown to him.”

Before the end of the century time accelerated. It might seem that just a moment has passed since the last moving and touching visit of the Holy Father that took place two years ago and, in fact, so much has happened around. Your Holiness told us then in Wroclaw: “I rejoice together with you over achieved successes and I share your worries.” Remembering these words I would like to say something just about our satisfactions and about our weaknesses at the beginning of the next meeting of the Holy Father with His Homeland.

Poland has a new Constitution that is conformable with standards of modernity and approved by the Nation. The Concordat with the Holy See has been ratified. We became a member of NATO, the political and military alliance that unites free and democratic nations over the Atlantic. We have started negotiations about admission of Poland into the European Union. Today we have friends far and near. We have developed a close cooperation with neighbours and countries in our part of Europe. We have been building special, strategic ties

with Lithuania and Ukraine. Poland and Germany refer to the best traditions of the Gniezno convention.

Your Holiness is coming to Poland, the independence, security and rapid economic development of which is treated as standard. Where sacrifice and strenuous work brings visible effects. To the State which has already achieved much, maybe the most of all in this region of Europe, but which, according to Your Holiness's appeal "does not quench the spirit". It keeps reforming its structures, changes the law and increases the quality of life. It is also aware how much is still to be done.

This altered Poland is the fruit of effort of many generations. It is the merit of those who worked hard for it, who fought with courage and determination for its freedom, independence and democracy, who created the works of Polish culture, science and technology. It is also the result of the wisdom of the Polish people who could come to understandings in issues that are most important for the State in the right time and in an appropriate way.

We were celebrating the anniversary of the Round Table, a turning point that moved Poland towards transformation. Yesterday on 4<sup>th</sup> of June we were celebrating the tenth anniversary of elections to the Sejm and Senate that were an outstanding victory of democracy. Critical changes in our Homeland showed how strong the causative action of the ability to come to an understanding is. How great we can sometimes be if we are able to reject traumas, selfishness and littleness for the good of the nation and the State.

Today the Pope, the Pole, is welcomed by a Poland that is transformed and that has still been transforming, a Poland that has beneficially used the past 10 years and in spite of many failures, it is different and better.

We have the feeling of satisfaction. We also have a profound feeling of gratitude to Your Holiness for the Catholic Church in Poland and in the world, for the inspiration and support for our changes. For the effort and patience, for the conviction that which seemed impossible shall be real one day. For consistency in defence of values, human rights and in defence of the harmed and the weak.

The changes of the last decade would not have taken place without these. The face of the world would not have been changed nor the the face of this land.

However we have not finished our work. While travelling to many places and meeting millions of inhabitants, Your Holiness shall have the chance to see our achievements as well as our weaknesses, our problems and failures at close range.

They are still numerous. Poverty, lack of the feeling of prospects and security and unemployment. They affect many people. They are present in various regions. Beneficial changes of recent years have not been distributed equally. They have left a wide margin of embitterment, feeling of harm and neglect. The situation of the Polish country is particularly difficult. Material problems are experienced by families with many children, disabled people, lonely and ill people. Many people feel lost. Some become frustrated and they fall back on aggression or apathy.

We cannot accept this part of Polish reality. We must not forget about the poverty and sufferings of other people. Nobody in our Homeland shall feel forgotten, helpless or deserted. This is a great challenge that the Polish people face at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Wishing to face it, with caution we shall listen to the words of Your Holiness on how to improve social sensitivity, how to overcome indifference and selfishness and what shall everyone do to find the sense of their existence and action. To let everybody find hope. (...)

Your Holiness!

For 20 years, Holy Father, the Church, Poland and all of us have come a long way. The 21<sup>st</sup> century that seemed so far away, just like a science fiction story, is on the threshold. We feel joy and anxiety. Happiness, because science, technology, culture and economy has been developing. Never before has the world been so small, so available and open, it has never had such excellent chances for peace, development and wealth.

But the point is that, as Your Holiness said in Gniezno two years ago, “after the fall of one wall, a visible one, another wall appears even more. An invisible wall that divides our continent, the wall that crosses our hearts? It is built of fear and aggression, lack of understanding for people of other origins, different complexion, religious beliefs, political and economic selfishness and weakening of sensitivity to the value of human life and dignity of each person. Even the unquestionable achievements of the recent period in the economic, political and social spheres do not conceal the existence of this wall. It casts its shadow on the whole of Europe.”

We want to remove the walls. We want the future to be based on such values as peace, understanding, human dignity and tolerance. These are also the foundations of the pontificate of Your Holiness that are tested in such an impressive way by time, storms of history and conflicts.

We want to benefit from this historical chance that was opened for Poland. Poland has to develop not against traditions and values but just to ensure them with a proper place in the European community. Poland wants to be modern and respected according to its considerable abilities. We are ready to cope with new challenges!

We want to be home for everybody, a common homeland in which nobody shall feel alienated or lonely. We should look for what unites us instead of fostering divisions.

We would like to be better! We count on Your Holiness that you will support us in this work. That You will tell us how to avoid mistakes and that You will show us the paths to the future. That, just like so far, You will be a great co-creator of Polish history. We have achieved so much. Together we will enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Hard-working, with dignity and hope.

I want to wish Your Holiness and everybody who is accompanying You a happy visit to the Homeland. I wish You joy of the meetings with fellow countrymen.

## 9. Speech made at farewell ceremony of the Pope, John Paul II – Cracow, 17<sup>th</sup> of June 1999

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Your Holiness!

It was an outstanding gift. Gdansk, Sopot, Pelplin, Elblag, Lichen, Bydgoszcz, Torun, Elk, Wigry, Siedlce, Drohiczyn, Warsaw, Sandomierz, Zamosc, Radzymin, Lowicz, Sosnowiec, Cracow, Stary Sacz, Wadowice, Gliwice, Czestochowa. The whole of Poland!

We had an exceptional honour and happiness to meet the Pope. To meet, to listen and to experience unique emotions which we probably cannot describe nor express yet. However, we have a profound feeling that we were participating in an exceptional, historical event that refers to each of us independently of religion, political views or nationality. The event related to all of us, together living in the Polish Homeland.

Meeting Your Holiness helped us consider what the world needs today, what Poland needs and what people need. And now, without any doubts we can understand better: the World needs peace, cooperation and solidarity, discontinuation of actions that bring destruction and sufferings to people. Poland needs work, development, cooperation and responsibility. And people need hope and love.

The moving spirit of Your Holiness's appeals has always had outstanding power. Especially at our place, in the Homeland, thanks to the unanimous effort and solidarity of millions of fellow countrymen. Let it be so also this time! Let this gift of grand ideas, offered to us in recent days help us enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Let it guide us to the new millennium as better and stronger people who are able to overcome weaknesses and who are ready for love. People who shape Poland that wants to and can be present in Europe and the world of a new century according to its heritage and potential!

We shall remember the appeal “to make revival of our land last and be deeper. Once we learn to experience the freedom offered to us as given, we will behave and live in such a way that nobody in our Homeland will be lacking a roof over their head and bread on the table, and nobody will feel lonely or left without care.”

Our public life needs such simple and beautiful truths. Even today after this busy and exhausting pilgrimage of the Pope across Poland and Polish problems we can see that each of us grew richer, each individual and every human being.

Let also our love be stronger. It is a difficult task and it has several dimensions: personal, family, social and civil. Because to love is to understand, demand and trust, remember and be ready to come to an understanding and mutual forgiveness. Love means sacrifice for the nearest, for society and the Homeland. We would love to rise to the words and expectations of the Holy Father.

Your Holiness!

In a moment you, Holy Father, will set out on a journey from the Polish land to the Italian land. We are staying here. We are staying here grateful and stronger. Grateful for support for our Homeland, for strengthening human dignity. Stronger with the love that Your Holiness surrounds us with every day.

Thank you! For everything! Thank you Your Holiness for your visit to Poland. For a visit to a new Poland. Thank you for the visit of the Holy Father in His Poland! We wish good health and persistence on the way to the third millennium. We are with Your Holiness with all our hearts. And we want to express an invitation for another visit to our Homeland.

With joy and hope we are saying: Holy Father, see you again!



# 10.

Interview for Zet Radio (excerpts) – 18<sup>th</sup> of June 1999

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*Yesterday at the airport when you were saying goodbye to Pope John Paul II, you said: “each of us has been enriched, each individual, each human person.” In what way have you been enriched as a result of the pilgrimage of Pope John Paul II?*

It was a very important pilgrimage. The previous ones paid maybe more attention to the problems of the State and freedom, and this one was directed to us as a community, a nation and as separate individuals. Appeals for love, goodwill and sensitivity to the problems of others and to people’s hurt are just such very universal, simple truths the recollection of which, that is, making us behave according to these instructions is important. It is the wealth that, as it seems to me, shall stay with us after the Pope’s visit.

*But can these simple truths somehow influence a politician, Polish politicians?*

Not only can they, but they should, and I am saying “simple” not in order to think about them as unimportant but because they are the most difficult to attain. Being well-wishing towards others is not a very complicated thought, but at the same time we know very well that it is not easy in public life. How much aggression, aversion and intolerance there is. If the political world listened attentively to the Pope’s words, I think that the quality of this life will be higher. There will be more political argumentations, fewer disputes and wicked arguments and less hatred.

*But you, Mr President, know both Poland and Polish politicians, so do you believe in what you have just said?*

I believe and I do not believe – it does not matter. I would like it to be so, and in my opinion the presence of politicians at a lot of divine services, an unprecedented, in fact, meeting in the Parliament has still left a mark on Polish political life. It would be bad if it turned out that after two weeks of the Pope’s pilgrimage, another two weeks would be enough for everything to return to not

the best standards from before the pilgrimage. Let us be optimists. I hope that the appeal for love does not exclude the political world from this call. (...)

*Yesterday at the airport you presented a definition of the word love. "To love is to understand, to require and trust, remember and be ready for coming to an understanding and for mutual forgiveness" – is that a definition that you have derived from the pilgrimage of Pope John Paul II or did you have it before?*

I think that it results from both the pilgrimage and experience that I have and we all have. I perceive the word to love, to cherish not only in a personal dimension but also in a social one.

*And do you agree with those two civilizations that we can build: a civilization of love and a civilization of death?*

It is named in a very symbolic way. Without any doubt there is only one choice. We ought to build the civilization of love. Certainly, how to do this and how to cope with this task is a fundamental question that has to be answered by politicians. The experience of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the experience of recent months, Kosovo, and what is happening in Yugoslavia clearly show that we have to build because the civilization of death is still present. It is still a threat, a threat that is not very distant. Only a few hundred kilometres from the Polish border such incidents take place. In this conflict undoubtedly we have to be for the civilization of love. But how to carry this out, that is the question.

*Once again, for the last time I shall refer to your speeches "The moving spirit of Your Holiness's appeals has always had a great power" What is this power based on?*

We have evidence for this. The first pilgrimage took place 20 years ago. Poland is different, it is better and it is a democratic country. The economy has been developing. All religious liberties are ensured. Schools are open to religious education. New churches were built. It is proof that Poland has changed and has been changing a lot with the significant participation of the Pope. In this meaning, I think that if we look at the world, Poland has changed mostly owing to the Pope, although the traces of His activity and his pilgrimages can also be found in other regions. Let such traces be found soon in Cuba and other countries where civil wars and conflicts appeared. The Pope has also been there and traces have been left there as well, but this Polish trace, the Polish change that to a large extent is related to the Pope is an undisputed proof.

*When you hear, at Plac Zwyciestwa, the words that Poland owes something to divine Providence. What do you mean?*

I am not going to comment on this. The last thing that I would like to do would be to comment on theological or religious content of the Pope's speeches. If I say something I refer to the Pope's statements in a social or purely human meaning. But I leave the questions of faith directly to the Pope and to those who have the right to make such interpretations.

*When you were welcoming Pope John Paul II at the airport in Gdansk did you expect that this pilgrimage would proceed like this and that Poland would look as it did during this pilgrimage? Did you expect that 10 million people in person would attend the mass?*

Yes. It is not surprising because each of the pilgrimages was experienced and watched by large numbers of people. And as for the content, if you remember my introductory welcoming speech to the Pope it will turn out that later on, many similar problems appeared in the speeches. I talked about what we had coped with but I also talked about our failures, I talked of poverty that is still a challenge for us. I talked about orphaned people, harmed people and those who were left beyond the stream of reforms that were taking place. I also said that we counted on advice to help us become better people. There, I used the expression "we would like to be better" and I think that those 13 days were an attempt from the Pope's side to indicate what to do so that we could be better. (...)

*Were you, Mr President, surprised yesterday at the airport in Balice, when Pope John Paul II invited you into the papamobile?*

I was incredibly surprised. It was so unexpected that at the beginning I did not really understand the invitation. Only when it was repeated that I had been invited into the papamobile with my wife I understood. I found it a very friendly gesture. Completely unique. As I was later told it had never been done before.

*Is the papamobile comfortable?*

Comfortable. Besides I found out that Sodano, the cardinal, was perfectly informed about all the technical facilities of the papamobile. He told us where the air-conditioning was turned on and what it all was based on. There was a chance to talk to the Pope. This moment of a ride in the papamobile is, without any doubts, one of the most surprising and at the same time beautiful, moments in my political activity and in my life. I did not expect that at all. And this is an experience. To be the only president in the world who was travelling in the papamobile with the Pope is a great honour. (...)

# 11. Speech made at the ceremony of laying of the foundation stone for the Sanctuary of Divine Providence (excerpts) – 2<sup>nd</sup> of May 2002

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

The construction of the Sanctuary of Divine Providence inaugurated today, goes back to the idea of erection of a similar construction started over two hundred years ago to express thanks for the magnificent act of passing the Constitution of 3<sup>rd</sup> of May. The Constitution that was a crowning of wishes of independence of the most enlightened Polish people of the period of the Four-Year Sejm. The Constitution that appeared in spite of internal and external adversities that seemed impossible to overcome. (..)

Up till today in Poland, a more worthy reference to common, national actions is hard to find. Today's ceremony and all the events that resulted in it certainly come out of the spirit of 3<sup>rd</sup> of May. Therefore let it be a chance to remember the heroic resistance of Polish women and men against outside violence, constant lack of acceptance of our nation for enslavement and the persistent wish for freedom in Poland. The memory of those fundamental values of our nation can be, in this place, mingled with the pride that stems from the understanding of the essence of the last fight of the Polish people for a free, independent existence of the State, our country can enjoy for thirteen years. Let also the awareness that this time, this important purpose was achieved not on battlefields, that cost us a sea of blood so many times, but through the clever understanding of a politically divided nation be the source of our satisfaction.

I want to express hope that contemporary Polish people will retain a living memory of this outstanding achievement and that they will pass over the fruitful gift of understanding to future generations. Because freedom that, as a poet writes, "was made over to us as heritage", and that shall be commemorated by these walls and the whole religious and social activity of the Sanctuary is not provided once for ever. It is a challenge at every moment of its possession and using its privilege. It is still a collective responsibility that every day has to be realised and appropriately accomplished with collective effort. The past of

Poland, its independent existence and well-being of the nation shall always be dependent on our unaffected respect for our liberty, on its strengthening, through communication of various social forces, reconciling of dissimilar interests and toleration for various philosophies of life. So if we can both persistently and consequently use freedom, the sanctuary that is being constructed here may become one of the important symbols of Polish changes. Changes that came out of mutual understanding of the Polish people and a nation-wide pursuit of collectively accepted purpose.

Today we can give each other and the whole world a clear signal that we are still united with the most important issue for us, the good of our Homeland. We want our State to enjoy freedom constantly, which means, to be strong with happiness of its inhabitants and secure, because we are a partner for other countries of our continent. I think that common approval of those opinions in Poland by the nation, Church and the State is a good guarantee of success of our intentions. Such understanding has a significant value and creative power. It enables previous achievements to be maintained and gives real grounds for successful common work in the future. Its additional benefits are related to our internal feeling of harmonious work in compliance with the national way of life and character. Outside, in the eyes of Europe and the world, it raises our assessment as a sensible and predictable partner and responsible member of the European community of nations. As a State, the citizens and most important social and political powers of which are united by a common vision of the future.

United in this way we have a chance to achieve much in an integrated Europe. The position of the Polish Episcopate and the Primate Priest in person, that is so reasonable and also explicitly supporting pro-European plans of the State, is excellent support and aid in our aspiration for the purpose of integration. I think that the moment when we together place the foundation stone for the monument of national unity is the right time to express, in the name of authorities, the words of respect for the Primate Priest and all Polish hierarchs of the Catholic Church for this excellent pro-European and pro-Polish attitude.

Also I want to present my thanks for such profound, well-wishing and sensible understanding of Polish national needs and interests. (...)

## 12. Speech made at the welcoming of the Pope, John Paul II in Poland – Cracow 16<sup>th</sup> of August 2002

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Your Holiness!

With great pleasure and with all my heart I welcome you to the homeland. I welcome you on behalf of the government of the Republic of Poland. I welcome you in the name of all inhabitants of our country who are filled with the feeling of love. For us, the Polish people, this visit is a real occasion for celebration and an excellent spiritual experience.

We remember messages that Your Holiness presented to us during previous pilgrimages to the homeland. Thank you for them wholeheartedly. Just as we thank for everything Your Holiness has brought to Polish history. And to the life of each of us – to thinking about ourselves, our neighbours and about the human community. All the Polish people, believers and non-believers, younger and older are impressed by the words and work of Your Holiness. For us and the whole contemporary world Your Holiness is an outstanding moral authority.

The visit of Your Holiness is taking place in a special period. We find ourselves in the face of challenges that we had not experienced before. We hoped that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century the world that was created by us would enter the period of peace and security, development and wealth. However it has emerged that we have to struggle with terrorism, that globalisation is not a remedy for social plagues, that we are still helpless towards ecological threats and natural disasters. It has turned out that democracy and market economy that are important and expected benefits can become the source of numerous difficulties that we have to cope with while feeling responsible for the State, society and every person.

From the See of Saint Peter, Your Holiness watches the problems of universal and global dimension. However, we know that Poland always occupies a special place in the heart of the Polish Pope.

Today Your Holiness is coming to a Poland that is aware of its achievements and failures. Independence, democracy and lawfulness make strong and permanent roots from which the Polish tree draws life-giving juices. Poland is secure and reconciled with its neighbours. On the international arena it is surrounded by esteem and respect.

On our path to a better and more dignified life not all can find their place. Not all can enjoy the fruit of changes. A lot of people do not have work; there is poverty in many Polish homes. Fears, frustrations and doubts appear. Difficult questions are asked: how to live? Does it make sense? Was it worth it? We need revival of the spirit of enthusiasm and belief in a better future even more. The spirit that shall help the Polish people overcome accumulating difficulties and shall guide them to future achievements.

The Polish people need support, they need power and hope which you, Your Holiness, have been offering to us with such consistency and generosity for many decades.

We remember the words of Your Holiness, that a “new imagination of mercy, the expression of which will not only be limited to the efficiency of aid, but to the ability to be a neighbour for a suffering person, standing in with him.” It is a task for us all, so that in Poland the bonds of social solidarity, the most human and fundamental bonds, shall never break. We understand it also today when our neighbours have been struck with flooding and when, with solidarity, we are rushing to help them.

Your Holiness is coming to the country of peace concluded between the State and Church. Within only a few years after regaining independence, we managed to create an appropriate model of relations with these institutions that are important for the nation and based on solid grounds of a new Constitution of the Republic of Poland and the Concordat.

A decided majority of Polish people have understood that democracy and religion support each other because democracy ensures freedom of action to believers. And religion strengthens the grounds for democracy, while propagating universal values of human dignity and respect for a neighbour without which democracy could easily turn into its opposite. I want to express a great respect and appreciation for the share that has been contributed and is still being contributed by the Catholic Church, into Polish transformations and in the shaping of the civil community.

Your Holiness!

We are experiencing an exceptional time in Polish millennial history. Since the beginning of its statehood, Poland is rooted in Europe and in European cultural circle. We have had a considerable share in this common heritage. We have emanated with values and we set examples. We were also victims of wars and aggression. Polish resistance, firmness and determination has crushed the walls, lent courage to others and “changed the face of the land”.

However never before have we had a chance such as we have today, to be at the European helm together with others to co-create unity and a successful future of Europe. “Integration of Poland with the European Union has been since its early beginning supported by the Holy See” – Your Holiness said three years ago in the Polish Sejm. We are at the end of this road. A road full of effort and sacrifice, but at the same time a road of opportunities, progress and outstanding prospects. Both for Poland and every single Pole.

In this work we are supported by aid, good will and the profound reflection of Your Holiness.

We want to co-create a Europe that shall be the fulfilment of both our and the Pope’s expectations. A Europe that is open, just and demonstrating solidarity and that ensures security and well-being.

We want a Europe that shall be a common home, based on solid grounds of thousands years of tradition, Christian values and diversity that makes the power of the European family.

In such a Europe we want a Poland, that is strong with its history, culture and identity, to matter. To ensure prosperity to its citizens and to enrich itself and others.

Your Holiness!

Cracow, Lagiewniki, Kalwaria Zebrzydowska are places particularly dear to the Holy Father; the place of his youth, spiritual growth, realisation of the path of life that led you to the Vatican. “Here everything began...”. These moving words of Your Holiness that you said at the main square in Wadowice could also be referred to on the route of this pilgrimage.

At the same time they are places inscribed in the life of the nation, in Polish history, culture and spirituality in a special way. The biography of the Pope, the



Pole and the history of the Polish national community interlock here particularly significantly as grand evidence and a symbol. Poland was looking forward to the next visit of the Pope. We have this great fortune that right now, when so much has been achieved and there are so many chances that can be used; Your Holiness is among us as one of the most meritorious in Polish history, a teacher of freedom. I really trust that independent Poland today and tomorrow shall be the proper proof that the Polish people not only love the Pope but also listen and follow His instructions.

I also believe that this visit shall be strengthening not only for us, here in Poland, but also for Your Holiness. I believe that we can pass great energy and this special power and support that come from millions of loving hearts to the Pope. From well-wishing and open attitudes of the Polish people that give Him spiritual and physical power. Let this love, this openness towards the Pope shall be this Polish, wonder-drug for pain and weariness.

Holy Father!

Welcome to the Homeland!

Welcome to Cracow!

Welcome home!

# 13. Speech made at the farewell ceremony of the Pope, John Paul II – Cracow, 19<sup>th</sup> of August 2002

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Your Holiness!

Thank You! Thank You that once again we could experience extraordinary moments. Our outstanding fellow countryman, the Pope, has come from Italy to Poland, to give us the joy of shared communion, to offer us His goodness, care and wisdom. To ensure the Polish people that, independently of age, wealth, belief or religious engagement they are a unity. The Polish people are moved with the spiritual dimension of the visit.

Millions of people have come here from the farthest corners of the country to meet your Holiness. For four days this land, Cracow, Lagiewniki, Kalwaria Zebrzydowska and the Pope's homeland became the whole of Poland. It focused our attention, energy and was a source that enriched our hearts and minds, our knowledge and sensitivity.

The Pope's care about the existence of the Polish people and the future of our country truly moved us. We are grateful to Your Holiness for support and wishes for us "to courageously head for new horizons of progress in peace and success", to use historical chance for a dignified and secure future of Poland in a united Europe. I am certain that the Polish people shall do their best for the Pope to be able to look at his Homeland with trust and pride.

Your Holiness!

We have been very happy to host you among us but also with pleasure we have noticed that the Pope is relaxed and happy with us. For these four days we have often been noticing a smile and true emotion on Your Holiness's face. Therefore I think that we have the right to say goodbye to Your Holiness with a conviction that although we have exhausted the Pope, we have also delighted Him. We have lent him power and energy for the future.

Having listened carefully to all the speeches by the Pope, we want to cope with all the expectations that Your Holiness has expressed in them. To prove to ourselves and others that we have not only been listening but we have also understood the Pope's teaching. We should be better towards one another; do our best so that in public activity "human problems" were at the top of all the problems. So that the Pope's teaching, this "image of mercy" was transformed into our everyday actions. So that it would not specify only important moments of meetings with His Holiness, it would not only be a special good, but so that it would be the daily bread of Poland and the Polish people.

Moved with the words of the Pope, I would like to tell my fellow countrymen: let us open the door widely, let us look through the windows of our homes and offices, let us not turn our eyes from our neighbours in need, from poverty and misfortune. Let mercy, solidarity, sensitivity and decency guide our action. Let our common efforts realise the Pope's appeal for help for the poor, work for the unemployed, roof over the head for the homeless, security for families and good upbringing and education for children and young people.

We shall treat the appeal of Your Holiness "to bring advice, spiritual comfort and moral support to those who undertake internal struggle with evil" as a common responsibility in our Homeland. Poland wants to build a "civilization of love" in the 21<sup>st</sup> century together with Your Holiness.

Thank you, Your, Holiness for the visit to Poland. For this moving visit to your home town. We wish you a good flight, good health and energy for every day work that serves the world and humanity. With the hearts of all the Polish people we want to support Your Holiness in the realisation of fruitful service that brings hope and good in which Your Holiness does not accept any limitations.

Today's parting leaves us as usual with profound hope for the next meeting. With the hope that, luckily, has never disappointed us.

We have experienced sublime and deeply moving moments. We are left enriched and stronger with the Pope's visit, His words and love. We shall not waste this good.

Holy Father, it is hard to express our gratitude, therefore the simplest word: Thank You! must be enough. We are with you! And as usually, full of hope, we are saying: good bye! See You Holy Father!

## 14. Interview for "Sygnaly Dnia" (Echoes of the Day – Polish radio programme) – Balice Airport, 19<sup>th</sup> of August 2002

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*Mr. President, for millions of Polish people the visit of the Holy Father to Poland is a special time. Is it the same for you?*

Certainly it is. It is a special time for me as well, it is a great joy and honour; being the president of a free, democratic Poland I have the privilege to welcome, host and say goodbye not only to the Pope, but to our Fellow Compatriot, a great man, who undoubtedly has left his special mark on the 20<sup>th</sup> century and who has shown us the ways we shall follow in this new 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is a profound, unforgettable experience: I mean not only great emotions; it is a deeply moving and touching spiritual experience that leaves a stamp on your life forever. I can share this opinion openly, without any shadow of embarrassment.

*Mr. President, you have met with and talked to the Holy Father a number of times. In what terms does this year's pilgrimage differ from the previous ones?*

Undoubtedly, this pilgrimage – apart from the entire religious and philosophical dimension – is the expression of the Polish peoples spiritual unity with the man who struggles with suffering, pain, tiredness related to his age and numerous ailments. I did see how people tried to help him, be it just a good word, to alleviate his pain, this great effort the Holy Father undertakes for all of us. It is all dedicated and devoted for us. The Pope spares no effort to fulfill his mission in the best way possible. We do realize that it is not an easy task in the contemporary world; however, I think that the Polish people did perfectly understand that the Pope has needed and still does need our support. I dare say that, as I said during the welcoming ceremony, we have succeeded in applying him an effective medicine. May it be a miraculous one, may this energy the Pope was filled with here serve him well and support him in further duties and work both in the Vatican and worldwide.

While departing, he said “I wish I did not have to leave”. We all heard that; later on, when I said “It is time to go to Rome”, he replied “Rome is waiting, work is waiting; still, I wish I did not have to leave.”

*In your welcoming speech at Balice Airport you said that not only do the Polish people have to hear the Pope’s words, but they have to listen and answer to these words as well.*

Yes I did. And I do hope it will so happen. We are hard learners to some extent and it is a kind of our weakness, drawback. Even during this visit some situations took place when, on one hand, everybody kept speaking about mercy and on the other hand we experienced some behaviors that were far from being in line with the Pope’s teaching. I think that – as the Primate said – we may listen to the Pope in a slightly different way, yet from the perspective of years we do see the results, the lesson has not been forgotten. I am deeply convinced that this visit shall result in all of us being better, more sensitive and open in everyday life, not only once in a blue moon. I do hope the Pope’s words shall become true – that we shall open ourselves to others; we shall open the door for those who need our support and understanding.

*But how can we do it in public life?*

We shall remember the Pope’s words while developing economic policies, while acting on the local administration level, or making decisions. We have to remember that it is not enough to give people a chance; we must help them in making the most of this chance as well. There are people who have found themselves in a difficult situation through no fault of their own. Nobody can stand in for the state and local government in thinking about those people. This approach does not differ significantly from the concept both of the Social Democracy and the Christian Democracy as well. The point is to treat others in a humane way, to be decent and take care of neighbours. Trivial as it may seem, when we look at the contemporary world we realize how tough a challenge it is, how many people fail to meet this requirement. If the world had really listened to the Pope’s teaching we would not have wars or violence, would we?

Let’s try to change this. May we forget about this visit neither tomorrow nor the day after tomorrow. Let’s try to become better.

Interview conducted by *Henryk Szrubarz*

# 15. Address during the New Year's gathering of the Polish Ecumenical Council – 16<sup>th</sup> of January 2003

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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

I am glad to meet as usual here, in the Ecumenical Council, with my good friends – noble and distinguished persons, clergymen and laics – to discuss the things we have managed to accomplish last year and to present our tasks for the forthcoming year.

I would like to thank all Polish Churches for their service to the homeland and society during the past twelve months. It was not an easy time indeed; however, I am deeply convinced that we shall remember it well. We completed our negotiations with the EU; NATO grew larger, which ensures us even more security since our neighbours belong to the same coalition. The Pope visited our country. The year 2002 was a difficult one; yet we can perceive it as a successful year and feel happy that we could support each other in times of trouble; also, we can be proud of what we have managed to achieve.

We still have to face numerous problems in Poland. We have to mention, also on the occasion of the beginning of New Year, the poverty, unemployment, the lackings, the difficulties Polish families are going through, and anxiety for our accession to the EU, for example. Today, we should make a solemn commitment that in the coming year – regardless of our religion, outlook, or professional positions we hold – we shall help those in need and trouble. They are looking at the government and other people, seeking human solidarity and mercy the Pope talked about so much during his visit.

We shall work this year so as to make our great political project – accession to the EU – a successful enterprise. We shall also prove that this year is a year of solidarity and love. It is very important that the clergymen, Churches, all members of the Ecumenical Council join their efforts in acting on this ground, help us in becoming successful on this uneasy way.

On behalf of the authorities of the Republic of Poland I would like to most heartily thank everybody present here for their understanding towards great common causes of Poland and the Polish people, for their responsibility. The voice of the clergy, regardless of the denomination, is very important and respected in Poland; we do listen to this voice and probably this is what makes us different from other countries. There is neither controversy nor competition between the laic state and you; nor there is a fight for who is better and listened to more. The key issue here is to be able to serve best the people, society, and the nation in its great diversity.

Our Homeland has more than a one thousand year history: lofty and tragic moments have intermingled therein. The present generation has a unique opportunity, yet at the same time a huge responsibility, to introduce our country into the European Union, to make the future of Poland safer and better, to ensure the people more safety and security. We too can enrich the European and global community by contributing our Polish tradition, sense of solidarity, mutual respect and love – all which is indispensable for nations and for every individual human being. I do believe that in 2003 we shall do our best to achieve all our goals and objectives. I am also convinced that Poland shall become a very interesting and encouraging example for the whole of Europe: by joining the EU, not only shall we bring Polish problems into the European structure; by far more important is the fact that we shall present our values, our strength, we shall show everything which may be interesting for others. Churches have a very important role to play in this task.

In this New Year, here in the Ecumenical Council, let me wish all my fellow Compatriots, believers in different religions, much luck and prosperity, happiness, mutual respect, tolerance. May we all feel at the end of this year that we had done our duty well and with a sense of great hope which we the Polish people not only need; we – the Polish people and Poland – do deserve it.

# 16.

Address during the thanksgiving ceremony at St. Peter's Square, the Vatican, 19<sup>th</sup> of May 2003

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Your Holiness!

It is an extraordinary honour, earnest joy, and deep emotional experience to meet once again with Your Holiness – our great Fellow Compatriot. Here, at the Vatican in St. Peter's Square, together with thousands of Polish pilgrims, I would like to pass on to you the expressions of deepest respect, gratitude, words of admiration and love on behalf of Poland and the Polish people!

We come here to most heartily thank Your Holiness. Thank you for your message contained in yesterday's canonization ceremony and new Polish Saints. At the same time, we would like to give thanks for 25 years of pontificate of Your Holiness – Pope John Paul II – your great, wonderful gift for our fatherland and for all the Polish people. We would like to express our deepest gratitude for all Your Holiness has bestowed on Poland, all that you taught us and strengthened us with. Today, we are going back to this memorable day of the 16<sup>th</sup> of October 1978, when thousands of pilgrims who gathered here at this square have heard the agitating, extraordinary news: *Habemus Papam! Sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae cardinalem Wojtyla!*

On this day, the vision of a Pope – Slav, once described by Juliusz Slowacki, became the inescapable fact far clearer than this great poet could have ever imagined. Also at that time, 25 years ago, hardly anyone could have predicted and understood what was the meaning and significance of the Pope – Pole's pontificate. And so the world, Poland, Europe, have changed for ever and beyond recognition. It would not have been possible if it had not been for Karol Wojtyla, for John Paul II, for the Pope-Pole, Pope-Slav and a European. For his strength, power and faith. For his powerful, clear and sound omnipresent appeal: "Fear not in the name of the respect for human rights, in the name of freedom, equality, brotherhood, human solidarity open your door wide to Christ." It would not have been possible if it had not been for Karol Wojtyla's words of truth and wisdom, and the boldness of vision. If it had not



been for the Pope's deep belief and conviction that we all should strengthen the foundations of history and tradition that create, not fight with, both the contemporary days and future as well. For the Pope who came upon and "with a great cry raised to the entire Church, Europe and the world to speak up for the forgotten nations and people". It would not have been possible without John Paul II, a noble man, decent, sensitive, caring for every man – Holy Father. We would like to thank for this tremendous, great revival and change, for all we have been generously presented with – love for the Fatherland and "for all of us, from a baby to hoary whitebeard". Thank you for all Your Holiness has bestowed on Poland, all that you taught us and strengthened us with. We are deeply grateful and much obliged.

Poland and the Polish people owe a special debt to Your Holiness. Polish freedom would not have been possible if it had not been for the Pope – Pole. For his vision of stance, attitude and action. 25 years of the pontificate have always been for us a time when we could feel the Pope's care, support, and openness toward his fellow Compatriots. Amongst numerous universal duties, issues of global importance and significance that form a part of the Pope's service, frequently have we benefited from the Holy Father's kindness and time. Many a time – and we are asking for forgiveness – we did overuse both.

Your Holiness!

Poland has to go through rough times and a hard way. The transformations that have taken place during the last couple of years brought us many reasons to be proud of and, unfortunately, to be disappointed with. Our Fatherland is a safe place; we live in peace with our neighbours. Our economy develops and becomes increasingly modern, we have the biggest number of students in history, our culture and scientific achievements are recognizable and esteemed worldwide. We can be proud of this. On the other hand, however, we have to face unemployment, poverty of thousands of families, underdevelopment of numerous regions. We are concerned for the weakness of state democratic institutions. Also, we have to undertake a consistent effort in developing the state of law. There is still a lot of hard work in front of us; however, as Your Holiness knows, neither Rome nor Cracow was not built in a day.

Holy Father!

Polish transformations are still in progress. The prospects for the future look promising. Last month, in the group of 25 countries we signed the EU Accession Treaty. We are joining the structure that was developed after the Second World War, inter alia, based on the notions set forth by Christian politicians. This

organization has managed to overcome numerous odds and differences, human prejudices, mutual hostility of nations, thus ensuring Europe fifty years of peace and development, respect towards human worth and dignity.

Today, in front of our very own eyes, and with our contribution, with Poland and because of Poland, a great historical act of Europe becoming united is taking place. In such a moment, one cannot miss the words of Your Holiness spoken in 1979 in Gniezno: “Does not Christ want it, does not the Holy Ghost decide upon, that this Pope-Pole, Pope-Slav right now reveal the spiritual unity of the Christian Europe, the unity consisting of two great traditions: Western and Eastern...?” Such were the Pope’s words in 1979. At that time, the Pope’s appeal calling to recognize these two great European traditions as an inextricable and inseparable entity was regarded as a rather risky step to take, a utopia, unrealistic and an unfeasible challenge issued to the Soviet empire. Today we know and our hearts are filled with joy! History proved that both John Paul II and his prophetic vision were right.

We shall also remember the words of Your Holiness delivered during the speech in the Sejm of the Republic of Poland four years ago. The Pope said then: “Poland is fully entitled to participate in the general process of global progress and development, with special regard paid to Europe.” Poland’s integration within the EU has been actively supported by the Holy See from the very beginning. The Polish nation’s historic responsibility and experience, its spiritual and cultural heritage can be conducive to general wealth and well being of the entire family of humankind, especially to the strengthening of peace and safety in Europe.

Your Holiness!

Poland does not rejoin Europe. We have been an inextricable part thereof for more than a thousand years. Poland is a symbol of the old Europe with fresh and new energy, wise and smart youth, with a strong belief that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Europe Poland shall be at the same time the benefactor and beneficiary, and shall lose nothing that decides upon our national identity, as the Pope said: “By becoming a member of the European community, Poland cannot lose even the smallest part of its material property and spiritual heritage, so desperately defended by the generations of our ancestors to their dying breath”. We shall remain faithful and obedient to this heritage. I am convinced that we can follow the right path that harmoniously combines within Polish heritage with fast development in the European family. We most heartily would like Europe to follow that path, too. While integrating with each other, defining

one's place on the international arena, Europe cannot forget its spiritual and cultural roots.

It is up to us – the Polish people – what Poland and our future would look like within the EU structures. Our future depends on our work, efforts, conscience, our patriotism, solidarity and mercy. This is how I read – as a Pole and as a human being – the message that follows from the great lifework of persons canonized yesterday: mother Urszula Ledochowska and bishop Jozef Sebastian Pelczar. They were people of great energy, wisdom and social enthusiasm. They managed to combine the service for their neighbours – especially those in need, with the service for Poland – both during the period of partitions and later on, in independent Poland. The Poland and the Polish peoples lot and fortune have never been easy and simple. Both in the past and today, they call for courage and reason, labour and patience, sensitivity and goodwill.

Holy Father!

The hearts and thoughts of the Polish people go out to Your Holiness. The sound of the Zygmunt Bell on Wawel, so clearly heard last week on the occasion of the Pope's birthday, was the symbol and expression of our best wishes, warm greetings and great respect. Quite recently, Your Holiness has said about yourself: "I am a young 83 year old man". We think so as well. Let me wish you much health, persistence and realization of all plans, including the one of visiting the Fatherland! Poland is looking forward to seeing you – as always. I would like to thank you, Holy Father, for the time spent here in Rome, for your words spoken, for emotions shared – with traditional, Polish "may God repay you" and see you in Poland!

We are looking forward to see you in your Fatherland!

## 17. Interview for the First Channel of Polish TV – “Gosc Jedyński” (First Channel Visitor) (excerpts) – 19<sup>th</sup> of May 2003

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*Mr. President, you have just returned from the Vatican where you participated in the solemn ceremony of the Pope’s anniversary and the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the pontificate of Pope John Paul II. What are your impressions from your stay at the Holy See?*

It was a very interesting time – this day and a half. Yesterday I took part in the canonization ceremony; we have four new saints, two of them coming from Poland. Today – a very personal and moving experience related to the Pope’s birthday anniversary celebration and the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Pope’s pontificate. The most important thing was the Pope’s words on the European issues and the place of Poland within the European structures. I must admit I did hope that, in the light of the national debate on referendum that takes place in Poland, the Pope would refer to it in some way; however, I did not expect these words to be so clear and resolute. In the past, we used to be a part of the Union of Lublin, today we join the European Union. It is not enough to say that Poland did not lose while joining the EU – it was the time of Poland’s heyday and prime. It used to be like that when, together with Lithuania and other countries, we established the commonwealth of States.

*Also today the Pope said that the fact of Poland joining the EU is the sign of historic justice. Probably, this statement is the most resolute and clear expression of support for Poland’s integration with the EU ever.*

John Paul II is outstandingly consistent in his deeds. We used to forget that in 1979, when the USSR still existed, when there was no “Solidarity” at all, when we did not know at all what was possible or not, the Pope did say that he perceived his election as a chance for unifying the Eastern and Western Europe. Later on, he elaborated on this idea into the notion of the European lungs; at that time, this idea seemed to be completely unrealistic – today we know that it eventually became true. Since 1979, with his words and actions, the Pope has been trying to “glue together” Europe, to unify this continent;

however, the principle thereof was not to resign from the diversity of particular parts of Europe, but rather to build on the abundant diversity and richness we bring. That is why the Pope is saying today – Poland needs Europe but Europe needs Poland, too. It is a chance also for the West that is badly off for new stimuli, energy. It was a very touching, very personal, emotional and important speech.

*Shall the Pope's declaration of support for Poland's integration with the EU convince those EU opponents who refer to the religious and Christian values?*

Well, I think those people refer to religious values when they think it is appropriate, not when they really should do. I do not think the Pope's declaration shall convince them; yet, we do not enjoy greater prestige, neither does the Church. It is the Pope who has the biggest, unquestionable authority and prestige, with 25 years of unprecedented testimony of faith. If they [opponents] do not trust the Pope, what else can you do? However, I know that the Pope's words are important for many a man who are allowed to hesitate, to have doubt. The Pope himself referred to this issue – he understood the concern and anxiety about whether we would be able to preserve and maintain our identity, how Poland's economy would look like, whether we would have to face the problem of increasingly intensifying social clashes, would the personal property and estate be appropriated? The Pope does understand those concerns; yet, at the end of the day, he clearly states: Poland needs Europe, Europe needs Poland as well.

*During the solemn ceremony of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Pope's pontificate, the Pope was in excellent shape. Is there any chance he can visit Poland when we shall have become the member of the one European family?*

Undoubtedly, the Pope is in good condition and the last several months have been very successful. The treatments applied are very effective and efficient, we are very pleased thereof, we see our Pope is more cheerful than before, since he managed to overcome many daily ailments. The Pope lives his life for vision – our Pope is restless. I think that the worst thing that could happen for him would be the inability to be active, to move and to travel. That is why he travels so much: to Croatia, soon to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mongolia has been planned for a long time and many other destinations are considered. We shall include the open invitation to visit Poland. May the Pope have enough strength and health to come. (...)

Interview conducted by *Piotr Gembarowski*

# 18.

Speech delivered during the New Year's gathering  
of the Polish Ecumenical Council – 11<sup>th</sup> of January 2005

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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

It has already become a tradition that we meet here at the threshold of a new year. I am honoured to be here with you, to meet in the Polish Ecumenical Council, and to thank for everything we have managed to accomplish together last year.

When, in a few years' time, we look back at 2004, we shall first of all see two historic events: Poland's accession to the EU and a great transformation and change that took place in our fellow country – Ukraine. We shall also remember that Europe consistently expands its outer borders, that it no longer is a continent of Western and Eastern Europe divided by the wall; here we are, in new European structures together with nine other Central and Eastern European countries; we are also glad it has been endorsed that our friends in Romania, Bulgaria, and Croatia in a moment shall join us as well.

Also, this year shall be remembered as a time when we have finally managed to get things right with regard to our domestic economy. I would like to wish Poland to have 6% economic growth with every passing year, and the zloty becoming so strong that the USD will shake with fear. These are not symptoms of disease and political mistakes, these are the signs and manifestation of our power, strength taking its source in the potential we have in Poland, which was created also thanks to Polish Churches and Polish denominational associations. Therefore I say: sursum corda! All bad things, misfortunes, and suffering, all that evil does not originate in 2004 – it has resulted from numerous processes, events that have their causes and pre-causes – we have to identify and eliminate them effectively and consistently. While talking about eliminating them, let me express my wishes more suitable for 2005 – may we not make the mistake of radicalism, irresponsible behaviour, experiments that may result in far worse things than which we have now.

I would like to thank you for the year 2004 – a difficult one, as always in Poland, yet successful indeed. I deeply believe – not only as the President, but as a citizen – that it was a year of historic change for Poland. I would like to thank all who supported us in joining the European family and wish to have friendly neighbours around us. (...)

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

Let me now pass on to the last issue – Ecumenism – not trying to compete with the theological knowledge of Your Excellencies. I think that the notion of ecumenism understood as the cooperation, tolerance, readiness for cooperation, becomes the actual challenge of modern times. We find proofs thereof practically at each step we make. It is true both for political disputes on the Middle East and Ukraine, and the fight against terrorism, dialogue (or lack of dialogue) between biggest denominations or civilizations. Ecumenism understood as the feeling of joint responsibility for the future of our world, concerns us all. What happened in Asia – tsunami and thousands of casualties – goes beyond any kind of theological, religious disputes and discussions, political divisions and so on. It calls for great human solidarity, readiness for cooperation, opening to each other. I am deeply convinced that we shall implement into our daily coexistence of human beings all that we are taught by prominent Church representatives – those who are able to overcome any historical obstacles and meet during common prayer, no matter whether in a church, synagogue or mosque. By accepting the criticism related to the political issues, I do hope that 2005 shall be a year of strengthening our ecumenical spirit in the Polish nation, in Europe and the entire world.

I wish all this most heartily, since we need it very badly indeed. The more dialogue we have, the more open, tolerant we become, seeking for things we have in common and for the ability to accept the things that make us different from each other, the more peace, safety and general welfare we shall have, creating them together. (...)

# 19. The telegram to His Holiness John Paul II – 3<sup>rd</sup> of February 2005

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Your Holiness, Holy Father!

On my behalf, on behalf of my wife and the Polish nation I would like to pass on to you the best, most sincere wishes of a rapid recovery. From the bottom of our hearts, we wish you Holy Father much strength and persistence in spreading the message of peace and hope throughout the entire world. The Polish peoples kindest thoughts and prayers are accompanying Your Holiness in fulfilling your apostolic mission of heading the Ecumenical Church.

Today, the human race needs the leadership that is filled with wisdom and love. Your Holiness' advocacy for the solidarity with the weak, care for the development of individual human being, welfare and well being of a family and society are the ultimate guideline for thousands of Polish people and for Polish authorities for the sake of our Fatherland. We do all expect that Your Holiness shall find strength and health to visit Poland again.

Let me use this opportunity and send Your Holiness the words of highest respect, and enclose the wishes of good health and well-being.



## 20. Speech delivered on the day the Pope John Paul II passed away – 2<sup>nd</sup> of April 2005

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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

Here, at the Presidential Palace in Warsaw, gathered together with the highest authorities of the Republic of Poland, the legislature, the Speaker of the Sejm and Senate, Government of the Republic of Poland, Prime Minister, Apostolic Nuncio – Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, chairmen of the highest tribunals – the Constitutional Tribunal, The Supreme Court, the Administrative Court, in the presence of the Ministers of the Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland, I would like to express my deepest, most profound sorrow and mournfulness. The Great Pope passed away, our most eminent and prominent Fellow Compatriot, Holy Father. A good father of all of us – believers and non-believers, followers of different denominations and religions.

We have lost an extraordinary person, one of the greatest creators and originators of modern times. A man, who moved Heaven and Earth, reached the most remote parts of the world in order to find the way to other people's souls. A man who for all his long life had only one goal – to make the world a place where good, wisdom and justice prevail in all the people.

Today the hearts of all the Polish people are filled with deep sorrow. With the pain of losing someone very close, a friend and spiritual leader, whose energy, power of faith and extraordinary gift of convincing other people were the ultimate source of our common hope. However, we are also filled with pride – one of the most wonderful and outstanding people in modern history was born on Polish ground. The centuries-old, extremely deep spirituality of our nation gave birth to the outstanding, beautiful individual who gave so much to the world. And personally, on this sad day we feel happier that we could have lived in this time.

John Paul II was a great apostle of reconciliation. He significantly contributed to the abolition of the “iron curtain” and the enlargement of the EU. By doing

so, he helped numerous countries reconstruct the ways of cooperation, and the citizens thereof – to regain their inextricable civic rights and the sense of dignity.

I had the unique honour to address His Holiness at St. Peter's Square on the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his pontificate. Today, I would like to recall these words:

And so the world, Poland, Europe, have changed for ever and beyond recognition. It would not have been possible if it had not been for Karol Wojtyła, for John Paul II, for the Pope-Pole, Pope-Slav and a European. For his strength, power and faith. For his powerful, clear and sound omnipresent appeal: "Fear not in the name of the respect for human rights, in the name of freedom, equality, brotherhood, human solidarity open your door wide to Christ". It would not have been possible if it had not been for Karol Wojtyła's words of truth and wisdom, and the boldness of vision. If it had not been for the Pope's deep belief and conviction that we all should strengthen the foundations of history and tradition that create, not fight with, both the contemporary days and future as well. For the Pope who came upon and "with a great cry raised to the entire Church, Europe and world speak up for the forgotten nations and people". It would not have been possible without John Paul II," a noble man, decent, sensitive, caring for every man – Holy Father. We would like to thank for this tremendous, great revival and change, for all we have been generously presented with – love for the Fatherland and "for all of us, from a baby to hoary whitebeard (...)".

Poland and the Polish people owe a special debt to Your Holiness. Polish freedom would not have been possible if it had not been for the Pope – Pole.

But for him, there would not have been new dimensions of dialogue between people, societies and religions. As the first Pope in history he crossed the threshold of a synagogue and mosque. He turned the field of rivalry into the fields for mutual dialogue and actions. Last but not least, it was this Pope who managed to bring down many barriers in human consciousness. With his wise words and earnest example he managed to convince us that showing mercy, compassion and being ready to forgive are the most important expressions of humanity.

My fellow Compatriots!

The last years of John Paul II papal service were of a truly heroic character. He fought with many issues, but he also fought with his own weakness, suffering and pain. He never stopped fighting, not for a single moment. He proved his

outstanding strength of character. Until the very last days, he taught, created, kept in close touch with people. He served those who needed him the most until the end.

Today we bitterly feel how great a loss his demise is for Poland. For Polish society and the State. We have irrevocably lost the greatest moral authority, who as Christ's plenipotentiary here on Earth and as a good father, demanding friend, allowed many citizens to find the sense of everyday existence and to make the toughest decisions. Also, we lost forever the tireless advocate of Polish issues on the international arena.

Because Karol Wojtyła – John Paul II never forgot about his Fatherland. He was a patriot of the highest possible dimension. He gave the world the best things from us and our history; in turn, he urged us to become better and worthy of his vision of the world. Personally, I am deeply indebted to fate and history for having the privilege to meet the man whose wisdom, knowledge, and kindness were of superb character.

Judging by many personal meetings and discussions I was lucky to attend, I know how proud he was of Poland, our achievements, but also how worried he was about our failures and weaknesses. This Man, this Pope had never stinted love for Poland, neither had he dispensed it.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Today, we are paying homage to our great fellow Compatriot. As the President of the Republic of Poland, together with Poland's government, I do hereby declare the national mourning and half-masting of the national flag as of today until the day of the funeral ceremony of the Pope John Paul II.

However, the most important homage we can pay to this tireless traveler of the paths of the world and human souls is to make the most of the abundance and power of his thoughts. We should understand his message on the need of peace and reconciliation; we should remain true and faithful to such values as freedom, compassion, solidarity. If we are really able to do this, then Karol Wojtyła, John Paul II shall never leave us. He shall keep supporting us in choosing what is right and just. What is good for man, Poland and the entire world.

Holy Father, thank you for everything. May we be able to measure up to your teaching, work, and stance. I wish we might!

## 21. Interview for the "Political Salon of the Third Polish Radio Program" (excerpts) – 5<sup>th</sup> of April 2005

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*Mr. President, these are very difficult days for us all, both believers and non-believers. You have always been declaring openly the fact of being agnostic. Yet, you admitted that when you had learned of the Pope's death, you simply burst into tears. What was so special and unique about the Holy Father that he managed to unite practically everybody – both believers and non-believers?*

Tears are not exclusively restricted to believers. I think that it is the very personality of John Paul II, his kindness, his love towards other people. The fact that he was a Pole, and we were proud of him for so many years. The fact that I was able to become closely acquainted with him during numerous meetings throughout many years – more than twenty years. All that gave me the feeling of great, irreparable loss and sorrow. That is why I cry. I think that many Polish people who are neither necessarily firm believers nor very active in the Church (or active in non-catholic Churches), or who are simply agnostics, feel very sorry because of this great loss. Yet at the same time they feel very proud that such a man did live, act, that he left such an extraordinary legacy. As I said in my official statement, we shall feel happy that we had the privilege of living in his times and having the opportunity of meeting with him. This shall not happen again for a number of generations, I am afraid.

*We have lost the greatest ambassador of Poland worldwide, a great patriot. Do you agree that if it had not been for the Pope, we would not have had all that happened before 1989 or in 1989 itself. We would not have joined NATO nor the EU?*

Undoubtedly, his role has been great. I am deeply convinced that without the Pope we would not have had our Polish freedom, these processes might have taken a slightly different course or might not have happened at all. This is a kind of an "ahistorical" thinking, I would say. For me, in turn, the Pope's speech in Gniezno in 1979 shall remain something utterly phenomenal for ever. We all remember well that the world then was completely different. It was the time of Brezhnev, the Soviet Union, the Warsaw Pact, the GDR, so the world

map was totally different. And the Pope in 1979 spoke about the possibility of Europe becoming united, that maybe the election of a Pope – Slav and Pole is a special sign, a signal. Some people were saying it was like irritating the bear, others were saying that it was a kind of Messianism; today we would say that not only was it a prophetic idea, but some kind of a political program, a kind of idea for Europe – later on, the Pope implemented this idea very consistently, avoiding however the strictly political methods.

*It was frankly stated that Europe has to breathe with two lungs.*

Yes, it was. This notion of a united Europe was accomplished. The Pope was saying that one had to abolish the obstacles, barriers, between those parts of the old continent. This idea was expressed before 1979, before “Solidarity” was established, before many important events took place later on worldwide. In this sense, the role of the Pope was tremendous. I think that in many aspects his role was decisive. However, in my opinion it has always been difficult to speculate on what if things went differently. We could have thought about how the world might have looked like if John Paul I remained the Pope one month longer. We shall remember that Karol Wojtyła was elected the Pope as the result of the sudden, unexpected death of John Paul I, who from 1978 could have led the Church for at least several years. So we can ask many such questions, but in my opinion they are of no significance.

*We were lucky that John Paul II was with us for almost 27 years and to some extent, we got used to the fact that he was with us. What does his demise mean for Poland?*

I think that we got used to the fact that the Pope is with us too much. That is why we hear so much wailing “I wish I had listened to him more”, “I wish I could go to Rome”, “I wish I went but I didn’t because I thought there would be another chance...”. We should appreciate the fact that he met with millions of people worldwide, as well as appreciating the Pope himself, the dimension of his pontificate, that he managed to meet with hundreds of million people from the entire world.

*And was trying to habituate us to his suffering*

No. I think first of all that he had managed to make the global parish out of the entire world. It was the Pope who was of the position that his presence in the Philippines, Poland, France, Switzerland or the USA, or Cuba, is the element of his pastoral activity in the most elementary aspect – to reach the human

being, to pass on the truth, encourage to follow Christ, to this famous “Fear not”. He kept on repeating these universal truths wherever he traveled to.

*You are right, Mr. President, but from the egoistic point of view we shall miss the Pope much more than the Philippians or Cubans will, won't we?*

Let me come back to my previous thought. Maybe we got used too much to the thought that the Pope was, is, and shall be – that is why this loss is so tremendous. Today it may result in a positive way, I mean maybe we can finally realize that there shall not be the Pope – Pole in the Vatican for a really long time now; maybe we shall understand better what the Pope was saying to us. And these are all available things, within our reach. They are on the bookshelves in bookstores, on the Internet; they are broadcasted on TV, in newspapers. The Pope's words are available. Maybe we all shall speak a little less – including myself – and think about the legacy the Pope left us. If we consider this loss in a responsible manner, in a way the Polish people are doing now, it may be beneficial for us – it may help the Polish people in rooting the values the Pope was talking about in our mentality and our way of thinking. But if within a week or two weeks time we go back to ordinary life, to normality, and if we admit there is too much thinking about mercifulness, respect to other people, openness towards others, about ecumenism – then we shall come back to a sad, grim norm that would be a clear sign that we can not learn the Pope's lessons well.

*Do you think we shall come back?*

It is an open question, since what I am saying now is a peculiar appeal and today I think that similar public appeals are made by Polish priests, bishops, cardinals. You have also hosted here people who say: let's change for the better now. This is the occasion and if we do not seize this opportunity, when is the next one going to occur?

*We have always said that we love the Pope but we do not listen to him.*

Yes we have. Now the sad time has come he shall speak no more. Now we simply have to listen, to think and start implementing the Pope's words in our daily life. Yesterday, cardinal Grocholewski said wonderful words about the Pope's greatest achievement – he was the Man of Dialogue. Not only did he talk with believers, non-believers, with people of culture, politicians and he always showed great respect towards other people. He never threw mud at anybody, while he always said what he wanted to say. He never compromised by thinking: I shall not say that because it is not the right place and time. He

just said it. This is how he talked to Fidel Castro, Gorbachev, Chirac, and young people during numerous meetings.

Yes, as bishop Tadeusz Pieronek said on Sunday, it was the Pope who first of all humanized the popedom, and who used to say that tolerance is not enough, that apart from tolerance we need acceptance, and it is still not enough, since you can do nothing without love.

It is important what bishop Pieronek said. There were many exceptional, wonderful words said by bishops at that time. Bishops managed to present the demise of the Pope in the way that gave us faith and heartened all of us. After all, death for Catholics is a passage to another, better world, while the work and testimony remains here, on worldly ground. It is something imperturbable.

*Mr. President, you must admit that it is quite difficult for us to accept this better world in such circumstances...*

Well, it is indeed; however, it is the core strength of a man, of the Pope, who showed us that it is feasible. We have a lot of teachings indeed coming from this last period, if only the learners would like to learn and draw appropriate conclusions thereof... It is an issue of key importance and it concerns the citizens, politicians, journalists, priests, all of us. None of these groups is exempted from this obligation.

*You are not exempted thereof either.*

Of course, I am not.

*You met with the Pope many times. Also, you did say that there were numerous meetings and all of them remained unforgettable for these 10 years. Which of the said meetings are the most important for you, judging from the time's perspective?*

I think that each of them was important; yet they tackled different issues. The first one in 1997 was a kind of introductory meeting, a very important discussion on Polish and European issues. The Pope was in very good shape, he was witty and humorous as well. I do remember well when the meeting was over, the delegations entered and in the Papal library we found ourselves close to the window facing St. Peter's Square. The Pope gave me the picture depicting this square and he said: look! St. Peter's Square – how should I say it – my daily place of work. In 1999 the Pope was here, at the Presidential Palace's chapel where today, at 9 a.m. there shall be a liturgy for my co-workers. We had conducted grand conversations on European issues, during which the Pope was

explicitly talking about two elements: Poland should be in the EU and Poland shall be the country that defends the Christian values within the EU – this is what we have been consistently trying to stress and implement by fighting for this present shape and legacy contained in the Constitutional Treaty. During our conversations, the Pope had always shown great interest in the Ukrainian issues, as well as Russian ones. I think that one of the unfulfilled, bitter and painful experiences for the Pope was that he had never managed to visit Russia, despite his utmost efforts.

*And what was his opinion on Polish-Russian relationships?*

He said of course they had to be good and friendly, but he did not give any guidelines or hints in the context of current politics. The issues relating to the current politics were rather discussed one floor lower, i.e. at cardinal Sodano's place. During these meetings, first there was a private conversation with the Pope, then discussions with delegations where the Pope used to deliver a speech available for the mass media too, and finally we all were going one floor down to cardinal Sodano who is a prominent diplomat. These discussions were held in a much more political style and language. Numerous details used to be provided then. The Pope had never said that the relations with any country should be bad; to the contrary, they should be based on mutual respect, love and understanding, high regard towards other people. This is the general doctrine, in which the Pope was acting. That is why, when I look through old pictures, be it from Cuba, I can clearly see that the Pope came there with his heart wide open. It has nothing to do with a typical, routine-like welcoming ceremony at the airport, usually so cold, lacking positive emotions.

*Was there anything special the Pope was standing firm against, anything he protested against during such private conversations?*

First of all, we should understand the real nature of the Pope's protest. He paid attention to certain elements that were of special importance to him. During one of the meetings he presented such a note dealing with several issues. They always dealt with the problem of life protection, of family. These issues tackled the problem of support for numerous charity activities conducted by the Church, with special attention paid to the voluntary service. He always stressed the respect and satisfaction that the Concordat had been signed. He believed it would be effective. These were also the European issues concerning the place of Poland in Europe. It was also the explicit and open respect for Polish authorities for skilful diplomatic approach towards the Vatican and other countries worldwide. Very essential and concrete issues. Maybe they were not discussed point by point, as it is established for the talks between Presidents. Yet they were



pointed out and later on they were confirmed in the official papal speeches, and once they were even delivered in the form of a note that summed up different important issues in the Polish-Vatican relationships.

*Today Warsaw, Poland, the Episcopate is going to pay the final tribute to John Paul II at Plsudski Square, at this memorable Victory Square of 1979. Will you be present today at 5 p.m. at Plsudski Square?*

Of course I shall. I shall be there with my wife and daughter, the Prime Minister is going to be there too, the Ministers, Marshals. We have agreed that it would be a kind of national meeting. The Primate shall be there as well, so it is going to be a major, most important event here, in the presence of the Church and state authorities – the Pope's farewell ceremony here in Warsaw.

*On Friday, you are leaving for Rome. We already know that, despite being invited, the former president Lech Walesa shall not accompany you. Is not it a pity?*

I would not like to comment on this. If we treat seriously what the Pope was saying, this fact speaks for itself and any comment is needless. Yesterday, I received a call from a person who spent many years by the Pope's side in the Vatican. Was very close to him. The Pope was always wondering why those two can not arrive together. I am not the person to answer this question. (...)

*Mr. President, we did hope (if hope is the right expression to be used in this context) that it would turn out that the Pope had left the testament and the last will of him would be to be buried in Cracow. Now we know that the funeral is going to be organized in the Vatican; there are some rumors however, that probably the heart of John Paul II shall rest in Wawel. Is it at all possible? Or are these just pure speculations and wishful thinking of the Cracow authorities?*

I think that what I was able to see yesterday, this very traditional ceremony of removing the Pope's body from the Clementine Hall to the Basilica of St. Peter may indicate that the unwritten yet true Pope's last will was fulfilled. First of all, the Catholic Church is universal, that is, open towards the entire world; secondly, it is very attached to tradition. When we look at everything that was happening, we can clearly see that everything was taking place according to well-known, written Vatican tradition, yet invisible for 27 years. It results in the impression, I even venture to say a conviction, that the Pope, by accepting this role and fulfilling it in such a way, had really become the Pope of the entire world. That is why he should be buried in the Vatican. I know that what I say now is contrary to the expectations of many people in Poland. We should however understand that by 27 years of service the Pope became a truly

international individual and passed away as such. He does not leave us as the former archbishop of Cracow or the Polish cardinal, even the Polish Pope. We have the right to speak about him in such a way; however, we cannot treat him this way. He was a great Pope, maybe the greatest one following St. Peter as many people say; therefore, his place of ultimate rest being in the Vatican not only shall be utterly understandable, but appropriate and due as well. Are there any other orders or instructions – I do not know and I would like not to speculate. If there is somebody who does know the Pope's last will it surely is archbishop Dziwisz, a great man as well; for these 27 years he has been the right hand of the Pope. He used to stay in the background; yet he played an extremely important role. This way I would like to express my deepest respect and regard. A few years ago, I had the privilege to award him with the Grand Cross of Polonia Restituta. I noticed his great modesty while preparing for the ceremony. He did not want it to be a great Vatican feast. Practically speaking, the ceremony was held in strict privacy, without publicity; the archbishop knowing his actual power and capabilities is at the same time an extraordinary modest man. Coming back to the place of the Pope's eternal rest, I am absolutely convinced that the most suitable place for such a noble citizen of the world, cosmopolite, prominent and great man the Pope was is of undoubtedly in the Holy See. In the Vatican. At his place.

# 22.

Statement issued after the return from the Pope's funeral ceremony  
– 8<sup>th</sup> of April 2005

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Dear Fellow Compatriots, Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

We come back from an unusual, exceptional funeral ceremony. From the funeral unheard-of ever before, since never before have we been saying goodbye to such an extraordinary person. Together with millions of people in Rome and billions of people worldwide we have paid the ultimate homage to the great Pope John Paul II. The scenes from St. Peter's Square shall be remembered forever by everyone. Most probably never again shall we be able to see so many white and red flags at this square. May this image inscribe and remain in us forever; I do believe that it shall give the best testimony to Poland at millions of households on all continents.

The pope was the shepherd of all of us. His words reached the believers and non-believers, moved conscience, brought relief and consolation for those who suffered. He loved humankind, and he was loved by entire nations, which we could clearly see these last days.

For us, he was somebody unique and exceptional. He was the most prominent and outstanding Pole who left his mark on the global history. He was an earnest and ardent patriot. As he wrote in his testimony, his heart had always been turning in a mysterious, special way to his "earthy Fatherland".

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

We have been bereaved but not left alone. We can still seek for courage in His teachings, message and example. And I think the Pope is proud of us today. Within the last couple of days Poland has witnessed a great change, transformation that surprised us all. It turned out that we, the Polish people, have great hidden indefatigable reserves of good feelings, sensitivity, fragility and trust. He was the one to instill them into us and activate them. He made us become better people for each other.

It is his ultimate gift he presented us with. We can make the most of it, if we are able to preserve this exceptional experience of recent days and transfer it onto the days, weeks, months and years to come. If we are able to talk and show mutual respect. If in our public life, in our daily work, at our homes, the spirit of understanding, reconciliation, charity and mercy settles for good. The spirit which the Pope was trying so desperately to convince us of.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen! Fellow Compatriots!

Today, as the President of the Republic of Poland I would like to first of all express my thanks. I would like to thank for the peace and tranquility, concentration and stately conduct of all our fellow Compatriots – here in Poland and those who made the pilgrimage to Italy and the Vatican. These qualities have evoked respect and admiration. It was visible in the news coverage, broadcastings by global news agencies; we also could read it in the letters of condolences addressed to Poland by global leaders. Today I heard some many warm words of admiration expressed by foreign guests who participated in the funeral ceremony. Poland has shown its more humane, beautiful face.

I would like to say thank you to all who in those days addressed Poland and the Polish people with words of sympathy and reconciliation. I thank the Holy See, the authorities of the Republic of Italy and Rome for their effort in the preparation of the funeral ceremony and the stately reception of more than a million pilgrims from Poland. I would like to stress and appreciate the great organizational and logistic effort and very smooth carrying out of today's celebration.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude for the Polish clergy for their great, extraordinary openness and sensitivity. They met the expectations of all who in those difficult days needed support and spiritual discussion, both believers and non-believers.

I want to express my highest regard to the Polish media. They have managed to present the work of the Pope in a perfect way, creating the atmosphere of reflection and meditation. Going far beyond shallow and worthless things, they helped us see the things that are really important. I would like to thank journalists for their tact and sense of responsibility.

I would like to thank the public services and institutions, voivodes, and local authorities for their sacrifice and smooth, flawless organization of numerous mourning celebrations and ceremonies throughout the entire country. Last but

not least, let me thank from the bottom of my heart all people of good will, who supported many of us during those days.

Dear Fellow Compatriots!

All across the country, last week we showed each other a plentitude of warmth and kindness. We were shaking hands, forgiving each other, throwing away grudges. We actually did feel we are one entity, we are unified.

Today John Paul II gained one more victory. During the stay in Rome, together with President Lech Walesa we undertook an important discussion on Poland. We shook hands with each other. We both felt that it was the only right thing to do, given the importance of the moment – this we owed to Him – Holy Father, and we owe it to the Polish people as well.

Shall this miraculous, exceptional week, this change in our behaviour and conduct, this special Polish, stately and filled with reconciliation “white revolution” stand the test of time? It is solely up to us.

The Pope said “I was seeking for thou, and now thou came to me”. Let us all stay with the Pope, with his teachings and thoughts. If each of us tries to be better even a little bit, so shall be the entire Poland.



## E. Bonds with Poles living abroad

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# 1. Address during the meeting with the Council of World Polonia – 18<sup>th</sup> of March 1996

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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

The Lublin meeting of the representatives of the CWP with the representatives of Polonia living in countries that have just abolished the yoke of communist regimes is, as I hope, a historic event. For the first time in our national history, the Polish people and their brothers and sisters from East and West have met. They may be scattered in different parts of the world, yet they feel that they belong to this one great Polish family, being united by Polish nationality, and they want to get to know each other better and to find ways to communicate.

If it had not been for a free, democratic Poland, this natural family reunion would not have been possible at all. For many years, under the communist regime, the truth about our relations and common roots had been distorted. The community of Poles from the West was ideologically uncomfortable, even hostile. This community was only possible thanks to the resilience of Polonia organizations in the said Western countries. They were free and independent in actions, thus they were strong enough to break through the wall of ideological hostility. During the hardest and darkest days, we had managed to sustain contacts and relationships. We were exchanging our spiritual values. Also, we were substantially supported financially by our fellow Compatriots. Very often it was a source of strength in our fight for a change of fate.

Community spirit with Poles in the East was an abstraction. It was even forbidden to remember that somewhere in the East, there were Poles living. Five years ago we were happy to hear that the Polish family grew bigger. Poles in Kazakhstan, Lithuania, and Ukraine – who were loyal citizens of their country of residence, their new homelands – were finally allowed to become Poles, too.

National sentiments and fondness became vivid again. The strong need of bonds and ties occurred once again. This is typical for the eternal human need of belonging. Becoming a part of a community we want to identify with.



However, there is a chance for improving the particularly difficult situation of our compatriots in the East. Hope for fraternal help and support that shall ease the local inconveniences, save from denationalization, and provide them with Polish books. Sometimes even it shall help learn the forgotten mother tongue.

Remembrance of those diverse needs of our compatriots in the east is our common duty, the duty of all Polish people. A new, reborn Poland, state of law, trust and just, worth its thousand years long tradition and history becomes the country the Polish people scattered throughout the entire world want to be proud of. This pride shall be even more enhanced and justified if we help all our children no matter where they are, live with dignity. Live in the feeling of genuine, authentic community of history, tradition, customs and morals, and the quality of well being. Of course we are neither able to do everything at once nor immediately. However, the sooner we start the better. By supporting mutually each other – we shall support the cause of Poland on the global arena. We shall build the image thereof as a country that integrates the one great global family of the Polish people. As a country of concordance and understanding for neighbours' problems; the customs and morals thereof one can trust. The triple separation may be of great importance. We can supplement each other perfectly.

It is my personal wish that the Lublin meeting of the Council of World Polonia initiated wise and necessary cooperation of all Polish people. I hope it shall help our brothers and sisters feel again, the once lost, ties with the rest of their compatriots. I hope they would be proud of their Polish origin, proud of the impressive, centuries old heritage and experience of Polishness.

I shall do my best to ensure that all Polish people on emigration and Poles living in Poland remain in unity. It concerns equally the Poles in Lithuania, Belarus and Kazakhstan. They also shall find the feeling of Polishness the source of strength and sufficient means for stately existence. The Lublin meeting, the place for establishing close relations between Polonia in the West and East in a free, independent Poland is a first, important milestone on this way. I would like all of us to follow this way in accordance and consistence – until we reach the ultimate goal.

## 2. Speech delivered during the meeting with Polonia in Moldova – Chisinau, Polish Community Center, 10<sup>th</sup> of December 1997

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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

I would like to welcome you on my behalf and on behalf of the Republic of Poland, and on behalf of my Spouse, Ministers and all persons accompanying me. I am very happy and proud that we can meet here, in Chisinau in Moldova during our first official visit to the free, independent Republic of Moldova. It is our sincere wish that this visit would result not only in very good mutual relationships between our countries, but also it would make you, Ladies and Gentlemen, be satisfied and sure that a bright future is ahead of you. You did manage to overcome things that were difficult, sad, and quite often tragic. Today, our two still developing countries spare no effort to ensure our contacts are on the best level possible. It is the task for us, the state government representatives. It is our sincere wish to fulfill this obligation earnestly.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

My meetings with Poles abroad have shown how difficult and strange the Polish fate has been. How different paths did Poles abroad choose to follow. Yet, I have always met persons speaking fluent, flawless Polish, despite the fact that they left Poland dozens of years ago. I highly appreciate the fact that you, Ladies and Gentlemen, speak Polish so well, that you think Polish, your hearts and souls feel Polish, and that for so many years you have never lost contact with your homeland, language and tradition. I would like to thank all those who supported you in preserving your Polishness. Also, I would like to thank you, since you alone were responsible for all that. You were responsible for raising your children in the spirit of Polishness, for teaching them the Polish language at their houses and homes. Moreover, I would like to thank priests – but for them, the preservation of Polishness would not have been possible. The clergy and church do play an important role in preserving not only faith, but Polish tradition, and language as well. This is true wherever Poles are present. I have always been greatly impressed by that fact.

Once again, please accept my sincere words of gratitude for your effort of being Polish, and preserving Polish roots and language. On the occasion of the forthcoming Christmas and New Year, please accept my best wishes. I wish all the best for you, your relatives, families, children, grandchildren. I wish you luck and prosperity, may this new year be a good one for your homes and your Moldova. Remember – you are with Poland and Poland is with you.

### 3. Address during the meeting with Polonia in Switzerland and the veterans of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Riflemen Division – Switzerland, Rapperswil Castle, 22<sup>nd</sup> of October 1998

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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

I am sincerely glad to begin my official visit to Switzerland with the visit to Rapperswil, so close to the Polish peoples hearts. As a Pole visiting Switzerland, I perceive it as a very important yet joyful duty to arrive here, to the city, to visit the local Polish Castle and Museum. In this Alpine landscape, in Rapperswil, one can feel at home somehow. It is the spirit of mutual Polish-Swiss closeness and intimacy.

I think we owe this atmosphere to this special place we are now – the Polish Museum. For almost 25 years now, this Museum has been continuing the beautiful tradition of a “Poland outside Poland”. It is the tradition of Polonia and the Polonia center, created here more than 130 years ago as the Polish National Museum and renamed later on during the interwar period to the Museum of Contemporary Poland. Polish-Swiss relationships, dating back to the Renaissance, have been marked with the names of the most prominent Polish citizens: Jan Laski, Kosciuszko, Mickiewicz, Narutowicz or Paderewski – and many more. We are proud of the fact that our contacts have always been good and satisfactory, and they have constituted a solid foundation for Polish- Swiss cooperation. The Poles owe a lot to the Swiss – starting from Zygmunt’s Column, the landmark of our capital and the oldest Warsaw monument – to the recent proofs of friendship during last year’s flood.

We shall cherish this friendship. Fortunately, in Rapperswil and other Swiss cities we can find many organizations and dedicated persons. The Polish Museum in Rapperswil is especially meritorious since it painstakingly collects the keepsakes of former and present Polish-Swiss relationship – involving in its activity the broadest circle of our Swiss compatriots and Swiss friends of Poland.

Therefore, I would like to welcome all Poland's friends who gathered here, and friends of the Polish Museum in Rapperswil. Especially I would like to most sincerely welcome the nestors of Swiss Polonia – the former soldiers of the Gen. Bronislaw Prugar-Ketling's 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Riflemen Division and their great friend and carer, professor Georg Thurer.

The hospitality Switzerland showed towards the Polish soldiers interned here during the Second World War shall remain unforgettable. The Poles appreciated this wonderful gesture of brotherhood and substantial help that followed. By their stance, respect to hosts, discipline and diligence, Polish soldiers had managed to gain the respect of the Swiss, and inscribed golden letters in the book of Polish immigration in this country. By showing their engagement in gaining education they inscribed themselves in noble, centuries-old tradition of Poles traveling to Switzerland for knowledge. They traveled to the universities of Basle, Zurich, Fryeburg and Sankt Gallen.

You, professor Thurer, were amongst the number of Swiss who at those difficult times took care of Poles and did not hesitate to support them with your strength and heart. The interned gen. Prugar-Ketling's soldiers owe a great change in their fate to you and your colleagues from Swiss universities and high schools. With your and your compatriot's support and good will, they managed to gain education, diplomas and excellent job positions. They had become successful in their professional carrier – both for Poland and Switzerland's sake. Since once they decided to settle here – being men of honour – they paid the debt with devoted labour for their newly chosen homeland. Those who decided to return to Poland – they dedicated all their knowledge and effort to reconstruct the destroyed country. Both the former and the latter passed their knowledge and skill onto numerous excellent successors; and the tradition of Polish-Swiss friendship they passed onto their children and grandchildren.

The Commander's Cross of Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland is the expression of my and my country's gratitude for you Mr. Professor, for all your efforts. For your kindness and cordiality you had shown towards the Polish soldiers-students during the war and post-war period. I would like to thank you for the invariable friendship presented by you until today. Moreover, this Polish Medal presented to you symbolizes the honorary tribute paid to the efforts of all Your Colleagues – professors of Swiss universities who were similarly involved in disinterested help and support to our compatriots, and whom unfortunately we can not thank personally.

In Rapperswil, the words and gestures expressing the Polish-Swiss friendship take up the most proper form and implication. They echo the local tradition, the essence of which can be found in the inscription on the column located in front of the castle and commemorating the first Polish revolutionary impulse – the Confederation of Bar: MAGNA RES LIBERTAS. Freedom is a great thing. Both Poles and Swiss have been the ardent guardians of this idea for centuries.

## 4. Address before the Polish American Congress (excerpts) Washington D.C., 22<sup>nd</sup> of April 1999

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Mr. Chairman of the Polish American Congress!

Friends, Compatriots!

It is a great honour and privilege for me to meet with so many prominent fellow compatriots on this hospitable American ground. You are our pride and hope. Pride of what you have managed to achieve. What you have accomplished for your country. And hope that your success, your contribution to the great effort of building Poland and America shall be even greater. I wish you all that. We believe in you.

Today, you have lots of reasons to be proud and satisfied with the old country on the Vistula River. After years of difficult and hard history, Poland has started its march towards a better future. A future in the family of democratic countries, countries that are safe and wealthy. Also thanks to your help, thanks to your efforts and letters, Poland was able to join NATO, the most powerful alliance that for 50 years has been protecting global peace, defending human rights and the rights of threatened ethnic minorities. For the first time for a number of centuries, Poland feels safe. Poland can count on tried, reliable allies. It has stable, fixed borderlines and friendly neighbours. Poland plays an important role in Central and Eastern Europe. This Poland owes you a lot. For all you have done to support us, for your heart and time you have sacrificed to this country – as the President of the Republic of Poland I would like to thank you most cordially! Thank you, Polonia! Thank you, America!

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

(...) for the first time for many centuries, Poland has good relationships with all neighbours. They are based on friendship, partnership, respect towards borderlines and ethnic minorities. Our relationships with Germany are the best in history. After having thrown away historical disagreements, we entered into

a strategic partnership with Ukraine. Traditionally, we are in very close and cordial relations with Lithuania, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia. Russia is a very important political and economic partner in the east. We are conducting dialogue with Jewish Diaspora, bearing in mind the tragedy of the holocaust and common cards of history filled with moments of triumph and joy, but also marked with evil and vile deeds. Our motto is “peace and reconciliation”, respect towards history, but more importantly, common efforts in building our future, strengthening peace and stabilization in this part of Europe.

We do not forget about our Polish national heritage on foreign lands. We are especially trying to make up for many years of negligence in the contacts with Poles in the East. We take care of Polish monuments, keepsakes, churches and palaces, the graves of our fathers and grandfathers. Together with Chairman Moskal and other representatives of the Polish Community in America I had the privilege to participate in the solemn ceremony at the Polish military cemetery in Kharkiv, where Polish officers murdered by the NKVD in 1940 are buried. We are of the opinion, that every Pole, every proof of our national heritage, every Polish grave, regardless of the location globally – shall be lavished with care and attention of the homeland. It is our duty; it is our obligation towards the history and the Republic of Poland.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

We can be especially proud of our economic achievements. Within the last five years, Poland’s rate of economic growth has been ranked as one of the highest in Europe. We have managed to suppress inflation, and strengthen our currency. Despite the global downturn in the economy and crisis in the East, we have sustained high foreign currency reserves. The pace of privatization of the Polish economy is increasing. Today, the private sector employs more than 65% of the labour force. (...)

The United States of America became the key partner in our development. Not only because this country is today the biggest investor in the Polish economy. Cooperation with the USA has a multi-dimensional and comprehensive character. It deals with culture, technology, defence. American supports our medium and small entrepreneurship; they train trade union activists and local government politicians, and provide extensive training to our soldiers. Our relationships with the USA have never been better for ages. I think that Poles and Americans have many things in common. The unquestionable need of freedom is the ultimate value for both nations, encoded in souls and minds. And this is not a coincidence that our countries have become the allies again.



Of course it was Polonia in America that played a crucial role in the process of establishing close relationships between Poland and America. Your activity and spiritual bonds with the Homeland. Many joint Polish-American enterprises could not have been possible if it had not been for your support, conducive climate and attitude you have created here, on American ground. Poles back in Poland do know how much they owe you. They work very hard as well, they bear the costs related to the transformation so as you can be proud of them too. You are most cordially invited to visit the old country as often as possible. Come and see how things change, see and learn about our strengths. You are our best ambassadors in America. You promote our culture, our products; speak about our openness towards the world.

Dear fellow Compatriots!

We are proud of you. We do appreciate all the good things you have done for Poland and America. Yet – as our great Pole, Pope John Paul II said – “do not quench the Spirit”. Poland still does need your support, your kindness and involvement. You have always been with us throughout history, so shall be with us today and tomorrow as well. Right now, when our fathers’ dreams come true, when the Polish eagle soars high!

## 5. Speech delivered during the meeting with Poles living in Kazakhstan (excerpts) – Almaty, 30<sup>th</sup> of October 1999

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Mr. Ambassador, Mr. Chairman, Members of Parliament, Dear Ministers, Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

(...) In Kazakhstan, there are almost one hundred thousand people who are Poles, who have Polish roots. History was very harsh to them, sometimes even cruel. They were the first to come on the territory that ceased to be the independent country, Poland. Later on, they were deported in the worst period of the 30s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and landed here, in Kazakhstan. We have many different stories to settle here in Poland. We have people who have suffered much and still suffer in different places worldwide, especially in the east of Europe. However, let me state it clearly that our moral debts toward Poles in Kazakhstan are special and unique. Your fortune was extremely difficult, tragic and dramatic. I would like to declare, as the President of the Republic of Poland, that we shall remember it very well. It is not an easy task to quickly make up for damages that history had made throughout the decades; yet, we shall undertake the effort and do our best to continue them.

I am glad that in these efforts we can count on good partners, the leaders of independent, free Kazakhstan. As it used to be 60 years ago, when you met here the people who, despite great poverty, were able to share with you what they had. Today I can say that the Kazakh authorities show a significant understanding towards the Poles' situation in Kazakhstan, they accept any personal decision you make – either to stay or to leave. There is a great respect towards Poles who live here and build today Kazakhstan. It is very important. Yesterday, I heard President Nazarbaiev and other Kazakhstan authorities saying so. We are convinced it shall be so. We hold them to their words. We shall each time demand to provide the same, equal conditions and opportunities for Poles

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

Today you are facing the dilemma: whether to stay here or to come back to Poland. There is no one, right answer to it. This decision shall be made individually by each of you. I would like to say just one thing: there is room in Poland for everyone who decides to come back.

We are working on the law on citizenship. We want to create such conducive conditions so as Poles living in different parts of the world can come back to their Homeland. It is not an easy task, though. Today, Poland is a country with a free market economy, where people are friendly, yet they compete with each other. Therefore, such a decision has to be very mature and considered.

Both the Parliament and government, and local authorities, shall create conditions conducive to settlement, to finding a job for everyone who decides to come back from Kazakhstan. However, it is not an easy process, and I have to state this frankly and openly. It is related to numerous new tasks, challenges, and risk. It happens often that our image of the Homeland remained unchanged, while the reality turns out to be different. The Polish government has to ensure proper conditions for all who want to come back, to ensure safety, proper material conditions and first of all, to provide work places.

We are of the position that our duties towards the Poles in Kazakhstan are very serious. Most importantly, these duties include the unrestrained access to the Polish language, Polish culture and religion. I would like to thank all Polish teachers working here, Polish priests without whom maintaining Polish national identity would have been extremely difficult. Also, I would like to thank all social workers who organize different forms of cooperation, for all they have done here in order to make Poland not only a symbolic and sentimental sign in your consciousness, but an actual, factual notion based on solid foundations. Foundations of history, language, and culture. We shall continue this.

I would like to assure that during my talks with President Nazarbaiev we tackled the issue of Polish language teaching, that we want to provide the teachers coming here with even better working conditions. We also talked about the greater opportunities of scholarships for youth of Polish origin in Poland. The President promised that we would check whether it would be technically feasible for Polish TV Polonia to be broadcasted in Kazakhstan. And I can assure you that you shall have your prime time on TV Polonia to present your problems and daily issues. By doing so, your problems become known not only in Kazakhstan, but also in Warsaw, Paris London and New York.

I would like also to appeal to Ministers who accompany me to work out proper methods for supporting and teaching the skills of entrepreneurship. So we were able to help Poles here to establish medium and small companies, to create a special fund that would ease those people to start running their own business. Today Poland and Kazakhstan are countries with market economy. All the more it is worthwhile learning the rules of such economy.

I would like to address you, Ladies and Gentlemen. Polishness and being a Pole are not easy tasks. Our historical lot is exceptional and special. The winds of history have been once blowing eastwards, the other time westwards. (...) Poland and Kazakhstan do know how difficult it is to keep its own territory, identity, language, culture while being faced with the great powers of this world. The more I am grateful to you that you have managed to accomplish this task, that you are conscious and active Poles, but I would like to ask you for one thing – you have to learn Polish, you have to convince young people to learn Polish, to explore Polish culture, contemporary Poland, to learn more on democratic institutions and law that are present in Poland. Because Poland is different too. You have to learn this new Poland as well. How does the democracy work, the local authorities, and self governments, what are the civic duties. If we are able to do it together, if Poland's authorities are capable of undertaking this challenge, as well as the Poles living in Kazakhstan are, I am fully positive that we shall succeed. We shall succeed in meeting each other, feeling safe and successful.

6. Speech delivered during the meeting with the participants  
of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Congress of Polish Communities and Poles living abroad  
– 30<sup>th</sup> of April 2001

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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

I would like to welcome all of you who have arrived to Poland and to the Presidential Palace today. By doing so, you have proven that Poland and Poles are present practically everywhere. I welcome you here, in this building, which not only is the official seat of the head of the state, but a historical part of the Royal Route in Warsaw. It is symbolic, that Poles in different countries worldwide contributed to the renovation of the palace that surmounts the Route, thus proving their vivid bonds with the country of their ancestors.

These bonds and links have always remained a characteristic and distinct feature of Polish Diaspora. They were reflected in the support for the Polish peoples drive towards freedom, democracy and independence, so vividly and deeply experienced by us in the 80s. I think now not only of financial support, but also of a moral one, demonstrated wherever the Polish people are living. Your support played a key role in the realization of one of the strategic goals of Polish politics in the 90s – joining NATO. I have great respect and gratitude for the activists of Polonia organizations, teachers, priests, journalists, businessmen and all who had helped us enter the Organization and who care about contemporary Poland.

Thank you all for your help, support and activities. I am convinced that also in the future you shall be the informal representatives and ambassadors of Poland.

We are proud of Poles and people of Polish origin, who by their service to new homelands – in the past and today – thanks to their spirit of entrepreneurship, knowledge and skills, as well as thanks to genuine, conscientious everyday work have fitted into new societies, achieving high and not infrequently prominent status therein. We would like to eliminate any formal obstacles that can

unfortunately be still observed in direct relations with Poland, starting from tourist trips, scholarships, studies, undertaking work, or running businesses, the possibility of temporary stay, to returns and repatriation. In order to achieve this, we are preparing new legal solutions concerning the act on citizenship and the Polish Card. I do realize that these projects have met with significant interest of yours, and – with relation to some regulations – significant concerns. I do believe that together with the Polish communities we shall be able to solve the emerging problems and concerns. Maintaining and cultivating the relationships with Polish communities and Poles living abroad is one of the issues the Polish people are unanimous about. I am deeply convinced that so shall be in the future, regardless of the political affiliations of authorities governing Poland.

You can be sure about it!

No government, no Parliament shall forget about the relations with Poles and Polish communities, about legal solutions most conducive thereto.

The issue of great importance as far as the vivid contact with the homeland is concerned is the access to TV, radio, and newspapers. This makes it possible to develop a personal approach and stance in relation to the Polish reality, contact with language and culture. I do know it is not always possible. I shall do my best to – within our financial and technical capacities – provide Polish mass media with the widest availability possible wherever Poles are living. The same concerns supporting the development of Polish education, especially in countries, where such an activity is hindered or distorted, and the material situation of Poles and Polish communities living there, as for example in Kazakhstan, makes the access to said education difficult or simply impossible.

There is one more thing we all are unanimous about. Poles, regardless of the place they live, shall remain solidary and solid. So, let us be solidary and unanimous with all those who need our support badly – with our fellow compatriots living in the East, in the former Soviet Union countries. They most sincerely wish they could preserve the Polish language, or go back to it. They wish they could watch Polish TV and read Polish books; they are anxious for reaching the same civilizational standard as contemporary Poles. Dear Ladies and Gentlemen, let us help them in achieving these goals and I am sure that when we join our efforts we shall manage to do so.

The experience has taught us that one of the basic conditions for improving and strengthening the position of Polish communities and the success of organizations representing them is the ability to work together, in harmony, in the name

of the common good. Here the old saying proves to be true: united we stand, divided we fall. I wish we had this unanimity and unity in action allowing us to overcome any and all obstacles – wherever any clashes exist! There is room for different views and stances, room for discussions and polemics both in the Homeland and in Diaspora. However, it is always worthwhile keeping to an old rule developed by the Union of Poles in Germany in the 20s and 30s – “Poland is our mother – you shall not speak ill of her.”

Today, Poland is a free country again. We have democracy. The understanding for Poland’s *raison d’état* is shaped first of all in internal, sometimes difficult and painstaking discussion. The Polish Nation is the ultimate judge of our debates and discussions; it is a nation that decides independently in consecutive elections who shall rule the country for the next term. We all have the right to have our own opinion on the situation in Poland, internal and foreign politics, on the ways for reconciliation over historic tragedies between Poles and Germans, Russians, Ukrainians, and Jews. However, it is always worth considering whether what we are going to say is good for Poland. Whether such or other opinion supports Poland in realizing our national interest.

Poland is our common experience, but also arguments, differences in opinions, disagreements, etc. Poland is our shared home. Also, Poland is a country that is present, recognized, and appreciated on the international arena, but it is subject to criticism as well. We want to be proud of Poland and we have our five minutes to prove so, not only with regard to our heroic past, but also prospects for the future we are trying to make the most of. We want Poland to be appreciated and respected worldwide, and we together have to work on it. The image of Poland shall by no means be built with or on old, harmful stereotypes and new prejudices. We shall get rid of notions that take us back to the dark, gloomy past. We can achieve anything we want, under one condition – we have to respect each other, be honest and open towards each other. We shall treat the neighbour, our neighbours and other nations the way we would like to be treated by others.

Contemporary world becomes increasingly available and open, increasingly dependent on mutual, concerted actions of particular countries and generations being the core thereof. Therefore, it is of key importance to cooperate with the youth, and I strongly encourage all Polonia activists to undertake the cooperation with younger generations. The development of communication diminishes the geographical distance, economic decisions taken have global implications, and we can clearly observe the process of unification of customs, culture, and education. Working abroad, departures and returns become a part of our normal, daily life, lacking the dramatics of decisions made long-ago.

How do these new phenomena influence the status and future of Polish communities and Poles abroad? What are the implications thereof for the activity of Polish communities? How shall these communities enter the new century without being deprived of an achieved status and glorious traditions? These are just a few questions you are looking forward to answer during the plenary sessions and discussions of this year's Congress. I wish you a lot of fruitful, effective and satisfactory discussions. I would like to pass onto your hands the greetings for Poles and Polish communities worldwide. I hope they keep in hearty mind the Old Country Poland and I wish them to become a living link joining Poland and its society with other nations and societies. Poland is everywhere you live. May Poland remain in the hearts of millions of people, who have the feeling of roots and tradition. We shall spare no efforts to make those young people of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, who are living in Poland and abroad, and for whom Poland is one of the most important and precious words, be proud of their Homeland.



## 7. Speech delivered during the Senate debate on the Polish communities' issues – (excerpts) 30<sup>th</sup> of April 2002

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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

One of the Senate's traditions, dating back to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic of Poland, is to care for the issues of Polish communities' abroad. I am glad that the works of the supreme chamber of the 5<sup>th</sup> term, as well as the work of the Speaker of the Senate Longin Pastusiak provide for the said issued as the matter of utmost importance. It is an adequate and suitable place and the right moment to take care – in a proper and comprehensive way – of the problems of Poles living abroad that have been accumulating for years. Paraphrasing the poet's words, one can say that taking care of Polonia abroad shall be our ultimate, common obligation and duty. I would like to stress that no country, I say once again – no country in the entire world has bigger Diaspora than Poland does. It has been proven and verified that Poles are present in every country on every continent. We can meet our fellow compatriots even in Oceania, on Mauritanian deserts or Manchurian grasslands. For several consecutive centuries, great emigrations have moved millions of our compatriots abroad. Poles were leaving the country due to economic, warfare, or for political reasons. We especially painfully do recall the most recent emigration waves, those dating back to the 50s, those from 1968, or those which took place after martial law was introduced. There is a personal tragedy hidden under each emigration wave, each person leaving the country. Yet at the same time it is a chance for a better life, people are leaving looking for hope and safety. In many instances, emigration meant for Poland the loss of prominent persons – quite often it was an irreparable loss. On the other hand, emigration means also great persons with eternal merits both for their new homelands, and for Poland, and, in a broader context, for the entire world. While speaking of emigration, of Poles in exile, one can not forget to mention Fryderyk Chopin or Maria Curie-Skłodowska, Mickiewicz or Norwid. We simple can not forget about a prominent engineer Ernest Malinowski who designed the trans-Andean railway, Ignacy Domeyko – founder and creator of the education system in Chile, and great explorer and inventor Habich who established the first University of Technology in Lima, Peru, great artists such

as Gombrowicz or Czapski, military leaders – general Maczek and many other Polish commanders, or an outstanding person of professor Jan Karski.

This list is much more voluminous and we should on the occasion such as this one mention many other prominent Poles who served Poland and the world the best they could while in exile. (...)

I have conducted a number of conversations with compatriots abroad and I do know what they expect from us and what is most important for them. This list is quite long, as Speaker Pastusiak has already mentioned. Surely, the list includes several legal solutions that shall be friendly, understandable and comprehensive for Poles living abroad. We can mention the unrestricted feasibility of staying in touch with the Homeland. It is the authorities' activity aimed at supporting our fellow compatriots in their new homelands and homes they live in. It is of course the notion of citizenship, both applying for and resigning from – these regulations do exist and I find the present solutions regarding this issue satisfactory. I am glad that we were able to recompense our compatriots for the losses and injustice in 1968 and later on, that were inflicted on those who wanted to become again the citizens of the Republic of Poland. Of course, there is a great problem of repatriation – coming back to Poland and here we shall be open yet realistic about it. We shall develop clear solutions. It would be highly immoral and indecent to shower those who have already suffered much with promises of easy return to their Homeland. They have to be provided with reliable, honest information concerning the possibilities of coming back to Poland and the scope thereof. However, when I wonder what our fellow compatriots want the most; I think it is the access to and availability of the national cultural heritage. Access to books, archives, newspapers, magazines and other materials that is conducive to the cultivation of Polish tradition, history, and knowledge of language. It is especially true in the case of young people – next generations, who were already born abroad. Therefore, we need stronger and more decisive support for Polish communities' education and culture – both in the West and East. I think that here we shall look for financial means and other non-investment forms of support for those interests and needs of our compatriots.

Poles living abroad shall also have better access to the comprehensive, reliable, and provided in attractive form information on our country. And I would to stress here the special role of Polish Radio and Polish Television, especially TV Polonia. I have been to Brazil recently and I took part in the official ceremony of launching the TV Polonia signal being broadcasted to South America. I saw the happiness and joy of all our compatriots who participated in this ceremony, despite the fact that probably few of them can afford buying the satellite decoder.

Nevertheless, Polonia associations have been given a very powerful tool. This is the form of cooperation and work we shall support. (...)

Many a time did I express my gratitude to the Polish community in America for our joint successful efforts aimed at Poland accession to NATO. I did so each time I met with the Poles living in the United States. I also gave expression to it on February this year, during the solemn ceremony of awarding with national distinctions the journalists of “Nowy Dziennik” – the New York magazine, for their merits in promoting Polish culture and tradition.

Still, I would like to express the words of my hearty gratitude to all our compatriots living in different parts of the world, who spared no effort in order to preserve the mother tongue and tradition, who cultivated national heritage and legacy, commemorated the remembrance of the most important events in our history. For me and those who have accompanied me, these have always been very touching, emotional moments, when I could meet here Poles speaking fluent, impeccable Polish, despite the fact that they had left Poland a couple of decades ago, or they are the descendants of those who left Poland over a century ago in seeking for livelihood. I would like to say here, at your presence, that we are proud of the fact that your homes and families have always been and still are a piece of Poland, your Homeland.

I am deeply convinced that Polonia is a strong asset and great capital of Poland on the international arena. I must admit that neither do we entirely realize nor fully take advantage of that. First of all, the role of the Polish communities in promoting our country is clearly underestimated, especially with regard to Polish products and brands that might have become the identification mark of our country. The contribution of Polish communities into the development of Poland’s economic cooperation with abroad is far below the capabilities and expectations, as well as needs. I think that in the presence of new challenges Poland has to face, also the Polish communities, being a peculiar kind of lobby, can play an important role – I mean here our efforts aimed at joining the EU, regional cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe. (...)

We all are responsible for Poland’s good name. First of all, this responsibility is upon us – here and now, on living and working Polish authorities. Yet the NGOs and social agencies have a great role to play. It is impossible to mention them all, but the ones that have to be named are: the Polish Community and the Foundation Aid to Poles in the East. The Catholic Church is of great importance here, as well as other Churches. I had the occasion to observe the work of Polish priests in different parts of the world and I have to objectively admit that but for them it would have been extremely difficult to conduct

such an educative activity, and at the same time cultivate Polish tradition and language. However, the responsibility for the good name of Poland is upon Polonia organizations and activists whose declarations and actions are attentively observed and examined by mass media and opinion-making circles.

Please, dear Ladies and Gentlemen do bear it in mind. You all constitute an entity and this entity is subject to observation and criticism. That is why I think that we shall have a shared – I stress this word – shared awareness of the common responsibility for Poland’s good name worldwide and we shall do our best to be proud of and pleased with this opinion ourselves, as Poles. (...)

I look into the future of Polish communities’ cooperation with the Homeland with optimism. Today’s debate, the foretoken of imminent presentation of governmental solutions within this field, the initiatives presented by the Speaker of the Senate Mr. Longin Pastusiak, let us cherish hope that the matters concerning Polish communities shall be given the proper dimension and dynamics in our country’s politics.

Of course I do not have to add that there is a strong connection between the situation of Polish communities and the way we treat the ethnic minorities in Poland. One can say straightforwardly that our efforts aimed at making this policy towards minorities meet any and all European and global standards is one of the forms of supporting and helping Poles living abroad. Why? Since it allows us to use the strong argument that, as far as this policy is concerned, we fulfill our requirements fully and duly. We are the country that fully respects the international standards and we have the right to expect the same from others.

I am using this opportunity – the Senate session and the forthcoming Day of Polonia – to express my sincere greetings to all Poles scattered on the entire world. I would like to assure you that you have a very affectionate friend and committed ally in my person. I shall support any and all activities conducive to the welfare and well being of the Polish communities and your successful and fruitful contacts with your Homeland.

“Everyone’s home – Poland” not only was the catchphrase of my presidential campaign. Everyone’s home – Poland is my deepest desire, conviction and goal of my activity. This everyone’s home is a home we all owe the utmost care, hard work and love. This home gives us the sense of safety, power and pride. Today, I would like to say one more thing: this home is your home too, my Dear Compatriots, wherever you are. It is your home, our common and shared home – Poland.

## F. The process of reconciliation and cooperation with the Jewish community in Poland

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1. Address to the participants of the 10<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Social and Cultural Association of the Jewish Community in Poland  
– Srodborow, 30<sup>th</sup> of March 1996
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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

On the occasion of the jubilee of the 10<sup>th</sup> Congress of your Association, I would like to express my best wishes of many years of successful and effective activity of your community in Poland to all of you, members of the Cultural Association of the Jewish Community.

I welcome this solemn meeting with satisfaction. With joy – the fact that you are here amongst us! United with the bonds of blood, tradition and custom, the descendants of survivors from the hell of extermination – you live, exist and work on Polish ground, the ground that was recognized by your predecessors centuries ago. You are part of it. You are part of the Polish nation. You enrich and improve the daily existence thereof with your work. This nation's diverse culture is enriched with the ancient culture of your society. By cultivating old, good customs of your ancestors you participate – together with all inhabitants of this country – in the creation of a world that respects and cherishes the universal values dear to every human being. The world in which distinctness is esteemed and appreciated, since it decides on its diversity that enriches all and everything.

For more than half a century, your Association has been conducting activity that managed to survive despite difficult twists and turns of our reality. Those twists and turns resulted in both societies making the difficult, yet righteous and non-opportunistic choices. It belongs to the past already. We are together now. As you inherit our achievements, we inherit yours. We are proud that Jewish culture, marked with such noble and distinct names as Ida Kaminska, Jonasz Stern, Jakub Rotbaum and many others, is still developing, becoming the part of our shared and common heritage. If it had not been for your effort, the Jewish language, literature and drama, complicated history and fascinating customs would not have been saved from oblivion in Poland. This effort

does bring results. It is conducive to the integration of the Jewish society, and by passing on the knowledge on to you and making people aware of values so precious for you – learn the respect thereto. First of all, it makes it possible for you and us to have the big picture of the world.

Today's world too easily is clapped into the stereotypical way of thinking. The creative diversity is suppressed in it. Thanks to the activity of such Associations as yours, there is a chance of overcoming similar dangers. We understand increasingly better the beauty and value of the world rich with its diversity. It calls for respect towards one's own achievements and protects against the mirages of present time standardizing the world.

Such a life experience, mutually shared, can become a long –lasting foundation for Polish and Jewish future.

I wish the members of the Cultural Association of Jewish Community many years of peaceful work, for the mutual benefit, satisfaction and content.

## 2. Message to the participants of the March of the Living in Auschwitz–Birkenau – 16<sup>th</sup> of April 1996

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Dear Friends,

You are here to remember. You have arrived here from the most remote parts of the world. Fifty six years ago, in this place, the machine of death started working. In front of the world's very own eyes, the biggest crime in the history of mankind took place. The victims thereof were all: Jews, Poles, Russians, and Gypsies... Hatred and violence united to exterminate the Jewish nation.

Today, sons and daughters of survivors are here.

Those who came and gathered here are against nationalism, xenophobia, disdain towards a human being. Together, we bow our heads down before the suffering and pain of the victims. Together, we testify to the reconciliation towards the trauma of the past, unity towards evil, hope and trust in the victory of good.

Young Jews and Poles bear a special responsibility. You are the grandchildren of generations of tragedy, dramas, crime, poverty and holocaust! Yet, you are also the inheritors of shared experience, rich culture and tradition. It is you who bear the historic responsibility of preserving what was good, common, and rejecting all that divided and caused suffering – and today is perceived as harmful stereotype.

I do believe in you and your mission. Your world has to be better, free, safe, wealthy. Filled with human dignity and friendship between nations.

Do it!

Let us shake hands.



### 3. Official statement after setting fire to the Warsaw synagogue (press release) – 26<sup>th</sup> of February 1997

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President of the Republic of Poland A. Kwasniewski does condemn this savage and reckless act of setting fire to the Synagogue in Warsaw, and he would like to express his deepest sorrow in relation to it. This barbarous act remains in clear contradiction to the Polish culture, tradition of tolerance and respect towards the places of regional worship. For us, the Polish people, this event is even more painful and shameful since it was aimed against the Jewish community in Poland, a community that has been present amongst us for 800 years and was so drastically and cruelly experienced by the 20<sup>th</sup> century history, when Jews became the ultimate victims of the Nazis' extermination. President Aleksander Kwasniewski stresses that the Polish nation, government and state authorities denounce any and all manifestations of racism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia. The Polish people do want to build on good, friendly relationships with Jews living in Poland and abroad. Any kind of criminal activities committed by individual perpetrators can not hamper us in maintaining those good relationships. The President would like to assure that these activities shall be subject to criminal prosecution with full consequences thereof and law enforcement.

## 4. Speech delivered during the ceremony of awarding for merits in the development of Polish-Jewish relationships (excerpts) – 12<sup>th</sup> of November 1998

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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

Today's special ceremony, the heroes of which are the people especially meritorious for the Polish-Jewish dialogue, is also the opportunity for reflection over the present condition of relationships between our nations.

I think that there are many issues to be proud of and satisfied with. Despite of the difficult starting point, we have managed to achieve many positive things. We have reconstructed mutual trust; we have shown that we are open to the dialogue, that our willingness to reach the consensus and reconciliation is factual and honest. The government of the independent Republic of Poland has unanimously condemned the injustice and vileness of the post war period. During recent years, we have managed to introduce a number of important and relevant legal solutions, thus creating a solid legal basis for the activity of the Jewish communities in Poland and the process of restitution of their property. Jewish communities become increasingly present in our public life, in numerous domains. Their activity enriches the heritage and achievements of Polish civic society. Positive development of Polish-Jewish relationships and relations of our country with Jewish Diaspora constitute a positive completion thereof.

Yet this has not happened by itself. Particular persons have contributed to it. Many of them are present today in this room. What was especially important and significant was that from amongst the Polish and Jewish communities, on both coasts of the Atlantic Ocean, a great coalition of common sense has emerged. This coalition consists of people who avoid extreme forms of stances, who feel responsible for the relationships between our nations.

However, we do realize that there are still some unsolved problems to deal with. We can avoid being disillusioned if we assume that they are likely to emerge in

the future as well. The character of our relationships is a complex one, it originates in the depth of past centuries and the chain of diverse circumstances.

Our remembrance of the past is inextricably connected to the tragedy of the Holocaust. The extermination inflicted by Nazis on millions of Jews on Polish soil is a horrible wound in the history of the Jewish nation and a terrible memento for the entire humankind. It is Poland's joint duty and responsibility to ensure that the remembrance of the Holocaust victims remains specially protected and preserved and the places of their martyrdom are properly cared for and respected.

Many a time have we proven that we perceive this duty in a very concrete way, as the obligation to undertake proper legal and organizational steps; we have also proven that the opinion of Jewish community thereon is of great importance for us. (...)

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

We meet here the day after the Polish Independence Day; therefore, today's ceremony can be perceived in a much broader context. The glorious moment of Poland becoming independent again, which took place 80 years ago, was preceded by the work and fight of many generations. We shall always remember how great was the cultural and civilizational contribution of Polish Jews to the development of our society, and later on – our independent Polish State. We also remember about the imposition of blood the Jewish inhabitants of this land had paid in order for Poland to be free, to do away with evil and violence. It is my sincere wish that the expression of recognition and respect to the personages decorated today shall accompany the words of gratitude and deepest respect that the Polish nation expresses towards our fellow Jewish nation.

## 5. Speech delivered during the International Forum dedicated to the Holocaust (excerpts) – Stockholm, 26<sup>th</sup> of January 2000

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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

I am representing a special country and a special land. People, war, witnesses, archives. It is important indeed. However, the best possible lesson on the Holocaust one can learn is to take a look through the Auschwitz-Birkenau entrance gate and to look at the camp's perspective and the chimneys of the great crematorium. The vastness of atrocity and crime, careful planning, helplessness of victims. The world has to remember.

Precisely tomorrow, on the 27<sup>th</sup> of January, we shall celebrate the 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the liberation of Oswiecim and those sparse KL Auschwitz-Birkenau prisoners who had managed to survive in the camp.

I presume then, that such a date for organizing the International Forum on Holocaust was chosen by the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Sweden on purpose, not by coincidence at all. Unfortunately enough, there were many more tragic places of the Holocaust on Polish soil than Auschwitz itself: Chelmno, Treblinka, Sobibor, Belzec, Majdanek, and Sztuthof; however, the first and the biggest of these camps, Auschwitz, became the symbol. It became the synonym of evil that was born out of hatred and disdain towards other human beings, racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism.

All those places of torture and torment of millions of human beings were built by men. By men who were doing it in the name of insane ideology. It was this ideology that in October 1939 made the Polish city of Oswiecim, along with the major part of our country a part of the German Reich. It was supposed to last for at least one millennium, and during this time the conquerors of Polish territory were to enslave the Polish citizens and it aimed at expunging from the historic memory the notion of "Poland" as a country.

The concentration camp that Germans had started to build immediately afterwards, was to be used for the purposes of executing these criminal intentions. It was then when the world, knowing hardly anything about Oswiecim before, had heard for the first time the sinister name – Auschwitz. Two years later, this name became inextricably linked to the tragic Birkenau. For five long war years, the world was not able to believe in what had been happening there. And, unfortunately, cannot and is not able to believe even today. (...)

Auschwitz and the entire traumatic experience of the Second World War have remained a warning for all of us – that in particular, special historical conditions, people become the creators of such institutions and systems of social and political life that may lead to genocide, atrocities, to the bureaucratization of mass murdering, to the trivialization thereof and evil.

Therefore, it is never enough to remind ourselves and realize that – if conducive conditions are provided – people can become the executors, frequently very fanatic and overeager executors of immoral orders and antihuman goals. (...)

It is my intention, the intention of the President of the Republic of Poland, as well as Poland's intention, to preserve Auschwitz–Birkenau as a cemetery and place of remembrance. I perceive it as very important that young people coming from all over the world should visit this place. We want to preserve Auschwitz, so it could last in its tragic dimension and could appeal to the imagination and conscience of generations to come. So it could make people aware of this tragic fact that it was people who prepared and implemented this tragic fate for their fellow men..

So, I would like to assure all who gathered here that the Polish people shall spare no effort to save this place – for generations to come. In our opinion, there shall be established a center of teaching and education on Holocaust, since it was here where, as Elie Wiesel rightly noticed: despite the fact that “not all victims were Jews, yet all Jews were victims.”

We, the Polish people, perceive it as our duty to remind others about the Jews' extermination and Holocaust. These people, living in Poland in the biggest number in Europe, had been present amongst us from centuries. We used to live next to each other. Their remembrance and achievements do still exist in our history, culture, science. Many prominent and recognized Polish artists, scientists, doctors, were Jews. In Auschwitz and other concentration camps we lost our fellow countrymen, dwellers on the same ground, Polish citizens. It is our personal loss. We think about the war tragedy of Jews with piercing pain and suffering.

We want to save the memory of them. Not only the memory of the Shoah, but the memory of their splendid, superb past, their living with us for a long time. The memory of Jewish culture, customs, knowledge, as well as their inextricable and unforgettable contribution to Polish culture, knowledge and customs. Therefore, it is with great pleasure and satisfaction that I welcome and support the initiative to built in Warsaw, on the territory of the former ghetto, where there was the most numerous cluster of Jews before the Second World War, the Museum of the History of Polish Jews. I do believe you shall support this idea too.

This museum shall commemorate the lot of the Jewish nation in Poland; being another education center – it shall meet the needs of many of my fellow countrymen, especially the young. Among them, there are many young people who are extremely interested in the centuries-old history of Polish and Jewish Diaspora. And they are the ones to pass the memory of the Jews' fate in Poland onto generations to come.

Tomorrow's anniversary of the liberating of Oswiecim I shall celebrate on the camp's area, together with former prisoners. I shall pass them on the message from Stockholm, that the memory of Auschwitz, of the holocaust, is a shared memory of the entire Europe. I shall welcome unfortunately already scanty in number former prisoners who had managed to survive the Holocaust, the ultimate extermination and who attend the anniversary ceremony. And I shall promise them, the descendants of a shared fate, sentenced to death by Nazis, I shall promise all the victims of the greatest tragedy in the history of mankind: we shall not forget! I shall recall their martyrdom and assure: the world shall never forget! The world can not forget about it!

## 6. Interview for "Tygodnik Powszechny" – a Polish weekly (excerpts) – 11<sup>th</sup> of April 2001

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*Mr. President, why did you decide to discuss the issue of Jedwabne with "Tygodnik Powszechny"?*

The pogrom in Jedwabne is a fact. It is amazing that we have been surprised by it. In 1949 we had a trial in this case, some documents did exist, and for 60 years we have believed that something like that would not have been possible at all. By the way, I asked gen. Jaruzelski about Jedwabne. Did he know anything? After all, he exercised great power for a number of years, and he is interested in history. He replied: "I do not know what to swear by, but I did not know anything". Of course, there were thousands of arguments indicating we should not even reveal such kind of events: what is the world going to say? Not now, when we are in the course of improving the Polish-Jewish relationships. Such was the case in the past. Well, now, the damage is done: we have been brutally roused from the state of bliss.

However, there is hope that the tragedy of Jedwabne shall make us better, stronger, and wiser. Under one condition though: we have to sit and have a genuine, true discussion. This discussion can not be based on stereotypes or emotions. And all communities have to participate therein. It can not be ceded solely to historians – it is too small and hermetic a circle. Nor can it be ceded to the hands of politicians – since it is not an issue that should be a subject to any kind of party games. It has to be the debate that shall become a part of the Poles considerations and re-evaluations, regardless of their political affiliations and beliefs, social position, etc.

For many years, "Tygodnik Powszechny" weekly has been the place for serious and honest reflection on the most important Polish problems. Also the case of Jedwabne is described both reliably and in a responsible manner, as well as in multi-aspect dimension.

*Mr. President, you have announced that in the anniversary of the pogrom you would go to Jedwabne to apologize for this atrocity. However, a doubt arose as to whether such an apology expressed by the head of the state can be perceived globally as Poland's plea of guilty – as the state – admission of its responsibility of killing Jews. The Primate of Poland Glemp has used this argument to justify his decision not to go to Jedwabne. According to him – the apology expressed by the Episcopate of Poland, or himself – the Chairman of the Conference of the Episcopate of Poland might give the impression that the church confirms the thesis that supposedly all Polish Catholics are guilty of the pogrom. Are you not afraid that the gesture of a “state” apology might have been interpreted in this way?*

I am elevated both by the declarations of Primate of Poland and the statements of Archbishop Henryk Muszynski – in “Tygodnik”. Particularly in the case of Jedwabne, the voice of the Catholic Church is of incomparably greater importance than what the president or prime minister shall do about it. We shall take into consideration both the reception in Poland and abroad. I appreciate that the Church in Poland decided to behave actively.

Let me stress once again: if we want to recover from the Jedwabne case as better, stronger and wiser people, we have to tell the whole truth about these events. However, to tell the truth does not mean we should blame the entire nation or the state. Amongst Poles, there were people who were helping Jews and saved them. There were also those who betrayed Jews and – yes, it did happen – killed them. One of the conclusions we may draw from the Jedwabne case is that we cannot, and even we should not – balance heroism and meanness. Unfortunately, one does not exclude the other. In Poland, we witnessed great nobleness and great shame. We have to admit it and talk about this complexity openly.

*There is also one more dimension of such a “state-induced” apology: when the atrocity in Jedwabne took place, the Polish State did not cover this territory with its jurisdiction. So, for example, when German Chancellor Willy Brandt was rightly apologizing for German guilt during the Second World War – since they were committed for and on behalf of the German state, in Jedwabne nothing like that happened at all.*

Apologizing for Jedwabne does not mean that Poland accepts full responsibility for this crime nor does it accept the joint responsibility for the atrocities of the Holocaust. One can not change history: we shall not forget who started the Second World War, who wrote the Nuremberg Laws, who organized concentration camps, who adopted the notion of Endloesung. We do know that Nazism and Hitler are the ultimate source thereof. We are also fully aware



of the crimes and nature of the second one – the communist regime; we also know that for some time, as the result of the Ribbentrop – Molotow Pact, these two regimes supported each other. The historical background of Jedwabne is obvious. And this shall be recalled as well.

The most important thing is that we have to adopt our own approach towards the crime in Jedwabne, which shall be based on truth. We have to call a spade a spade. While remembering the context, we have to state that this cruel murder in Jedwabne was committed by Poles, our countrymen. Therefore, we should do what should be done given the situation: we have to apologize and ask for forgiveness. Yet, we have to add that we do believe that the odium of murder shall not be extended over all Poles and we believe that based on this truth we shall be able to build up the bridges of reconciliation between the Polish people and Jews. And, based on this truth, we shall change our own attitude and approach: to put an end to any manifestation of intolerance, anti-Semitism, prejudices.

I would give a lot for Jedwabne to be just a nightmare and a bad dream that had never happened. Tragically enough, Jedwabne did happen. Therefore, we should approach this fact with full responsibility. Of course, it is entirely untrue that all Poles are to be blamed for the Jedwabne atrocity, and the Polish State is responsible for the Holocaust. However, if now, on 10<sup>th</sup> of July, on the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the murder, the president of the Republic of Poland had not attended the ceremony in Jedwabne, both the international community – not only Jews – and our society might have perceived it as the ostrich policy. Lack of reaction could have aggravated the perception of Poland and might have been more dangerous for our prestige than an honest and true apology.

*Rabin Michael Schudrich suggested to the Primate of Poland to meet during common prayer, join in mourning in such a way that it would not result in some kind of squaring, in blaming each other for what was done, mutual accusations. Maybe such a gesture would be more proper in the context of this tragic reality? The more that apology expressed by a politician can be perceived as an element of simple fight for power? I guess there are grounds to fear that the presidential apology can easily be interpreted as a trivial gesture, or even an ambiguous one.*

I would like to remind that many a time did the same people expect that the president would apologize for historic tragedies. I am aware of it and I know that each president or prime minister's gesture shall be assessed in the political context. This is our professional risk. Yet how many a time did the brave and honest politicians' gestures help in overcoming different obstacles and barriers? Such was the case when Willy Brandt knelt in front of the Monument to

the Ghetto Heroes in Warsaw, or when President Yeltsin apologized publicly in front of the Katyn Cross in the Powazki cemetery – he did have tears in his eyes then, real ones. Not only were these events of a political character, but of social too. They changed the mentality, political culture in countries those politicians headed. (...)

I think that it was the Pope who understood the best the extraordinary character of this moment. It was him who claimed that the beginning of a new millennium could be the time of the purification of memory. Someone may say: it is a kind of escape, retreat, forwards. Yes it is, but in a positive sense. The issue here is to say: yes, it did happen, but let us try to draw conclusions from it, and build upon it something better in the future. In the year 2000 John Paul II apologized for the sins of people of the Church – also the misdeeds against the Jews. It is enough to recall his universal and very personal speech delivered at the Yad Vashem institute.

It is worth considering Jedwabne as the element of such a millennium breakthrough. By avoiding this discussion we gain nothing. We can not possibly stop halfway to Jedwabne. We simply have to go there. Also on 10<sup>th</sup> of July.

Of course: “I am sorry” expressed by a politician has a different meaning than the same words articulated in the spiritual and religious context. Yet, at the same time, it means something different, incomparably more important as compared with a casual, polite “I am sorry” being the manifestation of your good manners.

“I am sorry” of a politician expresses a concrete, first of all, factual assessment – be it political, historical, and moral – of a particular fact. Secondly, “I am sorry” of a politician is also – and I find it more important – a declaration: the said politician shall spare no effort to prevent this situation from happening again and that he or she rejects these methods, notions, and behaviors.

Poles, while disputing over the apology for Jedwabne, shall also think whether it would be indifferent for them if Yeltsin did not summon up his courage and apologized for Katyn. Or if German Chancellors: Brandt in Warsaw, Kohl in Krzyszowa, Herzog in the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Warsaw Uprising or recently Schroeder, remained silent and did not bow down before the Polish victims of war. Did we perceive this behavior as empty and routine gestures? Certainly not.

Maybe there is also a third element of such apologies: they are of much greater significance in the country of the apologizing politician than outside it. For

Russians, Yeltsin's "I am sorry" in the context of Katyn must have been a terrible, shocking experience. They were brought up in the strong conviction that 600 thousand of their fellow countrymen were killed by Nazis while fighting for the liberation of Poles. They had their graves and feeling of deepest respect towards the fallen. And they want to live on with this knowledge. However, suddenly their president tells them that there was the atrocity of Katyn and what does matter is not only the fact that Polish officers were shot in the back of the head by Stalin's order, but that those officers were killed by Russians.

One can ask: why should we ever go back to those things? So many years have passed... Here, the answer is simple and it was formulated many a time in the case of Jedwabne: we have to go back since it is a part of our history. If we want to be proud of the glorious chapters of our nation's history, we also have to bear the full responsibility for the dark chapters thereof. As they did happen in Poland, we have to remember them, painful as it may be – also for the sake of our own identity.

Germany can be a good example here – not as a state, but as a nation, the people. Chancellor Schroeder is the first German politician who represents the post-war generation. His father, before the Chancellor's birth, died somewhere on the Romanian frontline, so from the psychological point of view he has right to feel a victim of the war rather than the accomplice thereof. Despite that, being a German, he did not hesitate to apologize.

*Mr. President, do you believe that such political apologies shall transform entirely the awareness of those Poles who still do not accept the truth about Jedwabne? Let's say the inhabitants of this town who for many years have been tolerating the perpetrators of this terrible crime, living next door, and now they are outraged they are being stigmatized?*

Please notice the fact that the discussion, now flaring up in Poland on this particular crime, despite the fact it is extremely difficult, is at the same reliable, honest and mature. A few years ago, reaching a comparable standard of discussion on a similar subject seemed rather unimaginable. I think that we should stress here the role of the IPN. Prof. Kieres' activity does stir up respect.

Last week, when I was watching the documentary "Sasiedzi" (Neighbours) and I was listening to Mr. Janusz Dziedzic, the grandson of Ms. Wyrzykowska who was one of the Righteous, I thought: what this young man says is so deep and emotionally moving that I would be pleased to repeat these words in Jedwabne. Actually, I do not have much to add.

*Did not the Polish state already commit a “sin of omission” with regard to Jedwabne? Experts knew about it for a long time. Press releases concerning the issue of Jedwabne were Published in the USA already in 1996...*

In this sense, the sin of omission was committed much earlier: the problem might have been tackled already after October 1956. Gierek could have done it as well. Your circle did not know anything either, yet the problem had existed somewhere.

*When in 1987 Prof. Blonski published in “Tygodnik” the article entitled “Biedni Polacy patrzy na getto” (Poor Poles look at the ghetto), it did not trigger off a broader discussion due to two reasons: first of all, indeed, the then opinion-forming groups did fear to take up the issue of Poles’ indifference towards the Holocaust or even Poles’ shared guilt. The second reason, however, was the communist censorship. Blonski did not know about Jedwabne, yet he was the first one to face this problem.*

We shall be grateful to Providence that in 1949 the trial of some of the perpetrators did take place after all. Controversial as it was, somebody was sentenced eventually. Where would we have been now if we had not been given even that? Of course, later on the experts did know about the case. I can imagine what arguments were brought forward in order not to publicize it: that it would be detrimental for Poland’s position worldwide; that in fact the Germans are to be blamed for; that making this history a public story shall paradoxically result in the escalation of anti-Semitic attitude in the country. The said arguments were of purely political and immediate character; quite commonly used in the times of a world being divided.

*Well, yet not necessarily, I am afraid: when in 1996 “The New York Times” – a respectable and influential magazine – published an article on Jedwabne, Poland would still disregard this history. This time, however, the argument against was that the outbreak of heated dispute can be conducive to the opponents of Poland’s accession to NATO.*

Well, it was not a completely silly opinion after all.

*You are right; from the political point of view it might not have been silly. But maybe we would have rather taken up the issue – be it even the form of escape forwards? It was commonly known then that the matter was so serious it would have come back sooner or later.*

I would not treat it with such levity. Undoubtedly, making the Jedwabne matter a public story then could have influenced adversely our process of joining NATO.

However, the politicians while making decisions have to take into account the frame of mind of influential social groups – especially in the United States where elections were closing in. Similarly a sensitive matter was the case of revising the sentence passed on col. Kuklinski. I tackled this problem while talking with President Clinton here on this terrace, face to face.

I could complain about another issue – for example, that for 10 years we have not been able to build the Museum of the History of Polish Jews. Having this, we could have presented Jedwabne and Radzilow, and at the same time recall the moving and agitating enterprise of Righteous Among the Nations, common culture of assimilated and non-assimilated Jews. How much easier would it have been now to discuss even the most difficult and controversial matters. I find it as a very serious omission and a mistake.

On the other hand, this delay in undertaking this problem has a positive dimension: today the Polish people are much better prepared to the discussion on Jedwabne than they used to be 20 years ago. (...)

Interlocutors: *rev. Adam Boniecki and Krzysztof Burnetko*

## 7. Speech delivered during the ceremony in Jedwabne – Jedwabne, 10<sup>th</sup> of July 2001

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Mr. Ambassador of Israel, Your Excellency Rabbi, representatives of Jewish communities, your Excellencies – from Poland and abroad, Mr. Mayor and residents of Jedwabne, ladies and gentlemen, countrymen.

On July the 10<sup>th</sup> 1941, sixty years ago on this very land, then conquered and occupied by Nazi Germany, Jews fell victims of carnage. A day of awe it was, a day filled with hate and violence. We have learnt much though still not all there is to learn about this crime. It could be that the whole truth will never be known. That, however, has not deterred us from assembling here today, or from speaking on the issue in clear terms. We have learnt enough to desire to face the reality of the pain, the desperate call and the anguish of those murdered here; and to do so alongside the victims' family members present here today, and before the high court of our own conscience. This was a crime nothing can justify. Among the victims – those burnt alive – were women and children. The terrifying cries of the human beings rounded up into a barn set afire continue to devastate those who witnessed the killings. The victims were vulnerable and defenceless, their killers driven by a sense of impunity reinforced through the incitement coming from the occupying forces. It has been established beyond doubt that Polish people formed part of the persecuting and tormenting mob here. We can say with all certainty that in Jedwabne citizens of the Republic of Poland died at the hands of some other of her citizens, the destiny of the former sealed by no other than their fellow men – their neighbours!

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the time, sixty years ago, as the scheme to wipe Poland off the map of Europe was unfolding, there were no Polish authorities in Jedwabne. The Polish state was not able to protect its citizens against a massacre sanctioned and inspired by the Hitlerite state. Yet, the Republic of Poland should have endured in Polish hearts and minds. The norms of a civilised polity, of the nation proud of its age-old tradition of toleration and harmonious racial and religious coexistence

were still valid, or rather should have remained valid and binding on her citizens. Thus, those involved in the hounding down and the assaults, the butchery and the setting of fires perpetrated those crimes against their Jewish neighbours, and beyond that against the Republic of Poland: her majestic history and her glorious traditions.

Dearly Gathered,

We stand on a hapless land. By ordain of fate, tragic for its present inhabitants, its name – Jedwabne had turned into an appellation that conjures up in our common memory the demons of fratricide. It was not only in Jedwabne that the superstition-fed prejudices burst into flames of hatred and anti-Semitism in the course of that “age of furnaces”. The responsibility for those deaths, the wrongs and the sufferings inflicted upon the Jews of Jedwabne, as on those of Radzilowo and some other localities, for those unspeakable events that cast so gloomy a shadow on Poland’s history, rests with their perpetrators and instigators. We cannot speak of collective responsibility, laying the guilt, be it, on an entire nation or a specific locality’s population. People can be held responsible only for their own deeds. The iniquity of the fathers is not inherited by the sons. Does that, however, warrant our saying that all those things happened long ago and involved others? A nation is a community: a community of individuals and a kinship of generations. That is why we need to face the truth, and to face every truth, with no exception. That is why we need to say: this is the way it was, this is what happened. Only if the memory of those days strikes horror and moral indignation in our hearts will our conscience be free. We are here to have a collective heart-searching. As we pay tribute to the victims, we also say: never again. On this day, let us all think ourselves Jedwabne’s inhabitants, and all be as they are. Let us stand with them in the shared sense of remorse, despair, shame and of solidarity. Cain could have slain Abel anywhere. Any community could have been put to a similar test, a test of evil and of good, of depravity and of decency. Righteous are those whose response to human suffering is compassion. Many were the Poles – including some residents of the surrounding lands and of Jedwabne itself – who have earned the right to be called the righteous ones! We remember them all today with supreme gratitude and utmost respect.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

The great national debate around this crime committed in 1941 proved life changing for us. Our consciousness in the year 2001, the first year in the new millennium, has been altered forever. Today, Poland has the courage to face the truth of a nightmare that has begloomed one of the chapters of her history. We

have become conscious of our responsibility for the way we think of the sinister episodes of the past. We realised that the nation is ill served by those who would have us deny that past. Such an attitude leads to moral self-destruction. We, the assembled, together with all in this country whose conscience is tender and with its lay and religious moral authorities, who have consolidated our adherence to the basic values, now pay homage to the memory of those murdered here and express our deepest remorse at the vileness of this crime's perpetrators. We articulate our pain and shame, express our determination to uncover the truth and communicate our indomitable will for reconciliation and concord. On account of this crime we should plead forgiveness with the shadows of the departed and their families, with each of those then victimized. I express remorse today as a human being and as a citizen and the President of the Republic of Poland. I do so in my own name and on behalf of the Polish people who are appalled in their conscience at this crime; of those who believe they can take no pride in the greatness of Polish history without, at the same time, feeling the pain and the shame for the evil that Poles had caused to others.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would, with all of my heart, wish that this town's name be not identified with this crime alone, but that it equally stand as a symbol of great self-examination, becoming a paragon of reconciliation. On the 27<sup>th</sup> of May, Polish bishops prayed "for all those bearing any resentment or grudge against the Jewish people, that they receive the grace of a change of heart". These words convey well the feelings of the great majority of the Polish people. May this change of heart truly come about. Let us spare no effort to bring it about. The tragedy that was played out here cannot be undone. The evil will not be erased nor the suffering forgotten. The truth about the things that had happened cannot redress them. It is not within its power to do so. At the same time, it is only the truth, the most searing and hurting truth that has the power to disinfect a lesion in the memory. That has been our hope and the reason for our coming together here today. We speak words of remorse, grief and contrition not merely for human decency's sake: not only because others expect them from us, not because the murdered would be thus compensated, and not because the world is watching, or listening to what we would say. We express them because they express just what we feel, because we ourselves are most in need of these words! This we do to become better men, stronger in their moral fibre and free of all prejudice, malice and hate. We express them to express our deepest esteem for men and out of love for mankind.

We do so to turn evil into good.



## 8. Lecture at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem “the Past – the present – the future. The role of a politician in developing the world of dialogue and peace” (excerpts) – Jerusalem, 29<sup>th</sup> of February 2004

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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

I am immensely honoured and honestly moved by being awarded by the Hebrew University the title of doctor honoris causa. This honourable mention is even more extraordinary for me given the fact that it was awarded by the university whose humanistic and scientific scholarly achievements make this institution one of the most prominent centers of global scientific ideas. I am grateful to the Hebrew University also because amongst my predecessors who obtained this honourable title there are prominent personages representing the world of contemporary science, art, social concepts and politics. These are the people who, in the contemporary world tormented with anxiety and conflicts, not only had the courage to face the problems and challenges facing us. Also, they were able to take the risk of practical solutions, thus changing the face of the contemporary world.

We live in times abundant with important and extraordinary events, in which the course of history has taken an unprecedented pace. In this context, it is the solemn duty of science and politics to differentiate what is important and constant from things that were of lesser importance and fugitive.

I have been involved in this latter activity – starting from my student life until today. For me, it was barely two decades – for the history of Poland and Europe – it was an entire epoch. The “Solidarity” movement initiated great changes and transformations, contributing to the abolishment of the “iron curtain” and the Berlin Wall. In 1989, I had the privilege to participate in the Round Table negotiations, thanks to which the peaceful transformation in Poland was possible and feasible at all. Then, we were guided by the willingness to achieve mutual agreements beyond political and historical differences. These principles, fidelity to dialogue and democracy, I have been trying to implement and realize for eight years as the President of the Republic of Poland, elected

by the nation's will. I am proud that during this period my country entered NATO and, in two months time, shall join the EU. It confirms me in the my conviction that we have made the right choice. (...)

Ladies and Gentlemen!

It is my sincere wish that we shall treat today's ceremony as the next step in enriching the history of mutual relationships between Poland and Israel. This day perfectly inscribes into the centuries old history of coexistence of our nations, which has left its significant mark in the consciousness of Poles and Jews.

The historical presence of the Jewish nation on Polish ground can be found in countless places nationwide. Most regretfully, in many cases it is painful evidence, recalling the greatest tragedy the Jewish nation had experienced and which essentially was the tragedy of the entire mankind. However, also here, in Israel, we can find many traces of history that Jews had lived together with the Polish nation. The testimony thereof is a positive experience preserved in the memory of numerous families, dating back two or three generations, leading to Poland. We can find it in literature and art being created in Israel. It is visible in the admirable activity of the Yad Vashem institute; the evidence of this memory is represented by the sea of trees planted by the "righteous among the nations", many of which commemorate Poles. One of the manifestations thereof is the Museum of the History of Polish Jews being established in Warsaw under my honorary auspices. Last but not least, this remembrance is manifested in the annual "Marches of the Living" taking place in Poland. Young Jews participating in them not only wish to express their deepest respect and homage to the victims of Holocaust, but they also want to see and learn more about the country their predecessors had lived in.

Let me now share with you some reflections on our joint, Polish-Jewish shared experience. I am deeply convinced that a moment of reflection on this experience is of significant value not only for us, Poles and Jews, but also for other nations and a common future. As it turns out, the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, stormy and tumultuous, filled with threats, frequently reminds us of situations and problems we have had to deal with already in the past. Those problems include most importantly the necessity to work out such a common model of coexistence of different nations and cultures that shall protect mankind against the atrocity of war and conflicts. Against hostility and hatred that find their ultimate, cruelest and most criminal expression in genocide.

I think I do not have to remind here that Poland, until the outbreak of the Second World War, was a shelter for the biggest Jewish Diaspora in Europe.

The centuries old impressive scientific, religious, cultural and literary, moral and philosophical heritage of this Diaspora is still vivid and developed also here, in Israel. The presence of Jewish communities and cultural centers had significantly influenced Polish culture as well, which, if being deprived of this neighbourhood, would have surely been poorer. This presence had also left a mark on Polish tradition and the image thereof, disseminated by literature and art.

Historically proven existence and presence of Jewish communities in Poland dates back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The groundswell of persecutions toward Jews in the Western European countries made them choose Poland as the haven and country of tolerance.

The impressive development and growth in significance of this community – also for the civilizational and economic development of our country – can be traced back to the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. By the Vistula river, Jewish religious communities found rights and privileges they had been deprived of in the majority of other European countries. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the groundswell of persecutions and pogroms reached Russia, the next wave of Jewish people came to the then Congress Poland.

Hence, Poles rightly toast the tradition of tolerance. The 17<sup>th</sup> century Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth, being the union of Poles and Lithuanians, and in fact the union of many other nations, since it consisted also of Ruthenians, Germans and above all Jews as a separate estate – is increasingly often perceived as an example of the then local European Union.

However, it would be untrue to state that the coexistence of our cultures had always been flawless and peaceable. Regretfully enough, we had witnessed mutual grudges, aversions, that became the fuel for nationalism and chauvinism. On the other hand, we can enumerate many stirring and inspiring examples of genuine openness and cooperation. Many impressive Poles' gestures of admiration, respect and tolerance, as well as the admirable manifestations of Polish patriotism presented by the Jewish communities. The said coexistence – which has to be stressed – allowed both nations to preserve their distinctive cultural and personal, moral and religious individuality and autonomy.

The Nazi invasion of Poland in 1939 turned this Jewish Haven into the place of extermination. The Nazi occupier built on Polish ground his death camps – Chelmno, Oswiecim, Majdanek, Treblinka, Sobibor, Belzec. The once vivid and lively Jewish districts, villages, and towns became deserted.

We can not turn a blind eye to the fact that the time of the Holocaust was not only the unspeakable tragedy of the Jewish nation, but also a great, historical moment of moral test for nations and peoples worldwide. It was a test for individual human beings, who witnessed this tragedy with their very own eyes. For many of them, it was a humiliating feeling of helplessness towards this atrocity. There were also those for whom this time became the time of shame and disgrace. As the head of state, I have deeply repented the tragic event in Jedwabne, and also, on behalf of the Polish nation, I paid tribute to the ashes of murdered Jews.

For the rest, however, it was the time when they managed to awaken themselves to the noblest feeling of solidarity and heroism. This heroism was even more difficult since they could neither count on any prizes nor even human remembrance.

I am personally proud of being the fellow countrymen of such noble persons as Jan Karski or Irena Sendlerowa. It is a great honour for me that my fellow countryman was – sometimes called the Polish Wallenberg – Henryk Slawik, who saved thousands of Polish Jews in Hungary.

There is one question that, from that dark time, has not abandoned us and shall not abandon any of us: namely, what shall be done in order that that tragic experience from the past will not ever happen again, anywhere. It is not by all means an abstract question. In many regions worldwide, there are numerous dangerous conflicts being ignited. The roots thereof quite often reach back to the long-standing national, religious, cultural or even historical antagonisms that are embedded in the consciousness of contemporary people as a splinter. In this context, this question is by all means a practical one, calling for practical answers and actions to be taken, also by politicians.

Presumably, there is no one single, universal answer to all the dilemmas tormenting us. However, I am convinced that there are many partial, fragmentary answers that result from the experience we have managed to gain.

The first and most obvious answer, is the principle Poland implements in its relationships with all countries, starting from the closest neighbours. This principle consists in an honest and open assessment of the past. It is not based on avoiding and papering over the truth each time we find it pitiful or painful for any of the parties. On the contrary: this principle aims at bringing the truth to light and an honest yet difficult squaring up with the past. My country is located in the region of Europe where numerous antagonisms had been accumulating and intertwining for ages. The number of historical mutual injustices

by very neighbours, is particularly numerous there. Yet the remembrance of such events, even if we manage to marginalize them and push them into the social sub-consciousness, neither disappears nor vanishes. Quite the opposite: it smoulders unceasingly, exploding sometimes in the most unexpected moments. That is why bringing them to light has a healing effect.

This principle works well in establishing new quality in the relationships between Poland and our Western neighbour – Germany. The formula once expressed by Polish bishops “we forgive and ask for forgiveness” – despite the fact it caused impulsive and intense discussions – turned out to be right and effective. It does not neglect nor hide any facts, even the most painful and shameful ones. It enables the neighbouring countries to shape both the presence and future, based on cooperation, mutual respect and friendship.

We decided to apply the same formula to our relations with Russia, and with the new State of Ukraine. For ages, blood had been shed along our eastern borders.

Especially painful were the events that took place between Poles and Ukrainians in 1943 in Volhynia, when many people were killed. On the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this tragic event, the Parliaments of Poland and Ukraine passed a joint declaration in which they condemned this crime; together with President Leonid Kuchma, I had the honour to unveil the monument commemorating the victims.

As a Pole and friend of Israel, I can say today with satisfaction that the mutual relationships between our countries develop well and in the right direction. The process of dialogue, understanding and mutual relations of Poles and Jews do bring positive and desirable results. Due to the fact that we become increasingly closer to each other, the bloodshed on your land fills our hearts with great concern and compassion. However, I do believe that one day Jerusalem, this cradle of many religions and cultures, shall be lit with the rays of peace again.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

It is clear that official political declarations, even the most beautiful, can not solve all prejudices, resentments and claims that are embedded in human minds with just one signature or one vote. As a great, prominent philosopher, the doctor honoris causa of this university once said: the present time which is true and completed – exists only when there is presence, meeting, relation. So I think that this is the role of politicians to abolish barriers and to indicate the way we can follow in future, in our long, difficult and complex process of reconciliation.

What kind of approach and values can support this process? The most reliable and effective foundation that enable people of different cultures to coexist peacefully is tolerance. I have already mentioned that tolerance was one of the features of the former Polish Republic and distinguished this state from other European countries. Tolerance, meaning the acceptance of the right to remain autonomous, to have ones own language, customs, belief or views is still a very precious and valuable approach. It allows for peaceful and harmonious coexistence especially in such situations where people of different cultures and nationalities meet on one territory, often cooperating in the realization of shared economic or social goals. (...)

The basic duty of all of us is to develop and improve the ability and willingness to cooperate. To develop openness and tolerance towards other cultures, opinions and arguments. Even when they significantly differ from those of ours, they do consist of elements that enrich our point of view and perception of the world. They strengthen our understanding towards our neighbours with whom we wish to live in peace. Yet, it is also the duty of those of us who take care of public issues, to ensure the citizens' safety and security.

Safety of our families, relatives, their homes and workplaces. Also, safety of nations, states and – last but not least – safety of the entire international community. This calls for very difficult choices. We have to choose a very narrow yet indispensable path to follow, balancing between the defence of freedom and safety requirements. These are political choices that become moral choices as well.

At the beginning of this speech I have mentioned three dimensions politics shall take into consideration: the past, presence, and future. In conclusion, let me express my conviction that the said three dimensions are united by morality itself. Both the Polish and Jewish nations had often experienced in the past the consequences of situations, where politics differed from morality. It is our one more shared experience we have to present to the contemporary world. May this very touching ceremony become the opportunity to appeal for politics that respects morality and values. Only then shall our nations and the entire world be granted a safe future, based on tolerance and cooperation.

In conclusion, I would like to address young people present in this room today, and all young people in Israel who probably in the future shall visit the country of their predecessors – Poland. Even though this visit, often to the symbolic graves of the victims of the atrocity of Shoah, shall not be an easy experience for many of you and may recall the demons of the past – please do not turn your back on Poland! While being in our country, have a closer look, look around!

There are young people living there, educated, interested in the world, your culture and history. Poland today is a modern and dynamic country, open and democratic; it is the country that refers to its best traditions of multicultural diversity and tolerance. Look ahead, while not forgetting the past! It is you who are going to create the future of relationships between our nations.

I would like to most heartily thank once again for this exceptional honourable mention. It is a source of great personal satisfaction. It is also a great obligation and commitment to me to remain persistent in efforts aimed at reaching understanding, cooperation and peace of all nations.

9. Address during the session “Remembering the past, shaping the future” organized at the Yad Vashem Museum (excerpts)  
– Jerusalem, 16<sup>th</sup> of March, 2005

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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

I am very honoured and sincerely touched that I can participate today – together with the representatives of nations of the entire world – in such a special ceremony at Yad Vashem. The New Museum makes a specific, peculiar impression; indelible and very moving, making visitors even more aware of the vastness of the Holocaust tragedy. It also calls for a moment of reflection, on how we, contemporary people, shall cherish the memory about that inhumane time. I find it also a personal obligation since last year I had the honour to receive the title of the doctor honoris causa of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. It is both a privilege and a commitment.

Three months ago we met in the biggest and the most terrifying Nazis’ death factory – in Auschwitz–Birkenau. More than forty heads of states and governments, together with hundreds of survivors, paid homage to the memory of murdered Jews, Poles, Gypsies, Russians, Ukrainians and the representatives of other nations. We can still hear the dramatic message of the Book of Esther: “Let my people live!” Today’s ceremony here in Israel, is a testimony to the fact that the criminal Nazis’ action plan failed. We, the ancestors of the victims and liberators, are here together today and we undertake a shared obligation to care for the truth about the past. It is an obligation towards our contemporary living and towards the future which has to be free from hatred, xenophobia and anti-Semitism.

For us, the Polish people, it is a special duty to save the remembrance of our Jewish brothers and sisters from being buried in the ashes of the Nazis’ death camps. Is it widely known, that until the outbreak of the Second World War, Poland was a shelter for the biggest Jewish Diaspora in Europe. For centuries, Jews were coming to Poland in search for opportunities for economic development and for cultivating their religion and tradition. The centuries old impressive



scientific, religious, cultural and literary, moral and philosophical heritage of this Diaspora is still vivid and developed also here, in Israel and worldwide. The presence of Jewish communities and cultural centers had significantly influenced Polish culture as well. For centuries, we had been inspiring and enriching each other.

At present, in Poland we have undertaken several activities to preserve the material remnants of the abundant world of Polish Jews for future generations, and to commemorate the history of the nation and to present it to all who visit our country. In Warsaw, on the former Ghetto territory, we are establishing – with the support of public and private institutions – the Museum of History of Polish Jews that shall present the heritage of more than the 800 year history of the Jewish nation in Poland. We are convinced that this project shall be unique on a global scale; it shall be an extraordinary place of remembrance and reflection, similarly to the Museum of Remembrance that was opened last year in the Nazi extermination camp in Belzec.

As the President of the Republic of Poland and friend of Israel, I can say today with satisfaction that the mutual relationships between our countries develop well and in the right direction. The process of dialogue, understanding and mutual relations of Poles and Jews do bring positive and desirable results. The diversity and abundance of initiatives in the field of Polish-Jewish history (such as the Festival of Jewish Culture in Cracow and the activity of the Shalom Foundation) results in a very positive phenomenon: Jewish culture becomes increasingly popular in Poland, especially amongst young people. It makes us look ahead with hope. Therefore, I do believe that the meetings of Polish and Jewish youth can play an important role in counteracting harmful stereotypes that still linger on our consciousness. (...)



## G. Strengthening relationships with national minorities

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1. Address during the ceremony of unveiling the monument commemorating the victims of the Jaworzno camp – Jaworzno, 23<sup>rd</sup> of May, 1998
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Mr. President of Ukraine, Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

It is not easy to speak in such a place. It is not easy to speak after that touching, deeply moving ecumenical prayer that reminded us of people who suffered pain, hunger, and humiliation here. The prayer that recalled those who died of diseases, starvation, and beating. It is not easy; yet we can never forget it. Here, from spring 1947 until August 1956, Polish citizens were imprisoned – in a Polish camp. They were openly referred to as the second category citizens. They were welcomed here with the words: You did not come here to live. It is simply impossible to imagine and describe the trauma and drama of young, adolescent boys, even children, who were imprisoned in the work camp for juveniles, who had to grow up here in Jaworzno in such conditions in the 50s. By no means can we imagine the humiliation of Greek Catholic clergymen, sufferings of Ukrainian civilians, including women and children interned here in 1947 – 1949.

There is no such an end, such a national or state ideology that could justify breaking young life, inflicting pain on the innocent, that could account for the use of inhumane educative methods and exaction of collective responsibility. Nobody and nothing can justify Stalinism, its crimes, wrongdoing, and misdeeds. People responsible for the existence of this camp and for everything that had happened here – are guilty before Poland, before its history.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

The honorary guest of today's ceremony is the great friend of Poland and the Polish people, President of independent Ukraine, Mr. Leonid Kuchma. His presence here is of symbolic character. Stalinism had done much harm and evil to both our nations. It aimed at dividing forever Poles and Ukrainians. May the presence of the two Presidents here in Jaworzno be the signal for our nations,

for national minorities – the Polish minority in Ukraine and the Ukrainian minority in Poland, that we are determined to strengthen our cooperation.

Last year, in Kiev, we signed with President Kuchma a joint declaration, in which we expressed our conviction that the future of Polish-Ukrainian relations has to be built on truth and justice and profound and sincere concord and reconciliation,

We shall not forget about spilled blood and the atrocity of Ukrainian – Polish conflicts. We paid homage to the innocent, the Poles and Ukrainians who were murdered, killed and forcibly dislocated. We condemned the perpetrators of their sufferings. But we also expressed gratitude to all those who in the course of these difficult years worked for rapprochement between our peoples.

History is remembrance. Remembrance of good, but also of bad things that happened. The wounds of the past take long to heal. It is difficult for us, in Poland, to forget the victims of red nights on Volhynia and Podolia in '43 and '44. Yet the contemporary generations do not seek for the justification for hatred and revenge in the history. They look for warnings and lessons for the future. Only a free, independent, and self-aware nation can face its own history, can see it without dodging and doubtful excuses. Hatred is a wrong advisor. We live not to hate, but to remember and leave our children a better world than that of our fathers and grandfathers.

May this monument contribute to it!

## 2. Address during the ceremony of laying wreaths on the Graves of Ukrainian soldiers – Warsaw, 25<sup>th</sup> of June 1999

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Mr. President, Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

Amongst numerous episodes in common Polish-Ukrainian history, the brotherhood of a joint fight for the freedom of our countries is an important and meaningful element of our relationships. At the threshold of the new millennium, being united with the prospects for a common future in a democratic and united Europe, we are recalling this episode on purpose. At present, when both our countries are given a chance for partner like and friendly coexistence, recalling the issues that are of the same, equally highest value in the lives of Poles and Ukrainians can only strengthen our joint Polish and Ukrainian lot – for the common good of our peoples and nations.

Standing at the Polish cemetery, in front of the graves of Ukrainian soldiers, who became famous for their fight against a common enemy – for a free Poland, we are paying homage to their courage and sacrifice. We express our deepest respect for the political concepts of their leader Semen Petlura. He perceived the chance for securing the independence of Ukraine by fighting in the military alliance of the Polish and Ukrainian army, commanded by Jozef Pilsudski and in the joint fight “for your and our freedom”. The heroic defence of Zamosc, commanded by Marko Bezruchko who is buried here – was the realization of the concept of Polish – Ukrainian allied forces. I recalled this personage to the Polish people at the ceremony last year during the Day of the Polish Armed Forces. In the complex nature of our mutual relationships – these events constituted the foundations for building our contemporary relationships and developing them, being at the same time fully aware of the difficult legacy.

At that time, history was not favourable for this visionary idea to prevail. Today, our two free countries independently shape their own neighbourhood. The remembrance of this heroic deed of soldiers buried here shall be a milestone for us, indicating the right direction.

Worship to the heroes! May they rest in peace!

### 3. Letter to the participants of the solemn ceremony of the opening and consecrating of the Ukrainian Cemetery in Kalisz – Szczypiorno – 28<sup>th</sup> of September 1999

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Dear Ukrainian Friends, Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Ukrainian Cemetery in Kalisz – Szczypiorno is a special place on the map of remembrance of both our nations. It is a symbol of soldier's fidelity, loyalty, of difficult yet unshaken patriotism of those who found here the place of eternal rest. It is also the testimony to the Polish-Ukrainian solidarity, the place symbolizing the allied relations between our countries.

Poland remembers its allies, the soldiers of the Ukrainian Army, who fought for independent Ukraine and supported us in the struggle against the Soviet invasion. The great plans of Jozef Pilsudski and Semen Petlura were ruined in 1921 by the adverse chain of historical adversities. In such conditions, the only thing Poland could offer its allies was shelter. Here, in Kalisz – Szczypiorno, Jozef Pilsudski addressed the interned Ukrainian officers with his famous words, bitter ones yet coming from the bottom of his heart: "I am sorry gentlemen, I am really sorry."

Szczypiorno became the center for the Ukrainian immigration community. There is a school named after Semen Petlura, Ukrainian gymnasium and school of fine arts, library, sport club "Falcon" and a theatre group. In nearby Kalisz, the Ukrainian printing office has published numerous journals and magazines. St. Pokrowa's Orthodox Church was a special place that assembled the Ukrainian community.

For many Ukrainians, the Polish land had become not only the hospitable haven, but a place for eternal rest as well. "Tym, szczo wmerły, ałe ne zradyły Ukrajiny" (For those who died but did not betray Ukraine) – reads the inscription on one of the monuments here. Today's ceremony of the official opening and consecration of this newly renovated cemetery make us think ahead towards

an important part of the future – difficult and intermingled, yet at the same heroic, and marked with Polish and Ukrainian friendship.

We pay our homage to those who are buried on this cemetery. And we can see the link that couples the past with the presence. We think about things that unite Poland and Ukraine, Poles and Ukrainians – about reconciliation, about strategic partnership, responsibility for our region and the shape of European transformations.

Today, not only is Szczypiorno the place of shared remembrance, but also a place of shared hope.



## 4. Letter for organizers and participants of the 10<sup>th</sup> All-Polish Review of the Achievement and Heritage of National and Ethnic Minorities “Community in Culture 2001” – 23<sup>rd</sup> of November 2001

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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

By accepting the honorary auspices over the 10<sup>th</sup> All-Polish Review of the Achievement and Heritage of National and Ethnic Minorities “Community in Culture”, I do hope to become the genuine and factual patron of the works of all Polish citizens who have been linked to Poland for years, even generations, despite the fact that they come from different ethnic and cultural groups. They live and work here, preserving their national identity and traditions.

This event has been inscribed for good into the calendar of important cultural events in the capital, attracting increasingly more spectators fascinated with the cultural heritage of nations living in Poland. It is a very significant sign of the times. In the atmosphere of mutual friendly relations, cooperation and respect, we create foundations for long lasting coexistence of different denominations and nationalities. It is this diversity that makes our society and culture richer with new, previously unknown values, strengthens the feeling of shared legacy and similar sensitivity, and language barriers do not matter at all. This is a noble idea, praiseworthy and admirable, since it serves the tightening of interpersonal relations, mutual understanding and friendship.

This year’s jubilee induces us to express our gratitude and sincere, cordial wishes to its initiators, sponsors and participants. Please accept the expression of my honest recognition and regard for your contribution to fostering the artistic achievements of all national and ethnic communities living in Poland, without which Polish culture would have been poorer. Thanks to you, we learn how to become more open, friendly and how to accept different cultures and nations.

## 5. Letter to the participants and organizers of the 20<sup>th</sup> Day of Lemkos' culture "Lemkowska Watra" – 19<sup>th</sup> of July 2002

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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to pass my cordial greetings to all participants of the "Lemkowska Watra", which this year is of a jubilee character, since it is being organized for the 20<sup>th</sup> time and gathers the Lemko community. I would like to heartily welcome our guests from abroad, representing the Lemko Diaspora, who arrived to Poland from many European countries and other continents.

Here, on the borderland of Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine, Lemkos have been living for centuries. The paths of history, on which the Lemko language, culture and identity were taking shape, are fascinating and not fully explored yet. Lemkos have left their mark on this land for ever; here they were, they are and shall be.

Due to democratic transformation in our country, for several years now you have been able to inscribe the activity of your community into Polish public life anew. "Lemkowska Watra" represents the entire Lemkos' heritage of culture and tradition; it is a proof of bonds that keep you uninterruptedly united, against all historical odds. Moreover, it is an important event in the prevailing image of Polish culture that we have learned to perceive and appreciate in the light of its mosaic diversity and abundance. Therefore, it is with great satisfaction that I accepted the invitation to take the honorary auspices of the President of the Republic of Poland over "Lemkowska Watra".

I do hope that meetings in shared circles, around a traditional shepherd's bonfire – enlightening darkness, radiating with warmth – shall help us in making consecutive steps on our way of dialogue and mutual reconciliation. This land and the Lemkos living here have been painfully and cruelly experienced by history. For ages, people of different languages, religions and cultures lived here in harmony; the 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, ruined this order. In the memory of the oldest generations, there are still vivid the recollections of struggle,

persecutions resulting from nationalistic attitude, and dramatic deportations and relocations. They had been coming in waves, from banishments to the Soviet East in 1939, through so called “exchange of population” between Poland and the USSR, ending with the infamous “Operation Vistula”, in the result thereof dozens of thousand of Lemkos were deported to western and northern regions of Poland.

The exaction of collective responsibility is always shameful and morally unacceptable, yet Lemkos can feel especially star-crossed in this respect. The strike against them was equally ruthless and blind, since in the prevailing majority they did not sympathize with OUN-UPA (the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists-the Ukrainian Insurgent Army) and did not support its activities. We, the Polish people, do remember well that during the Second World War in such villages as Ruska Wola, Litmanowa or Muszynka Polish resistance movements could successfully organize transfer points to the West. That is why we think about the harm suffered after the war by tens of thousand of Lemkos, by innocent people chased away from their patrimony.

For many years, a strange gap had been present in the landscape of the Lower Beskid and Bieszczady Mountains, empty places and dwellings abandoned by people, wrapped with sadness and nostalgia. Today, these places become vivid again. Not without obstacles and troubles, yet the Lemkos’ presence does return here. I would like to wish you that this shall be accompanied by reconciliation and openness between your community and Poles, between countries neighbouring here. May we all will be able to face each other in truth, to settle with each other and build future together.

I am deeply convinced that “Lemkowska Watra”, as well as any other initiatives undertaken by the Lemkos’ Union shall contribute to it significantly. I also believe that the joint Polish – Slovakian – Ukrainian cooperation shall do much good for improving the mutual relations between peoples, for overcoming prejudices and stereotypes. Lemkos can contribute to it with their own, very valuable input.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish you good luck and once again give my deepest regards to you.

## 6. Address during the signing of the Act on national and ethnic minorities, 24<sup>th</sup> of January 2005

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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

I would like to welcome you on this special occasion – the signing of the Act on national and ethnic minorities and regional language. I have to remind you that this act has been developed for quite a long time now. One can even dare say that it was prepared the longest in the history of the Parliamentary system in the III Republic of Poland, since the initiative of passing thereof first appeared as early as in the contractual Sejm after 1989. Therefore, we shall be grateful that after more than 15 years the idea of legal regulation of the issue of national minorities succeeded.

I would like to thank all those who contributed to the preparation and successful passing of this act. My special regards go to the members of the Commission of Ethnic and National Minorities, Commission of Administration and Internal Affairs, as well as the Commission of Education, Science and Youth, since those commissions and those members of parliament were especially involved in this process.

Let me recall now the personage of the late lamented Jacek Kuron, because it was on his own initiative that in 1993 the bill was prepared. Four years later, the bill was passed by the Commission of Ethnic and National Minorities, of which Jacek Kuron was twice the Chairman. The termination of the Sejm term made it impossible to continue works on this document; the Sejm of the next term was not able to successfully accomplish this challenge either. Only recently, were the present MPs able to finalize this. One can venture to say that in this sense, thanks to these MPs, the last will of Jacek Kuron, great friend of minorities living under the Polish sky, was fulfilled. I wish Jacek were amongst us today, but I believe, that by doing so, we fulfill his will with regard to a very important matter, so very important for and supported by him.

The opponents of the bill reasoned against it, stating that there was no need of a separate legal regulation of issues mentioned therein, since our country is inhabited by less than one percent of citizens having non-Polish roots. They were saying that the constitution is a sufficient guarantor of their rights. National minorities have in Poland conducive conditions to cherish their traditions and customs, to preserve and cultivate their language. They also stressed the fact that there were numerous institutions and organizations that dealt with the protection of national, cultural and religious identity and autonomy.

This is indeed true. However, the hitherto existing solutions turned out to be insufficient and inaccurate. Polish law lacked the definitions of national and ethnic minorities. The rules and regulations concerning the exercise of rights ascribed to minorities have not been specified sufficiently either.

This act, passed by the Sejm and signed by me just a while ago, fills this gap and does even more. It introduces a particular novelty, which by the way sparked the biggest controversy, and which is perceived by me as especially valuable – namely, the right to use one's mother tongue as the auxiliary language in any kind of official and formal contacts on the level of selected local authorities in particular communes. What is also important, this act establishes the Joint Commission of Government and National and Ethnic Minorities, which shall perform an advisory and opinion-making role to the prime minister. For the first time, the institution was explicitly appointed to deal with issues of national and ethnic minorities.

The new act meets the obligations we have assumed while signing few years ago the Framework Convention of the Council of Europe on the protection of ethnic minorities. By passing this bill, the parliament referred to the best traditions of Polish tolerance, dating back to the first Republic of Poland. For ages, our country was boasting its friendly attitude and approach towards the peoples of different nationalities and denominations, which had found its expression in the world famous Warsaw Confederation of 1573.

The Sejm's decision to establish separate regulations concerning national and ethnic minorities thus confirms our openness to different cultures, languages and nationalities. It is a strongly accentuated willingness to observe European standards of civic rights. This act can become a good example to follow for other states, an incentive for adopting similar regulations with regard to local national and ethnic minorities.

I do believe that the act I had the honour to sign personally shall bring numerous benefits. It shall serve well the protection of the minorities' rights, cultivation

of their tradition, culture and language. I would like to thank all members of parliament, experts, government, representatives of the organizations of national minorities for their determination and will to bringing this task to a close. I am also glad that I was able to sign this act in the presence of the representatives of the said organizations and the parliamentary and governmental side, being present here in such large numbers. Once again thank you for accomplishing this task successfully today!

## 7. Speech delivered during the meeting with Lithuanian minority – Sejny, 4<sup>th</sup> of November 2005

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Dear President of the Republic of Lithuania, Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

First of all, I would like to express my sincere delight that we can meet here. I fully agree with the words we all listened to a moment ago both in Lithuanian and Polish, so wonderfully speaking of the significance of this place and the Lithuanian minority in the contemporary history of the Republic of Poland. I am glad that together a great friend of Poland, the distinguished President of Lithuania, a great European, and my close personal friend Valdas Adamkus, we can be here. I am glad that we were able to see the Lithuanian school that is to be opened here in Sejny soon.

The coexistence of different cultures, traditions in one country can be very inspiring and valuable. The very condition of this coexistence to be successful is mutual respect, the possibility to express freely one's identity, including the national one. Therefore, the notions of national minorities – Lithuanian in Poland and Polish in Lithuania – belong to the matters of the utmost importance in mutual relationships between the two countries. It is our special obligation, given the long tradition of tolerance represented by the former Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth. We should benefit from the heritage of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth that consisted also of Ruthenians, Germans and above all Jews since increasingly more often is this unique entity perceived as the model example of the then local European Union.

It is true that the coexistence of our nations and cultures was not always peaceful and harmonious. We know well that it did not lack conflicts, resentment, and hostility, aversions that became the fuel for nationalism and chauvinism. On the other hand, we can enumerate many stirring and inspiring examples of genuine openness, cooperation, and reconciliation, gestures of admiration, respect and tolerance manifested by both Polish and Lithuanian communities.

Let me recall one such gesture: in September 2004, the veterans of the Polish Home Army and Lithuanian Local Troops adopted a joint Declaration of Reconciliation in the presence of President Valdas Adamkus. I fully agree with Mr. President who then called this act “one of the most important events in Lithuania during the recent 15 years.” This event did breathe new life into the process of Polish-Lithuanian reconciliation.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Friends!

We do our best so that national and ethnic minorities living in Poland could freely preserve and develop their national identity, culture, and language.

At the same time, we would like all members of those communities to participate in an unimpeded way in our common social life. To feel as actual, true citizens – responsible for their state and their “small homelands”. It is very important for us to promote the attitude of openness and tolerance. We become increasingly effective and successful in counteracting any manifestations of discrimination of xenophobia. All that, I would like to stress it, is in line with the highest European standards and requirements.

On May 1<sup>st</sup> this year the Act on national and ethnic minorities and regional language came into force. This important act of law confirms the best traditions of tolerance and multicultural legacy of the Republic of Poland. The Act provides for the possibility to use – apart from the official names of localities, buildings or streets – traditional names in the minorities’ own language. The document guarantees the right to officially record and write down the names and last names according to the rules of the minorities’ mother tongue.

With equal satisfaction we learnt that the government of the Republic of Lithuania accepted the bill on spelling names and last names in official documents that provides for, inter alia, the possibility of entering names and last names according to the rules of Polish orthography. It is a very promising portent for Polish and Lithuanian reconciliation and cooperation that meets many years of expectations of the Polish minority in Lithuania. I would like to thank the government for this decision and I do hope that the new act shall soon be passed by the Sejm of the Republic of Lithuania.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

I am concluding the ten year long presidency and I am glad that here in Sejny I can meet with you – the representatives of the Lithuanian community. I am deeply convinced that these ten years have contributed to the positive change



in the lot of our two states and our nations. We are together in NATO and EU. Not only are we able to refer to the great chapters of joint Polish-Lithuanian history, our joint commonwealth of nations, but we can trustfully look into the future. We can tell our youngest citizens that they have great perspectives awaiting them. I would like to most heartily thank all who contributed so greatly to the development of our mutual Polish-Lithuanian relationships.

Your support for the idea of cooperation was anxiously awaited by millions of Poles and Lithuanians who know that good relationships of our nations are essential and crucial both for us and for a united Europe. I would like to thank Mr. President Valdas Adamkus for his good will and friendship. Thank you, Valdas, for all we have managed to accomplish together. Thank you, Ladies and Gentlemen, citizens of Sejny, the Lithuanian community in Poland and those who arrived here from other towns – I would like to thank you all for your kindness, help, and support for my person expressed during the Election Day. I appreciate it very much and I shall remember it forever.

I have been trying to fulfill my duties the best way possible. It has been my perennial wish that understanding and friendship would prevail in Polish-Lithuanian relations. And I have the feeling that I have managed to fulfill my duty well. I would like to wish all of you, Poles and Lithuanians, much prosperity and good luck in a common, united Europe.



## Chapter 3.

Place of Poland on the international arena and its security (strategic activities in foreign Policy; accession to the North Atlantic Alliance)

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1. Address by the President of the Republic of Poland  
Aleksander Kwasniewski before the North Atlantic Council Brussels,  
17<sup>th</sup> of January 1996
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Mr. Secretary General! Your Excellencies!

Thank you for the kind words and for this meeting, I am pleased that it could be organized in such a short time. My visit to NATO Headquarters has a deep political meaning for us. We do not regard it as something routine.

First, it confirms Poland's constant adherence to the values which the North Atlantic Alliance represents and protects — political freedom, democracy, personal liberties, the rule of law, principles of the free market and the heritage of a common civilization. Second, it is a testimony of our recognition for NATO as an organization of fundamental importance for the stability and security of Europe and Poland. Third, this visit demonstrates that closer cooperation with the Atlantic Alliance and our future membership in it remain Poland's unalterable wish.

Mr. Secretary General!

In 1989 Poland made a historic choice. My country regained full sovereignty in foreign policy and became a democratic state of law. This choice is irreversible, no matter what changes take place on the Polish political stage.

The enhancement of democratic principles is one of the most important goals of my term. I shall strive consistently for a non-partisan understanding on matters of vital importance to Poland, especially regarding questions of security and foreign policy. I want our foreign policy platform to unite Poles. This has been the case until now, and this is how it should be in the future.

The main feature of Polish foreign policy is the absence of conflicts with anyone and the constant search for new possibilities of bilateral, regional, European

and global co-operation. Poland's stable foreign policy is and shall remain an important element of European stability, to which we want to contribute.

Poland's striving for integration with the European and Euro-Atlantic structures of economic and political-military co-operation is unwavering. All of the leading political forces are completely agreed on this matter, and these aspirations are supported by the vast majority of Polish society.

In recent centuries the Polish nation often suffered painful historical experiences. Spheres of influence and big-power ambitions clashed with each other in the centre of Europe, but for us this meant fire and bloodshed. On numerous occasions we had to defend our liberty and sovereignty against aggression from imperialist neighbours, suffer under foreign occupation, experience the tragedy of changes of borders and the calamitous exodus of millions of Polish people from their homeland. That is why Poland's desire to participate in a real security system is so strong and transcends the limits of everyday politics. We state this clearly and emphatically: We do not want to remain in a grey zone! The Euro-Atlantic orientation of Polish policy is and shall remain constant and immutable, for it is in Poland's vital interests.

It is the universal wish of the Polish people that on the threshold of the new century our country shall find itself in structures guaranteeing lasting security, democracy and an effective economic system, enabling Poland to take its proper place in the great family of free nations. I shall act vigorously towards the realisation of these national aspirations.

Making these aspirations become a reality remains the main priority of my country's policy. I would like the integration process to gain new momentum in the near future. I hope that our determination, patience and effort in meeting the conditions leading towards this goal shall be perceived and appreciated – here in Brussels and in the other capitals of the Western world.

In my opinion, Poland's accession to the European Union, NATO and the West European Union is not simply a fulfillment of Polish aspirations. It is also an element of the natural evolution of the world of Western civilization; it is also a necessary step forward for the West in building the future Europe – a continent of co-operation, dialogue and security.

It is not our intention to create new divisions on the continent of Europe. Quite the opposite – we want to eradicate the divisions which still remain. The enlargement of NATO shall expand the zone of stability and security. It shall strengthen democracy. It shall demonstrate that the historical process of

unification of the continent has overcome traditional thinking about its affairs which comes from the times of the cold war.

Mr. Chairman!

There are many signs that we are on the threshold of a new era in the political development of Europe. NATO is an institution which has proven its positive influence on the state of European affairs. This organization has much wider functions than only a military alliance. It expresses common values and the readiness to act on behalf of common interests. It organizes military co-operation among member states and partner countries.

The Partnership for Peace programme and the North Atlantic Council for Co-operation are introducing a new way of thinking about European security. They are concentrating attention not on a potential enemy but on seeking partners for co-operation. The potential of NATO, which stands at the disposal of the international community, makes the political decisions of the UN and OSCE more effective.

An important example of the Alliance's practical involvement in peacekeeping and reinforcement of security in consultation with international organizations is the recently undertaken IFOR operation in Bosnia-Herzegovina. It is being pursued under NATO command and UN Security Council auspices.

Polish soldiers shall soon begin their mission as part of the NATO peacekeeping force in Bosnia. We are undertaking this effort in the name of building peace and also with a sense of the new obligations imposed on us as a country aspiring for membership in NATO. We are also ready to create suitable facilities on Polish territory for those armed forces which shall take part in IFOR operations.

For several years we have been strongly emphasizing the need to enlarge NATO with Poland and the other countries of Central Europe. However, we do not believe that Poland's membership in NATO could be detrimental to the security interests of Russia or of any other country. Given our proximity to Russia, we sincerely hope for the success of the reforms being undertaken in that country and want to have the best possible, partner-like relations with Russia. Through constructive involvement in world affairs, we want Russia to become an inseparable part of the global economic and security system. On the other hand, the recognition of Russia's importance and role does not stand in conflict with the obvious fact that the countries of Central Europe ought to have the opportunity

to realize their own aspirations in the area of security and to decide on their place in this sphere in accordance with their own national interest.

The process of enlarging the Alliance has already been initiated. NATO's relations with Russia, the Ukraine and other countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States are also starting to develop. Work is under way on strengthening the OSCE. This is, we believe, the best approach to the problem of European security. This is a realistic approach, which takes into consideration the interests of other states and the role of other European organizations.

Mr. Secretary General!

Acceptance of the Study on NATO enlargement closes the first stage of discussion on this subject. We believe that the communiqué issued after the meeting of ministers of the North Atlantic Council in December 1995 opens a new stage, which shall be characterized by new energy and new forms of effective co-operation. The interested states should arrive at these forms in the course of an ongoing dialogue with NATO. We believe that a dialogue in the 16 + 1 formula, preceding the actual talks on our membership, should begin as soon as possible. We are ready to present our proposals on co-operation in this formula. I would like today's meeting to be the opening of such a dialogue with Poland. We are expecting that this phase of preparations for enlargement of the Alliance should conclude at the end of this year by setting the date for talks on accession.

We are trying to use the time before NATO enlargement to bring our armed forces and political structures up to the standards of the Alliance. At the same time, we are taking steps to align our defence structures to future NATO membership. These efforts include the restructuring and modernization of our armed forces, the creation of political and military structures serving the realization of the security policy, and instituting full civilian control over the military.

We are familiar with the criteria governing civilian-military relationships in the West. In work on our new Constitution we are attempting to include clear articles introducing an unmistakable division of powers among our branches of government during peacetime and in emergency situations. Aware of the importance of this question, we are introducing new legal regulations without waiting for ratification of the Constitution. One of the first legal acts which I signed after becoming President was the act on the office of minister of national defence, which introduces the principle of clear civilian control over the armed forces.



Mr. Secretary General! Your Excellencies!

Poland is firmly convinced that enlargement of the North Atlantic Alliance shall make the Alliance more effective. We are interested in strengthening the firm ties of Europe with the United States and Canada. With gratification we welcome the recent decision of the French government concerning NATO. We support the transformation started several years ago by the Alliance and its opening up ever wider to the East. The enlargement of NATO shall strengthen its new mission and identity in the era after the cold war.

Poland does not wish to be a mere consumer of security guaranteed by NATO. We also want to be a positive force strengthening the Alliance. We are contributing settled relations with all our neighbours. We are contributing our military potential and experience gained from participation in many international peacekeeping operations, including participation in IFOR. Another one of our advantages is our rapid economic growth, ties of solidarity with the countries of Europe and our strong rootedness in the values of Western civilization.

Mr. Secretary General! Your Excellencies!

In concluding, I wish all the representatives of the NATO member states assembled here that 1996 shall bring many successes to the Alliance and that one of these successes shall be preparing a place at this table for a Polish representative

Poland shall not disappoint the Atlantic Alliance. I also believe that the Alliance shall not disappoint the hopes of the Polish people.

Thank you for your attention.

## 2. Address by the President of the Republic of Poland Aleksander Kwasniewski before the Chairman and Members of the European Commission, Brussels (excerpts), 18<sup>th</sup> of January 1996

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Dear Mr. Chairman! Ladies and Gentlemen!

I highly value the opportunity to meet with the Chairman and members of the European Commission. This is one of the most important meetings at the beginning of my presidency. I am pleased that the European Commission attaches such great importance to the development of relations with Poland.

I would like our talk not only to help us get better acquainted but also to highlight various questions connected with Poland's path to membership in the Union.

Poland's integration with the Union constantly remains one of our most important goals. We have already done much together to reach this goal. We appreciate what the member states of the Union and the European Commission have done. With pride I also emphasize Poland's input. Thanks to the determination of successive Polish governments and parliaments and also the hard to overestimate effort of Polish society, Poland already meets most of the criteria for membership in the Union formulated by the Council of Europe in Copenhagen.

The Polish economy, which has been developing according to market rules, has been moved onto the track of rapid and sustainable economic growth. I am pleased to repeat the opinion of the mission of the International Monetary Fund, which in a report summing up an inspection visit to Poland at the end of last year stated: "Significant progress in the transformation of the Polish economy is continuing. The real growth of the GDP by 6.5 percent, the tangible improvement of effectiveness, falling unemployment and the decisive strengthening of external position (including the restoration of access to international financial markets) single out the Polish economy in 1995 as a model which the other transforming economies are striving to emulate."

To this I would like to add that economic growth is being stimulated primarily by a rapid increase of exports and investments, which lays the foundations for sustaining the high growth rate in the future. With satisfaction we are noting an improvement in the condition of public finances and are keeping the moderate 3 percent budget deficit under control.

The enlargement of the Union to the east imposes a huge number of still unfulfilled tasks on both sides. A common challenge for the present Commission and for the Polish government is to create conditions enabling Poland to enter the European Union at the turn of the century. I also regard this as my personal challenge.

On the enlargement of the Union to the east hangs the future of Europe; integration with Europe expresses the natural aspirations of countries which are geographically, historically and culturally close to one another. Without integration we shall be unable to prevent a new division of the continent – into a secure and unstable Europe, into an affluent and undeveloped Europe. Thus the question of access to the Union of new states should be regarded as a process of historic and strategic importance for the entire continent, opening before it new opportunities and prospects.

Poland does not intend to enter the Union as a poor and passive partner who only asks for assistance. We offer the dynamism and initiative of our entire nation. These qualities have been proven by successes in establishing and developing democratic institutions and rapidly transforming the economy. We are contributing a rich tradition, culture, scientific potential and a sense of responsibility for the destiny of the continent.

Membership in the European Union is also perceived by the Polish nation, and by the nations of the member states, as an opportunity to speed the march of civilization. We expect that membership shall stimulate our growth and strengthen our presence in the international community. Already today the countries of the European Union are Poland's main trading partner. These countries account for more than 71 percent of our exports and 65 percent of our imports.

The European Union cannot afford to squander the capital of trust which my countrymen have placed in the Union, especially in the face of the looming crisis of the European idea which may be observed in Western Europe. The social support for the idea of integration, which in Poland reaches 75 percent, may become an important trump card for the Union itself.

We accept the conception of the Union transcending its present shape, a conception assuming political, economic and monetary union. We regard the discussion on the future of the Union also as a discussion about our future.

I am convinced that the Polish people are quite familiar with the countries of Western Europe. For an entire millennium Poland has been part of the European cultural circle. For us, the prospect of integration with the European Union is a historic challenge which contemporary Poles want to and can meet. This is especially true of the most active 30- and 40-year olds. These are people of my generation, whose ambitions and aspirations I understand well and want to meet.

Poland expects that the future European Union shall be a Union in the true meaning of the word – a cohesive organism capable of decisive and effective action both in domestic and foreign policy, of ensuring its members – present and future ones – a greater sense of security and stability. The idea of such a Union should rest not on ceding national sovereignty to an extra-national bureaucracy, but on limiting some aspects of independence in order to accomplish primary goals. We believe that the Intergovernmental Conference shall be an important stage in this direction.

I share the idea of Jean Monet, who stated that the assumption of the incipient Communities is not alliance among states but a union among peoples. That is why we should be allowed to participate in the discussion on the future shape of the European Union. Transparency of the integration process is one of the cardinal goals of the institutions and states of the Union. This principle should also encompass the citizens of states which are candidates for membership. (...)

### 3. Toast during the official reception given by Boris Yeltsin, the President of the Russian Federation (excerpts) – Moscow, 9<sup>th</sup> of April 1996

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Dear Mr. President, Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for inviting me to pay an official visit to the Russian Federation. Our meetings and talks constituted a perfect opportunity for continuing the Polish-Russian dialogue on the highest level, dealing with bilateral relationships and the problems plaguing the European continent.

In May 1992 our countries concluded the Treaty on good neighborhood and friendly relations, which was signed by: you, Mr. President – on behalf of the Russian Federation and by my predecessor, President Lech Walesa – on behalf of the Republic of Poland. We do realize that the treaty provides only for the framework for mutual relations between our countries. These are the politicians whose task is to fill it with substance and meaning. I would like to assure that striving for good, friendly relations with Russia has always been the invariable goal of Polish foreign policy after 1989, when my country gained full sovereignty. We shall continue this direction also in the future.

In Warsaw, we have always been aware of the fact that our country does need good relations with countries in the east and west side of our borders. When we are thinking about this great value, which is the European civilization, we also think about the centuries old achievements of Russian peoples and the immense contribution of Russian culture into this shared heritage. Russia's influence on the process of shaping the conditions for safety and constructive European and global cooperation was, still is, and shall be of utmost importance. Poland does understand this entirely and fully appreciates.

Political dialogue between Poland and the Russian Federation is supported by numerous personal contacts of Poles and Russians. Poland today is visited by millions of Russian Federation citizens. It constitutes a conducive atmosphere

for international relationships and supports the plain truth that neighbours can and shall discuss and cooperate with each other.

Our goal is to overcome the difficult chapters in our history and to build a prosperous future. We have already managed to achieve much on this way. I shall mention here the disclosure of truth about the Katyn murder as one of the most important factors thereof. I would like to assure you, Mr. President that my fellow countrymen shall always remember your personal, significant contribution in this matter.

The challenge we have to face today is directing our shared efforts to the future by inviting the representatives of the young generation to participate in our cooperation.

Esteemed Mr. President!

It seems obvious that in each dialogue based on partnerships relations there is room for different opinions, mutual presentation of arguments and seeking understanding. The Polish – Russian discourse has never ceased to exist, despite the adverse historical events that our nations had to face. Today, there are many fields for our understanding and cooperation. Therefore, our dialogue is based on solid foundations.

We can not think of a safe Europe without Russia participating in the process of shaping the new face of our continent. We shall bear in mind that it is up to us, our capability to reach agreement and to cooperate, how the future architecture of safety in Europe should look like. Poland's striving to participate in the Euro Atlantic political, defence, and economic structures is not aimed against anyone since Poland is vividly interested in abolishing barriers between the East and West.

I am looking forward with optimism to work out solutions that would be satisfactory for our two countries and nations. We have a common aim. It is an effective and long-lasting system of European safety. We are striving for the prosperity and safety of our countries in a united Europe – a Europe that shall be able to overcome the gloomy legacy of the Cold War era: the logic of confrontation. (...)

## 4. Address during the NATO Workshops (excerpts) – Warsaw, 20<sup>th</sup> of June 1996

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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

Our generation has brought about colossal, historic change. During the last seven years, we have transformed the political landscape of the European continent. Remembering where we were in 1989, it is hard to believe the progress that has been made. In this short time we have promoted and deepened the reservoir of our shared values: freedom, democracy, human rights, the rule of law, and a free market economy. (...)

Now we are at a unique point in history. Over the next few months, the process of opening the North Atlantic Alliance and the European Union eastward shall begin to come to fruition. The December meeting of the North Atlantic Council and the ongoing European Union Intergovernmental Conference shall be critical factors in determining the mechanism for bringing Poland and other Central European countries into the Euro-Atlantic community. It is our strong expectation that accession negotiations shall commence soon after these events have concluded, taking a huge step toward strengthening Central European security, which constitutes one of the crucial problems that calls for effective solution. At the same time, it shall be a decisive move toward new security architecture throughout Europe.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

I reaffirm now Poland's continuing and unequivocal aspiration to become a full-fledged member of the North Atlantic Alliance at the earliest possible date. I believe that there is no longer a need to address "why" and "what for" do we seek NATO membership. I consider that phase of the debate completed. It is obvious that every credible scheme for the European architecture of safety must include NATO at its core; the Alliance is the key factor of stability in Europe. Both NATO and its Partnership for Peace program have demonstrated a huge potential for designing security arrangements in Europe as well as for

promoting democracy. At the critical moment of the crisis in Bosnia, NATO showed the necessary resolve to break through the persistent impotence of the international community and move toward a viable settlement. (...)

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

Poland has made good progress in its domestic preparations for NATO membership. Our political system has all the characteristics of a mature and stable democracy. Civilian control of our armed forces is already rooted in our domestic law, and we are now acquiring practical experience in this crucial domain. By the time our negotiations for membership in the Alliance take place, this issue shall be decisively and irreversibly settled.

Proper bodies in Poland are currently drafting a National Integration Plan that would cover all aspects of our country's accession into NATO as well as the period following, from finances to the legal issues of stationing NATO troops on Polish territory to implementing all the necessary structural and technical reforms.

We have also moved forward in restructuring our armed forces, so that they meet NATO requirements. Poland is deeply committed to achieving full military interoperability with the Allied forces, commencing with command, control, communications, and intelligence as well as management of air-defence systems. Numerous joint military exercises involving NATO and Polish troops have strongly contributed to the development of mutual understanding between our military and the Alliance at all levels, and have resulted in a strong habit of cooperation. A Polish assault battalion's participation in the NATO-led peace implementation force in Bosnia has given our Euro-Atlantic aspirations a strong practical dimension.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

From our perspective, the enlargement of NATO is part of a complex effort to construct a new architecture of safety in Europe. We do therefore believe that enlargement should proceed in parallel with the development of other forms of European cooperation. The effort to expand the European Union eastward is one such form of cooperation.

Especially important are the attempts to enhance the security of those states that shall not join NATO in the near future. Such security measures can be advanced through the continuation of the Partnership for Peace program, maintaining dialogue within the North Atlantic Cooperation Council, and



through the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe. There must also be a close partnership between an expanded NATO and Russia, and between NATO and Ukraine, to sustain the stability of the new European construction. A cooperative relationship between those nations and NATO shall greatly contribute to European security. (...)

We strongly feel that a pattern of cooperative bilateral and subregional relations is an indispensable element of stable order on the continent. Consequently, Poland attaches particular importance to maintaining peaceful and friendly relations with our neighbours. The Polish-German partnership has been referred to as a model for the constructive building of mutual ties in the evolving European context. We are also developing trilateral relations with Germany and France within the framework of the “Weimar Triangle,” and are cultivating close, strategic relations with Ukraine. With other neighbours to the south and the east, we have reached bilateral relations that we assess as “good” or “good neighborly”, a step that has often required overcoming the barriers that have come with the baggage of history. (...)

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

As a nation, Poland is committed to accepting all the obligations and responsibilities associated with achieving common security goals within the North Atlantic Alliance. We are also prepared and willing to shoulder our part of the responsibility for implementing NATO tasks to ensure the stability of the European continent in the broad meaning thereof. (...)

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

Through its potential as a security enhancer, the North Atlantic Alliance will inject fresh incentive into the consolidation and expansion of the Euro-Atlantic zone of security, prosperity, and mutual understanding. The enlarged Alliance will extend the prospect of long-term stability to the countries of Central as well as Eastern Europe. The new NATO will reinforce the tendency toward integration and cooperation in Europe as a whole. It is such a NATO whose membership we wish to join and to which we want to contribute towards.

5. Address before the members of the Atlantic Council of the United States  
"New Horizons of European Security" (excerpts)  
– Washington D.C., 8<sup>th</sup> of July 1996
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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

Meeting with a group of such prominent specialists in the matter of international relations whose opinions influence the shape of American politics, is a special honour and of great satisfaction for me. Just a few hours ago, I met with the President of the United States of America, Mr. Bill Clinton. Our conversation, similarly to my numerous meetings with leading Western politicians, strengthened me in the conviction that while discussing the notion of enlarging NATO significant progress took place. We are increasingly close to critical decisions to be taken.

Using the opportunity of today's meeting, I would like to suggest to you a kind of joint intellectual task, appealing to your imagination. I would like us to imagine the situation in Europe and worldwide, that would have taken place the day after the enlarging of NATO with the group of several Central Eastern countries, including Poland. Let us have a closer look at the possible consequences of this decision. We are talking here about the not so remote future – so you are the right audience and addressee of such a proposition. So, let us imagine Poland is a member of NATO. Let us go deeper in the reality that awaits us the day after this breakthrough decision.

Let us assume then, that the North Atlantic Alliance is broadened with Poland – a country of forty million inhabitants, one of the biggest in the Central Europe. A country of stable politics, with significant economic and defensive potential, a country that respects values thanks to which the Western World owes its very development. Poland does contribute to the shared civilizational heritage based on the rule of democracy, individual freedom and the rules of law. This commitment to the said values was presented by the Polish people many times in the past. They also prove this commitment today, in the daily reality of democracy and civic society. The Polish people do commonly accept

Poland's membership in NATO mainly due to the fact that the North Atlantic Alliance is a trustworthy and reliable defender and guarantor of the said values. 82 percent of Polish society wants Poland to be the member of NATO. As far as this issue is concerned, there has not been any disagreement amongst the leading political parties.

Poland is a country of economic success. Seven percent growth in the GNP, one of the biggest in Europe, and visible effects of system reforms have made the American experts to include Poland to the leading edge of the Big Emerging Markets. Foreign investment reach the level of tens of billions of dollars – and this trend shall be continued until 2000, provided the present dynamics shall prevail. The money invested in Poland, to the great extent American money, shall become fully safe as of Poland's accession to NATO.

This new Alliance member has quite large Armed Forces, which is fully compatible with the NATO structures as far as the structure and logistics is concerned. In Poland, there is efficient and clear system of civil control over the Armed Forces, established by legal regulations implemented in 1996. Our Army has also quite significant experience in the military cooperation with the United States, Germany, and other members of the Alliance. This experience has been constantly improved by the program of joint drills and exercises and contacts within the Partnership for Peace. Polish commanders and soldiers have been involved in peace operations for dozens of years. Most recently, they have proved themselves in the mission in the former Yugoslavia. Each and every Polish soldier sent to participate in the peace mission means that other countries bearing the major burden of maintaining global peace – and here I mean first the United States – can send there fewer soldiers.

Poland, as a member of NATO, strengthens the European stability, since this country does not remain in conflict with anybody. On the contrary, we have good relationships with all European countries. First of all, Poland has managed to set up its relations with its Eastern neighbours, i.e. with Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and the Baltic States. By these means, Poland, becoming increasingly more related with the West, at the same time makes the contribution to the good relations with Eastern Europe by offering its valuable and significant legacy to the Alliance.

In 1991, Poland bordered with only three countries; now, we are the neighbour of seven independent states. One might have been afraid that with the collapse of the system of balance of threat and the victory of democracy, the difficult legacy of the past would become vivid again amongst the peoples of our region. A Similar mechanism has led to the outbreak of the civil war

in former Yugoslavian countries. However, we in the Central Europe have managed to successfully overcome this threat. We have managed to value the future above the past.

To a greater extent, it was possible due to the active stance of Poland, due to the dialogue and reconciliation between Poles and Germans, Poles and Russians, and Poles and Ukrainians. Commonly accepted and acknowledged legal and civilizational standards became the basis for the relationships with our neighbours. Those relationships can be characterized by one, yet a very reasoned definition: normality.

So, NATO was enlarged (I remind you of the conventional character of this digression) with a country that for years has been supporting the idea of regional cooperation and actively participating in the construction thereof. The Polish people realize that they are not, and shall not be either, a superpower in the global or regional meaning, yet Poland still is a country of significance to the architecture of European safety and security. The area of Central Europe is of key importance for establishing and developing permanent bonds and ties and fruitful cooperation between the West and East. Along with France and Germany, we established the “Weimar Triangle”; we participate in the Central European Initiative that gathers the countries located in the central belt of Europe, from the Adriatic Sea to the Baltic Sea. Together with the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia, we have established the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA) initiative. We are active in the Council of the Baltic Sea States, cooperating in this field with Germany, Russia, Scandinavia and Baltic States.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Does not it prove that the day that shall follow the incorporation of Poland to the Alliance is going to be the day of considerable profit? NATO’s political, economic and defensive power shall be improved and strengthened, so shall the Central European safety and stability; consequently, the European and transatlantic safety and stability of international order shall be improved as well.

It is difficult to predict today how the relationships between the Euro Atlantic community and democratic Russia shall pan out. This shall be decided upon by the very partners. However, we do expect that the enlarging of NATO shall be accompanied by the establishment of a basis for the strategic partnership of NATO and Russia, as well as the development of means of mutual trust between these two countries. In this sense, the day after NATO enlargement we are still trying to imagine, shall not be the day of hostility, but the day

in which the partners shall realize fully the need for fundamental agreement and accord.

Poland supports this course of events. However, we can become the factual participant to such a dialogue only if we join NATO. Otherwise, we can be a mere active witness thereof. But for Poland itself, bordering with Russia, Ukraine and Belarus, hardly any other country is interested in the accord, partnership and cooperation between the East and West. Poland pursues the NATO and EU membership, not to become well protected from the eastern threat. Poland perceives its membership as the obligation to deepen the trust, openness and cooperation between the East and West. I believe that my visit to Moscow and my efforts to liven up the Polish – Russian dialogue have proven it entirely. It was proven by the recent visit to Warsaw paid by the President of Ukraine Mr. Leonid Kuchma, as did my visits to Lithuania and Belarus. (...)

The enlargement of NATO, provided it is a *fait accompli*, not a merely hypothetical one, shall become the foundation for new European order. Decisions taken in Berlin pursue the substantial internal transformation of NATO. In fact, critical for the very essence of the Alliance shall be the decision on enlargement. By moving eastwards, the Atlantic Alliance shall at the same time meet the east halfway. Nobody in the countries of the former USSR thinks seriously of going back to the arms race anew. The establishment of a new, broadened thus more powerful NATO, shall persuade all even more to solidify the non-confrontative, more partner-like, and more friendly relationships. (...)

## 6. Address delivered in the Royal Institute of International Affairs (excerpts) – London, 24<sup>th</sup> of October 1996

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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

The opening of NATO towards the Central Europe is closely related to the issues that have always been referred to as “matters of a sensitive nature”, most often concerning such issues as:

NATO–Russia partnership accompanying the enlargement, security of three Baltic States and Ukraine, the lot of the “Partnership for Peace” and the relationships between the Pact and the states that are not likely to be included during the first phase of enlargement, the costs of NATO enlargements, and the future of nuclear disarmament in Europe.

Finding ourselves in a rather delicate and touchy situation, when we have not yet been the full members, we have avoided taking a stand on these issues. Today, however, the preparations for the enlargement are very advanced.

After the Tuesday statement of President Clinton, we do hope that the decision making process shall step up. Therefore, we would like to assure that we do not want to avoid the discussion on any and all difficult problems and dilemmas that may occur in the future. Such an open approach is crucial to ensure that the enlargement process shall be a very prudent step, taken in a supporting environment.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

Safety is the basic value for all countries. It is the crucial foundation that enables the citizens to develop – in peace and wealth, as well as to work out friendly international relations. On the basis of a conscious choice, supported by the exchange of information, the Poles have come to the conclusion that safety for them means first of all Poland’s membership in the North Atlantic Pact. Poland is the only country in Central Europe where 82 percent of citizens support the

full membership in NATO. Within the last few years, many a time we have provided the evidence for enlarging NATO.

We do believe that the process shall strengthen the stability and security of the entire European continent, including Russia. Yet, we have to remind constantly that the development and enlarging the process of Euro Atlantic integration can not result in one party being the only aggrieved party.

The opening of NATO to Central Europe has to be recognized as the integral part of the reform and change of the Pact. The enlargement is the essence and logical result of the reform. The NATO evolution is a comprehensive development in which the positions of future, new member states shall be taken into consideration.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

While discussing the issues related to Poland's safety we are aware of the fact that the meaning of the term "safety" in contemporary international relationships is subject to constant change. What was first perceived as the statistical and territorial "safety", turned into a dynamic and comprehensive process. NATO – perceived by us from the position of ante factum ally – fulfills properly the new conditions of and for safety. NATO is changing (...), it became a more elastic structure, well prepared to make head against contemporary challenges. The basic feature of NATO, undoubtedly, shall still be the collective defence, based on the Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. Involvement in new tasks and fields of activity shall not divert the Pact's attention from the main defensive aim.

The basic feature of all defence allies, including NATO, is the mutual responsibility for safety of all member states. From our side, we would like to join NATO, in structures of which every member state shall be sure that its safety needs are met and fulfilled.

In my opinion, the North Atlantic Alliance shall be coherent, effective, and reliable and shall demonstrate shared responsibility for the safety and stability of Europe as a whole.

There is a defined space within which we can improve coherence, as the result of new members' adherence to the shared Euro Atlantic values and a common vision of safety. We shall all support a stable Trans Atlantic union.

The effectiveness of integrated military structure of the Pact has to be preserved when particular Armed Forces of the Central European countries shall become apart thereof. Even more, the credibility of NATO shall be improved, since opening eastwards shall reassure the Alliance's mission in the post cold war world.

Finally, an enlarged NATO shall continue to function as the organizer of safety on the European continent.

Poland expresses its willingness and readiness to contribute significantly to the improvement and strengthening of any and all of the above mentioned features.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

While our preparations to access NATO are progressing, Poland is now in the course of developing a detailed program of its membership. We have evaluated the role Poland can play in the Pact. We do believe that our membership shall improve the defensive capabilities of the Alliance and its stabilization potential.

Assessing Poland's contribution to NATO from the strictly military point of view, as a supplement to the military potential that consists of fourteen divisions, three big seaports at the Baltic Sea, and anti-aircraft network, etc., is a serious under-estimation of our potential. Of course, these assets have to be taken into consideration. NATO is a defensive organization, the values of which are based not only on the political instincts and imagination of its leaders, but also on military skills and weaponry.

Bearing the above in mind, we would like to stress the political dimension of Poland's contribution to the Pact. It is demonstrated in a mature, responsible democracy and in foreign policy. We are not interested in being merely an advance facility on the area of European stability. We want to become one of the pillars thereof. Relationships with all our neighbours are indeed friendly and constructive, based on treaties, ongoing political dialogue, economic cooperation and increasingly better interpersonal relations. We are convinced that Poland, once it becomes the full NATO member, shall be able to execute its stabilizing function even better.

Poland, within the Pact framework, shall be able to present its assets of year-long devotion to the idea of partnership. Pact means allies. Just a few steps away, there is an old Rubens Hotel, the seat of the general staff of gen. Sikorski



and the Polish government during the Second World War. In those difficult warfare times London was also, in a sense, our capital as well. I know that in your country, Poland's commitment as an ally, the commitment and courage of Polish soldiers is still vivid in your memory, not only to the generation of the Battle of England. Poland shall continue to be a trustworthy, reliable partner, now and in the future. We have the will, consciousness, and means to successfully pursue this aim. Through our close relationships with Germany, France, the United States, the United Kingdom, and other member states, Poland shall significantly contribute to the strengthening of the internal cohesion and coherence of the Alliance. (...)

## 7. Letter to William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America – 22<sup>nd</sup> of January 1997

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Dear Mr. President,

I would like to address you on the occasion of the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the President of the United States of America Woodrow Wilson's declaration, concerning the lot of Poland.

The said Declaration, together with the famous President's Fourteen Points published one year later were the consequence of a particular, special way of thinking about the European issues and the willingness of the United States to engage into the matter of the old continent.

American involvement in European issues today is of equal importance and significance as it was ten, fifty, or eighty years ago, despite the fact that contemporary Europe is in much better condition than it used to be in the past. Changes that took place in Europe would not have been possible but for the involvement of the USA, including the personal engagement of the consecutive Presidents and their immediate co-workers. For the last four years, it is you Mr. President, along with Vice President A. Gore, National Security Advisor A. Lake, Secretary of State W. Christopher, and Secretary of Defence W. Perry who have been supporting us and have personally contributed to the construction of a united and safe Europe.

Two days after the inauguration of your second term at the Presidential office in the White House, let me express my best and sincere wishes for you and your co-workers. I wish your administration to fulfill the plans and goals that have been set forth for the forthcoming four year term. I do believe that the Trans Atlantic cooperation shall contribute to the comprehensive integration of Europe after it had been divided by the iron curtain for many years. I am also deeply convinced that the enlargement of NATO, that has been taking place on the initiative and under the leadership of the USA shall result in – as Ms. M. Albright has recently stated – Eastern Europe being aided in the same way

as Western Europe was 50 years earlier. Using this opportunity, let me most cordially invite you, Mr. President, to pay an official visit in Poland this year. I am more than certain that it shall be of tremendous political significance for the process of NATO enlargement and shall stress the ideal cooperation between our countries that – there is no doubt about it – in two years shall become the allied cooperation.

## 8. Interview for Polish Television (excerpts) – 5<sup>th</sup> of July 1997

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*Mr. President, all 16 NATO member states are unanimous as far as the admission of three new countries is concerned. The negotiations with Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary shall begin soon. There is no such unanimity with regard to the remaining candidates. Why these three countries in particular? Does it mean that Poles, Czechs, and Hungarians are so strong and powerful or rather it is the geopolitical location that prevailed?*

The very fact that the door was opened for new members is a historical event. After nearly 50 years, NATO is ready to accept new countries. Why these very three? Because it is here where all the reforms have started, here the democracy and market economy are most advanced. These countries have demonstrated the biggest political stability, great determination as far as the issues of safety and social concordance in the above matter are concerned. These factors have made Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary being so distinguished from amongst other countries that, in my opinion, shall enter NATO as well, yet on a different date.

*Are we opting for limiting the group of newly admitted countries to these very three or would we like to expand this group? And which term is according to us most suitable for the next phase of enlargement?*

I have to answer this question very precisely. Poland does support the notion of enlarging NATO with other countries. We can think of such a system of safety in Europe that consists practically of the entire region of Central Europe – so according to us, there is room in NATO for the Baltic States, for Romania and Bulgaria. If other countries would like to join this structure – Ukraine for example – we are convinced that it shall improve the European safety even more. Also Slovakia that has disappeared from any public discussion and which according to me shall become an important element of the NATO structure in future.

Without any doubt, though, the level of preparedness of particular countries does differ. The level of their determination does differ too. In Bulgaria, for example, only recently have the politicians started to declare they want to join NATO – beforehand, there were nothing but political disputes and quarrels. I would not like to decide when and which countries shall join this structure, since we are not the member state yet. Surely we shall support the aspirations of our neighbours – for the sake of the interest of Poland and Central Europe, and all of Europe as well. (...)

*An invitation to negotiations does not equal full membership. We have a long, bumpy road to go before we ratify the treaty. Is it possible to think today of a scenario for such a ratification by the 16 parliaments?*

This road is not as very long as it may seem, since it shall have been accomplished in April 1999, when our countries join NATO, on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of NATO establishment. The very process of ratification is as follows: until the end of the year, the negotiations of the so called accession protocol shall be conducted – the group of Polish negotiators shall discuss it together with the representatives of “the Sixteen”. This process shall have been concluded by the end of this year, maybe it will take a month or two longer. I think that the ratification procedure in all sixteen parliaments shall be accomplished within 1998, including Poland’s newly elected parliament.

*When are the biggest problems going to emerge, in your opinion?*

I think that the biggest battle shall take place in the American Senate. The ratification shall be passed in countries that do not have serious doubts. We also shall bear in mind that this ratification process is also conditioned on elections in numerous cases. Next year is a year of elections, just to mention the Netherlands. Canada has already made its choice, so people there have a more peaceful time. And Canada strongly supports us. I think this is the country that would be able to relatively quickly ratify the accession of new member states.

*Going back to the American Senate, what are our chances today?*

Based on all my conversations I had recently – with former President Bush, with Henry Kissinger, whom I hosted recently – I can presume that things are going quite well, our chances are quite big; however it is not an easy task – we need a 2/3<sup>rd</sup> majority. It means that 67 out of 100 American Senators have to say “yeah”. And the most difficult issue in this procedure is that the resistance is on both sides, practically speaking. It means that both in the Democratic

Party, and in the Republican Party, there are so called “NATO–sceptics”. President Clinton, who is very involved in the enlargement – for whom it is a kind of historic mission – can count only on a part of his own party and seek support and good cooperation with only a part of Republicans. It is however possible, since President Bush and the Republican senators openly declare they support the enlargement. The problem for President Clinton is that the leader of the democratic minority in the Senate belongs to those sceptics. This is why, as I assume, President Clinton wants to very actively, and similarly to the Presidential campaign, face the opponents of NATO enlargement.

That is why he instantly arrived to Warsaw to show – in such a symbolic place, destroyed by the Second World War, in a country experienced with all possible atrocities of the last centuries, since one can hardly think of any war that did not afflict Poland – that the United States of America do participate in the process of constructing the system of safety that is to ensure peace, ease, and development for dozens of years to come, or even maybe hundreds of years.

*So, it can be stated that this visit of President Clinton to Warsaw is canvassing for votes in the Congress?*

I do appreciate this fact. I believe that here President Clinton demonstrates a firm determination and involvement. He wants to be in Poland – but also in other countries, since he is going to visit Romania – he wants to reach public opinion in the United States; to reach those who, somewhere in Arizona, ask why they have to pay for a Poland, to lose money on a Hungary, to take care of safety of a Czech Republic, wherever these countries can be?... This American syndrome is still vivid. It has undergone some changes in recent years, yet it still is present – it is a kind of American isolationism, or deep belief, that Russia or China can be a global partner, but Central Europe, whatever?... I think that this visit marks to a great extent the beginning of the American offensive of President Clinton’s administration to convince not only Senators, but also a part of the American public opinion that NATO enlargement is to the best interest of America as a whole.

*What is the role of Russia in that very process? Do you think that Russia came down a peg or two, that Russia is going to idly observe what is going on in the parliaments, or rather it would use any and all available means to block this process up?*

Russia’s means are very limited. Without any doubts, the Russians shall consequently express their critical attitude and judgment concerning the enlargement despite the fact that they have already accepted it. Signing the Act with NATO in Paris meant formal accord for enlargement and at the same time

for establishing the process of cooperation – today with NATO in its present shape, and in future with an enlarged Alliance. I think that the Russians would keep on saying that they are against it, yet they shall not be active, the more so that for Russia today the biggest problem consists of the economic reforms of the country. They would not have been able to succeed in them but for the support and good cooperation with the United States, Germany, Great Britain, France, and I also think that with Poland as well. (..)

9. Address delivered during the meeting with William J Clinton,  
the President of the United States of America – Warsaw, Castle Square,  
10<sup>th</sup> of July 1997

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Dear Mr. President, Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

Welcome on Polish soil, Mr. President. We would like to welcome the leader that shapes the global politics. We would like to welcome a man, who spares no efforts for the world order, safety and peace. We would like to welcome a great and close friend of Poland.

We have got some good news here, coming from Madrid. The North Atlantic Alliance invited new countries to participate in the accession process. These countries are Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary. We have been waiting for this moment for a long time. And this moment has come now!

I would like to express my deepest regret that today's spontaneity and joy of this meeting we can not share with those who suffered the drama of flood, who left their homes and dwellings. I would like to assure all of them that in this great moment we are also with them we are a unity, a community of men who have to take care of those who were afflicted by this tragedy.

Mr. President, on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of October last year in Detroit, very American and at the same time a Polish city, you said that in early 1997 the group of first future members of NATO would be invited to the preliminary talks. You kept your promise! Thank you very much Mr. President!

Thank you America! We would like to thank the American tax payers who do know that peace, freedom, safety and well being – of all of us, our children and grandchildren – is priceless and invaluable.



Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

Everything that happens today is of great, historic dimension. The era of the Yalta order is coming to the ultimate end. The territory of stability and security is expanding and growing larger. The global order is strengthening. Poland now has not been in a better situation for centuries.

We are gathered in the place that reminds us of painful yet proud history. We are standing on a square where national patriotic manifestations were organized. This land was consecrated with the blood of killed patriots who died fighting. This castle is a symbol of Polish parliamentary tradition, one of the eldest in Europe. Here, in 1791, the first constitution in Europe was proclaimed and passed.

Unfortunately, it was also here where the very first bombs of World War Two were dropped. 1939, attack from the West and East, war, German occupation, extermination of Jews, the drama of the Warsaw Uprising have been inscribed in the consciousness of the Polish people forever. Fifty years ago, there was nothing here but a sea of ashes and smouldering ruins. Even before the Polish wounds had begun to heal, the iron curtain shadowed our country. Poland, all of Central Europe, was forcibly excluded from the post war projects of reconstruction, cooperation and the guarantee of safety. Today we want to and we can take an active part in creating the architecture of a new, common Europe. A new one – yet based on permanent, existing and reliable values and structures.

Mr. President!

We live in an era where the symbols thereof are not the walls, but bridges built between people. Not hostility, but cooperation. Not the balance of threat, but shared safety and security. America did win in the “cold war” and managed to pass the fruits of this victory onto free, independent countries. America has proven to the world that being a superpower – means to participate, to take care of the future and to build it as well.

Mr. President, I may sound here somewhat immodest. Yet it is true indeed! But for Poland, these changes would not have taken place. But for Poland’s pride, patriotism and rebellious and disobedient spirit.

“Solidarity”, protests in the 80s, the Round Table, all these marked the beginning of great, tremendous and irreversible changes to take place in future. The wind of change and freedom did start blowing in Poland, and then it spread along the territory of all of Central and European Europe.

We should not be small-minded and pettish in the face of matters of great importance. Egoism is the worst disease of politics. As the President of the Republic of Poland I do hereby pay homage to, and thank for the personal consistent contribution to the Polish presence in NATO: Lech Walesa, prime ministers of the third Republic of Poland – Tadeusz Mazowiecki, Jan Krzysztof Bielecki, Jan Olszewski, Hanna Suchocka, Waldemar Pawlak, Jozef Oleksy, Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz; ministers of the foreign affairs – Krzysztof Skubiszewski, Andrzej Olechowski, Władysław Bartoszewski and Mr. Dariusz Rosati, who managed to conduct this policy so effectively. I would like to thank the Chairman of the Commission of Foreign Affairs of the Sejm, Mr. Bronisław Geremek.

If today we are happy about Poland's invitation to NATO, it is the unanimity of people, who in other matters spare no time and effort to exchange caustic and critical remarks – that is our capital that can not be overestimated.

Our partners have to know: participation in NATO is the goal inscribed in our *raison d'état*. Poland's foreign policy is consistent, impartial and invariable. We did not choose the Euro Atlantic orientation under the influence of a fugitive moment. Poland's membership in NATO is supported by the vast majority of Polish society and all leading political parties. It is a natural and logical choice, based on more than a one thousand year history of our state. We all want it!

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen!

The invitation to NATO is a great achievement, yet a great challenge as well. We are aware of the tasks and costs to come. You can never get safety for free. We are ready to assume the responsibilities and commitments relating to our membership in NATO.

Poland shall contribute to NATO with its recent achievements and successes. We are the country of established and mature democracy. Obvious in Poland are the independence of the judiciary, freedom of speech, local governments' autonomy, civil control over Armed Forces. Our economic growth is one of the highest in Europe. Open society, political stability and civilizational progress and development – these are the features of Poland of today!

Reforms in Poland have reached and gone beyond the critical point. They are irreversible. Poland is in good condition, on a good way and in good hands. Thanks to that – Poland is predictable. The effort and determination of millions of Poles become the crux of the success of Polish reforms. The nation had the will to change things and was able to manage its lot by itself. It is you, Dear

Ladies and Gentlemen, who are the greatest heroes of these transformations. It shall be remembered that we owe this exceptional and splendid moment to you. Yet, we shall also remember the great significance of support we were provided with by our friends abroad, especially the United States and the peoples of this country.

Mr. President! Ladies and Gentlemen!

Poland does not turn its back on anyone. We neither seek friends from far, nor do we seek enemies close to home. We are proud of the friendship and trust of our neighboring countries. Wealth and safety are a common cause. Therefore, we support the idea of enlarging NATO in future with the democratic countries from our region. Poland being in NATO, shall not forget even for a moment about the aspirations and hopes of Romania, Slovenia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Slovakia and Bulgaria.

States and peoples do need reconciliation. May all who seek it be encouraged by the example of excellent Polish – German cooperation that constitutes a firm, strong pillar of European order. We also have high expectations for the development of cooperation between Poland and the Russian Federation. With Ukraine, we are bonded with strategic partnership and pursuing reconciliation above the difficult past.

We can not be guaranteed safety unless we share the responsibility. Enjoying freedom – means also assuming responsibilities and risk. This is how we perceive it – in the moral and political dimension! The devoted service of thousands of Polish soldiers who for dozens of years have been participating in peace missions in Bosnia, Vietnam, Korea, Haiti, Cyprus, and the Middle East – is the best token and proof thereof.

Mr. President!

I would like to thank you once again for your understanding to our aspirations. We perceive America as the country that shapes the contemporary civilization. Energy and laboriousness and diligence of Americans have made America the country of constant, unwavering development and progress. Many a Pole could have seen it with their very own eyes. Many Poles have been and still are building this progress with their own hands and minds. We are proud of the Polish contribution to American wealth and well-being.

The bonds of friendship, close relations and solidarity have been uniting our countries for a long time. They united us in the times of Washington and Pulaski, the times of Paderewski and Wilson. It is also the case today.

We are approaching the great and unwavering moment in the history of our nations. We have always been friends.

Now we will be allies.

Poland can cooperate.

Poland keeps its promises.

Poland is ready!

# 10.

Lecture at the Centre for Eastern Studies (excerpts)  
– 6<sup>th</sup> of November 1997

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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

It is going to be more than just a few words. I would like to use this opportunity to refer to the issues concerning Poland, the foreign policy of our country that are also very closely related to your scope of activity. I shall start, though with a courtesy. (...)

Ladies and Gentlemen!

I would like to use this opportunity to present a few reflections on the most important and major challenges Poland has to face today with relation to our policy towards the former Soviet Union countries.

It is a great asset of Poland that the Polish foreign policy since 1989 has been characterized by consistency and stability. The main goals of this policy have remained unchanged, despite the personal shifts on the top level of politics. These goals focus on the following priorities: successful and effective accession talks with EU, so that we would be able to join this organization soon after 2000; development of cooperation with our neighbours and active participation in regional cooperation. I am especially glad that in the above mentioned issues there is a broad, impartial and factual consensus in Poland.

This consensus includes also, in my opinion, the key aims of Polish Policy towards Russia, Ukraine, Lithuania and Belarus. Therefore, all changes that were taking place on the position of the president, prime minister, or the minister of foreign affairs, did not result in this policy being redefined, nor its principles and main goals. The problem and subject matter for discussions, as well as arguments, shall always be finding the detailed, consistent political instrumentarium, which is adequate to the situation and answers life poses us. So, briefly put these are not aims that are the subject of dispute, but methods, tempo, and proper accentuation of this policy. The questions are numerous

and allow me to remind some of the most important ones. I do expect that our further cooperation shall consist in finding the best possible answers to these questions. So:

How can we improve the trust towards the partnership character of Poland's relations with our Eastern neighbours? How can we stimulate the Polish economy?

Which methods shall be implemented in order to promote the Polish economy, Polish products on the increasingly competing eastern markets?

How can we overcome the burdensome legacy of the past?

How, while respecting our partner, can we lead to compensation, even a symbolic one, for injustice done to Poles?

An important question is also how shall we approach Russia, what methods are we to use to reach the public opinion, to the opinion making circles and groups, to the economic elites and regional elites that become increasingly more important in this country?

How can we neutralize the possible, negative influence of some groups in Russia and other CIS countries that are unfavourable to our membership in NATO on the course of the ratification process in the parliaments of the NATO member states?

It is just a small part of a long list, but these questions do prove that providing a proper answer to each of them is a difficult task and a challenge also for you.

On the territory of Central and Eastern Europe, the history left its painful and hurtful traces that even today are visible in the relations between particular countries. While remembering about the injustice and wrongful deeds that Poland and our nation had to experience, we are always taking into account the stance of our eastern neighbours: Russia, Ukraine, Lithuania and Belarus. Poland has to face a challenge that is not easier than that of gen. Charles de Gaulle and Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, when they managed to achieve the accord between France and Germany. On this way of seeking reconciliation we have managed to achieve significant successes already. It is true that anytime we may have to face different tensions and situations that, in order to be solved and eased, call for patience and understanding of both sides, and events from the past impede the mutual trust and understanding. Treaties and joint

political declarations with Russia, Ukraine and Lithuania were and still are of great importance and emotional significance. It was not an easy task to reach them. The more we believe that they shall constitute a solid basis for good friendly relations in the long term.

Pursuing good relations with Russia was the will and goal of the consecutive governments of democratic Poland. Russia is an important participant of changes and transformations that take place on our continent. We do remember well that “perestroika” in the Soviet Union helped Poles define in 1989 our own future single handedly. Today, not only our hopes for European stability depend on the Russian progress on the way to democracy and market reforms. However, we shall never forget about threats. Many political groups are trying to win on the great imperialistic sentiments, and the harsh and tough living conditions, as well as these permanently present obstacles if reforming the economy result in these great imperialistic groups and this way of thinking become increasingly more popular in the Russian society. (...)

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Poland’s opening towards its neighbours, especially those with whom we share centuries old history, is frequently a very difficult one, is not an easy task. Close, partner-like, or I venture to say even friendly relations between Poland, Lithuania, and Ukraine is a source of great satisfaction for all of us. I have a very personal attitude to the development of Polish-Ukrainian relationships. I believe that a democratic, independent Ukraine if given a chance for good economic and social progress would become one of the most important guarantors of stabilization in the whole of Europe, and undoubtedly shall be the best guarantee for stabilization in Central and Eastern Europe. It also shall be the best protection against the eventual revival of imperialistic sentiments.

Polish-Ukrainian cooperation does progress well. Quite recently, together with President Kuchma, we have signed the joint declaration on cooperation and reconciliation. I am also glad that this cooperation becomes increasingly visible in the economic field and I can observe with great satisfaction how Ukraine becomes fully bonded with the European structures. Signing the charter with the North Atlantic Alliance – that took place at the meeting in Madrid – I perceive as an extremely important event, underestimated by the mass media and public opinion. Ukraine shall have to face great challenges; the biggest of them are the elections next year, which in my opinion may be of key significance for the future of this country. These elections may strengthen even more the autonomy and democratic processes, and economic reforms in Ukraine. They may result in Ukraine being in close relations and integration with Russia.

Reevaluations have also taken place in the Polish-Lithuanian relationships that today are defined as the strategic partnership. This partnership is even more important since it is accepted by different political alliances, both on the Polish and Lithuanian side. In my opinion, it proves that on both sides and amongst political elites both in Poland and Lithuania, there is a strong, unwavering belief that Poland and Lithuania shall cooperate very closely on our common way to a new, united Europe.

A separate very difficult issue is our relation with Belarus. The situation in this country is very alarming, and news is disturbing. I have expressed my deepest anxiety in my official addresses in Lisbon, and on a seminar in Vilnius recently. Breaking the most basic human rights, restricting the freedom of mass media, electronic media, the authoritarian manner of governing, inhibiting the process of economic reforms are nothing but the gloomy symbols belonging to the past. They neither can be accepted nor supported in any way.

Since we are realistic people, however, we have to cooperate with the present authorities in Minsk and look for the means of influencing their politics. Therefore, each time when we stand against the violation of democratic standards in Belarus, officially and in every form possible demanding respect for democracy and human rights, we shall not attempt to isolate Belarus politically and economically, since such a behavior could have negative effects for us too. I was strongly criticized for my meeting with the President of Belarus. I do not want to discuss now whether it was right, but I do believe that the chance for democracy in Belarus, for respecting human rights there, consists in engaging that country and its peoples to the European dialogue. Isolation could inevitably lead to the conviction that Belarus has only a one-way ticket to use. This ticket is for the trip to Moscow. It is a very difficult task, we need new stimuli and genuine solutions in this matter. I hope that your center shall be very supportive in finding such formulas or initiatives that can meet these two conditions above. We have to protect human rights and the rule of democracy, we have to be very consistent in this matter; yet, our activities can not result in Belarus becoming completely isolated and turned away from the whole of central Europe and, consequently, European structures as well.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

The most important and crucial issue for us is undoubtedly the shape of international cooperation in our part of Europe after NATO expansion and enlargement. Whether shall it be the time of cooperation, or the time of new European divisions and separation, time of “cold peace” or even “cold war”.



It is difficult to determine today the future shape of mutual relations between the Euro Atlantic community and Russia. These are the very partners to decide on that. Today we clearly see that the NATO enlargement is accompanied by the construction of the strategic partnership of NATO and Russia, as well as the development of proper means of mutual trust between those two. These are positive facts and they are perceived as such. We are supporting this course of action. I have stressed many a time that Poland is the most interested in the agreement on partnership and cooperation between East and West. Poland does want to be in NATO, yet Poland does not want to be a frontline country, exposed to any possible threats resulting from the disagreement that may emerge between an enlarged NATO and Russia and Russian partners.

Poland does pursue the membership in NATO and the EU in order not to hide in the bunker well protected from the east. We perceive our membership as a task, as the obligation to deepen the trust, openness and cooperation between the East and West, as well as cooperation in the entire region of central and Eastern Europe.

I am of the opinion that Russia and other post soviet countries shall not remain on the margin of the integration processes. Already today, they increasingly often participate in the global and European economic processes, in the international division of labour, they are present in financial and capital markets. Quite recently, Ukraine and Russia have become the members of the Council of Europe. Legal standards that had been worked out for many years by democratic countries now become accessible and available for both parts of the decades-divided continent, with all possible significant restrictions thereof.

Economic issues are of key and utmost importance for our contacts with the former Soviet Union countries. We are satisfied with the growing turnover with Russia, Ukraine and Baltic States. However, it is also true that the level of our economic cooperation is far below our expectations, and most importantly from our actual capacities. Therefore, we are greatly interested in the liberalization of trade; we are hindered however in this respect by the not fully reformed economy in those countries and commonly known problems relating to payments and financial settlements, obstruction of bank infrastructure and lack of security for bank operations that are being conducted. Despite this, we shall spare no effort in order to make the markets of CIS be increasingly open for Polish economy and trade; therefore we do hope it is a task that can be accomplished in the nearest future. Within the framework of cooperation with the said countries, special attention shall be paid to the regional cooperation, which in many instances has successfully managed to replace the former, state controlled economy. You do know best how much is to be done in this respect.

It is also important that Poland more attentively looks at the countries of Caucasus and Central Asia. We have recorded the increase in the importance of those countries in the international economic cooperation. Recently, the President of Azerbaijan visited Poland; the President of Kazakhstan shall arrive soon. I do hope to meet with the President of Georgia. These are very important elements of broader activities that shall result in the increase of our economic cooperation; in the CIS countries, in turn these activities shall result in increasing support for Polish international aspirations, since those countries have attitudes different from Russia's towards our drive towards NATO, or Poland's integration with the EU. We have their full support in this respect.

While speaking about opportunities, it is worth mentioning Ukraine that promotes the notion of building a route that shall couple the Caspian oil fields with the Baltic Sea, with Scandinavia. It is a project that could engage many countries from our region and become an important completion to the infrastructure in the whole of Europe.

We do believe that this project, despite being a long-term and costly one, could result in all our countries being involved, in an even better way, into the integrated European systems and it shall put an end to the awkward, strange, and decades-old system in which Poland, Ukraine, Caucasus, and Middle East were isolated from Western and North Europe.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

These were the problems I wanted to share with you. Surely, this list does not contain all the issues that we shall talk about and which I find in your interesting studies and analyses. Maybe I have overused your patience; yet, your studies and analyses call for my patience as well. I do believe that it is a kind of very friendly, cordial return of mine. I do hope we shall together seek the answers. It is a rather intriguing time we all live in, we act, and we can make decisions, since Europe does change in front of our very own eyes. These are the events that hardly anyone could have predicted even just a few years ago. Since we are able to shape many of those processes by ourselves, I am even more convinced that it is worth cooperating, because we can influence the course of events and shape them to the benefit of Poland. Therefore, in conclusion, I would like to share one message with you, a message that shall accompany our activities in the East, and which says: "to be present, active, and open; yet first of all to know, what we want to achieve."(...)

# 11.

Letter to William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America  
– 24<sup>th</sup> of March 1998

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Dear Mr. President,

We are witnessing a momentous occasion – the Senate of the United States of America has authorized you to ratify the accession protocol concerning Poland's accession to the North Atlantic Alliance. This news has been welcomed in Poland with great joy, enthusiasm and hope for a better and safer future.

You, Mr. President belong to the group of those persons who have never let Poland down; it is the group of people who have always been making every possible effort to see the Polish flag flying over the NATO Headquarters. Here, in Poland, you can always count on friendship, respect and deepest gratitude.

Poland is joining NATO along with the Czech Republic and Hungary, with whom not only are we bonded with ties of shared businesses, but a sincere, true friendship as well. We, the inhabitants of Central Europe, are entering the Alliance with a clearly defined burden of experience and the legacy of historical knowledge and awareness. Therefore, there is nothing more important for us than a stable Europe, based on mutual cooperation and an effective and reliable alliance; I do believe that the basic guarantee thereof is the presence of American troops on our continent. We do perceive the USA as a European country, we can see a historical task and mission to be fulfilled by us and by the USA – to move beyond existing borders the best values of a Euro Atlantic world, i.e. freedom, democracy, stabilization and wealth and well being of all citizens.

On behalf of the entire Polish nation, I can assure you that we are ready to participate in the process of the building of a better world. Together with the American people and other allies, we want to do our best to continue the process of NATO being enlarged.

Dear Mr. President, please accept, my sincere expressions of friendship and allied loyalty. I do wish to reassure you that we shall not let down the confidence trusted in Poland.

## 12. Interview for "Rzeczpospolita" – a Polish daily (excerpts) – 14<sup>th</sup> of May 1998

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*We are increasingly closer to NATO. However, according to the internal NATO report, revealed by "Rzeczpospolita" in January this year the condition of the Polish Armed Forces is very bad. Are you going, as the commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces to undertake some steps in order to improve the process of modernization of the Polish army?*

I know this report. Obviously, it points out some weaknesses and drawbacks; yet the said report does not question the fact that an enlarged NATO shall significantly benefit from Poland's potential.

As far as the modernization is concerned, we have to undoubtedly improve the level of preparedness of Polish operational officers who would be able to join different international operations. We also have to establish a separate Polish Army modernization fund. The costs are not dramatically high. Within the 15 year period, the additional financial sources for the modernization of the armed forces in the amount of 200 million USD annually shall be sufficient. I have tackled this issue during my talks with the prime minister and ministers. I do not think that there will be any key differences of opinion here. (...)

There is the willingness to reduce the army from more than 220 thousand soldiers and officers we have today to 180 thousand. This significant reduction shall take place at the higher commanding levels. On the other hand, we do observe the evident deficiency of well educated and trained professional commanders of the basic military units. This has to be a very well thought-out process, though, not a one-off action that would humiliate people.

The same concerns the garrisons – both at the General Staff and in the Ministry of National Defence, there is good will in the above matter. The biggest reservations concerning this issue, however, are expressed by local self-governments. Liquidation of any garrison – especially in towns where there is a high level

of unemployment, where numerous institutions are dependent to and related with the army, result in instantaneous protests.

Still, the decisions simply have to be taken, and the plan has already been developed: reorganization of military districts, liquidation of redundant garrisons, and changes in the strategic policies, as well as the concepts of operational activity of all kinds of armed forces.

*Let us now have a look at the international arena. Do you not think that today, when Poland has finally managed to ensure itself the sense of security and safety, it is a good moment to pursue the improvement of our relationships with Russia? If so, what kind of gesture would be most suitable and advisable?*

(...) we do need good, friendly relations with Russia and today I would presume that our economic relations are more than simply good. In the political context [these relations] are on a satisfactory level, yet the dialogue shall be more lively. Beyond any doubt, the contacts must be maintained at the prime ministers' level. I shall do my best to intensify the talks on the level of presidents and their close cooperators. The invitation for President Yeltsin is open.

I am deeply convinced that in Russia people have accepted the fact of NATO being enlarged. And they shall overcome their reluctance and resentments. The only question, however, does remain: when shall it be possible to undertake more spectacular steps and activities, more significant gestures? I will spare no effort that this may happen sooner rather than later.

*At the same time, Russia does not want to accept the possibility of NATO being enlarged with the Baltic States or former Soviet Union countries. What is your opinion about that?*

It is the matter of our moral responsibility that the process of NATO enlargement would not have ended with Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. Also, it is the matter of our political interest. Besides, both the Polish experience of the Round Table, and the Russian one – of perestroika, as well as other ones, have proven that if we initiate a certain process, there are two possibilities: either the door for changes becomes open, or closed. And by no means can we accept the formula that the door is opened just for the chosen ones, and closed for the rest. Therefore, I rest assured that in the long term the NATO enlargement shall continue. I have no doubt whatsoever that the Baltic States, provided that they keep the hitherto determination, shall join NATO, too. The question is not if, but when. (...)

I am also deeply convinced that while enlarging NATO we should all the time maintain the best possible contacts with Russia, since the world is going to be much safer if Russia would cooperate. Russia follows the democratic way, because such is the will of Russian citizens, especially of my generation and younger ones. Those people do not want to become an isolated superpower. They do want to participate in the normal course of things globally. Of course, they want to do so while preserving their own pride, own values and great potential. (...)

Interview conducted by  
*Piotr Aleksandrowicz, Krzysztof Gottesman, Jan Skorzynski*

# 13. Speech at the opening of the conference on “Euro-Atlantic Integration as a Key Aspect of Stability” – Vilnius, 3<sup>rd</sup> of September 1998

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Mr President of the Republic of Lithuania, Ladies and Gentlemen!

It has become a tradition that representatives of political and intellectual elites from many countries meet in Vilnius in order to discuss cooperation, stability and safety on the regional, European and Euro-Atlantic level. I wish to thank President Valdas Adamkus for the great honour of making me the co-patron of this conference. I am very happy that the President’s gesture, evoking a similar Lithuanian initiative from last year, clearly shows evidence of a special friendly relationship binding Lithuania and Poland today.

We are living in times of great transformations. Democracy, the rule of law, free market economy have become an everyday aspect of nearly all of Europe. The modified political map of our continent is a basis for the construction of a new international order. For the first time in the history of Euro-Atlantic civilization have we found stability and common safety not on hostile rivalry and ‘the harmony of fear’, but on trust and cooperation between nations.

We put great hope in the success of integration processes. The political and economic unification of Europe and the construction of a new safety architecture and mutual trust on the Euro-Atlantic territory form two parallel and complementary currents.

It is impossible to consider European stability without taking into account the role played in the past and to be played in the future by the North Atlantic Alliance. Political and military cooperation within NATO and the American presence on our continent have enabled reconstruction after the destruction of World War II and have prevented the rebirth of historical conflicts in Europe. Indirectly, the Alliance has also stimulated the economic and political integration of Western European countries.

Similarly, today's NATO, adapted to new regional and global challenges, can form a pillar of European stability. The enlargement of NATO to the East and the Treaty's policy of "open doors" shall create favourable conditions for the unification of the continent and the promotion of values forming the cement of the European construction. Poland believes that under article 10 of the North-Atlantic Treaty and the Study on the enlargement of NATO, the doors of the Alliance should be open to all Eastern and Central European countries wishing to participate in NATO activities and which fulfill generally known membership criteria.

It is also necessary to expand the activities of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and Partnership for Peace. It is an important field of experience and preparation for countries aiming at integration with the Alliance. Moreover, it is a method of boosting mutual trust and common safety. A significant event, reinforcing stability in the region have been the recent "Baltic Challenge 1998" international manoeuvres.

It would not be good for European stability, if the expansion of structures of economic and political cooperation lagged behind the development of structures guaranteeing safety. The construction of a true community requires organically linked activities.

The unity of Europe means dialogue and cooperation of all the partners from the territory. It is impossible to undertake that breakthrough project without the active participation of Russia. The common safety of the continent, stability, mutual trust and European construction shall only come true if Russia participates in their construction. The role of Ukraine in that respect is also significant.

I am convinced that our meeting in Vilnius will be yet another important stimulus for strengthening stability from Alaska to Kamchatka. The construction of tools of mutual trust in Central Europe in the Baltic region is particularly important and promising.

I believe that I shall express the feelings of all of us gathered here by thanking very warmly President Valdas Adamkus and our Lithuanian hosts for the initiative of organizing this interesting forum. I wish you and myself a fruitful debate which shall cumulate with auspicious decisions for Europe for the future.



# 14.

Speech on the occasion of the ratification of the Treaty on the Polish accession to NATO ("Teleconference" with the Czech president V. Havel)  
– 26<sup>th</sup> of February 1999

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Dear Mr President of the Czech Republic, Dear Friends from the Czech Republic, Ladies and Gentlemen!

Today is a very special moment in our history. Our dreams have come true, our joint efforts have borne fruit. We are entering NATO. We are returning to where we belong. For the Alliance is nothing else than joint power in the pursuit of common values.

Our nations have been unswerving in their fight for those values, even under the grim post-Yalta system: during the Warsaw October, the Budapest tragedy in 1956, the "Prague spring" in 1968, the courageous movement of Polish Solidarity in 1980. Today we have reached the finishing line.

We can be proud that we have all contributed to that success. As recently as ten years ago the future of Central Europe gave rise to concern. Today our region is an example of profound transformation, of the development of democracy and economy, not free from difficulties. It is an example of success.

A moment before we step into NATO, we loudly and clearly articulate our desire for the doors of the Alliance to remain opened to new future members, as security is a common good.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

On behalf of my countrymen I wish to thank the Polish people and all those who trusted Poland. I wish to thank the Alliance member states and their peoples. Several times in its history has Poland had a chance to prove that it is a serious and reliable ally. So shall it be now.

In April, as full members to the Alliance, we shall celebrate together in Washington the fiftieth anniversary of NATO. We will then be proud that we managed to draw lessons from history. We will think about the future – with hope, but also with a firm decision to guarantee a better 21<sup>st</sup> century. Nursing hopes for a friendly world of free and secure people. Our achievement is a considerable one. But it is not the end, it is just the beginning. Today NATO, tomorrow the European Union. We can achieve it together!

I appeal to our Czech friends:

Dnes v NATO zítra v Evropské Uni a spolu!

# 15. Speech during the ceremony of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of NATO (excerpt) – Washington, 23<sup>rd</sup> of April 1999

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

I am taking the floor today overcome by special emotion. For the Polish people the existence of NATO has been a beacon of hope. Hope to save freedom and democracy in a pre-1989 divided Europe. Hope that the iron curtain would not be eternal. Hope that as soon as Poland recovered full sovereignty and the ability to decide for itself, it would be able to create a better future for itself and the entire continent, together with the whole Euro-Atlantic community.

60 years since the outbreak of the Second World War, since the bombs which hit Gdansk and Warsaw, since the days of hate, contempt and the holocaust, despite doubts the dreams of our fathers and grandfathers have come true. In the 50<sup>th</sup> year of the existence of NATO Poland has become a member of the organization. Our satisfaction is even greater, as that enlargement symbolizes the closing of the chapter of nearly 300 years of misfortune in Polish history. Our best countrymen have fought, been executed or deported in the pursuit of freedom – generation after generation. That dramatic tradition is only a memento for the young generation today.

The North Atlantic Alliance has proved its efficiency many times over the last fifty years. Its political and military umbrella has protected its member states. It created the conditions for their normal development and it strengthened their cooperation and solidarity.

The Alliance is still necessary to all of us living on both sides of the Atlantic. Even today, after the collapse of the global bi-polar political system, after the decline of communism, after the conclusion of the cold war. NATO and the American presence in Europe stabilize the situation in the Euro-Atlantic area, creating the basis for our democratic development.

The enlargement of the Alliance to include Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary has expanded the European zone of security. It is a dream of the Polish people that the zone should continue to expand. The beneficial effects of guaranteed security, stability and development must become accessible to new European nations – Poland's partners and friends. The door of NATO must remain open.

# 16.

Speech to American senators at the NATO summit  
– Washington, 23<sup>rd</sup> of April 1999

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

One of the basic principles in the moral model of the Polish people is the imperative to fight “for our freedom and yours”. It is a beautiful motto, born at battlefields at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, related to the best traditions of the Polish struggle for independence. Generations of Poles have confirmed that principle in military action and they have praised it in song and poetry. Today that truth, so close to our hearts, is one of the most important pillars of the Western world, of its political and defence transatlantic community. For Poles who gained the possibility to shape their fate in 1989, an obvious choice was to try to become members of that community. Such was our unanimous will and the generally accepted Polish reason of state.

The aim we have achieved inspires pride and satisfaction. But let us not forget that the road leading to it was not easy. Our success required much help and friendliness from all the countries of the Alliance. The comprehension and strong support that we received at the heart of American democracy, the Senate of the United States, shall remain in our grateful memory forever.

That great gesture of friendship, openness and trust is very dear to our hearts. Knowing that that attitude is based on a realistic assessment of the current situation in Poland, we are proud that its conclusions have been positive for us. We also believe that the gesture is related to the traditionally friendly attitude of America towards Poland. Our friendship was born and cemented by deep historical ties. Their source was the love of freedom common for Poles and Americans. That friendship was enhanced by Kosciuszko and Pulaski’s military deeds in the American War of Independence, President Woodrow Wilson’s political declarations, the participation of American pilots in the defence of Poland in 1920 during our war against the Bolsheviks and the common military actions in Normandy in 1944. Our more recent memories include the American

support for the process of constructing and strengthening democracy and the free market economy in Poland.

I have listed only a few examples, but those are all issues which have forged and stabilized our close ties. Your “yes” as regards the Polish membership in NATO was an expression of your friendship. It also expressed trust. We will not let you down. Our membership in NATO is a challenge which we shall face. We wish to construct a safe and stable Europe together with all our allies. We are ready.

On behalf of the Polish people and my own I wish to thank the Senate of the United States warmly for its trust in Poland and in the Polish people. Let our future as allies deepen and develop the beautiful ties binding us.

Long live America and long live Poland! In peace, friendship and happiness!

## 17. Speech at NATO workshops on "The main aspects of a Polish presence in NATO in the changing security environment" (excerpt) – Budapest, 21<sup>st</sup> of June 1999

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(..) After the Washington Summit Poland is a different Poland than before the summit. For the first time in the many centuries of the power struggle for security do we hold an ace which cannot be overestimated. Our security depends mainly on ourselves, but, what is very important to us, it is guaranteed by obligations we accept as allies. We have already seen NATO from a different perspective. The new experiences have definitely accelerated the process of the integration of our country with the structures of the Alliance. We are aware of the fact that we are the beneficiaries of the democratic way of thinking, which imposes huge responsibilities on us. We know very well that security must be paid for. Nobody will free Poland from paying for all the burdens of the modern attitude towards international relations. We are creating a modern army ready to participate in NATO operations, and we will have to devote more and more funds for humanitarian missions organized around the world.

The objective of NATO and our common Euroatlantic interest remain unchanged: to win new countries for democracy, to create conditions for stability in the region, to persuade peoples facing dilemmas. Therefore, although geography has ceased to be the deciding factor for our security, it has become an important element shaping our particular position in the Alliance. To a large extent Poland will be implementing the Alliance's policy in the Eastern direction. Therefore we are glad to hear the acceptance of our policy of shaping good relationships with neighbour countries to the East of the Vistula river, expressed at this summit. We are also satisfied with the announcements of support that we will receive from our allies and their openness to our initiatives. The conclusions of the Washington summit give us solid bases to define our country's clear, constructive and realistic "Eastern policy".

For Poland openness of the Euro-Atlantic structures means that the regional security system will be based upon friendly cooperative relationships with our neighbours. We participate actively in defining an institutional network of

interrelations in the region. That is why friendly, mutually beneficial regional relations both with other NATO member states and countries not being members of the Alliance, are so important to us. In Szczecin the Danish-German-Polish North-East Corps is being created. We are organizing military units in cooperation with Ukraine and Lithuania, which may be used in peace missions. We are constantly treating Ukraine as our strategic partner. I am happy that mutual trust and openness are contributing to the gradual expansion of the practical dimension of NATO's cooperation with Ukraine. We also support Slovakia and Lithuania's efforts. We wish both countries that they join the countries which became members of the North-Atlantic Alliance in March soon. As regards the expansion of the stability and security zone on our continent it is important to shape good relations with Russia. Therefore, those projects are beneficial both for Poland and for the entire continent. Processes which five years ago we considered political fiction are coming true before our eyes. Europe must not waste their historic consequences.

The enlargement of NATO remains a priority. The Alliance adopted the Membership Action Plan (MAP) to support all the current candidate countries, and other countries in the future, to prepare more actively to fulfill the requirements of NATO membership. Given our relatively recent experience in that matter, we are ready to share our knowledge with countries aspiring to membership.

After joining NATO Poland proceeded to limit its armed forces further, planning to reduce the Polish army by one fourth. I believe that it is a positive sign for our Eastern neighbours, which could encourage them to follow us. Let us add that in the course of the CFE Treaty adoption (on the reduction of armed forces and conventional arms in Europe) Poland declared its readiness to limit its national armament thresholds in the future. I would like to take this occasion to point to the fact that in the NATO–Russia Treaty the Alliance guaranteed that in the present and foreseeable situation it was not planning to place nuclear arms on the territory of the new member states. Our membership in NATO enabled Poland to gain more security while reducing the presence of armed forces on its territory.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Poland's ambition is to play an important role in NATO. Not only should our position in the Alliance correspond to the size of our country, but it should result from our activity in the institutions of the Alliance as well. NATO is important for Poland not only as a social club of stable and prospering democracies of the Euro-Atlantic zone, but rather as one of the basic instruments to achieve



the most prevalent interests of humanity, which may be briefly defined as the ambition to guarantee proper conditions for stable and unhindered development in all directions.

We have all the reasons to believe that Poland is able to achieve full compatibility as regards the need to face new challenges of the coming millennium. Harmony and consistency in fulfilling our obligations in the Alliance have a direct impact on the security of Poland and Europe. I wish to express my deep belief that our participation in the Alliance will not be symbolic and ceremonial – that we are an important and serious partner. Thus what used to be a chance shall become a guarantee.

# 18.

Interview for Channel 1 of Polish TV – 18<sup>th</sup> of April 2000

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*Mr President, Poland by becoming a full-fledged member of the North-Atlantic Alliance, on the one hand obtained its guarantees, and on the other hand took on many duties. What is your opinion on the way in which Poland fulfills those obligations after one year?*

When it comes to the duties, let me put my comments in three parts. Poland, when accepting the obligations of an ally, is trying to become a reliable partner. The tasks we have to complete, which requires our political decisions is being undertaken. The Polish stance towards Kosovo, let me remind you that only 12 days after we entered NATO we were confronted with such a difficult situation, was evaluated very positively by NATO. The majority of Poles, the Polish political elites, the army, decided to fulfill the obligations of the ally fully. We supported the project with the full belief and I think that today one may say that it was the right decision.

Another important obligation we accepted is our participation in various NATO operations, requiring our military involvement, as well as the presence of our KFOR battalion in Kosovo. The presence of our soldiers in Bosnia and Herzegovina proves that we are ready to participate in the Alliance not only politically, but also in the military context. The Polish-German-Danish corps is yet another example that the military structures of the Polish army and its commanders are ready for cooperation.

The third commitment, requiring time – and here we have most to reproach ourselves – are issues related to the modernization and adaptation of the Polish army. In that respect we are definitely only starting. We must say self-critically that last year was not used fully, for instance as regards modernization decisions. We are postponing the decision concerning the multi-purpose aircraft, the discussion on other elements of Polish army equipment is still going on. It seems to me that we should speed up those actions, as well as the training of our personnel – people who will be ready to cooperate with the structures of the Pact.

*That is your opinion, but is the opinion of politicians, NATO leaders whom you meet regularly, similar to yours? What do they think about Poland as an ally?*

Poland is praised for two reasons. First of all – due to its potential. There is no doubt that among the new NATO members Poland is the most important partner, as it has 40 million inhabitants, an army of 200 thousand and a geographic position between the East and the West. The other reason for the high assessment is our attitude at the beginning of the Kosovo crisis. It was a trial, a kind of test, not easy for NATO countries themselves either. Let us not forget that the discussions on the necessity of the Kosovo operation took place not only in Poland, but also in Germany, France and Greece which was very sceptical in that respect. The Polish people passed the test. The Polish people once again proved that “For our freedom and yours” they express is more than a slogan, it is a clear commitment. (...)

*Which aspect will be most difficult for Poland to comply with, as regards the requirements of the Alliance?*

The financial one, because if we judge by the per capita GDP, Poland takes the last position among the countries of the Alliance. Obviously, that is a relative judgment, for if we take into account the national spending on the army, generally in Poland it is higher than in many other countries. However, definitely the main problem which we will have to face in the next ten-twenty years will be the efficient stable financing of modernization processes in the Polish army. I do hope that the successive governments, irrespective of who will sit in parliament, will understand that it needs to be done. Our international prestige depends on the Polish presence in NATO. If Poland becomes a serious NATO member, it will be easier for us to enter the European Union, we will play a more important role among our European and non-European partners. If Poland fails to fulfill its commitments, others could say: ok, they're here, but in fact they are not in the center of the Alliance. And that would be bad for us.

*Mr President, you are clearly an advocate of the enlargement of the North-Atlantic Alliance to include new member states. In your opinion, what would Poland gain, if Slovakia and Lithuania became members of the Alliance?*

To put it simply – we would have two more neighbours in the same alliance. It's much better for us, as then the border between us and non-NATO countries would be shorter. I'm also looking at it from a different perspective, a historical and philosophical one. In 1989 here in this palace the debates of the Round Table took place. They started the great transformation in all of Europe. The Soviet Union collapsed, the Berlin Wall fell. And the idea of those changes

was to move towards a united Europe as a continent. Unless we create new borders, if there are no barriers, we will be able to build a better Europe. In that sense, the enlargement of NATO to include Lithuania, Estonia, Slovakia, and in the future Bulgaria and Romania, Macedonia, Slovenia and Croatia, is truly logical. Obviously, that will not happen tomorrow, it definitely requires a few, and maybe more than several years, but it is deeply consistent with the sense of the transformations which we started here nearly eleven years ago.

*There are countries which don't have the prospect of becoming members of NATO, at least not in the foreseeable future. First of all Ukraine, which interests you so much. Don't you think that Poland should develop further its military cooperation with Ukraine?*

For us Ukraine is a strategic partner. It is a great neighbour with 50 million inhabitants in an extremely sensitive region of the world. Ukraine has established very close contacts with NATO. An agreement between NATO and Ukraine was signed in Madrid, Ukraine participated in various forms of cooperation. There are Ukrainian soldiers from our common Polish-Ukrainian battalion in the Polish battalion in Kosovo. That proves that the cooperation is not only declared on the presidential level, but it is real, taking place on the operational level. It is in our interest that Ukraine should strengthen its ties with NATO, and I believe that Poland is the right bridge to make it happen. So, the more positive the cooperation, including military cooperation, between Poland and Ukraine, the closer Ukraine is to European Euro-Atlantic structures. And that means stability, security, development, both for Ukraine, for us and for all of Europe, something which is worth our efforts and determination. I believe that I will find many partners for that project and that we will be showing the necessary determination.

*Mr President, there are generals of the North-East Corps listening to us in Szczecin. They remember your visit in September. What would you like to tell them?*

First of all, generals, congratulations! All that you have done so far is building the prestige of the corps and it proves that the corps also has its military and human aspect. What General Ekmann said about families assimilating in Szczecin, about the interpersonal contacts – I treat it as a great contribution to the construction of a common Europe. I wish you further success, let your work continue successfully. I wish you a calm and happy Easter!

Interview conducted by *Maria Wagrowska, Piotr Wieliczko*

# 19.

Speech at the third plenary session of the UN Millennium Summit  
– New York, 7<sup>th</sup> of September 2000

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Mr Secretary-General, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen!

In history every end also marks a beginning. We can feel it strongly now, at the turn of the millenniums, at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. History has quickened its pace, the world is gaining a new image.

One may find the evaluation of the passing century depressing. Two world wars and hundreds of local ones. Two hostile totalitarian systems. The achievements of science in the service of acts of destruction. Famine. Explosions of national and group egoism crushing individuals. However, the 20<sup>th</sup> century also had its brighter moments. The progress of technology has equipped mankind with new medicines, new energy sources, new means of communication. International cooperation has flourished. The world has learned to appreciate its multi-dimensional and multicultural character. Freedom, democracy, the rule of law, tolerance, have become a common shelter for millions of people, as it had never happened before.

I am proud to represent a country which has contributed substantially to the positive transformation. Twenty years ago the phenomenon of Polish “Solidarity” initiated the current which brought down the “iron curtain” and melted the ice of the Cold War. In 1989 as a result of the Round Table talks, the Polish people proved that the will to negotiate and agreement above divisions could lead to a historic breakthrough. Democracy, reforms, reconciliation and development have become part of Polish everyday life and have allowed our entire region of Central Europe to become a factor of stability, security and development. Poland, aware of its assets and proportionately to its potential, participates and wishes to become involved even more actively in the construction of the new global order. It is clearly visible in the participation of Polish soldiers and observers in UN peace-keeping missions, in our efforts in the period of our chairmanship of the OSCE, as well as in the Warsaw Declaration adopted last June in which,

together with other countries, we confirmed our determination to cooperate on the basis of fundamental values of democracy and human rights.

Let us ask ourselves the following question, let us ask it honestly. Have we created procedures and instruments to protect human rights effectively? Have we found a way to overcome divisions between the pauperized South and the prospering North? Do we know how to protect the environment? Do we know how to make the era of inexorable progress of information and communication favour the development of culture and education, without turning into an era of information chaos? In the face of the rule of the market, aren't we losing sight of man in his/her full dimensions, his/her spiritual values?

That interrelation is generally referred to as "globalization". I represent a country which has opened itself to the world by participating even more actively in commercial, scientific and technological exchanges. We the Polish people feel at ease in a world of the mutual interaction of cultures and lively interpersonal contacts.

However, we must not forget that globalization also has its dark side. Disparities between poor and rich countries are increasing. In my opinion, we will only manage to stop the negative effects of globalization, if we understand that the world's development must be founded on universal values. The principle of solidarity should play an important role here. Solidarity is shared responsibility. Being sensitive to the needs and anxieties of others. The willingness to cooperate and to support each other. The readiness to offer help. The priority of concerted actions over unilateral ones. Overcoming divisions, respect for diversity and dialogue. But above all by solidarity I understand placing the issues of freedom, dignity and welfare in the centre of all political endeavors and global actions. The world needs a synthesis of indisputable assets of the free market and realistic solutions, tailored to the needs of people. That synthesis needs to be introduced into everyday political practices.

The beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century poses enormous challenges before the United Nations. The world has changed, the concept of international order is undergoing a transformation, therefore it is necessary to reform the UN in order for the Organization to be able to face the great global challenges while at the same time protecting the rights of every person. Within the UN we need efficient organs, a flexible programme, the efficient use of resources. Our role as national leaders is to provide the UN clear guidelines, political support and adequate funds.

We need the United Nations, maybe more than ever before. We must face the inevitable: changing lifestyles, means of communication and satisfying our needs. In the new, ever-changing world the United Nations should give us a feeling of stability and predictability. I am truly convinced that the UN is able to offer that service to mankind, in the face of the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## 20. Letter to George W. Bush, President of the United States of America – 1<sup>st</sup> of March 2001

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Mr. President,

In the summer of 1989, in the Polish Parliament, George Bush, President of the United States and your father, a great visionary and friend of Poland, encouraged us in kind words to follow the road of democratic transformations. We are grateful to America and to George Bush senior for their help and for supporting our efforts aimed at constructing and strengthening democracy and stabilizing free market economy.

The 12<sup>th</sup> of March is the second anniversary of Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary joining the North-Atlantic Alliance. Our countries accepted part of the responsibility for the security of our Euro-Atlantic community. We managed to expand the area of democracy and freedom in Europe, the political and military situation in the region has become more stable. The transformations which occurred in Poland opened a period of great breakthrough in Europe. The activity of “Solidarity”, the first independent trade union, and the political compromise negotiated during the Round Table talks enabled my country to enter the road of freedom, democracy and efforts for general stability and prosperity.

Poland, through its history, its feeling of spiritual community, its neighbourhood and partnership ties, is enrooted in a particular region. We play an active role in strengthening cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe. We consider it an element of peace and stability for the entire continent. Poland approaches all its neighbours – Germany, the Countries of the Visegrad Group, Baltic and Scandinavian countries – with openness and willingness to deepen our cooperation. We are developing our strategic partnership with Lithuania and Ukraine. We are trying to improve our relations with Russia, including the Kaliningrad Oblast, and with other countries which have gained independence recently. We wish Belarus success and democratic changes. We are also conducting a dialogue with the Jewish diaspora, remembering the tragedy of



the Nazi holocaust and our shared history full of noble and beautiful moments, but also bad and despicable ones.

Today Poland is a country where democratic standards, the rule of law, the principles of the free market and a clear foreign policy are self-evident. In Poland there is a general consensus of all the significant political forces in issues of key importance for the state – security and foreign policy. Due to that agreement on the national level, Polish foreign policy in the last decade has been characterized by unchangeability, consistency and predictability, irrespective of the political powers which are elected to form the government.

The United States of America is Poland's key strategic ally. We wish to enhance the position of Poland as main strategic partner for the USA in Central-Eastern Europe.

Currently, an issue debated by the USA and its partners is the construction of the American anti-missile defence system. We believe that the controversial elements related to the American initiative should be solved by discussion. Poland as an ally country wishes to participate in an active and constructive way in the talks. We share the USA's position as regards the need for a new approach towards the issue of strategic balance ten years after the end of the Cold War.

Poland's objective is membership in the European Union. We are interested in discussing European Safety and Defence Identity (ESDI) and the Common European Safety and Defence Policy (CESDP). We support the process and we regard it as the proper way to reinforce practical operational capacities of the Europeans, which should contribute to the increased ability of the entire Euro-Atlantic community to prevent and react to crisis situations. Creating adequate mechanisms of cooperation between NATO and the European Union should increase the feeling of security in Europe and at the same time guarantee the primary role of NATO as an organization of collective action in that respect. Poland is truly interested in a stable and visible presence of the United States in Europe, including the direct presence in our country. In particular, increasing the activity of American capital in Poland could constitute the desired direction of American involvement. American investments in modern technology and education could create a great basis for the development of Polish-American projects, related for instance to the modernization of Polish armed forces.

All European nations should enjoy freedom, peace and prosperity. Therefore we will soon have to take the decision on the integration of new member states into NATO. At the Washington summit, NATO member states agreed to deal

with the issue of enlargement no later than in 2002. Poland supports partner countries in their integration with the North-Atlantic Alliance. NATO candidate countries are expecting from us a clear and straightforward message that the expansion of the zone of freedom and stabilization in order to prevent the division of Europe into zones of influence is a continuous process which must not be hindered by any borders or possible protests of third parties.

The region located to the east of Poland also requires constant attention. The peoples and governments of newly independent countries created after the fall of the Soviet Union, bearing the heavy heritage of many centuries of colonial dependence on Russia and several decades of totalitarian communist system, are facing huge economic problems, as well as difficulties in security, politics and social psychology. Without resolute help from outside, post-Soviet countries stand little chance of overcoming those difficulties. On the economic, cultural and social level we must show their peoples real perspectives of improving their situation, and on the geopolitical level create an active alternative for Russian attempts at economic and political domination of the newly independent countries.

Poland, which shares its history with its Eastern neighbours, and which has gained extensive knowledge of the problems of the region and developed relationships in many fields, sees its role in NATO and the European Union in enhancing security and stability on the Eastern border of the Alliance by developing regional cooperation. The policy of Poland's special relations with Eastern countries concerns not only countries such as Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, whose progress by means of reforms makes their ambition to become members of European and Euro-Atlantic economic and political-military structures realistic. It also concerns Ukraine whose independence and the reinforcement of its economic sovereignty is the key to the Europe of the future, free from divisions and zones of influence. The launch of new support projects for Ukraine and its integration into European economic projects seem to be one of the priority tasks of the present decade.

Poland wishes to develop its economic cooperation, as well as regional, humanitarian and cultural contacts with Belarus. The pragmatic assessment of the internal situation in Belarus and the weakness of its democratic opposition impose our selective commitment based on completing the support of the opposition by means of contacts with selected politicians of the regime in power in Minsk.

A key issue for Europe and for the world, for the entire international order, is the issue of NATO and EU countries' relations with the Russian Federation.

Given the fact that Russia is our neighbour, the importance of the country for the Polish economy and its influence on the situation in the ex-Soviet Union, Poland is building its policy towards Moscow on partnership, good neighbourhood and the respect of the interests and the independence of other countries in the region. Poland is interested in participating in European-Russian economic projects and believes that the development of European-Russian cooperation in the field of economy and security serves peace and stability in Europe well.

Our objective is to make the relations of Poland with all post-Soviet countries as good as possible. I am convinced that it corresponds to the interests of Poland and the United States and I do hope that such a policy of my country will be received with comprehension and support from our American friends.

Mr. President,

I hope that the prospects of Polish-American relations, including in particular economic relations, the situation in Central and Eastern Europe, the development of assistance projects for Eastern European countries and the Polish-American involvement in Central and Eastern Europe will be the subject of our deepened contacts. I am convinced that by means of close ally and partner cooperation on all the levels we will continue to contribute to the reinforcement of our common values. I hope that in the near future we will be able to meet and discuss new prospects of cooperation between our countries.

## 21. Speech at the meeting with George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, at the Library of the University of Warsaw (excerpts) – 15<sup>th</sup> of June 2001

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Mr President, Mrs Bush, Dear American Friends, Mrs Speaker, Mr Prime Minister, Your Eminence the Primate, Ladies and Gentlemen!

Today the eyes of the world are turned to Warsaw, to this meeting. We are in a place where politics, and its most important part, international politics, is being shaped.

I have the honour to welcome Mr George Walker Bush, President of the United States of America, who is visiting us during his first visit to Europe. It is an important signal, proving Poland's position in Europe. We appreciate it immensely.

We would like to welcome you very warmly, Mr President!

You have come to a country which respects and admires America. We respect America as a great power. We appreciate America as a country of freedom and democracy, as freedom and democracy had for centuries been unfulfilled ideals for the Polish people. We are grateful to America for its friendship and support, expressed especially in the most difficult times. America is dear to us – as it has become the home of millions of Poles who emigrated there for many decades.

Our meeting is a good moment to recall the accomplishments of your predecessors: Ronald Reagan, George Bush senior and Bill Clinton. On behalf of the Republic of Poland I wish to thank them for all they have done for Polish freedom, for our return to the structures of the Western world. (...)

We still remember clearly the words spoken by your father at the lower chamber of the Polish Parliament about Polish reforms which would lay foundations for

security and prosperity all over Europe – now and in the next century. And that Europe, he then said, “shall be open, united and free”.

Those words and our common hopes have come true. We may all feel satisfied. Today Poland is so much different than twelve years ago. Today Poland is a member of NATO and shall soon become a member of the European Union. We are participating in processes consolidating Europe by strengthening freedom, security and civilizational development. We are among the constructors of a better world. And, what is obvious to us, we share the responsibility with our partners and allies. Our soldiers, every day 2200 officers and soldiers, participate in peace-keeping missions in all the corners of our complex world. We are happy that we are highly praised while being there, and that by creating common battalions with Lithuanians and Ukrainians we add a practical dimension to our strategic partnership in Central and Eastern Europe. (...)

Mr President, Ladies and Gentlemen!

We, the Polish people, are perfectly aware of the fact that our fate depends on the security of other countries and nations in our region. When thinking about the future of Europe, we declare our readiness for dialogue and cooperation across the continent – including its Eastern and South-Eastern part.

It is true – Poland is sensitive to symptoms of egoism of wealthy and stable nations. Not because we are still developing. We know from our historical experience how fragile such a selfish stability can be. Mr President, unless we export stability from here, from this part of the world, unless we expand the zone of freedom and development, one day we may find poverty and instability knocking on our door.

Therefore, with deepest conviction we appeal to the Euro-Atlantic community to include new countries, so that no part of our continent is excluded from it in advance and forever.

Mr President, I listened to your speech delivered in Brussels, we have had the opportunity to talk several times today and I wish to tell you that I am happy that the American point of view in that matter is not only similar, but identical with the Polish stance.

May the door of the Alliance remain open. May it be opened to our neighbours: Slovakia and Lithuania. To Slovenia, Estonia and Latvia – countries which have constructed efficient democracies and market economy. To Romania and Bulgaria, which express their particularly strong willingness to join us and

which are achieving notable success. To other countries, provided they fulfill the accession criteria. May NATO mean more security, more stability and more positive cooperation in our region and all of Europe. We hope that most of our current candidates will be invited to join the Alliance next year. And let me assure you – it will not pose a threat to the Alliance. On the contrary – it will mean more trust, more predictability and more security for all Europe.

We also believe that the European Union will be enlarged soon. That we will find our place there. That the great visions of the Europeans who created the basis of that system will come true. That the entire continent will be able to participate in that project, leading to progress and peace.

Mr President, I am convinced that today, in the post-Cold War world, that the key to success is positive politics, based not only on traditional diplomacy tools, not on military power, but politics appealing to human expectations and dreams, politics understanding the importance of economy and public opinion. And, Ladies and Gentleman, if Euro-Atlantic and European structures show their ability to be open, to develop, to concentrate hope and positive emotions, we can be sure that the world in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be a better place.

I am sure – we can, we should, we must achieve it!

## 22. Common declaration by George W. Bush, President of the United States of America and Aleksander Kwasniewski, President of the republic of Poland – Warsaw, 15<sup>th</sup> of June 2001

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President George W. Bush and President Aleksander Kwasniewski affirm the deep friendship binding the United States and Poland, built on common democratic values and common commitment to strengthen the Transatlantic Alliance and the Europe of the 21<sup>st</sup> century which would fully enjoy freedom and peace. Poland and the United States have been cooperating for over ten years to stabilize and promote democracy in Europe. This is made possible by the existence of an independent Poland, which had for many years been a dream for the Polish people who, as one of the first nations in Central and Eastern Europe, initiated their successful march towards freedom. The friendship of both countries is deeply rooted in the common tradition of aspiring to freedom, developed for centuries by Americans of Polish origin, who, while contributing to the success of the United States, never forgot the country of their ancestors.

We are convinced that NATO shall remain the basis foundation of transatlantic security. We will act together and with other NATO allies to adapt the Alliance to new missions and challenges by improving its potential, by accepting European democracies ready to fulfill the obligations resulting from membership and to extend our cooperation with Ukraine, Russia and other members of the Partnership for Peace. Poland's entry into NATO in 1999 marked a milestone on the way to its return to the transatlantic community and it contributed to the general improvement of security in Europe. The continued expansion of NATO will enable our new allies to participate and to contribute to the construction of a more secure, undivided Europe and Euro-Atlantic area. Together we will take action to enlarge the Alliance at the NATO summit in Prague in 2002 to include candidates meeting objective membership criteria. The future enlargement of NATO shall contribute considerably to the security of the Euro-Atlantic community of nations.

Poland and the United States support the efforts of NATO members being members of the European Union and other EU countries to assume more responsibility for crisis management by providing new resources aimed at increasing their own potential and the potential of the Alliance, and, by means of the European Safety and Defence Policy (ESDP) – by developing the ability to manage actions in situations where NATO as a whole decides not to become involved. The United States and Poland believe that it is necessary for the EU to develop its potential as regards NATO in a fully coordinated, consistent and transparent way, guaranteeing the fullest possible participation for European members of the Alliance who are not members of the EU.

Poland's success in constructing democracy and a market economy is of great importance to the entire region of Central and Eastern Europe.

Poland and the United States reaffirm their support for future integration of Ukraine with Western institutions as a strong foundation for Ukrainian sovereignty, independence, free market economy and civil society. We undertake to cooperate with our allies to achieve that aim and we call on the Ukrainian leaders to reconstruct the consensus for reforms required to achieve that objective. We are glad to see the successful outcome of American programmes assisting economic reforms in Poland and we agree to cooperate to support Polish efforts to share the lessons of Polish experience with our neighbours seeking support.

We are proud of the first achievements of the Polish-American Enterprise Fund, one of the first initiatives undertaken in the new, free Poland by President George H.W. Bush. The mission of the Fund, crowned with great success, is continued by its successor – the Polish-American Freedom Foundation. We are satisfied with the growing role of the Foundation and other civic organizations as a tool for sharing Polish experience in constructing free market economy and democracy with countries of our region.

We are committed to strengthening our mutual contacts by creating a climate favourable to investments and to commercial growth. We are convinced that the young generations of Polish people and Americans will be looking together for solutions to the problems and challenges of the new millennium. That is yet another way used by Poland, the United States and their friends to support democracy and prosperity.

We reaffirm our willingness to cooperate with the European Union and other partners to enhance peace and restore lasting stability in South-Eastern Europe, based on principles of democratic rule, the rule of law and deepening integration



with Euro-Atlantic institutions. We condemn extremists, such as those in Macedonia, who undermine the democratic process through violence. We affirm the willingness of our countries to participate in operations in Bosnia and Kosovo organized by NATO and to work, whenever possible, together with our allies, for a gradual transfer of responsibilities of armed forces related to the protection of public security to specialized units and international police, and finally to local authorities.

We will continue to combine our efforts to promote the respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Europe and beyond. We will continue to cooperate to face new non-military threats to security, such as terrorism and organized crime. Understanding the complexity of problems faced by the world, we shall initiate and support initiatives aimed at sustainable development, combatting drug trafficking and the spread of HIV. Recognizing the essential character of human rights and their impact on international security, we shall continue to advocate their respect around the world. We are facing a common threat resulting from the growing proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and the development of methods of their delivery. We are organizing consultations on that issue with all the interested countries. We agree on the necessity to adopt a comprehensive security strategy, covering offensive and defensive deterrent systems, foreseeing the continuation of nuclear arms reduction and enhancing both the mechanisms of Weapons of Mass Destruction, and missile technologies control and ways of preventing their proliferation.

We would like to express our belief that Poland's transatlantic economic ties should facilitate its integration with the European Union. Recognizing open markets as our common objective, we support the launch of a multilateral commercial negotiations round this year. The United States welcome Poland's status as a candidate to membership in the European Union and believe that it will create new trade and investment opportunities for the United States and Poland.

We are satisfied with the efforts of public and private institutions from our countries concerning the crimes and injustices of the Second World War and the Holocaust. We hope that the multilateral agreement concerning damages for victims of slave and forced labour during World War II will be implemented soon.

Bearing in mind the historical ties and democratic values binding our nations, we express our willingness to act together as friends and close allies in Europe and beyond in order to make our common interests and values a reality.

## 23. Letter to Jacques Chirac, President of the French Republic – 17<sup>th</sup> of July 2001

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Mr President, Dear Friend,

Thank you for inviting me again to share my opinion on the approaching G-8 Summit. I consider the dialogue between heads of state and government in key economic and social issues as an important element of mastering the globalization process.

I agree with you, Mr President, that among the conditions which must be fulfilled to guarantee harmonious global economic development one should take into account: the mechanisms of financial crisis management, which also covered countries undergoing transformations, reforms of the international financial system and the liberalization of capital markets, methods of increasing the stability of currency rates and the next round of trade negotiations.

In all those issues, while supporting generally the liberalization trend, one should take into account various levels of economic development, as well as the rate of liberalization and market opening.

As a member of the UN Millennium Summit and president of one of the four round tables, I am satisfied with your opinion that G-8 leaders in Genoa should express their solidarity with developing countries by discussing the methods of reducing poverty areas and limiting pandemic diseases.

Your suggestion that the future summit should adopt generally accessible education as a key priority is particularly dear to me. I believe that in that context it would be worth evoking the spreading of IT, an issue already discussed at the Okinawa Summit. Although a large part of public opinion is sceptical as regards the possibility to use those technologies in countries struck by poverty, neglecting the issue will lead to a wider gap, including the educational gap, between the most developed countries and the rest of the world.

I also share your belief that in order to strengthen the multilateral environmental protection system and to cope with the problems of climatic change it is important to persuade the United States to join the Kyoto Protocol. The Worldwide Fund for Nature should become a major instrument for supporting environmental protection projects.

## 24. Declaration on the terrorist attacks in the United States – 11<sup>th</sup> of September 2001

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What has happened goes beyond our imagination, beyond our experience to date and it shall probably not only make our world a different place, but also make us different people than we used to be yesterday.

First of all let me express my condolences, my deepest sorrow for the American nation, for all those suffering after the loss of their dearest ones. The information we are receiving mentions over 10 thousand victims. I wish to express our solidarity with the authorities of the United States, with the American nation, with President Bush. We are absolutely determined to participate, together with America, in the fight against international terrorism which organized today's attack. An unprecedented attack. We do not know who is responsible, we may only guess, but undoubtedly it is the duty of the public opinion around the world – the public opinion who feels attached to the values of freedom, democracy, the protection of human rights – to be with the Americans today. To be with the inhabitants of New York and Washington. To feel what they are feeling. The pain, the fear, the panic, and at the same time the conviction that we must say NO to terrorism and use all the available means to achieve that goal.

We have organized a session of the Crisis Committee together with the Prime Minister and the ministers, where we discussed various aspects of the situation. I wish to assure all the Polish people that there is no reason for anxiety, and definitely not for panic. All the activities are being coordinated. We are in full control of the air space of the Polish borders. In the last hours nothing happened which could serve as evidence for any extraordinary situation. We are convinced that the terrorist attack will not be continued, neither in America nor in other places, but I wish to emphasize the fact that we are trying to be well prepared also for such scenarios. All the services are ready, the public institutions are protected, so are the embassies of the United States, Israel, and, I wish to stress it – all Arab states. So today there is no need for anxiety. However, I appeal to everybody to behave with due respect for that dramatic situation.

Polish Airlines have announced that their flights have been cancelled. The airplanes which were already approaching the United States returned to Poland successfully. Tomorrow's flights have been cancelled. We do not know when they will be resumed. Please listen to LOT's announcements.

I also wish to inform you that we are cooperating with our partners in NATO and in Central Europe in order to exchange information concerning any real and potential dangers. In conclusion, I wish to say that today there is no reason to lose your sleep except one, the tragedy faced by the entire world. And if tomorrow you want to express your humanitarian approach to the victims, the people who died in those terrorist attacks, I believe that it will be fully understood and seen as evidence for the fact that at such a moment the word "solidarity" acquires again a deeper meaning. The solidarity across seas, oceans, which must bind all of us, for evil, terrorism and crime, must not win in the battle against law, dignity and freedom. What is at stake in today's and tomorrow's true battle is the future of the modern world.

## 25. Speech at the inauguration of the Warsaw Conference on Combating Terrorism – 6<sup>th</sup> of November 2001

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Madam President, Presidents, Ministers, Ambassadors,  
Ladies and Gentleman!

Welcome to Warsaw. Let me welcome you to Warsaw and greet warmly the presidents of various countries who accepted the invitation to participate in this conference. Also, let me welcome representatives of observer countries of the United Nations, the European Union, OSCE and the North Atlantic Alliance.

Over 10 months have passed since the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We welcomed the beginning of the century with hope. After September 11<sup>th</sup>, however, we found ourselves in a new reality. The oncoming times will certainly be more difficult, and more demanding for politicians and heads of state. Many issues have to be analyzed again and many expectations have to be postponed. The attacks of the 11<sup>th</sup> of September 2001 were targeted at buildings in New York and Washington, but they hit all of us.

We share the pain of the families of the victims. We are struck by the extent of the harm and blind hatred. What hit the Americans may hit any nation, any man, any of us. The time after September 11<sup>th</sup> is a time of testimony – by word and action – of justice, truth, loyalty and democracy.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

We represent a region of Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe heavily experienced by history. Today – thanks to the democratic transformations and the efforts of our nations, thanks to our partnership and solidarity – this part of Europe is stable or is heading towards stability very rapidly. By gathering today in Warsaw, we wish to confirm our solidarity and our faith in democracy. The anti-terrorist coalition should be universal. Our countries have proved that they wish to participate in it in such a way as to contribute significantly to the struggle against terrorism.

I am glad that those issues are being discussed in Warsaw. We, the Polish people, believe in the importance of strengthening the ties binding the countries of our region. I was very happy to learn that practically all the countries in this part of Europe, irrespective of their independent actions, accepted the Polish invitation to prove their solidarity in the struggle against evil. The voice of the states of Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe must be heard! That is the purpose of this conference. Our voice must be heard and be present. By gathering in Warsaw, we are sending a message of our readiness to the world. I am also convinced that we will also discuss how to fight the causes and eliminate the sources of international terrorism. That fight is a task for many years. Similarly, the perspective of our undertakings should be permanent. Terrorists are enjoying all the achievements of civilization: access to modern technologies, complete information, free communication between various parts of the world, they are benefitting from the free flow of capital. Terrorists resort to corruption, drug trafficking, the illegal trafficking in arms and persons, illegal capital transfer. We must not agree to the fact that the processes enabling humanity to progress turn against it.

Let us not forget that the activity of terrorists gains public support mainly in those countries and societies where people are poor and deprived of hope. They are quenching their hatred of the world and modernity. Therefore we must put more emphasis on international dialogue, education, mutual tolerance, the upbringing of youth.

Globalization is an irreversible process, but it needs to be democratized and its fruit must be made available to all countries and nations. We must enrich globalization, adding the voice of poor, peripheral countries and communities, facing serious problems. And as every man has the right to equal opportunities, every nation has the right to benefit from global development. The global circulation of persons, information, capital should be made more equitable than it is today.

At the same time we must repeat and stress that when trying to understand the exact reasons for terrorism, when aiming at eliminating its causes, we must never forgive terrorists or justify them.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

We are acting on the basis of a wide mandate of the international community defined by a resolution of the UN Security Council and international conventions on combating terrorism. As candidates to membership in the European Union and EU-associated states, we support the position of the Union and we

feel specially authorized to undertake regional initiatives serving the values and objectives of a united Europe.

Therefore, in the area of economy we have to consider using effective procedures and instruments preventing money laundering and financing terrorism. As regards intelligence cooperation, we need to facilitate our contacts and our cooperation. As for the control of the movement of persons and goods we should adopt the standards proposed by the European Union and concentrate on harmonizing the methods of passport and duty control.

If we adopt the solutions aimed at creating regional cooperation instruments in order to prevent and combat international terrorism, we may, as a region, offer ideas which could act as suggestions to other regions as open as ours. They could be used by countries bordering on our continent, where terrorism has been present for a long time.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Our part of Europe has been struck by the plague of hatred and xenophobia more than once in its history. However, we managed to overcome that disease, often paying a high price. Our painful experience should strengthen our determination in fighting fanatic terrorism. It could also become an opportunity to enhance the ties binding us, to overcome historical grudges in our part of Europe, to solve the problems inherited from the last decade. The answer to those threats, and I wish to say it very clearly here in Warsaw, the answer to the threats should be the acceleration of European integration and the enlargement of NATO to include the candidate countries. Integration requires the acceptance of common values, principles and procedures. That means that Europe is really becoming a united continent where we are all benefitting from security and development and accepting part of the responsibility for our fate and sharing the risk of fighting all dangers concerning either one community, country, region or the entire Europe or the world. Today we have the opportunity to try to make tragedy and despair a wise strength!

Thank you for coming here to conduct common dialogue. I am convinced that from here, from our meeting, a great message of solidarity, solidarity in the battle against terrorism and evil, will be sent.

I would like to wish you all a fruitful debate and let me invite all the representatives of states and organizations present here to a joint discussion.



## 26. Declaration after a "tête-à-tête" of Presidents of the Republic of Poland and the Russian Federation – Warsaw, 16<sup>th</sup> of January 2002

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

First of all let me express my satisfaction with the fact that I may welcome Vladimir Putin, President of the Russian Federation, at the Presidential Palace. After nearly nine years, it is the next official visit of the President of the Russian Federation to Poland. It has roused great interest and in fact suffice to ask one of the cameras to show all the journalists gathered here. The fact that so many of you have come here, Ladies and Gentleman, proves how high the interest and the expectations are. Those expectations are expressed both by the Polish authorities and, more importantly, by all the circles of the Polish nation. None of the numerous visits has been received with such public response. We treat it as a positive signal, but also as a great challenge to us – myself and President Putin – not to fail to meet those expectations and hopes.

Today, Poland and Russia meet as free and democratic states shaping their new 21<sup>st</sup> century reality in this room, where the Warsaw Treaty was signed, and then the sessions of the Round Table took place. Poland is a member of the North Atlantic Alliance and is aiming at joining the European Union, but while choosing that direction, it also wishes to cooperate as closely as possible with the Russian Federation. We want our relations to be based on good neighbourhood, rich in political, economic, cultural and social contacts. Poland is convinced that good cooperation between our countries will also serve stability, peace, the development of our region, Central and Eastern Europe. I am glad that in my discussions with President Putin our opinion is very similar, not to say identical. We share the same expectations towards ourselves and we want to see contemporary Europe as a cooperating Europe, accepting the same values, benefiting from the great cultural heritage, but also able to face new challenges.

During our talks we concentrated on what is most important in the relations between our countries. We want this visit to shape a new start for close political

contacts, for a true political dialogue at all levels, not only between presidents, but also between governments, particular ministries, regions, all levels of Polish and Russian authorities. We want this visit to enliven our economic cooperation, to support Poland in eliminating the very high trade deficit with Russia. I am satisfied with the stance of President Putin who understands our needs in that respect. We need to introduce order in formal issues, we need to sign the necessary agreements, such as the agreement on the protection of investments or the already drafted aviation agreement, which has waited so many years for a successful completion, as which will soon be initialled and signed owing to this visit. We want to solve issues related to gas and the transit between Russia and the rest of Europe, as it is in our common interest.

We have discussed cultural exchange and we both believe that it is highly unsatisfactory, below the levels of the past. We are convinced that our societies are still open to literature, film, theatre, to the great masterpieces arriving to Poland from Russia or from Russia to Poland. A lot needs to be done to present those people, those works, to organizing exhibitions, through the cooperation of competent institutions, in order to restore the level of cultural exchange from the past, which is so much expected by our nations. We believe that we should emphasize scientific exchange. The first such event has already taken place. In Moscow “Days of Polish Science” were organized under the patronage of President Putin and myself. I believe that we should follow that direction and support the cooperation of universities, schools and youth exchange.

We have also talked about the Kaliningrad Oblast, which is part of the Russian Federation and a very important partner in Polish contacts with Russia. We would like all of the current obstacles to our mutual relations to be solved. The presence of the governor of the Kaliningrad Oblast in the delegation proves that the issue is also important to the Russian side as well.

Our discussions are continuing. The next round shall take place tomorrow in Poznan. We have also discussed European and global security issues, anti-terrorist coalitions and all that is related to multilateral problems. To conclude, I would like to say that the climate of our talks is very frank and open. President Putin is a great interlocutor, as there are no taboos, and therefore it seems to me that the visit may create an atmosphere of true confidence and good neighbourhood, so necessary not only to us politicians, but also to people dealing with economy, and all the citizens of Poland and Russia. I would like to thank President Putin already for the first part of our talks. If we continue in the same spirit, our discussions will definitely bear desired and expected fruit.

It is the first time that President Putin has been to Poland, so when welcoming him I would like to voice my hope that he will enjoy his stay in Warsaw and Poznan so much that he will return to Poland many times and that we will be able to play host to him not only at official, but also at private visits. Mr President, I wish to assure you that Poland is welcoming you with all its friendship, with an open heart and it believes that this visit will truly introduce a new quality and provide new necessary stimuli for Polish-Russian cooperation.

At the beginning of the visit I was handed documents recovered from Russian archives concerning general Wladyslaw Sikorski, Prime Minister of the Polish government, then chief commander and Prime Minister of the government in exile. I treat it as a very significant gesture proving the possibility for Polish and Russian historians to cooperate and use the archives, in order to present the Polish-Russian relations in the past truly. That gift marked a strong opening of this visit.

## 27. Toast raised during an official dinner in honour of Vladimir Putin, President of the Russian Federation (excerpt) – 16<sup>th</sup> of January 2002

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Mr President, Ladies and Gentlemen!

I am extremely happy to welcome the President of the Russian Federation on Polish soil. I am meeting the leader of a country which takes part in shaping the present-day world by its geopolitical role, economic, scientific, and cultural achievements, and also by its natural resources and military potential. Russia commands respect and friendship through the scale of its reforms, its commitment to the cause of worldwide peace and security. (...)

The first visit of the Russian President to Poland after eight years is of special significance to us. We attach a symbolic dimension to this meeting as a new phase in the Polish-Russian relations. Our desire is to jointly give them a new quality proportionate to 21<sup>st</sup>-century challenges. Efforts aimed at establishing the best possible relation with Russia are an important goal of Polish foreign policy. It is also a desire of the Polish people. As recent public opinion surveys show, more than two thirds of the Polish people consider the Russians as their partners or allies. We are bound by the convergence of interests in many areas, by cultural and linguistic closeness. Good relations between Poland and Russia are an important component of international cooperation, a condition for Europe's successful development, security, and the development of our region.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

History and geography have made Russia a state located on two continents, linked with many various centres of civilization, culture and politics. Nevertheless, the most important bonds – economic, political, and cultural ones – have tied it to Europe. Over centuries Russia was a co-architect of the historical achievements of this continent by adding its fascinating input into the development of the continent's culture and civilization. This is why Russia, like Poland, does not need to enter Europe – we have been there for a very long time. We are

bound with Europe today by the attachment to the fundamental values, such as: freedom, democracy, human and civil rights, economy based on the free human enterprise, tolerance for religious and political diversity. (...)

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Russia has recently invigorated its relations with the North Atlantic Alliance. Poland, as a NATO member and Russia's neighbour, takes a friendly and satisfied attitude towards this cooperation. Expanding and re-defining its functions, NATO remains the core of the European security structure. At the same time, it is impossible to ensure political order, security and stability on our continent without the participation of Russia. The qualitative breakthrough in Russia–NATO relations augurs hope and potential for building a secure Europe. The same message is expressed from the Pact's enlargement to include the countries of our region which, emerging out of the trauma of their experience during the past century, believe that NATO is their opportunity to build their own security and peace in the region and on the continent. We believe that further enlargement of the Alliance, which cooperates with Russia more and more closely, will not become a factor leading to disputes between our countries. Moreover, we believe that we can turn it into an opportunity for even closer cooperation.

Poland is a country where, due to its history and location, Western and Eastern Europe meet. This meeting often used to take place on the battlefield but it also consisted in the joint creation of common values and masterpieces, the construction of the European civilization, the currents of cooperation and dialogue. Today, Poland in the heart of Europe wants to take advantage of its location on the basis of the same durable values – we want peace and development for ourselves and our neighbours. We do not wish to build a new wall along our Eastern borders as a result of the enlargement of the European Union. We want to form a link. We want to have close partners and friends in Russia and other neighbour countries. We expect that following Poland's integration with the European Union, which will presumably happen within two years from now, the contacts between our countries will become even more attractive. The Kaliningrad Oblast and the whole Baltic Region can become an area of special cooperation.

The improving relations between Poland and Russia do not equal the weakening of contacts with other neighbour countries, especially Lithuania, Ukraine, and Belarus. Partner-like, sincere Polish-Russian relations offer new prospects for cooperation in the entire region.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Poland and Russia are carrying the enormous burden of their common history which contains – alongside clear and even golden pages – so much suffering, blood and tears. There was a time of rivalry, there were the traumas of wars, and there were centuries of domination. I am saying this openly. As a politician, I have realized that you cannot run away from your history. You should discuss it in a genuine way, heal the wounds of the past and draw conclusions. I truly believe that similarly to the successful development of the Polish-German and Polish-Ukrainian reconciliation, also the reconciliation of the Poles and the Russians will gain a new quality. Mr President, we keep in our thankful memory the bold decisions of your predecessors – Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin – who disclosed the truth about Katyn. We hope that Polish and Russian historians will be able to conduct joint research on the interweaved past of the Polish and Russian people benefiting from broad access to archives.

With so much traumatic historical experience, the Polish people have never blamed the Russians as concrete individuals or the Russian nation for their pains. Communism was the tragedy of millions, a common drama of the Russians and Poles, Ukrainians and Belarusians, Lithuanians and other enslaved nations. We know that no other nation has ever suffered so much from the Stalinist totalitarian system as the Russian people themselves. All those people, after years full of crime, humiliation and oblivion, today deserve dignity, justice, and every form of possible compensation.

Mr President, tomorrow we are going to pay our joint homage to the Soviet Army soldiers fallen on the Polish soil. Every year on November the 1<sup>st</sup>, Remembrance Day, the Polish people light candles on their graves. We honour their sacrifice of life which gave us liberation from the Nazi invader. No matter how we look at the history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we always remember that the victorious outcome of World War II was decided at Stalingrad and Kursk. And we shall always admire the courage and sacrifice of ordinary soldiers fighting not for politics, but for their own freedom and the freedom of other nations. (...)

Poland and Russia have great potential to develop economic cooperation. We would like to restore its balance, first of all by increasing the presence of our products on the Russian market. But we can also see opportunities for joint projects, investments and transit cooperation. Poland is ready to provide legal regulations and guarantees encouraging the growth of mutually beneficial trade exchange. We voice our belief, Mr President, that the forum of Polish and Russian businessmen which accompanies your visit will give a new substantial dimension to our economic relations. (...)

In 1959 Jerzy Giedroyc, who had tried most of his life to build bridges between nations and cultures, encouraged Poles and Russians to get closer. He wrote: “Some kind of dialogue should be started at last. Surely a tough and painful one, but the point is finally to start talking honestly.” Such an honest conversation we offer to you, Mr President, and to all the Russian people today. An honest conversation about the history and the present day, about what troubles us, what makes us happy, and what we are proud of. Let an honest dialogue become an unquestionable principle of our relations and, at the same time, the everyday reality of the Polish and Russian people. (...)

## 28. Speech at the NATO-Russia Summit – Pratica di Mare, near Rome, 28<sup>th</sup> of May 2002

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Mr Secretary General, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen!

Thirteen years ago, when I participated in the Warsaw Round Table discussions none of us expected that road to take us to Rome today. Neither then nor at the time of the fall of the Berlin wall, and the Autumn of the Peoples flourishing in Central and Eastern Europe, could even the boldest visionaries foresee the meeting that is taking place now. Today there is no communism in Europe, no Warsaw Treaty, no balance of fear. We, the Polish people, feel great satisfaction that the cause of the construction of a better, united and secure Europe of free people began in Poland and has achieved the present phase here in Rome. NATO and Russia already back in 1997 established cooperation and structures aimed at facilitating regular consultations. Much had to happen afterwards, we had to pass more exams on international solidarity in the face of new threats. September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 made the world redefine its security priorities and effective defence methods. Russia defined its position strongly. As a participant of the anti-terrorist coalition it helped to successfully complete the first phase of the war in Afghanistan, give the world hope and the conviction that all of us are determined and united in this difficult struggle.

Today, at this table there are heads of states being members of the Alliance and Vladimir Putin, President of the Russian Federation. Under your leadership, Mr President, Russia has chosen this route and has drawn closer to the Alliance. The new NATO–Russia Council is yet another important step in mutual relations. As President of the Republic of Poland, a NATO member since 1999 and Russia's neighbour for centuries, I would like to voice my satisfaction with the fact that we have made our contribution to the construction of good relations, and that the doubts about these relations after Poland's accession to the Alliance, expressed in the past, have been proven incorrect. It is a desire of Poland that NATO and Russia, by concrete actions and joint decisions, become more and more responsible for peace and stability in the world. The Council will be a success story, as long as its existence is filled with substance and



mutual trust. However, we also need the conviction of the Russian citizens that NATO is not an old enemy or rival, but a trustworthy and necessary partner. We are looking forward to this effort by Russian authorities. NATO–Russia rapprochement must not be an isolated decision of elites, it must occur in the minds of people. We are facing other important decisions.

As a result of wise and far-sighted policy, the North Atlantic Alliance will decide to enlarge NATO at the November summit in Prague. Strengthening the Alliance by including new members is part of its evolution and the process of maintaining the role of security guarantor, especially that the candidate countries already now are not only the consumers of security but contribute to it themselves, as in the Balkans or in Afghanistan. Therefore NATO possesses its own strong political and strategic interest related to inviting new countries aspiring to membership. Shaping a new substance and form of cooperation with Ukraine will also serve this aim. This process will increase stability on the continent, mitigate potential tensions between individual countries and will favour the blurring of divisions from the past. It enhances the sense of freedom and the transparency of democratic procedures.

I appreciate the fact that Russia is also aware of the benefits and new opportunities resulting from NATO enlargement and its cooperation with Ukraine. Poland is convinced that if the Alliance preserves its functions, structure, effectiveness and remains the guarantor of the US military presence in Europe, it will act as a guarantee of security in Europe. And security is the guarantee of Europe's unity. Today, from Italy, we are sending an optimistic message to the world. NATO and Russia share responsibility and are determined to cooperate: at one table, on an equal footing, in the interest of Europe and the world.

## 29. Joint statement by Presidents of the United States and Poland – Washington, 17<sup>th</sup> of July 2002

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We reaffirm the deep friendship and allied ties between the United States and Poland. We are committed to freedom and democratic values, which form the basis of a Europe whole, free, and at peace. As we begin the 21<sup>st</sup> century, all Europeans for the first time in history have an opportunity to live in democracies, at peace with themselves and their neighbours. The United States pays tribute to the people of Poland, who contributed so much to bringing an end to Europe's Cold War division and who led the way to the undivided Europe now taking shape. Today, Poland and the United States are determined to complete our task: to build the Transatlantic House of Freedom, open to all of Europe's peoples and prepared to meet the global challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Both sides stress the paramount importance of strong and active Transatlantic links for a successful response to the new challenges that we face.

We will meet the new challenges together. We must act decisively to win the war against global terror. Polish forces serve alongside United States forces in Operation Enduring Freedom. In November 2001, President Kwasniewski invited leaders from Central, Eastern, and Southern Europe to identify concrete steps to defeat terrorism. The United States highly appreciates this initiative and welcomes follow-up meetings. Poland and the United States believe that these efforts can contribute significantly to controlling borders, cutting off terrorist financing, eliminating the smuggling of individuals and equipment for terrorist purposes, and preventing bioterrorism.

In the face of terrorism and other new threats, NATO's traditional commitment to collective defence must be carried out in new ways. We are determined to play a leadership role in NATO's adaptation process to meet the new threats we face. NATO must develop improved capabilities to be able to respond, rapidly and flexibly to threats from wherever they arise. We are determined to provide the resources needed to achieve strengthened defence capabilities and want to work jointly with other Allies to this end. As NATO adapts, the United States and Poland are transforming their militaries to make them efficient, mobile,

and as well-equipped as possible. The United States and Poland have agreed to expand cooperation between our armed services both to deepen our military-to-military relations and in particular to promote necessary transformation in our defence. We hope this enhanced cooperation can be a model for activities with other Allies.

We look forward to welcoming new members to the North Atlantic Alliance. The enlargement of NATO has already extended security on the European continent and will continue. At its Prague Summit, NATO will extend invitations to those European democracies ready to share in the responsibilities of NATO membership. The United States and Poland have agreed on the desirability of another, possibly broad round of enlargement. The states aspiring to join NATO have worked hard to institute reforms, solidify the rule of law. It leaves no doubt about the strength of their democratic institutions. Reforms must continue even after membership, just as Poland has continued its reforms since joining NATO in 1999.

We welcome NATO's new relationship with Russia. The NATO–Russia Council has great potential for NATO members and Russia to build common security against common threats, especially in combating proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism. We also welcome with satisfaction the improvement of the relationship between NATO and Ukraine. The United States and Poland share an interest in encouraging the aspirations of the people of Ukraine to prepare for a future in Europe. We agreed to work together to support Ukraine's efforts to implement the necessary economic and democratic reforms. Our two nations urge Belarus to join its neighbours in seeking a democratic and free market future.

Accession to the European Union is essential for Poland's future economic growth. It will be beneficial to our bilateral relations as well as the Transatlantic relations. The United States and Poland welcome with satisfaction the future enlargement of the European Union as another signal of the deep roots of free market and open society principles across the European continent. We aim at creating ties between the European Union and NATO. The prospects for overcoming the most serious challenges of the day are enhanced significantly when NATO and the European Union cooperate in achieving common solutions.

The Polish-American economic partnership contributes to Poland's ability to realize its full potential as a future EU Member State and increases employment and high technology growth opportunities in Poland. We believe that Poland's ambition to play a significant role within the EU is fully compatible with its desire to remain a strong Transatlantic partner of the United States.

Poland's continued growth and prosperity depend on a friendly and predictable climate for investments. We have established an Economic-Commercial Dialogue to enhance our trade and investment relations and to address specific issues of mutual concern. Commerce Secretary Evans hopes to visit Poland in 2003 as part of our overall plan to tighten our bilateral relations.

We welcome the significant contribution of the Polish-American community to building ties between our nations. For over 200 years the United States has been a home and a land of hope for generations of Poles searching for the American dream of liberty, justice, and prosperity. Today, their task is not only that of linking our two great democracies, but also has global dimensions. Poles and Americans are now ready to devote themselves in the name of the common values that Polish Americans have done so much to develop.

The United States and Poland have worked closely, including cooperation with Jewish communities in both countries, to promote tolerance. We express satisfaction with the efforts made to preserve memories of the Holocaust and support initiatives to expand education on the history of the Shoah. We renew our commitment to preserve and protect significant cultural heritage of mutual interest and commend the progress achieved in this area through cooperation between Polish central and local institutions and American public and private institutions.

We are united by ties of common heritage and faith. Bilateral relations between the United States and Poland are excellent. We will work to strengthen those ties. Our common interests reinforce our relationship. We reaffirm today our determination to work more closely as friends and allies in the future.

# 30. Speech during the meeting with NATO Defence Ministers (excerpt) – Warsaw, 23<sup>rd</sup> of September 2002

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

I am very pleased to be your host at the Presidential Palace in Warsaw. Please accept a warm welcome on behalf of the Polish authorities and the Polish people. I am glad that such a distinguished group of politicians, many of whom I consider my friends, has come to the Polish capital.

The meeting in Warsaw is taking place shortly before the NATO Summit in Prague and is aimed at hammering out decisions that will be of key importance for the allies' policy. The meeting also helps us understand the opportunities and challenges that we have come to face on the threshold of the new century. Scarred by two world wars, the Holocaust, and totalitarian systems, the 20<sup>th</sup> century was a period of particularly trying experiences in the history of Europe. Today, we must draw wise conclusions from the past, but we must first of all look to the future. We must have courage and trust in our ability to build a world that is better, fairer, and more secure.

Only two weeks ago, in the United States and in many other countries, including Poland, we commemorated the victims of the tragic events of September 11<sup>th</sup>. For a moment, we all felt New Yorkers again. Let the memory of that ordeal be an additional encouragement to reflect on the need for solidarity and cooperation among peace-loving nations. The memory of the events should also serve as a warning and an incentive to take the necessary measures to protect ourselves against the onslaught of evil, terrorism, and crime. The wisdom of our reforms and the effective strengthening of the system of global security will determine the fate of the generations to come.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

For the first time ever, Poland has friendly relations and ties with all of its neighbours at the same time. Our democracy is permanent and stable, and

the canons of the Polish *raison d'état* and the priorities of our foreign policy remain unchanged, regardless of the political forces in power. The Polish people are aware of our departure point and our destination. They also know which road we do not want to take.

The security of Poland and the region is of fundamental importance for our engagement on the international stage. However, we are now learning how to think in global terms according to the rule that our security and peace are based on the security of other countries, not only our neighbours. Therefore, we advocate further NATO enlargement. The accession of Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary proved a success. The zone of security and stability was extended and sceptics' fears and reservations were found groundless. The decisions to be taken in Prague will be a token of appreciation of the efforts taken by the candidate countries to meet the Alliance's demanding requirements and standards. We will move not only the borders of the Transatlantic community of peace, but also the borders of respect for democratic principles and human rights. History is offering us an opportunity that was unthinkable in the past. We must not ignore it. In taking up this opportunity, we will increase common security for the benefit of the entire community of democracies.

However, with the benefit of hindsight, in taking fast and decisive actions, we must not draw new artificial dividing lines on the political map of Europe and the rest of the world. We know from the experience of the Visegrad Group that it is best to counter that by developing regional cooperation. We are now working on creating a wider platform for joint actions by the countries of Central, Eastern and Southern Europe, called the Riga Initiative. One of its main objectives is to establish a forum for security consultations for all the countries of the region, regardless of their affiliation with international organizations. This should foster the creation of favourable conditions for the enlargement of NATO and the European Union and the continuation of the open-door policy.

Our country believes that NATO enlargement, a more effective struggle against terrorism, strengthened cooperation with partner countries, opening up to Russia and devising a new framework of cooperation with Ukraine constitute the main elements of the Alliance's evolution to enable it to maintain its key role in ensuring Euro-Atlantic and global security. It is also worth seeking new forms of cooperation in the framework of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, offering an attractive and credible platform of contacts with countries that are interested in working with the Alliance.

In Poland, we attach great importance to the transformations in Russia, especially its gradual opening up to cooperation and partnership with the West. We welcome with hope the strengthening of good relations between Russia and NATO, the development of its contacts with the European Union, the breakthrough in the strategic armament field, and cooperation with the United States in fighting international terrorism. I would like to emphasize that also Polish-Russian relations are acquiring new positive dynamics. We have been able to overcome a number of difficult issues and prejudices originating in the past, as well as to solve present problems concerning economic and political cooperation.

Poland will continue to be active in supporting the Euro-Atlantic aspirations of Ukraine. We take the view that we must help the Ukrainian transformations and strengthen Ukraine's position in its relations with the Alliance. We were one of the first countries to support the decision of Ukraine's National Security and Defence Council of May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2002 "On Ukraine's strategy toward the North Atlantic Alliance". In this decision, Ukraine emphasizes that the final objective of its European integration policy is to become a member of NATO. An example of Kiev's aspirations is the participation of the Ukrainian-Polish battalion in the KFOR peace mission, in Kosovo. Ukraine's engagement in the common European area lies in our best interests. Ukraine has a vast military potential, including defence industry capacity that can be used by NATO countries as an important element to strengthen the Alliance's defence capability.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

This year may be a turning point for NATO. This will depend both on the enlargement decisions taken in Prague and the settlement of important issues concerning its organization and the strengthening of its defence capability in the face of new threats. Poland advocates an evolution of NATO that, without compromising its traditional defence functions, will ensure flexibility in reacting to such threats. The Alliance's transformation should help strengthen its political and military effectiveness. We must also be more consistent than before in demanding that each member meets its obligations toward the Alliance.

From the perspective of Polish security interests, NATO's objectives should primarily be those of a classical defence alliance. We are aware, however, that given the present international situation, the Alliance should also be capable of conducting military operations other than the defence of allied territories. This need follows from the nature of modern threats, and especially the fight against terrorism.

The effective transformation of NATO will require the strengthening of Euro-Atlantic relations. A united Europe and the United States are natural allies. Poland supports and, as an EU member, will support continued US presence and interest in European affairs. We believe that it is NATO that is the main guarantee of the US military presence in Europe. This is not contradictory with the European Security and Defence Identity, which is not an alternative to or the counterbalance of the Euro-Atlantic security mechanisms, but their necessary supplement. In a few years' time, we may build a common military pillar in Europe to shape a new structure of the Transatlantic partnership. The countries of Europe must be aware that only with joint efforts of North America and a united Europe will it be possible to create a system of security capable of countering the threats of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The Alliance's transformation and enlargement must be accompanied by necessary reforms and modernization efforts resulting in:

- improved interoperability within NATO;
- closer cooperation between the armed forces of the member states on both sides of the Atlantic;
- faster development of defence capabilities in the face of new threats, such as terrorism, proliferation of weapons, or cyber attacks;
- development of a suitable strategy, allowing for the European Security and Defence Identity, aimed at better coordination of efforts between NATO and the EU and between America and Europe.

The Defence Capabilities Initiative must be reassessed and revitalized. The specification of objectives planned by the Alliance should not only enable the allies to achieve the required defence capability faster, but also to accelerate modernization efforts in many European armies and to reduce the technological gap between Europe and the US. Neither NATO nor Europe needs larger armed forces. All they need are modern armies capable of immediate action anywhere across the globe. Therefore, the Alliance's efforts should take the form of a detailed plan that, given our economic capabilities, will have the effect of increasing as fast as possible its defence capability.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

The North Atlantic Alliance has proved many times in its history that it is capable of dealing with adversities, building bridges of understanding, and effectively fighting evil. Difficulties make it stronger, and adversities release new energy. I strongly believe that the allied countries are also capable of overcoming the great challenges of our times. That it is possible to defeat international terrorism, diffuse many conflicts, ensure a more equitable distribution of the benefits



of globalization, and secure faster global economic growth. We see promising times ahead of us. We see times of international cooperation and solidarity and the strengthening of ties between Europe and America. The meeting of NATO Defence Ministers in Warsaw is a good opportunity to ensure that our hopes for a bright future take real shape.

(...)

You are in a very special, symbolic place – in the very room where 50 years ago the Warsaw Pact was signed. And today NATO ministers of defence meet exactly in the same place. I believe this is a real symbol of changes in modern world.

I wish you all productive discussions and a pleasant stay in Poland.

# 31. Speech on NATO Enlargement during the meeting of NATO's North Atlantic Council – Prague, 21<sup>st</sup> of November 2002

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This day is a historic one!

I wish to express how deeply moved and happy I am that here in Prague, a city of a thousand years of history, the place of the Warsaw Pact invasion of 1968 and its last meeting eleven years ago, we are making a decision that will finally put an end to the era of Yalta and Potsdam divisions, the evil of the Ribbentrop–Molotov pact, the Cold War and the false balance of fear.

Poland is happy and proud that Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia are being invited to participate in our Alliance. This is an expression of respect for the path these countries have walked. The creation of democratic institutions, the development of civic society, democratization and modernization of the armed forces have been taken up with great determination.

It is a great satisfaction for Poland that from the very beginning we have supported this process, shared our experiences, built mutual trust.

I am convinced that this decision will make us stronger – not weaker!

The open-door policy of the Alliance is the correct and necessary initiative and it ought to be continued. I repeat the proposal I presented in Riga to cooperate with all the countries that wish to join NATO in the future, including the countries that defined clearly their intentions a long time ago.

Today is also a historic day for a man I wish to convey my special thanks to. President Vaclav Havel! My Dear Friend – you are leaving great monuments of your work:

- defeated communism;
- free and democratic Czech Republic;

- Central Europe – so different and at the same time built today around the same values;
- political philosophy free from selfishness and short-sightedness;
- and today NATO enlarged with nations that have gone through so much to be finally able to enjoy freedom, democracy and security.

I am happy that I can experience this here and I can say this in your home, Vaclav, in Prague.

## 32. An interview conducted in Prague for the First Channel of Polish TV – “Gosc Jedynki” (First Channel Visitor) – 21<sup>st</sup> of November 2002

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*Mr President, when several dozen years ago NATO was coming into being, the world was divided according to a specific criterion which does not exist today and NATO's enemy is said to be terrorism. But is it the enemy of NATO or of the United States?*

It is the enemy of all, broader than NATO, it is the enemy of the whole civilized world because it may come unexpectedly and may kill people, kidnap and terrorise for unknown reasons. We have experienced so many totally unimaginable tragedies, such as the 11<sup>th</sup> of September in New York, tourists on Bali, theatre viewers in Moscow etc. Unfortunately, terrorism is the plague of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is clearly visible now. There are various reasons for this state of things. Just fighting terrorism is certainly not sufficient; we must reach to the sources, to social injustice, to fundamentalisms, to intolerance, to xenophobia, to all that is the background of terrorism. But this organized terrorism must be fought, otherwise we shall not have a moment of peace and this is NATO's and the United States' business but also the business of the entire world. I think that some of my compatriots do not realize to what extent this is our common problem.

*But some Polish people notice the difference between the Americans' and their European allies' attitude to fighting terrorism and the conclusion they may draw is that terrorism is rather the enemy of America, not Europe.*

America has had its own very traumatic experience. New York City had seemed to be the safest place on Earth – not in the street where you could always face a criminal – but in the political sense; nobody thought about terrorists. So America is reacting to what happened. We can also see this in Europe and as for Poland; we are getting ready, too. A couple of days ago I took part in a military operation game “Leadership 2002”. It gave us the opportunity to think how state structures should cope with such a – let's hope theoretical – threat. Terrorism is a huge problem because it is quite often unidentified, unknown, we cannot

foresee the direction it is coming from, it acts in the most unexpected way and – worst of all – terrorism does not respect man, does not respect human life. Even at war true soldiers know that there is such a thing as war ethics, the ethics of war, though of course it is controversial, too. But you know what to do, how to behave at the frontline, how to treat prisoners. And here: no. Here it turns out that no holds barred, everything is permitted. Therefore really – as NATO – we are simply obliged to make proper efforts.

*Our conversation takes place at a crucial moment and in a place on which all media are focused nowadays. Here, in the Prague Congress Centre, one floor down, among hundreds of correspondents, there often appears the question which could already be heard in Warsaw: will any decisions be taken today?*

Important decisions are being taken. We have accepted many important statements concerning the enlargement of NATO and these are certainly historic decisions. Seven new countries, among them our neighbours Lithuania and Slovakia, have been invited. This is very good news for Poland. We have adopted the decision to build the rapid reaction forces, to implement other modernizations in NATO, to cooperate with Russia, to cooperate with Ukraine; we have also adopted a document supporting the United Nations resolution concerning Iraq. If you read the document today accepted, you will see how exceptionally precise it is.

*But there are no dates or time limits in it.*

There are dates in some matters. I would say it is better that the Iraqi issue is left without any dates. That is because we are still waiting for the inspectors' mission results, for Saddam Hussein coming to his senses. Military action may still prove unnecessary. So it is better that there are no dates in some issues. As for other matters, such as for example creating various troops – only now can these decisions be transformed into military and organizational language. The officers will for certain write with precision: when, what, with what means. I must say that this summit is very businesslike in this respect. (...)

*Undoubtedly, the most important decision of this summit is inviting new members but isn't this enlargement also a weakening factor, if we take into account the situation of the future NATO members?*

No, no. Of course, it would be absurd to expect Estonia or Slovenia to take over the fight against terrorism (much as I like those two countries and have nothing against them). But this is just part of the truth. Accepting Romania, for example, with its military and logistic potential, is not to be slighted. The Romanian President, Mr Iliescu, said today that almost 10 thousand Romanian

soldiers have served in various peace operations of the Partnership for Peace, over the last years. These are data worth noticing. Whereas, what is important – the accession of those countries to NATO means that the security zone in Europe is widening, that there will not be any threats coming from the Baltic States, Romania or Bulgaria. We also have a chance to deal with the matters in the Balkans. This hope is due to the presence of Slovenia but also to the ambitions of Slovakia, Macedonia, and Albania to join NATO. Each new country in NATO structures means fewer conflicts in Europe, because it means meeting certain standards, observing certain rules, the duty of being a democratic state, of respecting minorities. It is like joining a club with very strict rules – in this way it is a strengthening process.

We also have to voice the true statement that the richest and the best prepared countries will bear the main burden of military – but also political – acts performed by the Alliance for a long time to come. The United States has today a great advantage over all the rest as for the military potential at its disposal. Nobody can undermine the French, British, German forces. We as Poland should strive consistently to reinforce our position. With genuine pride did I hear today the statements of President Bush and other leaders considering the acceptance of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic to NATO a few years ago as the right step. It worked. It is important. Hadn't we acted properly and cooperated in building the NATO structures, the door would probably be closed for new members now. We have set a good example to follow and we have given the NATO states courage to make the next step. And we managed to do that. Those entering NATO today are grateful to us, since they not only know about our political support but they also realize the importance of our demonstration that new members were useful and able to act in the structures of NATO. Without doubt, Poland is a very valuable ally. I am saying this not as president but as an objective observer of the whole process.

*NATO will be different the day after tomorrow.*

It will be stronger. I said this today: NATO will be stronger, will be better, not worse, will be stronger, not weaker, and will have the perspective of future development. The door must stay open for the Balkan states. There is a chance for NATO to be the main military-political pact, cooperating well with the EU, which will secure safety for our continent, adherence to the same standards everywhere in Europe, the mutual respect and readiness to act in case of threats, for example the effectiveness of fighting terrorism. I am absolutely certain that today in Prague a very good and very important history-making event took place.

Interview conducted by *Marek Czyż*

# 33. Statement on sending the Polish Military Contingent in the Persian Gulf region – 17<sup>th</sup> of March 2003

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

For months we have been discussing sending a Polish Military Contingent in the Persian Gulf region. I fully understand and approve today's request submitted by Prime Minister Leszek Miller on behalf of the Cabinet. I want to inform you that just before the beginning of our meeting I signed a Presidential Decision pursuant to Article 117 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland and Article 3, Section 1, Item 1 and Article 5, Section 1 of the Law of December 17<sup>th</sup>, 1998 on Rules of Use or Stationing of Polish Troops Outside Poland. In the Decision I consent to the participation of up to 200 Polish troops from March 19<sup>th</sup> to September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2003 in the international coalition forces to enforce Iraq's compliance with UN Security Council Resolution 1441 of November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2002 and the related earlier resolutions of the UN Security Council. The planned area of operations covers the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Qatar, Kuwait, the Republic of Iraq, the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, and the Indian Ocean. The Decision was taken a few moments ago at the request of the Cabinet and Prime Minister Leszek Miller. As required by the rules and the Law, I have notified the Speaker of the Sejm Marek Borowski and Speaker of the Senate Longin Pastusiak.

Ladies and Gentlemen, please allow me to make a few comments on this issue. For years, the international community has been trying to enforce Iraq's compliance with international decisions on that country. We have emphasized the fact that our concerns follow from the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction, a threat that stems from Iraq. We also believe that we should all take measures against terrorism. Steps taken in the last dozen or so years have not been effective. Regrettably, the results of UN Resolution 1441 have not met expectations either. The findings of the weapons inspectors, information flowing from the Iraqi authorities, and everything we have witnessed in the last weeks clearly demonstrate that the existence of weapons of mass destruction on Iraqi territory is a fact and that Iraq's willingness to disarm will not

occur other than by force. The Iraqi authorities have never demonstrated the will to disarm.

We are part of a grand anti-terrorist coalition formed in the aftermath of the events of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001. I recall those events because the memory of not only people, but also states turns out to be short. We remember our pain and the shared tragedy, also associated with the death of our compatriots buried under the rubble of the World Trade Center in New York City. We recall a deep conviction we all held at that time that war against terrorism had to be fought as consistently as possible until the very end. Today, many months later, I would like to repeat these words: War against terrorism must be fought as consistently as possible until the very end and until it brings positive effects to all of us.

Poland has never been and will never be in favour of war. We are a nation and a state that cherishes peace because in the past we were too often victims of wars, partitions, misfortunes, violence, and terrorism in different forms. Of all nations, the Polish people should not be lectured on the meaning of peace. We know it perfectly well. But we also know the meaning of failure to act. We know perfectly well the meaning of indifference. We know the bitterness of the experience of many wars. And we know the meaning of indifference at the time of threat, like the indifference Poland experienced in 1939. We remember those who, then, did not want to die for Gdansk, and we remember the consequences of those decisions. Having been tried so severely in the past, today we appeal to the international community: We should say yes to peace, but not at the cost of accepting crime, violence, and terrorism. We say yes to peace, if we can ensure it to all people across the world. We support diplomatic solutions strongly. Poland has supported all measures taken by the United Nations, the European Union, as well as NATO. Until the very end, Prime Minister Miller and I had talks with our partners to ensure as much understanding as possible for peaceful and diplomatic measures. Also today, the Prime Minister and I have both been in touch with our counterparts. We are convinced that if tonight, tomorrow night, or later it is possible to find diplomatic solutions to the present conflict, Poland will strongly support such solutions. You can count on our understanding, support, and involvement in this respect. But I also want to say that if that turns out to be impossible, we agree with Tony Blair's words that there are moments in history when in order to preserve peace, one must take up the fight.

We are at a very difficult juncture in our common history. I am convinced that the decision and the request of the Cabinet, as well as my decision are right. Right, given the threats we must overcome, given the need to ensure global



peace, and given commitments to our allies. I am convinced that, with all the doubts and difficulties, as well as the public reaction in individual countries, those who take this difficult decision are right. We must demonstrate determination and strive for solidarity in action. We must ensure that we participate in the widest possible coalition of states and that we come in an efficient manner and without unnecessary victims in the course of reasonably short military operations to a point when it is possible to build mutual trust, peace, and cooperation, also engaging so important to the contemporary world Iraq and the whole range of Arab states.

I believe that the next few hours or the dozen or so hours ahead of us still offer a chance for peace. And we intend to use this opportunity. But I want to make it clear, especially to my compatriots: if it turns out that this opportunity leads nowhere, but to delaying crucial decisions, Poland has taken an important decision today. We are ready to use the Polish Military Contingent as part of the international coalition forces to contribute to enforcing compliance by the Republic of Iraq with UN Security Council Resolution 1441 of November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2002 and the related earlier resolutions.

Every one of us would prefer not to go through moments like today, but there are times in the life of responsible politicians when they have to face such challenges. I thank the government of the Republic of Poland for taking a very responsible decision. I thank the Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Defence Minister. I appreciate the effort that it required and the responsibility that we all bear. I trust that the Polish people will understand this difficult moment in history in which we should be together and act effectively and jointly to ensure peace and security in Poland, in Europe, and across the world.

# 34. Statements by the Presidents of: Poland, France and Germany during the Summit of the Weimar Triangle – Wrocław, 9<sup>th</sup> of May 2003

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## **Statement by Mr Aleksander Kwasniewski, President of the Republic of Poland:**

This is another meeting of the Weimar Triangle at the level of heads of state. The first one took place in Poznan, after that we were in France, in Germany, and now we have returned to Poland. Today in Wrocław we talked about European Union affairs, the enlargement of the Union, and the referendum in Poland. I expressed my thanks to our partners for supporting Poland's presence in the European Union. We spoke of the common foreign and security policy of the European Union, the transatlantic community, Iraq and the future of the Weimar Triangle.

I was authorized to give you a communiqué that is a summary of our discussion:

- “The Presidents of the Republic of Poland, the French Republic and the Chancellor of Germany held their fifth meeting at the Summit of the Weimar Triangle at the invitation of President Aleksander Kwasniewski on 9<sup>th</sup> of May, 2003 in Wrocław. On this day, which is also the Holiday of Europe, President Chirac and Chancellor Schroeder wished to convey their esteem for Poland, for its authorities and nation, for the will with which they covered the road to the gate of the Union, to express how much their return to the European family is expected after so many dramatic events of history, and emphasize their confidence as to the choice that the Polish nation will make on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> of June during the ratification referendum on the Accession Treaty.
- They confirmed the importance that they attach to the idea of the Weimar Triangle, whose goal continues to be developing cooperation that binds nations and states at all levels and in all areas of life. As a framework of dialogue and cooperation among three equal partners, the Weimar Triangle can become an initiating power serving an enlarged Union. In this context France and

Germany decided to invite Poland to their deliberations on the development of common European policies, in particular the Common Agricultural Policy, Policy of Economic and Social Cohesion and Transport Policy. The Presidents and the Chancellor agreed that they would intensify actions to harmonize positions on the question of the development of European foreign and defence policy by holding regular trilateral consultations. They decided to develop close cooperation on the reform of European institutions conducted within the Convention, in particular as regards the institutional architecture and common security policy. That common work ought to be continued and intensified at intergovernmental conferences.

– They have made a thorough review of prospects of strengthening partner-like relations with Russia and other new neighbours of an enlarged Union, especially with Ukraine, and reached agreement on the continuation of such exchange.

– The Presidents and the Chancellor expressed their satisfaction with the friendly dialogue conducted since the formation of the Weimar Triangle among the ministers of foreign affairs and defence, with the rapid pace of agreements reached by the ministers of finance and – in the future – with the first meeting between the ministers of social affairs and labour, which will take place at the end of May. They supported the enlargement of the areas of action of the Weimar Triangle and other fields in view of developing a civil society through the intensification of cooperation among the local governments of the three countries and exchange of young people and students.”

I wish to add that the President of France, the Chancellor of Germany and I acknowledge that it is worth continuing the discussion that was held today at the level of foreign ministers, in particular as regards the common foreign and defence policy of the Union. We are also going to try to arrange a meeting of ministers responsible for European integration in the context of the work of the Convention, preparing the Constitutional Treaty of the European Union and discussions on institutional reforms in the Union.

The talks were very open, very friendly and once again I wish to express my thanks to the President of France and the Chancellor of Germany for the support that they have been giving Poland on the road to the European Union as well as for the words that we heard today with reference to Poland's future in the European Union and for encouraging our society to vote in the referendum that will take place in a month. Thank you very much!

## Statement by Mr Jacques Chirac, President of the French Republic:

I wish to thank warmly my friend, President Aleksander Kwasniewski. We have known each other for a long time; I still remember my official visit to Poland and I am still very moved. Our personal relations and very strong historical ties between Poland and France are being continued. Thank you very much for inviting us here together with the Chancellor of Germany for such very interesting meetings. I would like to thank the Polish people, the men and women, citizens of Wrocław, who welcome us with such great kindness; warmly despite certain inconveniences, caused especially by our driving around the city. Such meetings always cause such troubles, and therefore I am very grateful that the citizens endured this so patiently. I also would like to thank the President of this city, who received us in the beautiful town hall.

Our meeting is taking place on a symbolic day: this is Europe Day. Everyone knows that Germany and France were the first and most active supporters of Poland's accession to the European Union. That means that today our joy is enormous. After the last Summit in Athens and signing of the Treaty on Poland's accession to the Union, the final process of Poland's entry into the European Union has started. All Europeans unquestionably feel great joy over that fact. The reconciliation of our continent is taking place. Perhaps Germany and France feel even happier, because we were the first states who absolutely wanted this dream to come true. During our today's talks we discussed the problems referred to by the President of Poland and mentioned in the communiqué. We spoke of the reform of European institutions, which is necessary to adapt the European Union to enlargement. We see with satisfaction that as regards fundamental matters, the reform of institutions, the approach of Poland, Germany and France and our points of view are identical. We spoke of the problems of Europe: security, defence, diplomacy, we also mentioned the problems that have appeared recently in connection with the situation in Iraq. We stated very clearly that we are all striving to achieve a strong Europe, able to defend itself, with all due respect for the Atlantic Pact.

We also spoke of the common agricultural policy, the policy of social cohesion. And here we concluded that we are following the same road and that the same horizon is looming before us.

We also spoke of partnership between the European Union and Russia. That is a fundamental matter for the future. We spoke of Petersburg and the relations that we want to have with all our friends. We wish to emphasise certain reforms and progress of Russia on the road to democracy.

We spoke of the problems of trilateral cooperation. We agreed as to how the Weimar contacts should develop in the future in order to bring concrete results. We also spoke of science and cultural matters. I proposed to enhance the partnership between French and Polish, and German and Polish universities.

**Statement by Mr Gerhard Schroeder, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany:**

Thanks to the enlargement Europe is becoming a place of lasting peace and prosperity. On a day like today this should be emphasized many times: what great historic successes we have achieved and what great historic progress has taken place. That is why we stated that we are appealing to the citizens of this beautiful country – Poland – to vote “Yes” in the referendum. We are certain that Poland, which always regarded itself as a European country, will support this membership.

In our talks what President Kwasniewski and President Chirac have already said was also important: a whole series of European and international matters. I am very glad that we all agree with what France and Germany proposed in a common letter to the Convention as regards European institutions. To be sure, we are still going to specify the details. President Kwasniewski said that in order to agree upon these details, we should hold a number of meetings on the ministerial and governmental level. It is self-evident that what we regard as common security and defence policy, which was the subject of the meeting of France and Germany with Luxembourg and Belgium in Brussels, and everything that we said about the common defence policy relates to every member of the European Union.

The three of us confirmed that any suggestions that some actions were being undertaken against NATO are wrong. We have in mind the European pillar, conscious responsibility, the consciousness of Europeans within NATO and nothing else.

Finally, we should ensure the development of the European institutions so that the enlarged Europe will function properly.

We are all interested in preventing a humanitarian catastrophe in Iraq. We are helping people in Iraq in order to alleviate their suffering. We also stated, at least I can say that on my own behalf, that the questions connected with the reconstruction of Iraq will be examined, when possible, under the auspices of the UN. The crucial question will concern the stabilisation of the region and the country.

As regards the future of the Weimar Triangle, the main point is to have respect for partners in Europe. In the near future we all are going to be equal members. Therefore, this dialogue, with the observance of mutual respect, should be continued within the Weimar Triangle, where it is necessary. And there are many such areas where cooperation should be intensified. I believe that our trilateral meetings so far and our meeting today are very useful.

All that President Kwasniewski said about the referendum in Poland fills us with optimism. We are happy that Poland will soon be a full-fledged member of the European Union. We are convinced that the Polish people will clear away all “stones” from the road leading to the Union. I am referring to the legal aspects of this issue, as the political decisions have already been taken.

## 35. Speech during the accession protocols ratification ceremony of seven countries joining NATO (excerpt) – Warsaw, 3<sup>rd</sup> of October 2003

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Mr Prime Minister, Mr Deputy Speaker of the Senate, Mr Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Minister of National Defence, Members of Parliament, Your Excellencies, Ambassadors, dear Guests who are making this celebration a different and better one!

Here in the place where years ago, in 1955, exactly in the same room, the Warsaw Pact was signed, in your presence I have signed the ratification documents on the enlargement of NATO, accepting our closest, best and most faithful friends to the organization.

I want to pay honour to those who have done so much for the enlargement of NATO, for the political changes in our part of Europe and who are today with us. I thank Professor Zbigniew Brzezinski for all he has done. I think he is satisfied as a witness but also to a co-creator of this breakthrough moment in history. I want to greet Mr Vytautas Landsbergis, Chairman of the Parliament and former President of Lithuania, our great friend, the man of the independence of Lithuania and dedicated to the idea of a democratic Europe. I greet Mr Nicolae Vacaroiu, Chairman of the Romanian Senate who has also done so much for changes in our region. I want to greet Mr Minister Antanas Valionis, who is here today as Minister of Foreign Affairs, but for years had been Ambassador of Lithuania to Poland, and who knows very well the importance for all of us, not only the Lithuanians and the Polish people, but also for the world and Europe, of friendly ties between our peoples and our countries. I want to greet also Mr Boris Tarasiuk, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, today Member of the Parliament from Ukraine, the political leader of that country. I am proud of what we have been able to achieve for the Polish-Ukrainian matters. I invite you today to a similar ceremony – were it possible for me also to take part in it, that wouldn't be so bad – because I believe that one day in this Palace the ratification of enlargement of NATO will be signed with Ukraine. I wish you that with all my heart.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

A moment ago I signed with great satisfaction the documents of ratification of accession protocols on the enlargement of NATO. The decision made during the Summit in Prague in November 2002 on the admission of seven new members to NATO gains Polish confirmation today.

We are happy that our friends: Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia in just a few months will become formal allies of Poland. This momentous act definitively closes the Cold War and the balance of fear era.

The importance of the documents which I have signed lies not only in their formal-legal dimension. First of all, they are an accomplishment of the great historical process which has transformed Europe. Four years ago, during the ratification of the act of Polish accession to NATO, I expressed my wish to keep the door of the alliance open for new future members because security is a common good. Today we are celebrating this open door policy. The policy for which Poland has been consistently opting for years. The moment has come when we can symbolically welcome new countries of the former Eastern Bloc among the states which together take care of security and the peace of the region and the world. The present enlargement of NATO is an important event for the whole continent. It is the triumph of considering Europe in terms of a wider and deeper integration. It is the final surpassing of the divisions imposed by the Yalta and the Potsdam treaties.

NATO's extension of security guaranties on the Baltic countries, the inclusion of Bulgaria and Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia in their boundaries will enlarge the zone of stability in the Euro-Atlantic area, will help to consolidate order in this region. Such an advantageous change of the geopolitical environment around our country should also be conducive to good, neighbourly cooperation, should serve economic development.

We all remember the climate which accompanied the Polish, Hungarian and Czech accession to NATO. It was a historic event. For the first time the Cold War division lines were overcome. The process of democratic reforms in Central and Eastern Europe was reinforced. The trend to integrate that region with the Western world began.

From the very beginning, Poland was treating the first phase of enlargement and consequently its own membership as part of a wider process. We have never forgotten that our security and prosperity cannot be isolated from the security



and prosperity of our neighbours and friends. Therefore, we became involved in building various forms of regional cooperation. We have actively supported our partners from Eastern and Southern Europe in their Euro-Atlantic aspirations. I have personally made every possible effort not to lose any occasion, any meeting which would bring the countries aspiring to membership nearer to the achievement of their goal. Today, myself and all of us can feel great satisfaction. Today we can enjoy with our friends the fulfilment of their aspirations.

The current second phase of enlargement is a consequence of the development strategy adopted by the Alliance, an evidence of its power, the ability to adjust to changing realities and security requirements. The accession to the Organization of the next countries, including former Soviet republics: Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, is a crossing of the Rubicon, surpassing another “taboo” which until recently had been marking the Euro-Atlantic idea that NATO shouldn’t surpass the boundaries of former Soviet Union. Today’s ceremony confirms that we are living in different times, in a Europe which takes its strength from the cooperation of its nations, from sharing the responsibility for common security. (...)

# 36.

Speech during the session closing the European Economic Summit  
"Transatlantic Relations: A New Direction" (excerpt)  
– Warsaw, 30<sup>th</sup> of April 2004

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

The subject of our discussions in Warsaw is the most important problems and challenges facing the unifying Europe and its surroundings. The security issues have always been an integral part of economic analyses. Therefore, during the European Economic Summit the reflection about the international situation and the condition of transatlantic relations cannot be neglected.

NATO is a security instrument, which during its 50-year history has guaranteed freedom, democracy and peace for Europe. The Alliance has performed well also in the face of new factors, like violating human rights in the Balkan States, and today contributes effectively to the stability of Europe, to the integration of our continent. We believe that only NATO, based on strong ties between Europe and America, may secure for us and other European countries full security guarantees. Poland, as far as it is possible, would like to be a spokesman for the transatlantic relations development. For the sake of Poland, Europe and the world we shall strive to strengthen the significance of the Alliance and act for the benefit of its internal cohesion.

After the historic enlargement of NATO in 1999, overcoming the post-Yalta divisions, Poland welcomes with great joy seven new countries in this structure. We believe that the door of the Alliance should be kept open for all who are able to fulfil the membership criteria. Ukraine's aspirations give this process a special meaning. We also believe that cautious actions by NATO and the European Union, aimed at cooperation, will contribute to the modernization and opting for the pro-European direction by many of our Eastern neighbours. (...)

The European Union plays a very important role as regards transatlantic relations. With the progress of integration, the Common Foreign and Security Policy and a European Security and Defence Policy should be developed.

Poland wants the European Union to speak with one voice in these matters. But at the same time I want to say it clearly that we are absolutely opposed to doing this in confrontation with the United States and against internal divisions inside the Union. We are convinced that transatlantic cooperation belongs to the common and vital interests of the whole European continent. The principles which are the foundations shaping the European Union have always been strongly supported by the United States. So we are talking of the same values, we share them and I am convinced that on this basis we can build the future of transatlantic relations.

We are glad that the European Security Strategy – the first coherent document describing the international security environment and showing the directions for the actions of the Union in this area – clearly emphasizes the meaning of transatlantic relations for Europe and the strategic character of EU–NATO relations. (...)

Finally, I also want to say that in less than 12 hours Poland will become a member of the EU. This is a great moment in Polish and European history. I take the opportunity to express my thanks to all who took part in the Summit organized here in Warsaw. I had the honour to be the patron of this event. I thank warmly all the participants for the splendid discussions. I thank the organizers – the World Economic Forum – especially professor. I thank the Polish Organizing Committee with Ambassador Jerzy Kozminski. Finally, I thank all of you with all my heart for commemorating this historic moment when Poland enters the European Union community with a very serious and courageous discussion.

I also wish to express my joy that during this final session I can be here with a great friend of Poland, a wonderful man, a prominent German and a wonderful European – Johannes Rau. It is extremely inspiring that here, in the centre of Warsaw, a city so experienced by war tragedies, we can rejoice over a completely new page in our history together with the President of Germany and other Presidents, prominent persons from so many countries around the world. We are happy because of the words spoken by President Rau today in the Parliament: “Europe without Poland is not Europe”. Thanks to your presence here we belong to the big European family once again. For all of you – a thousand thanks!

# 37.

Speech during the general debate at the high-level meeting of the 60<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly – New York, 16<sup>th</sup> of September 2005

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

The United Nations today is facing a great challenge to provide humanity with a new hope to build the 21<sup>st</sup> century's civilization on a solid foundation of such universal values as: freedom, security, democracy and solidarity.

Polish attachment to those values comes from our past experiences. This year we commemorate in Poland the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Solidarity movement which inspired profound changes in Central and Eastern Europe. But above all, it contributed to the mobilization of nations and societies around fundamental values and principles. The anniversary celebrations attended by numerous heads of state and government were concluded by the appeal to establish the 31<sup>st</sup> of August as the World Day of Freedom and Solidarity. Today, I wish to repeat that appeal: let's build a world united in freedom and solidarity.

Solidarity should be perceived as one of the key principles of international relations. Solidarity combines respect for diversity and readiness to provide assistance. As Pope John Paul II underlined, solidarity means cooperation with one another and not fighting one another, it means priority of unity over divisions. Solidarity of nations should always prevail over national egoism. The European Union has proved that it is possible to build structures and mechanisms of cooperation in a spirit of true solidarity.

The principle of solidarity remains inextricably linked to that of freedom. For many, unfortunately, freedom is still an unfulfilled dream. On different continents, people are deprived of their basic rights. True freedom, however, cannot be imposed from outside. It must grow from within and from below. Democratic changes do not occur because they are masterminded somewhere else, but because people want them. We must learn how to advance freedom without imposing anything, how to foster it without relieving states from their

primary responsibility towards their citizens. The United Nations should make us feel confident that the international community will provide people with the necessary protection and assistance when their state is unable to deliver it.

I hope that the recently established Democracy Fund, which Poland supports and is ready to contribute to, will offer a reliable assistance instrument for those who aspire for freedom.

We must also show greater determination in our response to problems such as violence, poverty, ethnic conflicts, terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and others. We must stand up to those who ignore the unity of our world and see it as a battlefield of conflicting religions, nations and races. Therefore, the United Nations must pursue a far-reaching and comprehensive vision of change and play a more decisive role in shaping a broad international development policy which would contribute to the improvement of life in all parts of the world.

Poland engaged in that reform process and reiterated on numerous occasions the need to elaborate a New Political Act of the UN for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The Polish vision of the United Nations reform reflects our strong commitment to fundamental values and principles as well as to the effective multilateralism, which should serve as a guiding principle of the United Nations activities.

The outcome document of this summit reflects many of the ideas proposed by the Polish Government. However, at the same time it represents in many ways a consensus lower than expected and should be perceived as a basis for further reform of the UN efforts. There is no need to say how much we regret that neither arms control nor non-proliferation issues are covered by this document. Despite our great determination, we were not able to achieve unity in confronting all of the problems facing the United Nations.

On the other hand, we should not expect that each and every summit will provide revolutionary changes. The real breakthrough comes usually in the wake of a lengthy and gradual process of change and adaptation. Indeed, the outcome document, the preparatory and negotiation process, as well as discussions of the summit itself, has offered many substantial insights, ideas and very useful recommendations that need further analysis. How to implement them, how to translate them into concrete actions, and how to build practical consensus around them remains a serious challenge for the 60<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly.

Poland will continue her striving for a genuine and comprehensive reform that will help greatly to strengthen the effectiveness of the United Nations.

We cannot build a secure and just world without a strong commitment to act together through the United Nations. Freedom, security, democracy and solidarity must be the key guidelines that will lead the Organization in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

# Chapter 4.

## The Way to the European Community

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# 1. Address at the conference "Europe – Forum" (excerpts) – Berlin, 23<sup>rd</sup> of November 1996

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(...) Poland contributes more and more assets to this widely understood alliance of European states. The Polish train rushing to meet its West European partners is not carrying air. The transformation of the political and economic system is well advanced. My country is more and more open to the world. It is moving fast to join Western market economy democracies. This year's acceptance of Poland's membership in OECD has certified to that.

The growth of our gross domestic product is among the highest in Europe – last year it reached 7 percent and this year it is going to record a similar level. The industrial output has been growing at a two-digit rate since 1994. The rates of inflation and unemployment are falling. At the same time the percentage of the public debt in the GDP has fallen to the level of 53 percent and the last year's budget deficit has reached 2.7 percent. Thus, Poland already meets two important convergence criteria of those set by the Treaty of Maastricht.

A great majority of our trade turnover falls to member states of the European Union, one third of which to Germany. In turn, for Germany Poland is the most important trade partner in Central and Eastern Europe. Duties and other trade barriers are gradually being removed, in line with the scenario written in the Stabilisation and Association Treaty with the EU, as well as with other international agreements, among others, in the scope of CEFTA.

Poland plays an important stabilising role in its immediate international surroundings. We have very good relations with all our seven neighbours. We are actively functioning in groups promoting sub-regional cooperation – from the Baltic State's Council, through CEFTA, to the Central European Initiative. In 1998 Poland will take over the presidency of OSCE.

Europe integrating itself without Poland would be a heartless Europe. Enlargement of the European Union, as well as that of NATO, is not only in our interest but also in the interest of Europe. Hoping for a prompt access to

the integration structures we consider not only our gains. We are also aware of the duties. We are posing the question for ourselves: what can Poland give to the uniting Europe?

The Polish people have significant civilizational, creative and consumption-related aspirations. Educational aspirations of the young have increased significantly. Poland is not merely an absorptive outlet. Together with other states in the region, it can pose an opportunity for adding a new impetus to the old Europe in the increasingly competitive world. Our euroenthusiasm could, to a certain extent, balance symptoms of the Western euroscepticism.

The prosperous and economically stable area east of Germany would increase the broadly understood security of the whole continent. It would also facilitate “export” of the transformation and stability to other areas in Central and Eastern Europe. The Polish people – strongly attached to the European idea – could strengthen their role of the cultural intermediaries and a kind of “economic translators” in contacts between Western business circles and the Russians, the Ukrainians, the Belarusians or the Lithuanians. The policy of openness towards the neighbours across the EU’s Eastern frontier could be our trademark in the enlarged Europe.

Poland is interested in the existence of an externally open but also [internally] deepened EU – stronger and more efficient in its actions. A wide common denominator should unite convergent aspects of national interests of all EU member states. Neither a loose free market zone nor an artificial European super-state should be the final objective. Search for halfway institutional solutions and avoiding the extremes seems to be the most reasonable option.

The reform and the future shape of the European Union are currently being discussed by the “fifteen” at the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC). Its success is very important for us. Although formally we do not participate in the debate, Poland – as a state associated with the EU and its future fully-fledged member – is often encouraged by its Western partners to present its point of view on the subject. I, therefore, hope that my remarks on the expected direction of the EU’s development will not be treated as interfering with its internal affairs.

Poland supports the drive to facilitate and simplify the decision making procedures in the EU. What is important in the context is securing a balance between the “large” and the “small” states. The EU’s coherence requires that each and every one of its member states should have at least one commissioner in the

European Commission. The right to veto and block decisions of the Ministry Council should not be overused by any of the member states.

An increased democratic legitimisation of the EU is indispensable. Its actions should be more transparent and subject to greater control of the citizens. This requires an extension of the European Parliament's scope of competence. Yet, the number of its deputies should be limited to a constant level. National parliaments should also have greater opportunities to cooperate with and exert pressure on the European institutions.

While solving the most complex issues, the EU should be guided both by the rule of subsidiarity and the principle of solidarity. It is vital for us that citizens of the EU should have a real possibility to shape the EU's fate, among others, by co-deciding of its actions. But the social sensitivity and care for every citizen of the united Europe may not be forgotten, either.

This is not the only reason why development of more advanced forms of coordination of various specific policies on the supranational or intergovernmental levels is needed. Reform of the Common Agricultural Policy, as well as of the Structural and Cohesion funds, seems indispensable but their complete liquidation does not. Implementation of one of the EU's main goals – equalling the development chances of its member states – requires appropriate financial means, as well as guaranteeing transitional adjustment periods to the new members.

The European solidarity is also manifested in the steady development of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> pillars of the EU. Poland is decided in its support of the Common External and Security Policy, as well as to back the cooperation in the scope of internal policy and the judicature. (...)

## 2. Interview for "Le Monde" – 14<sup>th</sup> of October 1997

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*While negotiations are continuing in Warsaw on formation of the new government, President Aleksander Kwasniewski has gone to France for the summit of the Council of Europe which opens its proceedings on the 11<sup>th</sup> of October in Strasbourg. During the conversation with "Le Monde" the head of state, whose ally social democrats have lost power summarises the situation related to Poland's accession to the EU. What is your opinion on the proposal of France, Belgium and Italy, according to which the EU's enlargement would only be possible after an efficient implementation of the institutional reform?*

The ongoing processes should be differentiated one from the other: the institutional reform is one thing, the enlargement is another one and the monetary union is still another one. It would be beneficial to talk about parallel processes. On the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 1998 negotiations will open with the view to the EU's enlargement. At the same time the European Union will discuss changes needed to be made to the current institutions. The discussion should be dependent on the progress of the enlargement – in a sense, it should forecast the latter. It would not be sufficient to reform the institutions taking account of only the current number of the EU member states. The pressure of the Central European states will be very strong. Both in the political and in the economic terms it would be an error to say: "We are very busy with our own problems, you should wait ..." Poland is going to be a member of the EU equipped with the new structures, new decision making mechanisms and the new common currency, enlarged by the new member states. We should not envision Poland's participation in the merely current structural shape of the EU but in the context of creation of the new institutional framework.

*Poland remains a relatively poor country where the average monthly salary equals around 1800 francs. What kind of a transition period do you expect before Poland's full integration with the European Union?*

This issue is being raised in the negotiations with the EU. For us the main task is to sustain the economic growth dynamics. If the growth is maintained on

the current level (5-6 percent) the distance which separates us from the Western states will be shrinking in the coming years. The European Union has already incorporated states which were not on an economic level comparable to that of France or Germany. There are two attitudes towards the possible date of the accession: for many reasons the EU may demand a longer adaptation period before our full integration. For us in Poland it is important to be able to tell the public opinion and business circles that the reforms need to be continued at a rapid pace. If our entry is scheduled for the year 2002, it may be effected a year or two later than this. Yet, it will be effected with more determination and commitment than it would be if one said that the accession would take place in the year 2010 or 2015. What will be at stake during the negotiations will be finding a compromise between the attitude of Brussels and the dynamic and pressing attitude of Poland on this matter. I believe that at the beginning of the next century Poland can even further reform its economy. The date of our accession to the EU may be found somewhere between the years 2000 and 2010.

*Negotiations on creation of the new coalition have been in progress in Poland for three weeks. How do you see the “cohabitation” with the future government?*

I would like the principal objectives of the future government to be the same as those of the previous one and those which I also share: a continuation of the economic development, the state's reform, preparing our entry to the EU and NATO, and playing an active role in the region, while maintaining good relations with all the neighbours. I am not anxious and I do not expect either dramatic situations or radical changes. I think that the name of the new prime minister will be known in a few days. On 17<sup>th</sup> of October, on the day when the new Constitution comes in force, the current government is going to resign and I am going to designate the new prime minister. At the parliamentary session on 20<sup>th</sup> of October we will get the new government.

Interview by: *Natalie Nougayrede*

### 3. Address at the panel discussion “Central and Eastern Europe and the World: Directions of Long-Term Partnership” in the scope of the Central and Eastern European Economic Summit – Salzburg, 23<sup>rd</sup> of June 1998

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

It seems to me that each time the summit is held in Salzburg we have to discuss an increased number of specific tasks related to the economic prospects and the integration of Eastern European states with the European Union. This is also the case of today’s meeting. Having opened the membership negotiations a few months ago, all the parties have already gained useful knowledge of the tasks which have to be performed before the EU’s enlargement. I trust that President Klestil will not be surprised when persons gathered around this table urge him to intensify the accession talks during Austria’s presidency of the European Union. I would like to stress that we are interested in gaining the membership as soon as possible. A careful consideration of all the aspects of this issue points to optimality of an ambitious schedule. Our attitude to the question of the timing, which has bothered some observers in the current member states, is revealing as to the scope of expectations related to our future membership.

We do not intend to hinder the authentic public enthusiasm about the integration but we hope to direct it so that we are able to take an optimal advantage of the future membership. Our expectations can be summed up by referring to such protective notions as stabilisation, predictability and the opportunity for development, as well as the striving for participation in the common European experience.

I have mentioned the predictability and the stabilisation here not because these terms are willingly used during any economic summit, especially at a time of disturbances in some regions of the world. I am mentioning them because our co-citizens have tasked us, the politicians, with attainment of these goals.

The Polish people have their own ambitious plans. In our country these are reflected by the enterprise and the dynamics of the economy. We are determined to meet the expectations. There are many things we can be proud of. The macroeconomic stability, the cautious monetary policy, the consolidated banking system, the involvement in further restructuring of the industry, the reform of the old-age pension scheme – all these and others constitute achievements which make Poland an increasingly competitive player on the international scene. The integration with the European Union will facilitate strengthening of our position. The EU rules of functioning involve specific requirements but they also safeguard the largest zone of political and economic stability in the world.

Some commentators have recently pointed out to what they see as an “overheating” of the European integration which is taking place at the moment. They maintain that involvement in such projects as the monetary union has led member states to look inside and concentrate on domestic and local issues.

Many people complain about the deficit of democracy in the European processes. The EU leaders will tackle the issue later this year. The reforms which should be carried out at the turn of the century will surely be accompanied by heated debates. All this is contributing to the feeling of certain tiredness on the part of European citizens. Applying for the EU membership in such circumstances may be a challenge for us. At the same time we are confident about the values we have to offer. Poland is a country of committed advocates of the united Europe. Our attitude to the issue of integration is based on the understanding of the historic value of what has been accomplished in the united Europe.

In the view of our – quite often difficult – past, we especially appreciate such European values as solidarity and economic coherence. We realise that these have not been accomplished without an effort. This adds to our determination to be among the leaders while continuing the European integration. The Polish support for integration draws partially from our great desire for this to happen. We are not a particularly agreeable nation in Europe, yet in the course of the current debate we have come to an agreement on this issue. We have made all possible effort to use the opportunity we are facing. Wherever we – gathered in this hall – come from, we should realise the historic responsibility for assuring the well-being of the whole of Europe.

## 4. Address to the European Parliament (excerpts) – Strasbourg, 18<sup>th</sup> of November 1998

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Mr President, Ladies and Gentlemen!

A whole epoch – several decades – separates us from the beginning of the European process. Successive generations have identified themselves with the European idea. We continue to draw new inspirations and new practical tasks from it.

Today it is impossible to imagine the European Union without the European Parliament. Your especially important role, Ladies and Gentlemen Deputies, is a result of the implementation of a particular idea, the essence of which was to give a democratic dimension to the European framework.

We in Poland are glad that the European project will soon be subject to another completion. For, we cannot imagine the future of the European Union without Central Europe, without Poland – the biggest state in the region (...).

Europeism is democracy, freedom, criticism and tolerance. Europeism means acknowledgement of the equal status and value of all cultures. Europeism means partnership and civilised labour relations, social market economy and strong local citizens' communities. Europeism – is enterprise but also social sensitiveness and solidarity towards the weak and the needing assistance. We need a reasonable balance between efficiency and attachment to these values.

This is especially important in the view of shaping the future of the European Union. The individuals' and societies' ownership of the European idea cannot be limited to the acceptance of its symbolic meaning. The European Union is a package of mutual trust, where tough negotiations and discussions take place in the context of a consensus over fundamental issues. We attach special importance to what constitutes the notions of solidarity and coherence of the European Union. (...)



I hope that, while reviewing its institutions, policies and programs, the European Union will take account of the need to maintain the internal harmony. For, the European Union will only be strong if it is coherent and close-knit.

The integrating Europe has always had the instincts guiding it to overcome divergence and to face the challenges of a particular moment. This has happened in the case of the Treaty of Rome, then the Uniform European Act and – currently – the Economic and Monetary Union. This should also be the case of the future enlargement.

Eight days ago an important stage on the way of the candidate states towards the membership of the European Union was initiated. True accession talks have been opened. At this point a new impetus has been given to the enlargement process. The impetus should be maintained as it stimulates the transformation in the candidate states. And not only there.

It would be a bad signal if today on the banner of realism we started considering the possibility of slowing down the EU enlargement process. I will refer to our Eastern European experiences of the last years. They point out the fact that success in reforming their economies has only been attained by those countries where the targets were set high. This is the best evidence that, wishing to achieve the achievable, one should set ambitious goals for themselves.

We expect Poland to achieve full readiness for the accession by the end of the year 2002. Poland's membership of the European Union – involving the complete set of duties and rights of a member – is among the fundamental goals of our policy. It is the aim of determined efforts of the state's authorities, the whole public administration and all political powers – from the left to the right. This should be certified by the experience and commitment of those present here: Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland Professor Bronislaw Geremek, the former Prime Minister and the Head of the Sejm European Integration Commission Tadeusz Mazowiecki, the chief Polish Negotiator Jan Kulakowski and the Polish Ambassador to the European Union Jan Truszczyński.

The high dynamics of the enlargement process is also in the interest of today's "fifteen" – not only for the reason that in accepting new members, the EU will strengthen itself as the biggest area of political and economic stability in the world. The EU's enlargement also strengthens argumentation in favour of carrying out changes within the EU itself. The changes are needed if in the 21<sup>st</sup> century the EU is to be a more efficient and competitive body. Such is the message of Agenda 2000, which – as we hope – will be enacted in the nearest future. (...)

The level of the Europeans' identification with the new shape of Europe – both in the institutional and the geographical terms – is a measure of success of the enlargement process, as well as that of the whole integration project. Therefore, special care should be applied in the nearest future to assure the growth of the social support for the integration. It may be disturbing that many stereotypes have gathered around the enlargement of the European Union process. Quite often they start to live independent lives. It is indeed regrettable that quite often their power prevails – in the eyes of the public opinion and of certain political circles – over the power of facts. It turns out that the level of knowledge about the situation in the candidate countries remains insufficient. In a nutshell – a deepening of this understanding is needed. What is needed is a close-knit network of contacts.

The stereotypes and sometimes even myths regard issues which are – sometimes too hastily – being regarded as sensitive and requiring special treatment, and special solutions.

In my opinion, the freedom of movement of people is one such issue. In some statements it is being presented as the main challenge facing the states and societies of the current “fifteen”. In fact, I believe there are no reasons to overdramatize this.

In the 1980s we could see on the example of Spain and Portugal that the strenuously negotiated transition periods for the free movement of people soon became unnecessary. We also remember the great concerns which have recently accompanied the lifting of visa requirements in the EU states for Poland. Today more Polish people are coming back than leaving the country.

For several years our country has been recording one of the highest rates of economic growth in Europe. The unemployment has been falling for several years. Currently it is lower than the EU average. To a growing extent the Polish people are fulfilling their material aspirations at home. We are not interested in an outflow of qualified labour. Imports of goods and services from the European Union to Poland outgrow Polish exports. Thus, we are supporting jobs in the 15 UE member states. The number of these jobs is estimated at the level of around 200 thousand.

Excessive and largely unwarranted concerns are also raised by the issue of Poland's joining the Common Agricultural Policy. Also here many things are missing from the debate and there are many misled assessments. It is commonly believed that 25 percent of the Polish labour is employed in agriculture while

only less than half of the number of Polish farms sell products to the market and only for them agriculture is the main source of income.

The nature of the problem we are faced with is different from the common stereotype. We are facing sensitive social issues such as lack of jobs in rural areas outside of agriculture and an unfavourable demographic structure in the countryside. Yet, an excessively large agriculture is not our problem. Prolonging the integration period of the Polish food economy would not be beneficial either for Poland or for the European Union.

It is difficult for me to agree with the concerns that enlargement of the European Union by acceptance of the Central European states would lead to destabilisation of the EU agricultural markets. Even a 30 percent increase of the agricultural output in Poland – basically meaning no more than a return to the level of the agricultural output before 1989 – could have only a marginal influence on the level of prices on agricultural products in the European Union.

Also, protection of the environment is partially being viewed in the context of old stereotypes. Today, with one of the highest growth rates in Europe recorded since 1993, Poland is mobilising large investments in the protection of the environment. In 1996 the outlays constituted almost 10 percent of all investments in the Polish economy and 1.7 percent of the national income. So, the rates are higher than in most member states of the European Union.

Also increasing safety of the citizens is among our priorities. Expenditures for this in the 1999 budget will grow by 7 percent. The issue plays a significant role for us in the accession process. (...)

We, the Polish people have been in the circle of the Western civilization for over ten hundred years. Our parliamentarism dates back to the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. Like the rest of Europe, we have had revolutions and uprisings and in the 20<sup>th</sup> century we faced the tragic disaster of the two world wars. Nothing which is European and which has been lived through and experienced by Europe is alien to us. Poland does not need to return to Europe. We are participating in the most successful endeavour in the history of our continent – its integration. We are happy that the Czech Republic, Slovenia and Hungary are negotiating the accession together with us. The doors to the integration should be open also for other European countries which fulfil the necessary requirements – for Lithuania, Latvia, Slovakia and Romania. Without considering any specific dates and speeds, we also see Bulgaria and Ukraine as potential participants of the process. The great European project should not leave anybody out.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

We are in a period when the pace of the world politics is being measured by crises and attempts to overcome them. Before the international community has managed to draw conclusions from one crisis situation, there comes another. Therefore, when there is an opportunity to augment the stability and well-being at a relatively low cost – it is necessary to take it. More than once in the recent years and decades European politicians have proven their farsightedness and made decisions beneficial for building unity of the continent. I am convinced that this is also going to be the case on this occasion.

## 5. Address opening a meeting with members of the Parliamentary Joint Commission of Poland and the European Union (excerpts) – Warsaw, 31<sup>st</sup> of March 1999

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

It gives me great satisfaction to welcome members of the Poland–EU Parliamentary Joint Commission with its co-presidents Ms. Ursula Stenzel and Mr Tadeusz Mazowiecki at the Presidential Palace. I would like to use the opportunity that the Commission is holding its last sitting in this term of the European Parliament to express my appreciation for your achievements. The Parliamentary Joint Commission is currently one of the most important forums of dialogue between Poland and the European Union. When the parliamentary contacts were being formalised within the European Agreement in 1991 its aim was to give a more complete dimension to the process of Poland's association with the European Union. Since that time the scope of the Commission's activities has grown and encompassed most aspects of the pre-accession preparations. By exerting influence on instruments and aims of the integration the Commission is currently an important catalyst of progress on Poland's way towards the membership of the European Union. Paying a visit to Strasbourg last November I stressed my belief that an efficient European Parliament constitutes the basis of the European Union, which Poland wishes to join. I hope that at the end of the subsequent parliamentary term we will have a meeting to celebrate the completion of our mission – Poland's membership of the European Union. (...)

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Although events in Yugoslavia have grasped our attention in the recent days, we have marked the results of the recent EU summit in Berlin with great satisfaction as well. The summit has brought very good news as regards one of the key aspects for the future of Europe that is opening of the EU to new member states. The nomination of Romano Prodi for the President of the European Commission and the decisions regarding the Agenda 2000 have created conditions for rapid

progress in the accession talks. Having established the common currency and having made the decisions regarding its financial prospects, the European Union is currently better prepared to focus itself on the enlargement. In our opinion the accession talks are progressing well although so far they have not brought the kind of results we could have wished for. A year from the opening of the accession process we have opened negotiations on a half of the existing chapters, yet we have closed the talks in three out of thirty one chapters. I hope that as early as during the German presidency a new dynamics of the negotiations will be observed as a result of the success of Euro and the "Agenda 2000". We should do everything to end this century fully determined to implement the vision of an enlarged European Union.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Since the birth of our membership aspirations Poland has been aware of the task it faces in its pre-accession preparations. The magnitude of the *acquis communautaire* itself well defines the scope of the challenge. In some specific areas we have already achieved a significant level of convergence. The prospects for an efficient progress of the negotiations have been strengthened by promising results of the review of legislations, exemplified by the recent very successful negotiations in the areas of justice and internal affairs. Where an additional effort is needed I opt for intensification of the efforts and a quicker pace of adjustments. More attention should be paid to the issue of a schedule for implementation of the EU legislation. The process must be more carefully prepared to avoid legislative congestion as the new legal acts or amendments drafts are being submitted to the parliament. Moreover, the changes should be viewed as harmonious from the point of view of the citizens, including business people. First of all, to enable an acceleration of the legislation process before the deadline we have established for our readiness for the membership, it is necessary to establish a fast legislation track. Poland is going to be a strong and credible member state.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In my opinion there are numerous similarities between the democratic changes in Central Europe in the early 1990s and the strengthening of democracy on the European level. The augmented parliamentary dimension of the integration process is one of the most positive proofs of the development of the European structures in comparison with the previous states of the enlargement. The current European Parliament in an impressive way combines the democratic control over the decisions being made and the strong sense of responsibility for the all EU policies. The European integration becomes more complete due

to this. When deputies from Central Europe take their seats in the Parliament it is going to gain a new weight and significance. I am convinced that the Joint Commission is going to remain one of the strongest advocates of the EU enlargement.

## 6. Interview for the German "Der Tageesspiegel" (excerpts) – 11<sup>th</sup> of March 2000

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*On the coming Sunday, together with President Rau and five other heads of states you will be reviving memories in Gniezno of the meeting between Emperor Otto III and the Polish ruler Boleslaw the Brave. What is the significance of this historic date for today's politics?*

The Gniezno Congress a thousand years ago opened the West and Christian Europe to the Central and Eastern one. It was the first attempt to define Europe in political terms and a beginning of the Polish-German good neighbourhood relations which developed throughout the centuries.

Later the situation became less pleasant and that is why historians for a long time spoke about the thousand years of hostility instead of a thousand years of neighbourhood. Today we are going to Gniezno to restate that we identify ourselves with the common Europe of shared values built on Christianity, dialogue and cooperation. The aim is to liquidate the existing barriers and limits and to finally overcome [the heritage of] Yalta. The states represented by the seven presidents – Germany and Poland accompanied by the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Lithuania and Ukraine – have been influenced by the mission of Saint Wojciech (Adalbert) and orientate themselves not towards the Byzantine but towards the Roman Christianity.

*There is a certain asymmetry: the West is already in the European Union while Poland wants to join it: the West is richer. Does not this hamper equal treatment?*

There exist economic differences but as Emperor Otto III and Prince Boleslaw at those times had a vision and a drive to create a joint Europe for the common benefit – a similar situation exists with reference to the EU's enlargement. Certainly, it does not mean that the more affluent states are going to descend to a lower level but the poorer ones are going to adjust themselves to the higher level. Germany is going to benefit from this. The integration process is going to bring us closer to one to another and to diminish the differences.



*What is Poland going to contribute to the united Europe?*

Our strategic location, which has brought us much suffering, has also proven our ability to deal with neighbours. Poland makes also a big contribution to the stability of the region. Apart from that, Poland has 39 million citizens and it is the biggest of the states which candidate to the EU. We are also a very young and dynamic society. The West occasionally seems a bit tired with the European integration. We are full of energy and freshness.

*Where are the borders of Europe?*

First the current candidate states must be integrated with the Union. Russia will always be interested in intensive cooperation but Turkey and Ukraine are especially important as they are located on the borders with the other continent. The architecture of Europe is going to be changed dramatically depending on Turkey's directing itself towards the world of Islam and Central Asia or towards Europe. In a similar way, is Ukraine going to turn itself towards the East or towards the West?

*Should Ukraine become a candidate to the EU like Turkey?*

These are two separate cases. Turkey is a member of NATO and it is economically more developed but the future of Ukraine is also decisive for the shape of Europe.

*The Polish media are, with concern, reporting signals from Brussels according to which Poland's accession to the EU is going to be postponed – partly due to political issues and partly because of the inadequate state of preparedness on the part of Poland.*

We are strongly protesting against signals of any intentions to postpone the EU enlargement process, allegedly even coming from the President of the Commission Romano Prodi. We intend to achieve readiness for the accession by the end of 2002. Poland is very sensitive to all attempts to apply relativism to the Nazi crimes or the Holocaust. There is not going to be any leniency on this even for such a country as Austria, to which the Poles are very grateful for having been on many occasions the first place where the Poles sought asylum at times of political repressions. It is impossible to dictate any democratic country how it should be governed. Yet we are applying our own benchmark and we are closely observing Vienna's attitude towards the integration of Europe, as well as towards the issue of compensations for forced labourers and towards immigrants. In this sense we support reactions of the EU member states.

*What would be Poland's reaction if one day the EU partners interfered with its internal affairs, threatening it with a boycott?*

In Poland such a party as that of Joerg Haider would be unthinkable. There are no significant groupings which would negate the crimes of Nazism or Communism. By the Power of its 13<sup>th</sup> Article, the Constitution bans existence of such powers and "chief's parties". What is decisive is another issue: how many citizens support Haider's slogans and how strong is euroscepticism in the EU. We are watching the Germans closely. The federal government luckily opts for the EU enlargement and supports us within the limits of its possibilities. But is it going to happen with the CDU? What stance will it take on the EU integration after its crisis? There is a difference between what is said by Helmut Kohl and what is said by the Prime Minister of Bavaria Edmund Stolber.

*What would be Poland's reaction if the enlargement were in fact postponed?*

We are determined to do everything possible to join the EU in 2003. The deadline puts pressure to solve all the issues, including the unpleasant ones. It is also a signal for the European Union that it should initiate internal reforms so that it could be ready for the accession by that time. There are 33 months left to the end of the year 2002.

*What is the source of your scepticism that the planned enlargement may not come off, not because of an inadequate readiness of the candidates but as a result of insufficient reform of the EU?*

I am not a sceptic, I am a realist. There are risks on both sides. If both of the sides are convinced that this should be done, it will be. If the conviction is missing on one part, the enlargement will be postponed. And if both sides do not overcome their problems, the delay will take longer. A slight delay due to understandable reasons may be properly explained to the Polish people. Yet, a prolonged treatment of this issue as an open one and lack of any specific deadline will cause scepticism on the part of the Polish people, who will say: the EU does not want us anyway, it is telling us lies. But this is a theoretical reasoning and I am convinced that this is not going to be so. The Poles' support for the EU is high...

*...according to one of the recent surveys it is less than 50 percent...*

...no, it is still above 50 %. First of all, the number of supporters remains twice or three times bigger than that of the opponents. If we have a referendum, a decisive majority will support us. Nonetheless, the government has neglected

providing the citizens with the information needed. It is a pity as every month is important. A brochure should be delivered to every household listing the most important benefits and problems and ways of solving them. It is also important that we are implementing the reforms not in order to ingratiate ourselves with the European Union. The reforms are equally needed without our accession to the European Union.

*There are signals coming from Brussels that Poland may not join the EU in the first round of the enlargement if it still delays the negotiations. Would it be politically dangerous if the other countries were accepted earlier?*

Certainly smaller states have smaller problems and they may solve them more quickly. We are working hard on our capabilities to join the EU. Smaller countries are also significant for the EU. It is, however, important to remember that its political nucleus is formed by Germany and France.

*Do you think that Poland, which is as large as all the seven remaining candidates taken together, is at the heart of the enlargement process?*

This is an overstatement. Nonetheless, Poland belongs to the heavyweight category.

*Does this mean that someone who would like to postpone the enlargement would have the easiest job targeting Poland?*

I do not see such a danger at the moment. We want to stick to our driving schedule. We also want to reassure our partners in the West that this is not happening too fast. When German citizens hear: "Poland is going to be here as early as in the year 2003", some of them may think: my God, it is the day after tomorrow. But we have been working hard on our reforms since 1989. In 2003 fourteen years will have passed – much more than in the case of Spain or Portugal from the fall of their dictatorships to the moment when they joined the European Union.

Interview conducted by *Christoph Marschall*

## 7. Speech at the 7<sup>th</sup> Polish European Meetings (excerpts) – Warsaw, Hotel Sheraton, 14<sup>th</sup> of May 2000

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

It is a great satisfaction for me to take the floor at the 7<sup>th</sup> Polish European Meetings. The event already has its own tradition and each year it gathers the most active advocates of the European integration in Poland. If someone had doubts as to the scale of public support for the European Union in Poland they should join us today and they should have seen it yesterday with their own eyes how big the scale of the activism is in our country in support for the integration. I have always believed that the Polish people are instinctive supporters of the European Union, which certainly does not automatically level the differences of opinions or remove all concerns related to this. The Polish European Meetings are a point proving that this is not only a matter of instincts but also a matter of great will and determination on the part of the society. (...)

On one hand we are aware of the fact that Europe uniting itself is one of the greatest civilizational achievements of humanity. On the other hand, we know that at the moment it does not fulfil all the expectations put in it. We are noticing with concern that some European politicians have become afraid of their own vision. Concepts of Europe integrating itself at two different speeds are being raised right now, when we have a chance to unite the continent at a scale unique in history. Despite being aware of how much Europe has been enriched with every previous enlargement round, some are advocating now an escape of the seniors of the integration process ahead of the others and creation of an European avant-garde. We cannot agree to such a vision of the future of the European Union. After all, the very idea of the integration stipulates that there should be no breach between the better and the worse. We are not going to overcome the differences postulating new divisions. Therefore, I am appealing to the leaders of the European Union not to endanger the coherence of Europe and the European solidarity. This would be an undeserved gift for all those opposing the integration process and the EU enlargement.

The united Europe has never been stagnant. Now it is also carrying out far-sighted projects which would have been unthinkable a short time ago. Such is the nature of the introduction of the common currency and the creation of the foundations of the European security and defence policy. The same may be said about the discussion on ways of strengthening the European labour market and counteracting illegal immigration. There is an unquestioned political commitment to the enlargement. All of this means that the dynamics of the European matters is very big. Nonetheless, it may not be overlooked that something very important has been left over. I mean the citizens' involvement in governing Europe. I mean human and cultural ties – the European binding agent. It may be true that in the contemporary world there is no place for the spiritual union because the world has become too individualised. Everyone is following his or her separate route, yet this is not beneficial for the united Europe. For the future of the European Union and its role in the world is a function of how we avail ourselves of the positive energy of the mutual rights. (...)

Poland wishes to join a citizenship Europe. The logic of our transformation of 1989, confirmed by the reform of the self-government system, is that of the citizens' involvement, their participation in ruling of the country. The rapid development of the citizenship society, millions of people involved in activities of non-government organisations such as the ones represented by you – this is a great potential of the Polish transformation. Already now it is a great input to the united Europe. We must take care of its proper use.

The clock measuring the time of Poland's preparations to the membership of the European Union has been ticking for years – in my opinion since the year 1989. Since the beginning of our transformation a return to Europe has been our goal and our inspiration. The Association and Stabilisation Treaty, the membership application and finally the opening of the accession talks have been but subsequent stages of this process. Our goal is now within reach.

For us, the Polish people, the entry to the European Union must be preceded by a national reflection on our own matters. After the changes of 1989 our participation in the European integration process is going to be the most significant change in our individual and collective identity. The change is going to serve as a mirror reflecting our stronger and weaker traits. We have to be prepared for this. Starting from the fundamental issues to the most mundane ones. I often get the impression that the changes which we are implementing are too mechanical, void of a credible analysis and reflection. To some extent this is inevitable. We have our job to do and there is no excuse from that. Yet, the role of the government must not be limited to that of implementation of legislative changes – despite their whole weight and significant. We must not

limit our European debate to this or another EU directive. The rules of the game must not be the focus of the whole debate. It is important to communicate a sort of a European Decalogue of what Poland perceives as the most important issues related to the integration to the business people, the farmers and the whole society. At the same time we will present a more complete opinion on the EU policy in particular fields to our partners in the European Union. Thus, we will influence correction of what we see as inappropriate. Such was the case of each previous EU enlargement. Such should be the case now. (...)

On the eve of Poland's accession of the European Union a national plan of action is needed. The changes of 1989 have created opportunities for a significant portion of our society. Today a similar window of opportunities should be opened for the others – those who have benefited less from the changes. The accession to the European Union is not only a good opportunity for this. It is a requirement of the moment, even more so as this is taking place in the context of global social and technological changes, the pace of which does not cease to astonish us. It turns out that the economic growth itself is not a sufficient drive for creation of jobs. Something more is needed. Creating opportunities should not be based on investments in education and training, research and science, in communication and the infrastructure, in strengthening the culture of business drive, flexibility of the job market, departure from hierarchical methods of government, controlled transfer of responsibilities to local and regional communities, mutual monitoring of the activities of the state, the market and social organisations, supporting cooperation between the industry and scientific circles and investments made by the industry in research projects. Poland's discovering of Europe and making Europe trendy in Poland will not be affected without an effort. They must be developed. They must be a tool on the way to a better future.

The more immediate the perspective of Poland's membership of the EU becomes the more vital the common understanding of the integration issues and the availability of information on it become. I have repeatedly advocated an intensive information campaign on the European Union and Poland's membership of it. I am afraid that we still have a lot to do in this area. The lack of comprehensive information on the European Union has been proven by the results of a recent survey of Polish management circles – even a half of their representatives had no idea of the future influence of the integration with the EU on the functioning of their companies. A constant dialogue with social partners on matters covered in the course of the negotiations is indispensable. I am appealing for a development of the information policy. We cannot demand from the Polish society to reach all sources of information on the EU by themselves as the sources are too numerous. We also cannot demand people to grasp the knowledge overnight.

We are entering a decisive period in the negotiations and preparations of our presence in the European Union. There is no and there should be no preferential treatment for us regardless of our merits and our belief in the historic role we have played in transforming Europe over the recent decades. Activities of pro-European institutions prove that the Polish people do not refrain from everyday educational and development work addressed to individual citizens. I am glad to see many representatives of the young generation here, I am happy that you are taking the matters in your own hands as the prospects of the European Union are your own. I wish everybody that Europe may be a synonym of our hopes and expectations. Let the European Union mean for us peace, security, development and also dialogue, openness and cooperation with our partners. The goal is within reach. My wish to all of us is that the next European Meeting is held in Poland being a member of the European Union.

## 8. Speech at the French Institute of International Relations (IFRI) – Paris, 16<sup>th</sup> of May 2000

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Honourable Director, Ladies and Gentlemen!

It is a great pleasure for me to pay yet another visit to the IFRI. I feel here at ease just as if I were visiting close friends. Recently my visits to Paris have been traditionally combined with visits at the IFRI. I cherish the wonderful atmosphere of our meetings in my memory. We understand one another very well; we share the sense of participation in facing historic challenges for Europe. France is a great director and a great actor on the European and global scenes, and you, Ladies and Gentlemen, are co-authors of the French foreign policy. It is a great satisfaction for me to be able to represent the Polish perspective here.

In 1996 I told you here that it was our common desire for Europe to enter the new millennium not as the “Old Continent” but as the “continent modern” – a centre of the civilizational dynamics. I told you that Poland felt the weight of the challenge. That is why it wishes to be a modern and strong member of the European Union, as deeply integrated with the others as possible. Half a year ago I shared with you both the Polish enthusiasm and concerns. I told you that the Polish people – contrary to Western eurosceptics – believe in Europe and its creative power. But I also expressed a reflection that if the enlargement of the EU is to be significantly prolonged, a wave of public discouragement will grow in the candidate countries. A combination of this discouragement, frustration and unfulfilled hopes in the negotiating countries with the euro-sceptical trend in the EU countries – is a serious threat for the durability of the European project.

Now I am in France at a very special moment. In a month and a half the French presidency of the European Union will begin. The moment is pivotal also for the reason that decisions are about to be made which will determine the nature of the united Europe for the years to come. We are ahead of institutional reforms of the Union and the Community’s enlargement.



The atmosphere is tense: optimistic and pessimistic signals are being heard at the same time. Poland has welcomed the declaration of the EU Commissioner for the Enlargement of the European Union that there are extensive chances that this autumn a deadline will be set for finalisation of the negotiations with the first group of the candidate countries. At the same time, a signal was sent that the possibility was being considered that Poland might not be among the countries accepted as the first ones to the EU. From the Polish point of view this would be unimaginable. Poland's contribution to the stability of the region and to uniting the continent over the old divisions – made not in the distant past but today – is so large that the united Europe cannot overlook it. At the same time I wish to stress that we understand that much depends on ourselves – on the pace and diligence in adopting the Community law. By accelerating the legislative works we have recently given evidence that we are up to the challenge.

At this special moment I am visiting France – a traditional partner, friend and ally of Poland. I have come here assured that a time of pivotal decisions has come and we are going to use this chance together.

Today it is time to insert dynamism into the EU enlargement process and bring it to the decisive stage. For centuries France has been the heart of Europe and now it is one of the most important creators and animators of the European unity. In Poland it is difficult to understand why France has the lowest, merely 34% level of public support for the EU enlargement while in the Scandinavian countries the level is 60% and the average for all EU member states is 43%. Poland believes that the situation is going to change and France will be the place where the momentum for breaking changes in Europe is going to come from, as it often has before.

Now it is also the time to give a new quality to the Polish-French relations. We are partners – also in the specific dimension of the Weimar Triangle. For nearly a year we have been allies within the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. One seventh of the 40 billion Euro invested so far in Poland by the foreign capital has fallen to French investments. Yet, historic ties between the two countries and contemporary reasons favouring the strategic cooperation should be clear enough to persuade us to opt for an even closer, strategic partnership. It is worth noticing that in the future enlarged European Union Poland will be among the six biggest countries. Poland and Germany have been able to build wonderful mutual relations despite such great burdens of the past. Success of the partnership between Poland and France is, therefore, even more certain – there are so many things which act as unifying and not divisive agents.

Before I finish, I would like to say that a time has come to take a new look at the international setup in Europe: get rid of automatically copied stereotypes which do not fit the current realities. The old division between the West and the East understood in terms of Yalta loses its grounds. The endeavour to integrate Europe should no longer be identified with Western Europe. Western Europe together with the central European region forms a new political quality and at the same time they constitute an ages-old traditional civilizational community. Using this perspective we will be able to better understand processes occurring in Europe. We will also notice opportunities and threats in a better way. The Eastern border of Poland is soon going to be the Eastern border of the European Union – a place of encounters with Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. When you look towards the East from Paris you will see Berlin and of course Warsaw. When the voice is being heard from France that it is time for realistic policy towards Russia, Poland accepts this with great attentiveness and understanding. Poland is deeply interested in just this kind of policy of the Europe unifying itself towards Russia – and also towards Ukraine – and Poland wants to participate in it actively. There is also one very important point advocating the Polish-French partnership. Poland and France are close and well-meaning one towards the other and they need one the other. Poland is turning towards France with hope and optimism.

## 9. Statement by the President of Poland, Aleksander Kwasniewski, on the Occasion of the Signing of the Treaty of Nice, Warsaw, February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2001<sup>5</sup>

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1. It is with enormous satisfaction that I welcome the signing today of the Treaty of Nice, designed primarily to increase the efficiency of the EU's operation and to ensure that it is adequately prepared institutionally for the forthcoming accession of new states. Notwithstanding the difficult debate, the European Union has met the obligations assumed in Cologne and Helsinki. Treaty provisions make formally possible what has already been politically decided: European Union enlargement. Thus, the Treaty opens before Poland and the other candidate states the door to European Union membership.

2. I trust that the process of the ratification of the Treaty in the Member States will advance efficiently and at a good pace. As regards to the dynamics of the enlargement process, I trust also that it will be possible to work out a formula of a parallel ratification of the amendments to the Treaties agreed upon in Nice and the Accession Treaties to be signed with the candidate states.

3. I note with satisfaction that the institutional arrangements under the Treaty of Nice are conducive to a balanced character of a new, enlarged European Union, guided by the principle of solidarity. I am convinced that Poland will make full use of these opportunities, contributing to the development of the European idea and to building an EU to match the challenges and objectives of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. I share the opinions on this issue presented in a document of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: "The Treaty of Nice: the Polish point of view."

4. To my satisfaction, I find in the Treaty of Nice instruments and arrangements that serve not only EU enlargement, but also its deepening. A balanced extension of decision-making by majority vote and improving the efficiency of the closer cooperation mechanism will allow advancing integration in those areas in which it will serve the common good of the entire European Union.

<sup>5</sup> Source: [www.prezydent.pl](http://www.prezydent.pl), Collection of Documents – Zbiór Dokumentow, 2001, nr 1 (edit.).

These arrangements meet the expectations of Poland, willing to contribute actively to the strengthening and consolidation of the united Europe.

5. In accordance with the Nice arrangements, the year 2001 will mark the beginning of a debate on the EU's future shape, to be crowned with convening the next Intergovernmental Conference in 2004. Poland wants to play an active and constructive role in activities under the so-called post-Nice process. I believe that, being a Member State already, we will be involved in the proceedings of the Intergovernmental Conference of 2004 to discuss issues fundamental to the future of the EU, including a simplification of the Treaties, division of powers and the role of national parliaments in the integration process.

6. Completing the European Union's internal preparations for enlargement, the Treaty of Nice shifts the centre of gravity towards the accession negotiation process. Both the candidate and the Member States must respond positively to this challenge and step up their efforts to reach agreement in all negotiating chapters. I expect that the next few months will bring a breakthrough in the negotiations, bringing closer the prospect of their ultimate completion.

# 10.

Address at a meeting with members of the Parliamentary Joint Commission of Poland and the European Union (excerpts),  
Warsaw 5<sup>th</sup> of March 2001

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

I have had the opportunity to meet you on many occasions in various parts of the world so I want to tell you now that I am very glad to meet you in Warsaw and to continue the great endeavour of introducing Poland to the European Union and that of the EU enlargement which appears to be the most important and the most spectacular goal of the European Union in the contemporary times.

The EU enlargement has been decided. Now we are only discussing ways of achieving this historic goal. Thus the question is not if the EU is to be enlarged but how to carry this out to the benefit of Europe, of the current EU members and the future members of this structure. In this context I want to restate that the decisions of the Treaty of Nice, which was signed several days ago, are a right step in the right direction. (...)

The summit has brought solutions which, as I have said, are an important and decisive move forward and which form internal foundations in the EU facilitating the enlargement. From our point of view also the political declaration that the 2004 elections to the European Parliament might be participated in by new member states is a matter of great importance. We see this as a very brave statement on the part of the old EU member states. And we will spare no effort to make our participation in this process possible in the year 2002.

I want to refer to three more things. The negotiations are in progress. They are not easy but I am convinced that – due to its achievements, the achievements which are visible and unquestionable – Poland has strong assets favouring its membership in the EU. At meetings with government representatives you must be hearing about various problems, but also of what has already been

accomplished. My opinion on the negotiation process is that, although with obstacles, we are decisively moving in a good direction.

Second – we are convinced that both the summit of Nice and the stance you represent have been very encouraging for the enlargement process. If I were to list the biggest difficulties on the part of the EU today, I would confirm that, on one hand, these include the mishaps which we have not expected, such as the BSE, and on the other hand they stem from the still not complete acceptance on the part of the public opinion. Yet, if the needed efforts are taken, I believe that we will be able to provide our societies and the EU citizens with such arguments to ensure that the enlargement process wins also their acceptance and support.

The next thing is that Poland is in its election year. I wish to assure everybody that the elections are not going to change much as regards the attitude towards the EU and actions taken by Poland. As there is a wide-spread consensus in Poland regarding the country's entry to the European Union, each setup resulting from the elections will in fact continue this policy. Nonetheless, the period from 2001 to 2005 is going to be decisive, therefore, the shape of the government and its stability are going to be meaningful. Yet, let me stress this once more: there are no reasons for anxiety; there is no debate in Poland: neither regarding the EU nor anything else. In Poland the question is what should be done to ensure that Poland's accession is beneficial for both sides – both for Poland and for the EU. The main goal of my second term in office is ensuring Poland's entry to the EU. And I will do everything possible to make this happen. But of course, to make this happen, cooperation, partnership and mutual understanding are needed. I value very highly what is being done by the European Parliament and, especially, by your Commission.

The goal we have taken for ourselves is closer at hand rather than distant. We are very close to this great, historic moment. Poland's entry to the European Union and the EU enlargement are a process which is almost complete and which may be one of the most important and the biggest events of the coming years (...). Very often and for a good reason we talk about the EU's enlargement in political, economic and technical terms but I believe that it is sometimes worth talking about the enlargement in historic, philosophical and also more personal terms which point to the fact that we are participating in one of the most significant European processes for many centuries. Therefore, let us not view this as merely piles of papers – let us see this as a great thing which we are creating together. (...)

# 11.

Joint interview for the Polish "Przeгляд" and the German weekly "Die Woche" by Presidents of Poland and Germany (excerpts)  
– 27<sup>th</sup> of June 2001

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*(...) How will you tell your co-citizens in three words why Poland must enter the European Union?*

President of the Republic of Poland: First, the European Union is a proven economic system. Second, Poland needs the EU to breach the civilizational gap. Third, there is a question of the alternative. What will happen if Poland does not join the EU? For 50 years we belonged to the Soviet bloc, what do we want now? Do we want to live in a Central European vacuum? There is no sensible alternative to the accession of the EU. Our young people fear they might end up somewhere at the periphery of Europe.

*Mr President, maybe you will explain this to the Germans right now why Poland must become a part of the EU?*

President of Republic of Poland: This must be accomplished to make Europe whole. Many inhabitants of Western Europe do not think about Krolewiec (Koenigsberg), Cracow, Budapest or Prague when they talk about Europe. In fact this is one cultural region. Nowhere is this more visible than here in Gdansk. The European Union is primarily a community of values and only in the second place the economic community.

*The project "Enlargement of the European Union to the East" was first received euphorically both in Germany and in Poland. Do fears prevail now?*

President of Germany: We had a similar situation during the EU's enlargement to the South. Think about the warnings before the accession of Portugal and the concerns about Greece and anxieties because of Spain. Before any country's accession to the EU there have always been two prevailing moods. In the old member states a feeling arose that the candidates were not mature enough for the accession. In the candidate states suspicions arose that we others were

demanding an excessive price for accepting them to the EU. Now we have the same case. The Polish people are irritated because of the transition periods. Many old member states are saying that the transition periods should be even longer. Nonetheless, the enlargement to the East is going to be as much of a success story as it has been with the enlargement to the South.

President of Republic of Poland: In my opinion President Rau is absolutely right. In the last 12 years in Europe there have been too many breakthrough events: the fall of the Soviet Union, the unification of Germany, the emergence of new democracies in Central Europe, the drama in the Balkans region. Europe is exhausted; the great emotions have burnt out. We have the psychological effect that people wish for some peace and calm and first they want to get acquainted with the situation. I can understand this, yet from the political point of view a serious mistake may be made.

*Do you fear stagnation?*

President of Republic of Poland: The generation which perceived Europe from a visionary perspective and which was represented by a number of outstanding individuals is no longer present in the politics. Not many such people are left. The great Europeans have been replaced by a generation of political managers.

*How can Germany assist Poland in its accession to the EU?*

President of Germany: As its direct neighbours we are especially interested in Poland's accession to the European Union. The German voice is significant in the EU. Nonetheless, we cannot accept an interpretation that Germany plays a kind of an ideological leadership role in the EU or that it is number one. The voice is significant but it is not the only one which is decisive.

*The Germans fear that the Poles are going to take their jobs away. The Poles fear that the Germans are going to buy their land out. How to build a partnership on the mistrust?*

President of Republic of Poland: I am of the opinion that the scenarios are exaggerated. Polish business people are not going to overflow Germany. Each year several thousand people from Poland work in Germany and this does not cause problems. When Poland finds itself in the EU it is going to continue its economic development and it will create more and more jobs for its own citizens. Already now more Poles are returning home from abroad than emigrate. And after Poland's accession of the EU even more Poles are going to return from abroad.



*Is there a threat of a buyout of Polish real estate and land?*

President of Republic of Poland: I do not believe that there is going to be an inflow of Germans willing to buy land from us. In such a case the prices would immediately go up which in turn would limit the demand. After all, we are not on the Azure Coast where real properties find buyers for even exuberant sums of money. Also in this area the general rule is binding – everything is going to return to reasonable dimensions.

*How long should be the transition periods for taking jobs and purchasing land? In the course of the negotiations periods of seven or 18 years are being talked about.*

President of Republic of Poland: I leave this issue to the negotiators. It only occurs to me that many Polish people treat the negotiations with the EU like a football match which can only be won either by the EU or by Poland. There is also a possibility of a tie. I call this reasonable compromise.

*Do you have the impression that at the moment Germany is doing too little in the EU for Poland?*

President of Republic of Poland: Germany is acting in a consistent manner and is making an effort to ensure that Poland is in the first group of the candidate states. I hope that this is going to continue in the future. For now we are entering a difficult stage. We have the parliamentary elections this year and Germany has the elections to the Bundestag next year. The issue of the free movement of business people may become central for the election campaigns in both countries.

*Mr President, do you also see the threat?*

President of Germany: I hope this is not going to happen. I cannot imagine that it should come to such disputes with reference to the EU enlargement to the East as it did in the case of the Eastern Treaties (regarding among others recognition of the Western border of Poland by the Federal Republic of Germany). I have the feeling that all the parties in the Bundestag want the EU's enlargement to the East, even if there may be differences of opinions as to the transition periods and ways of conducting the negotiations. Poland and Germany are already in the security community. We have also the community of culture. Now it is time for the civil and economic community.

*Once Poland is in the EU, will then the threat arise of establishment of the, so called, iron curtain on the borders with Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and the other countries?*

President of Germany: 60 years ago the Wehrmacht entered into Russia. In a speech devoted to this issue I quoted Willy Brandt. He said: "Russia belongs to Europe" and I added: "Russia is not going to be a member of the EU but it is going to be its most important partner." I think that the Russian authorities know that the EU enlargement is not directed against Russia.

President of Republic of Poland: Also for us Russia is going to be a very meaningful partner. Only one thing may become a problem – we must be careful to ensure that the commitments to secure the external borders of the EU resulting from the Schengen Agreement do not lead to the establishment of an "iron curtain". We must fight crime, trade in narcotic drugs and illegal immigration effectively but at the same time we must leave the border open for human, regional and economic contacts. I understand the concerns, shared also by democratic circles in Russia and in Ukraine, that Poland may turn its back on them. Yet the situation may not be allowed that only the road to Moscow remains open for them while the roads to Warsaw, Brussels, Paris or Berlin are closed.

*Are the doors to Europe going to be open for an indefinite time?*

President of Germany: I am not a lawyer but I will use a lawyers' definition of the term "immediately". Immediately means without a delay for which someone is at fault. This is how the negotiations with the candidate states should be conducted. Then the situation will not occur that the doors will be closed.

President of Republic of Poland: I cannot imagine that a time will come when it is going to be said: "here is where we stop the European process." President Rau was fully right when he spoke about finishing the construction of Europe. This is exactly what it is about. I cannot imagine that a big European country would be swept to the margin.

*In Germany and in Poland nationalism is growing in power?*

President of Germany: If we carry out the negotiations without a delay for which someone may be at fault, the nationalism will not make its gains.

President of Republic of Poland: Please take a look at the countries which have strong ethnic minorities like Hungary, Slovenia or Romania. The prospects of

NATO and the EU memberships alone have decreased the risk of nationalism.  
An enlarged European Union is a good cure for the virus of nationalism.

Interview conducted by  
*Alina Kietrys and Pawel Dybicz from "Przegląd"*  
*and Jan Puhl and Tyll Schoenemann from "Die Woche"*

## 12. Address at a meeting with representatives of public administration, non-government organisations and the media involved in dissemination of knowledge about the process of Poland's integration with the European Union and the functioning of the EU (excerpts) – 9<sup>th</sup> of May 2001

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(...) The accession talks are entering a decisive phase. Decisions on matters sensitive and crucial for the societies on both sides will be made in the nearest future. The Polish efforts are founded on the wide political and social consensus on the idea of integrating Poland with the European Union. Independently of this there is the open problem of the fundamental issue such as the right to seek employment and the situation of the Polish farmers after the country's accession of the EU. They are and should be the matter of an active public debate in our country.

It is very important to base this debate on facts and substantive arguments. It is in our interest to inform as fully as possible on the negotiations progress and this requires an efficient cooperation based on partnership between the administration on one side and the media and non-governmental organisations on the other. For all of us it is crucial to use the transition periods to the membership of the EU in an optimal way and to provide the Polish society with the best objective knowledge of the consequences of our accession. Not only in the context of global changes but first of all with reference to particular professional groups and communities. It is necessary to spare no efforts to ensure that to the public eye the Polish attempts to gain the EU membership are perceived as a source of opportunities, new chances, new fulfilled aspirations and hopes rather than as a source of fears, frustrations or unwarranted concerns.

The public interest in gaining knowledge on the results of integration and on our future functioning in the EU is big. You, Ladies and Gentlemen, who face the expectations every day, know this best. The active functioning of pro-European non-government organisations speaks tales of this. We may expect that with the advancement of the negotiations process, when more and more complicated and often controversial issues are discussed, the demand for knowledge is going

to grow. And the demand must be met. For, only the presence of the Polish people fully aware of their future rights and duties in the EU will allow for our country's membership to be up to our ambitions and aspirations.

All the time the number of supporters of Poland's entry to the European structures is twice higher than the number of its opponents, yet the period of the pro-integration enthusiasm is behind us. Weighing both of the phenomena, I am not afraid of the results of the pre-accession referendum. I am sure that even if the Polish people have their doubts or fears, they are going to associate their future with the European Union. This is the goal and the endeavour we are trying to assist. I want to express my deepest respect for all those trying to engage themselves in non-government activities, those who represent institutions aiding the Polish integration with the European Union. This work cannot be overestimated. I am convinced that the activities taken by you will contribute to better preparedness of our society to the integration with the EU and in the future they will allow for better use of the opportunities coming from the membership in the EU, as well as for giving a proper quality to our membership of the EU – a quality commensurate to our potential and our economic, social and historic accomplishments. I want to restate this with joy on the Day of Europe and to recommend the message of this meeting so that our joint efforts of the state's authorities, self-government bodies and non-government organisations might bring an accomplishment of the great goal – Poland's presence in the EU.

# 13. Speech at the 8<sup>th</sup> Polish European Meetings organised by the Polish Foundation of Robert Schuman (excerpts) – 13<sup>th</sup> of May 2001

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

The Polish European Meetings are being held for the eighth time – the Robert Schuman Foundation is 10 years old – so they have been sort of institutionalised by now. They are a forum for discussions on Poland's European policy, on the social challenges, needs and expectations, as well as on our progress on the way to the European Community. The Meetings gather both those who are discussing the agenda of Polish preparations and representatives of hundreds of non-government organisations from all over the country. They are a proof of the strength and significance of the European movement. So I am using the opportunity to share a few reflections with you on our march towards the united Europe.

We are on the eve of the grand finale of this endeavour. The membership of the European Union is almost at hand. We have to be aware of this, irrespective of the emotions and frustrations natural with such a great project. We must also remember that for hundreds of years Poland has not had this kind of a historic chance or opportunities as those related with our entry to the European Union. The significant input in shaping the future of the united Europe, in constructing rules of the game on its territory has been a great success of the Polish policy and a gigantic civilizational advancement. It is necessary to be aware of this. (...)

Poland's declaration of its will to join the European Union on 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2003 still has objective chances of being materialised. We treat this deadline first of all as a factor mobilising us to prepare the Republic of Poland for the membership of the European Union.

The decision made in Nice enabling participation of the new members in the elections to the European Parliament is a concrete proposal. I hope this plan will be significantly filled with substance in Goeteborg. I believe that leaders

of the EU member states will respect and fulfil the commitments. This is not only in the interest of the candidate states, not solely in the interest of Poland – this is a historic chance for the whole of Europe, for all of us.

The great finale on the Polish journey to the European Union is at the same time a great trial for all of us. We already know that this road is not paved with roses and the Polish society is probably even experiencing this in an exaggerated way, stressing certain concerns and fears. But also a half of the Polish people are convinced that we will find ourselves in the European Union. This group also believes that member states of the European Union will be the first to profit from our accession. I express my gratitude to the Robert Schuman Foundation for having strived in its work to disprove all stereotypes. Yet, while disproving the stereotypes and sentiments, this needs to be said clearly: irrespective of the principle of solidarity, which is cherished in the European Union, national, regional, branch and other interests are a strong causative force in it. One needs to come to terms with this. (...) Acknowledging the truth, it is necessary to believe that – paraphrasing the words of Churchill – the majority is of the opinion that although the EU may not be an ideal product, it is still the best possible one for Poland and for Europe. This is the spirit we need to adopt in our further works, displaying perseverance, patience and complete composure. This much we can afford. (...)

Thanks to the great effort of the Polish society a major part of the preparations for Poland's membership of the European Union is already behind us. We have strong arguments in favour of taking a position in the European Union which will fit our aspirations. The wide support of the biggest political powers is one of the key assets. I am deeply convinced that – thanks to the nation-wide consensus on the matter of the integration – the election campaign period is not going to have an adverse effect on the timetable of the accession process or on fulfilment of the commitments made by our country. (...) And after the parliamentary elections we are not going to redefine our policy towards the European Union. In the pre-elections period cooperation is at all times continued between the government and representatives of the opposition, and the opposition is providing the government with the needed support in the adaptation activities and the negotiations. This guarantees that the probable changes on the Polish political scene are going to be merely an efficient change in the years' long relay race of our aspirations with regard to the European integration matters. I trust that the Polish political elites are fully aware of the fact that the progress achieved so far in the integration process has been possible due to consistent actions of the subsequent Polish governments and parliaments. A successful finish of this long-distance race to the European Union is going to be the shared success of all of us involved in the process since the beginning of

1990s. Poland's entry to the European Union is going to be a victory of Poland and the Polish people, shared by all meaningful political powers. The success may not be appropriated by any formation or political power. (...)

No one needs to be persuaded about the importance of maintaining the intensive pace of legislative works until the end of this parliamentary term. The efforts made in the recent dozen months or so deserve respect and the numbers are self-explanatory. Over 90 legal acts harmonising the Polish law with the *acquis communautaire* adopted in the years 2000-2001 make an impressive result. Leaders of the EU member states speak about this with respect. The balance of the Polish parliament's achievements in the scope of the European legislation may look even more impressive. Continuing the current pace of works will be the best proof of the responsibility, maturity and strong resolve of the political elites on the way to the European Union. The harmonisation of the Polish law is very important, yet much more of the public attention is being grasped by the accession talks. The negotiations are at such a state where it is inevitable that positions of both sides are being revised towards an adoption of more flexible solutions to specific issues. Negotiations involve finding a compromise and this means that disappointment is possible. Negotiations stipulating a 100 percent implementation of one's own ideas cease to be negotiations and become a dictate. That is why I would like to persuade the Polish public opinion that a proper scale needs to be applied when assessing the negotiations, that reaching an agreement requires readiness to make one's own positions more flexible on every single issue. Our negotiators must remember that they are not conducting the negotiations in a social vacuum, totally separated from political powers and economic entities. Yet, a coherent stance towards the "fifteen" partners cannot be overestimated. However, based on this the governments – the current government and every future one – should not come to the false conclusion that every exchange of opinions and every consultation may undermine the unanimity of our stance in the negotiations process. The negotiations mandate must be supported by the widest possible consultations with all political powers and social partners, as well as by a complex set of arguments based on professional expertise about results of particular decisions. (...)

In the hectic time of the preparations for the EU membership we must remember that Poland's presence in the European Union means first of all the presence of the citizens and not only that of officials and politicians. The accession will require preparations of the whole society, although its benefits are not going to be felt by everyone to the same degree. In the debate one rule must be adhered to with all the consistency – we must not create false mirages or make promises which will not be possible to be kept. We need an active information policy on the part of the government, the parliament and all political powers, and



also from my Chancellery – policy which will go beyond its current scope. The citizens have the right to expect the government to answer the questions, doubts and concerns which are bothering them because the government is the one primarily responsible for the process of approaching the membership and for the series of legal and institutional changes related to it. (...)

On the other hand a mobilisation and involvement should be expected from the society. Participation in the integration process will require the Polish people to raise themselves above the level of the balance of their immediate personal gains. It will also require a personal active approach and anticipating events instead of passive acceptance of the flow of changes. We are proud of the fact that elements of the citizenship society are stronger and stronger and the pro-European movement is growing in Poland. It is enough to take a look at the hundreds of school European clubs being established not only in the big cities – in Cracow or Poznan, but also in Wyszkw, Ciechanow or Zyrardow. The young generation is going to decide about the quality of our presence in the European Union. (...)

At the end I would like to tell you about the future and about what has happened in the last months in the debate on the European Union. Being involved in discussing technical and current matters we have not always been willing to participate in analyses of the great visions which have been recently put forward by European leaders. The visions are partly a natural consequence of the advanced stage of the integration process and they partly result from the sense of deficiency after last year's summit of Nice. Three weeks ago Poland – together with the Swedish presidency – was the co-organiser of the first conference on the future of the European Union participated both by the member states and the candidates. Three days ago I presented my own voice in the debate suggesting an initiation of the constitutional process in the European Union. Works of constitutional committees of the national parliaments would be the first stage of the process. The debate could be extended so that it is participated by as many participants as possible, and by various circles.

I would also like to inform you, Ladies and Gentlemen, that a few weeks ago I established the Reflection Group dealing with the future of the European Union. It consists of representatives of the government, parliamentary clubs, The Sejm commissions, research institutes and non-government organisations. (...)

We are a society which – after the lessons of the past – wants to have our feet firmly on the ground. We are also a nation of romantics – we have our ideals and we consistently abide by them. These features will be helpful on our way to

the European Union. I believe that they will also be useful in the near future when we are members of the EU family and we co-decide about the direction of the EU's development, of the future of Europe – we will be enriched by the whole our history, more sensitive due to the Polish experience, faithful to the traditions and at the same time modern, open to ourselves, to the world and Europe, dynamic and active. This can be our contribution to the 21<sup>st</sup> century Europe.

# 14. Address at the inauguration session of the Forum "Jointly About the Future of Europe" (excerpts) – 18<sup>th</sup> of February 2002

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Honourable Prime Minister, Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ladies and Gentlemen!

The debate we are opening is one of the most important ones in the Polish history. We have chosen an appropriate place for it. The Royal Castle in Warsaw reminds of what has happened before our times. Polish kings resided here, the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May Constitution was enacted here, and we have raised the edifice from the ruins proving the steadfastness of the Polish spirit, the devotion of the people and the state. Now at the site pervaded by the Polish history and symbolic for both our power and weaknesses, we are analysing matters which will be decisive for our future. (...)

Entering the European Union Poland will not only confirm that it feels at home in Europe but it will also discover new perspectives and possibilities. Also the fact that – when we make our presence in the EU – we are going to be among the states deciding about the fate of our continent is undoubtedly significant. That is why reflection on the routes to a united Europe of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is so much needed. On these routes we will also find own well-being as the nation.

The history of the European community is a success story. For over fifty years Europe has provided its citizens with security and prosperity. There are no conflicts among the EU member states, no wire entanglements on the borders, no major economic differences. People may freely choose the place of their residence, work and make investments, enjoying the riches of the cultures which jointly compose the European culture; since recently they may also pay with one common currency – euro.

Despite these unquestionable achievements, the integration process remains open and it is a great political challenge. The European Union is on the crossroads with reference to many issues today. The time has come to make fundamental

decisions which will shape the future decades of the European order. Which direction should be taken? The one towards the “United States of Europe” which will supplement the common currency and the common area of jurisdiction and security with common foreign policy, the army and possibly also the parliament chosen in general elections and the government? Or maybe it is advisable to restrain radical federalism; to wait and see how the “European society” is taking its shape first and look for intermediate solutions – a balance between the communal and the national shapes of Europe?

The questions are not easy. For, although Europe is growing into one and getting more and more integrated it still remains a union of states of diverging national identities, own historic experiences, diverse cultures and economic potentials. We must take account of the diversity when we look for a compromise which could be a model for the future Europe. We must respect this cultural mosaic, the diversity in unity, the great unique richness and the set of civilizational accomplishments of all Europeans.

Let this be my message to the Ladies and Gentlemen having the honour to represent the Republic of Poland in the Convent – the Polish experience advocates respect for the national factor, creation of a Europe of homelands and referring to the fundamental values which our civilization descends from.

The debate on the future of Europe has recently gained speed and temperature, yet it did not begin yesterday. It has lasted for years and especially since the historic breakthrough of 1989 which created the opportunity for Europe to become fully united. Poland has been the co-author and the leader of the breaking changes; it has had a major contribution to the tearing down of the “Iron Curtain” and the Berlin Wall, as well as to the construction of the European bridges of reconciliation and co-operation. We are actively participating in the discussion on the Europe of tomorrow. The declaration on the future of the European Union adopted in Laeken and the decision to establish the Convent which is to prepare plans for a reform of the EU have both benefited from Polish efforts, Polish reflections and arguments since their birth. Many important individuals – all significant Polish politicians – have co-created the achievement by their service to the Polish and the European *raison d'état*. I want to express my respect for work of all Polish Prime Ministers since 1989. I also want to thank all Ministers of Foreign Affairs in this period, who have invested much time, resolve and effort in their work. I want to express my gratitude to Professor Geremek, who has had a significant influence on the vision of the Belgian presidency in the EU – so important and beneficial for Poland – the fruit of which has been the establishment of the Convent.

Like all the remaining Polish people, I am proud that works of the European Convent will involve representatives of the Sejm, the Senate and the government. I appreciate this gesture by the EU member states directed to the states aspiring to the EU membership. It is a good thing that our representation is so pluralistic, that it reflects both the governing and the opposition setups. I trust this is going to be an active representation, competent and able also to present arguments to the Polish public opinion. It is also my desire that achievements of the Reflection Group, which I have established, comprising outstanding representatives of Polish political, scientific and social life, prove effective for the debate on the future of Europe. I wish to invite Polish delegates to the Convent to a meeting of this Group, as I trust that we will be able to have there a competent and sometimes unrestrained discussion which will be of assistance also to you, Ladies and Gentlemen in your responsible, even historic mission. (...)

It is absolutely necessary that the Polish proposals presented on the international scene have a real public support. To secure this they must be widely consulted. This is precisely the aim of this Forum which we are opening today. Participation of each of you in it is much appreciated – each of you who truly and in a constructive way want to contribute to shaping the Polish stance on matters vital for the Republic of Poland.

The Forum should fulfil the informative function; it should be an encouragement to broaden knowledge on the EU and its institutions. I trust that it will also disperse myths and stereotypes on the European Union which are deeply rooted in our society. The biggest project of modern Europe deserves to be watched live and in the full spotlight, rather than lampooned. I believe that the Forum is going to bring us closer to the point where every Polish citizens will be able to make their decisions in the accession referendum consciously and having considered all “pros” and “cons”. (...)

In the debate which we are opening each voice should be listened to with respect and attention. It has become a rule in many countries that the more details of the participation in the EU became known to the society and the more actively this engaged interests of various professional groups – the louder and more vivid the debates became. We should honestly discuss, analyse, compare and count. We should also listen to the voices of the integration's opponents. They are also meaningful and they can teach us something important. Let us remember that after 2004 we will still be living in one country, in Poland which belongs to all of us. Let the power of arguments count in this discussion, not the power of emotions.

Second – let us not create illusions, let us be realists. Regardless of all the opportunities which the pro-European trend is going to create for us, the key to our well-being is always going to be in Poland, not in Brussels. The EU may not be viewed as a cure for all Polish ailments or as an excuse to reject the burden of the needed reforms. We are the ones who can fix but also the one who can spoil things best; who can earn but also lose a lot. Therefore, regardless of the circumstances we are the ones who must always feel the burden of responsibility for the fate of our country, here and now.

Third, let us not lose the sight of what is this game about. The detailed character of the discussion or the need to provide reliable information must not lead to an overflow of technicalities. The subsidies, structural funds, transition periods and conditions of the accession – although very important, must not overshadow the fact that the whole integration has a civilizational dimension. Let us, then, see the integration process as a whole rather than making it conditional on one, albeit important element for a particular social group. What is at stake is the fate of the whole of Poland for decades to come. (...)

What is needed are positive thinking, optimism and trust in ourselves. When we are asked why we want to be in the European Union, we have many reasons to give.

We want to be in the European Union to live among friends, partners and allies!

We want to be in the European Union to develop our economy faster and to benefit from the most modern technologies in a more complete way! We want to be in the European Union to share our problems and successes jointly and severally with the other European nations! We want to be in the European Union so that our national heritage, as well as the culture and civilizational identity could be developed and could shine with their full light in the European spiritual landscape!

We want to be in the European Union so that the current and the future generations of Polish people could be proud of their Nation, their country and their continent; so that they may live in peace and enjoy a prosperous and safe life! This is why we want to be in the European Union.

# 15.

Address at the opening of the Cabinet Council's meeting (excerpts)  
– Warsaw, 21<sup>st</sup> of February 2002

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Honourable Prime Minister, Ladies and Gentlemen Ministers!

(..) It is my wish that we devote the meeting to three subjects: first – economic issues, second – negotiations with the EU, third – Eastern policy, especially in the context of the very important visit we have had recently: that of the President of Russia; it has been the first time for nine years that such an official visit has taken place (...).

We are in the course of negotiations with the EU and there is no doubt that this year, 2002 is going to be especially difficult in this respect. We need to finalise the negotiations. I do not believe that they can be finalised without any tremors or conflicts, without tensions of various kind. I am certain that we are going to live through this type of emotions many times resulting from the perception that Brussels is saying one thing and we are saying another. We have discussed many options within our circle and I am appealing to the Polish people not to take this too seriously as such is the nature of negotiations. The negotiations are not to be blacked out; we live in the world of the media where each item of news is immediately disseminated to the public opinion. Therefore, we are treating the negotiations as a process in which we are trying to gain optimal goals but in which also the other party has its rights. For the time being we will have to deal with a dispute but a dispute does not denote a conflict and a dispute over substantial issues does not mean a war either. Such is the nature of negotiations. (...)

What remains to be settled is the very important issue of preparing our country for the entry from the legal point of view that is the need to prepare the institutions which must assume the responsibilities. And here I am now expecting information from the government. I am convinced that we must speed up work in many areas as they are not sufficiently advanced at the moment.

Still, the task is simple – by the end of 2002 the negotiations must be finalised, by the year 2003 all legal procedures must be completed, including those regarding the ratification. I expect the referendum to be held in Poland in autumn 2003 and this will be the moment when we will have to present the society, the public opinion with a complete set of arguments. I am convinced that we will get the support as there is no other and better alternative to Poland's presence in the European Union. The country is not only able to take advantage of the EU's accomplishments but it can also make a very significant input to Europe and the European Union resulting from our experience – both the one gained over the thousand years and the one of the last 13 years of the transformation. (...)



## 16. Interview for the French daily "Le Figaro" (excerpts), 7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> December 2002

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*How is Poland coming into the home stretch of the accession negotiations before the Copenhagen Summit?*

This is a difficult home stretch. We are only discussing details of the negotiations package, quotas and money. We, the European leaders are being reduced to the role of accountants. I trust that in Copenhagen we will be able to differentiate what is important from the things which are not. I hope that we will be able to demonstrate it to the public opinion that we are living through one of the most important processes in our history – that of uniting Europe after the years of the division. This may not be brought down to the problem of direct payments or milk quotas. The European Union must not be a kind of gigantic shop or a hypermarket. Europe should be something totally different from this. I hope that at the end of the negotiations we are going to return to real values.

*And if it comes to a blockade, could Poland ask to continue the negotiations after the Copenhagen event?*

Deadlines which have been set need to be kept, therefore, in Copenhagen the negotiations should be finalised. I hope that the EU partners will understand that the current enlargement is the cheapest one of all in its history and the money which is so much talked about is not in fact big. What the candidates are going to receive in the first years comes to merely 0.05 percent of the whole gross domestic product of the EU. So, we are discussing amounts which are not gigantic.

*Are not the proposals put forward by the fifteen generous enough?*

This is a historic moment and we understand that Europe may have its constraints. We are not asking it to donate us its last shirt. Still, I do not understand the position of some Western European leaders who want to discuss nothing

but money. They are saying: this is as much as you are going to get and we are not going to give you anything more. This is not fair play. (...)

*What is your assessment of the position of France?*

France is trying to help Poland. As it has been stressed on many occasions, it is in favour of the enlargement. But – to be honest – it could be doing more. I have suggested that President Chirac could be the god father of the enlargement process. After all, he has won the elections and he has a majority in the parliament. I think that France should play a more active role in the process because it is taking a big advantage of the enlargement. For example, in Poland French investors account for more investments than even the Germans or the Americans.

*Do the money problems you have referred to result from a reversal of the economic trend and budget problems of Germany?*

The mishap is that no one has expected that Germany might have this kind of budgetary problems. But in an attempt to aid Germany, France could resign from a part of the payments it receives from the European Union. I have often heard that Germany pays too much but never that the French could resign from anything. And maybe this should be done in the name of the European solidarity, to help Germany. This is for us a matter of concern as Germany is our most important trade partner,

*Will the Polish farmers be able to adjust themselves to Europe?*

Agriculture plays an important role in the Polish economy and it concerns a large number of inhabitants of this country. Now it is being modernised and the process should be continued. As far as direct assistance to farmers and the production quota are concerned, we have found ourselves on the track to a reasonable compromise. It is our aim to secure the farmers' competitiveness towards Western Europe. For example, we cannot have producers of milk who would not be subsidised and would have to compete against the import of subsidised milk from France.

*Could the Danish proposal lead to an agreement?*

Without the proposal it would be difficult to talk about anything. I find it strange that Chancellor Schroeder and President Chirac maintain that this is not an EU proposal. For me, proposals of the Danish presidency are those of the EU. I hope this is going to be straightened out quickly.

*These doubts are causing some commotion...*

And this is what I have told President Chirac. We are entering the European Union which already now is in the hands of accountants and, what is more, where we have a mess. If the Danish proposals are virtual, let us get engaged with something else. The negotiations with the EU are not a computer simulation game.

*Do you opt in favour of reforming the Common Agricultural Policy?*

In the course of the current negotiations the aim is to create in the next few years conditions which will allow Polish farmers to face up to the competition. In a longer perspective I am of the opinion that the CAP is going to lose its patency. It costs too much and it petrifies solutions which cannot be maintained. A reform of the CAP is an absolute necessity.

*The agreement about the CAP reached between Chirac and Schroeder in Brussels has enabled today's negotiations on the subject of your accession. What is your opinion, from the Polish perspective on the French-German agreement, without which Europe could not move forward?*

It is obvious that France and Germany are playing a very important role. I do not see anything bad about it. What concerns me is rather the fact that, for external reasons – in Germany for the budget related reasons, in France because of Le Pen – European ambitions of France and Germany may be weakened. Today's enlargement process is viewed in the perspective of internal matters. It is a domestic issue while it should be a historic one. I hope that this is going to change as it would be very bad if France and Germany lacked the braveness, the courage and the resolve to carry out the enlargement process.

*How do you see Poland's role when it becomes a member of the European Union?*

Poland is entering the EU with a great potential. The number of its inhabitants is comparable with that for Spain. This is a big market. Our deficit in the commercial exchange with France amounts to 1.6 million euro. This is translatable to many jobs in France. France has invested over 11 billion euro in Poland. From the political point of view our location in the region and our competence on issues of the Eastern policy are going to be assets. We know the problems of Ukraine and Belarus better than anyone else. And we know problems of Russia equally well as the others. Thus, we are contributing a certain added value to the enlarged Europe. We are going to be the EU's and NATO's border

state and the first pillar which will have to ensure the borders protection and to combat crime, narcotic drugs trafficking and prostitution. There is something more than that. We believe in the power of Europe stronger than do the other states in Europe. We have the faith and the enthusiasm. We believe that there is still much which can be done.

*And how would you explain the fact that today the enthusiasm about the enlargement is smaller in Poland than it was in the year 1999 when you were entering NATO?*

This is another period of time. Then the enthusiasm was big everywhere. President Chirac and Chancellor Kohl even believed that Poland could enter the European Union in the year 2000. With time the enthusiasm has waned. There is a risk that the discussion on the negotiations' details before the Copenhagen summit might kill the remaining enthusiasm. I feel helpless when I have to discuss the milk quotas, isoglucosis and tomatoes. Yet, I am convinced that when Poland joins the European Union this is going to be one of the most moving moments in the history of Poland.

*The enthusiasm aroused by NATO results also from Poland's atlantism.*

We are a strong advocate of the Euro-Atlantic cooperation. We believe that the American presence in Europe has played a significant role. There would not have been a democratic Europe without the Americans. There is no point in asking us if we prefer the Europeans or the Americans. As a member of NATO we are trying to be a loyal partner not only of the USA but also of the other countries. Saying that we are a Trojan horse of the United States is unfair in a situation when it is widely known that there are more French or German investments in Poland than there are American ones.

*What role do you see for yourself in the fight over the referendum on the accession, which is going to take place next year in spring?*

This is going to be as if my third election campaign. In Poland one can be the president only for two terms in a row and the referendum is going to be the third great combat of my life. I will have discussions; try to convince those who do not want to vote and who are disenchanted with the political life in Poland, mainly the youth. (...). This is going to be a great trial but I am convinced Poland's accession of the EU is going to be one of the most significant matters in our history. That is why I am going to spare no efforts on that.

Interview by: *Pierre Rousselin*

# 17.

Interview for "Gazeta Wyborcza", a Polish daily – 14<sup>th</sup> of December 2002

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*Who did you learn it from that the talks ended with a success?*

From the Prime Minister. I had been in constant contact with him since morning – also with Minister Cimoszewicz and Deputy Prime Minister Kolodko. I spoke in these dramatic moments with Deputy Prime Minister Kalinowski. I needed information from them and they needed my support.

*What were the dramatic moments when you talked to Mr Kalinowski?*

When the issue was about the quotas of the volume sales of milk. From the very beginning this seemed the most difficult part. We have expected it, that many states of the Fifteen would have doubts about this issue.

*What were the details you discussed with Mr Kalinowski?*

He had very serious doubts what to do: should he make a concession or not? I advised him to show patience and a kind of European discipline.

*What does this mean?*

This means a lot. PSL is the coalition member and its presence in the coalition is very important. I wish to stress this, that in the European negotiations the PSL's leader has maintained great mindfulness – as the leader of the peasants' party and as an individual who knows what the prospects of the Polish agriculture are. And I hope that what he has been able to achieve in Copenhagen will finally be an argument for the peasants' movement, as well as for PSL, to limit their criticism.

*What time did you learn that the Copenhagen summit had ended with a success?*

Between 6 and 7 p.m. The Prime Minister said that he had managed to achieve much and he hoped that this would be confirmed by the Fifteen. I advised him to keep media silence for the time being.

*And then there was a great moment of joy?*

We are too old to get excited so much. We are saying this without emotions: this is much more than the starting position and much more than the Danish proposal. This is a success of Poland.

*Mr President, has this tenacious stance of the Polish government in the final part of the negotiations been partially an effect of the right's moves – the right started to say that the integration's conditions are more important than the date?*

Of course, partially this has been the case. The fact that we acted behind no closed doors forced us to work hard until the end. And here the right has really played its role – the role provided for in a democratic state. Each authority devoid of control gets unwise.

Yet, the postulate to give up on the date of Poland's entry to the European Union was extremely risky. Here nothing could have been postponed for some months – everything would have been postponed for years and this would inevitably have directed Poland to discuss the accession already with the 24 states – including states which are difficult: Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey. I am glad that Poland is going to discuss ways these countries integrate themselves with the EU as one of the important member states of the EU, and not, so to speak, as a “next door neighbour”.

*Was there a possibility that the Prime Minister might return from Copenhagen without an agreement.*

Theoretically there was. But we believed that it would be possible to handle this successfully. In politics it is important to believe that it will be possible to achieve what seems to be beyond our imagination. Optimism creates great things. We have done it.

*Who is to be credited for this?*

All the governments since 1989 have worked for Poland's integration with the EU, although with various intensity. But also those who have opened the doors to Poland's transformation may take credit for this. It would be necessary to begin with General Wojciech Jaruzelski for whom – I hope so – a significant

act is taking place – on 13<sup>th</sup> December he chose the lesser evil and today on the 13<sup>th</sup> December we are choosing the greater good.

This has been also attained due to the contribution of “Solidarity” which some time ago opened the doors to Europe and President Lech Walesa, and people of all political camps.

*What is the real significance for you personally of what has happened in Copenhagen?*

For me it has been an extremely important day. The power of Poland rests in its presence in the European Union, in having excellent relations with all the neighbours, as well in its ability to play the role of an active partner in this region and to have strategic relations with the United States or NATO. I have been able to introduce Poland to NATO. I have built good relations with the neighbours and I have been able to give Poland the constitution, which is a powerful stabilising factor for us.

Now we are entering the European Union; this is a stimulus which may bring us closer to the important standards which are by no means contrary to our national heritage. So, today the very concept of my presidency is being fully materialised. Of course, what remains is the referendum.

*What to do not to lose it?*

It is necessary to talk. Nothing wiser than a direct dialogue with the society has been invented. It is necessary to devote time to this, show patience and have arguments. And do you know what raises my spirit? The fact that we have won good conditions of our entry to the EU. That is why in the evening the euroenthusiasts rejoiced and they were convinced that they had received an additional argument favouring their cause. I suspect that for eurosceptics and euroopponents the spirits were rather low. They had hoped that it would be worse. Then they would have an additional argument “against”.

*Do you expect the result of the referendum to be positive?*

I do, and I am going to fight for it.

Interview by: *Agnieszka Kublik*

# 18. Address at the conference "Towards New Tasks in an Enlarged European Union" (excerpts) – Belvedere Palace, 23<sup>rd</sup> of January 2003

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

I wish to cordially welcome Mr Valery Giscard d'Estaing and thank him for the conversation which we have had a while ago.

I also welcome all the other delegates to the Convent and the distinguished guests from abroad. Using this opportunity I would like to thank all of you very much for your contribution to the fortunate and very positive finalisation of the negotiations with the EU. I have said this on many occasions but I have not had an opportunity to say this directly after the Copenhagen summit: this is also your achievement and your effort – your support and counselling have been of enormous importance.

Using the opportunity created by the presence of President V. Giscard d'Estaing, I will say that Poland is a kind of a phenomenon: please look at the first row of the guest gathered here and you will see the first Prime Minister of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Republic Professor Tadeusz Mazowiecki, another Prime Minister, currently a member of the Convent Jozef Oleksy and the Prime Minister Jerzy Buzek. If someone asks about the Polish success, this is undoubtedly a part of it: political consistence regardless of party differences and personal backgrounds, plus resolve on this way.

Moving on to the subject of today's meeting, I wish to say that the subject "Towards New Tasks in an Enlarged European Union" is very optimistic, for it expresses the unshaken conviction that the EU enlargement process will be a success and, above all, we will win the referenda; that the votes in the national parliaments and in the European Parliament will end with success, that already as of the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2005 25 states are going to jointly carry out the tasks. This is very optimistic, and the works of the Convent on the future of the EU are equally optimistic, too.



The wisdom of this idea has been proven by the fact that well in advance representatives of the candidate states have been invited to participate in the works of the Convent to jointly discuss the European constitution so that all those who are to join the EU are involved in the works. I am convinced that the relation between the accession of the new states and the indispensable reflection on the future of the community has been a very fortunate political decision.

Undoubtedly, the vision of the EU's enlargement has been one of the reasons for the opening of the Convent's proceedings. It is necessary to remember that – if everything goes well – as of the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2005 the European Union is going to encompass over a half of the continent and nearly half a billion people. This is going to make Europe one of the most important civilization and economic centres in the world. It is very important to reconcile this new perspective, as well as the opportunities and difficulties related to it, with the principles which have been at the basis of creating the European Union and which have been present there for a half of the century. I think that the reflection should also regard the place of Europe in the modern globalised world.

The EU's enlargement is not only a definite end of the division of Europe; it also denotes real benefits in many areas such as promoting the economic development, creation of its strong position in the world, supporting sustained development and finally – which may be more important for us than for the EU member states – augmenting areas of democracy and acknowledgement of the undisputable adherence to standards which are at the foundations of the European Union. The enlargement is also about securing peace and safety. I am convinced that the societies which are carrying with them hope and joy, as well as aspirations, are going to join the Community structures soon.

The discussions in the scope of the Convent have gained dynamics – this has happened primarily due to the fact that the Presidium of the Convent has presented the initial draft of the Constitutional Treaty. I am of the opinion that the draft should be the basis for works of the government representatives proceeding in the scope of the intergovernmental conference. The growing involvement of the heads of governments and ministers of foreign affairs in the discussions on the solutions of the Treaty increases the chance for the Convent to shape such proposals which are going to gain acceptance in the scope of the intergovernmental conference. The works on the new Constitutional Treaty are a good opportunity to restate the goals, principles and values upon which the European Union is founded in a way clear and comprehensible for an average citizen, as well as to make them more specific. Working out solutions which guarantee efficient functioning of the enlarged community, the Convent should also put some effort so that the EU's goals and ways of proceeding become

closer to the people. It is extremely important for the works of the Convent not to be perceived only as technical adjustments of the existing legal acts, the sense of which is comprehensible to the specialists only. It is necessary for people to be able to recognise the values and ideals with which they identify themselves in the European project. So far the course of the discussions in the European Union and the public debate on the future of Europe has confirmed that also the Polish people expect creation of the new European Union on the basis of the Community's heritage, on the values which have been placed at the foundation of the European project. We believe that values such as solidarity, the community of values and goals, as well as respect for the national identities and cultures will be written into the future Constitutional Treaty.

We are aware of the fact that finding a formula which is going to win acceptance of all the interested parties is by all means a difficult task. While debating the normative dimension of the European Community, and especially the shape of the preamble to the Constitutional Treaty, we are ready to share the Polish experience from the period of works on the Constitution of the Republic of Poland of 1997. Then we proved that it is possible to reach a consensus on the shared values while maintaining and respecting the diversity of beliefs. We are ready to share this experience, especially that it has passed the verification process of over five years.

I mark this with satisfaction that apart from specialist institutional matters, the discussions in the scope of the European Convent cover issues regarding the governance system. By this I mean the goals and tasks of the European Union, the division of competence between the EU and member states and regions, bringing the EU closer to the citizen, increasing the democratic legitimacy of the EU institutions and, finally, including the Charter of Basic Rights in the Treaty. For, it is impossible to discuss the shape of the enlarged European Union without being aware of the fundamental principles. The uniqueness of the debate, as well as the parallel discussion of the reform of the EU policies is connected with the requirement to define the model of the European Union comprising a doubled number of members. Yet it is the opinion of the current and the future member states that the indispensable reforms should not lead to questioning of the basic mechanisms of the integration process (...).

Finally, I would like to quote Robert Schuman who – in the famous speech of the 9<sup>th</sup> of May 1950 – said: “The European project cannot be carried out overnight in a complete way; it is rather going to be carried out through specific achievements including, among others, by establishment of real solidarity.” The Constitutional Treaty may become such a specific achievement strengthening the European solidarity which is so valuable for the Polish people. I believe

that thanks to it we will be able to better comprehend the sense of “European citizenship” which is going to supplement our Polish identity giving us and the other nations of Europe a common denominator. I would like to thank all those involved in the works related to the Constitutional Treaty and I am convinced that they are going to form new perspectives for the united Europe, for all of us, after the accession on 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2004. I also would like to express my deepest belief that Europe is facing one of the most spectacular opportunities. I am sure that we are going to use it; I believe that the Polish people, my fellow citizens, are going to give sufficient support to the idea – the idea of a united Europe.

# 19. Statement on the acceptance of the Accession Treaty by the European Parliament and on the Iraq conflict (excerpt) – 9<sup>th</sup> of April 2003

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

I have just finished a meeting with the President of the Ministers' Council, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of National Defence. We have two important good pieces of news to communicate.

The first news item: today a vote has been held in the European Parliament in which the adoption of the European Treaty has carried a decisive majority of votes, this also means acceptance of the Republic of Poland to the great family of democratic nations of Europe. I am convinced that the words of the President of the European Parliament Pat Cox are going to materialise – we are sending the division of Europe to the history manuals. Today the Berlin Wall has finally fallen down. 509 MEPs present at the plenary session in Strasbourg voted in favour of accepting Poland to the European Union, 25 were against it and 31 abstained from vote. This means that the support is beyond discussion, it is common and it gives us a reason for satisfaction.

I am expressing great joy from the fact that aspirations of our friends – Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Malta, Slovakia, Slovenia and Hungary – have received the same acceptance and support. I am convinced that real opportunities are indeed opening in Europe, as well as in the world. I trust that during the Polish referendum also the Polish people – all of us – are going to say “Yes” to the great, and above all significant and good, opportunity for us to be in the European Union. Without Poland there is no Europe. Poland contributes experience, heritage, as well as all the tragedies we have suffered so that Europe may be whole, efficient, just and solidary. As of today, as of the decision of the European Parliament, what we have been talking about has received stronger foundations. (...)

## 20. Address by Mr. Aleksander Kwasniewski President of the Republic of Poland during the ceremony of signing the Accession Treaty<sup>6</sup>, Athens, 16<sup>th</sup> of April 2003

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Polish dreams are coming true. From the experiences of history we know what freedom means and what it means to have friends and partners.

This day will bring Poland development, prosperity and security.

Europe today is experiencing a holiday of unity. Its success could be a guidepost for the world. Although two great wars not long ago started on our continent, two totalitarian systems came into existence; Cold War divisions and the tragedy of expulsions tore us apart – we have rebuilt the spiritual unity of Europe. We have developed co-operation on a previously unheard-of scale. Poland feels itself a co-author of this work. For more than a thousand years we have been a co-originator of European culture. We always treated Europe as our home. “Solidarity” fought for a worthy place for Poland in this home. The changes initiated in 1989 at the Polish Round Table released a wave of freedom over all Central and Eastern Europe.

Today Poland is ready to shoulder joint responsibility for the fate of the continent.

Entering the Union we regard ourselves as partners. We are contributing the potential of a young, dynamic, and educated society.

In reaching for this opportunity for ourselves we also are giving Europe an opportunity, and we believe that we will bring it new possibilities.

We thank the countries of the European Union, the European Commission, the European Parliament, and all personalities and people who supported our aspirations. I thank my steadfast countrymen, patient, attached to Polish tradition, fighting for Polish sovereignty and independence, but also open to

<sup>6</sup> [www.ms.gov.pl/files/file\\_library/31/0304\\_354.doc](http://www.ms.gov.pl/files/file_library/31/0304_354.doc) (edit.).

the idea of unification. I thank the members of the democratic opposition, and people of culture, science, and people of the Polish Church, all of them have the right to feel great satisfaction today.

For us, the Polish people, especially eloquent is the fact that we are signing the Accession Treaty exactly here, on the Acropolis, in Greece, in the cradle of European civilization.

We are also pleased that we are entering the Union in a group of neighbours and close friends and are glad that the door will remain open for others.

Together with other nations we wish to build a cohesive, prosperous and secure Europe, a Europe based on strong transatlantic ties, a Europe striving to strengthen international organisations, especially the UN.

We are convinced that we are up to the task of building a Europe that will be capable of responding to the acute problems of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, to poverty, injustice, terrorism, ecological threats.

So I wish to appeal to my countrymen. You are participating in a historic moment. Poland's presence in the European Union is not only one of aid and a guarantee of development; it is also the presence in a family of states that are free and democratic, that respect human rights and each other. I am convinced that saying, "Yes" to the European Union means security for Poland, every Polish city and village, every family.

From today we can believe that our dreams will come true, that we will build a future worthy of our children and grandchildren.

Today, here in Athens, in a moment we are going to sign the Accession Treaty, and this decision means "Yes" for Poland; it means "Yes" for Europe; it means "Yes" for people of good will on our continent and others.

I am convinced that we have the right to say: Welcome, common Europe, welcome Europe rich with the past, strong in diversity, a Europe united and ready to meet new challenges!

## 21. Interview for the First Programme of the Polish Radio from Athens – 16<sup>th</sup> of April 2003

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*Mr President, have you noticed – the press has published a chronology of the process of our accession to the EU and it turns out that on 8<sup>th</sup> of April 1994 exactly here, in Athens, the then head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mr Andrzej Olechowski lodged the final motion for our membership of the European Union. Today we are again in Athens, we are awaiting the signature of the Accession Treaty and, thus, the circle is slowly closing – it has not closed down completely at the moment – but it is closing.*

It is closing. What we will be left with is the referendum. And the fact about Athens – there is some symbolism to it, a positive one as it shows that the cradle of the European democracy is also a good place to think about the future; that we are building the new, enlarged Europe on solid historic foundations. And at the same time we are building it with verve, with new hope.

*How to persuade those who still have doubts that this is a chance for Poland? I am not referring to those who are saying “no” as they have already made up their minds, but to the people who have doubts – this is quite a big group.*

I will start with Greece, I was here five years ago and I have noticed big progress, as far as the roads, highways and the whole infrastructure is concerned. The Greeks themselves are stressing that the European Union is to be credited for this and we should remember that Greece is not regarded as a top achiever among European countries. What does this mean for us? The EU is a chance. Not a theoretical one but one which is very practical and tangible. Second – we are among 10 candidate states which, entering the current European Union will enrich it very much, although it is certain that some issues complicate various matters. It would be something incomprehensible, unnatural if Poland is missing from the 10. Third – when we see the result of votes of the inhabitants of Malta, Slovenia, Hungary and, in a while, Lithuania, we should especially give a thought to the question why we cannot take the chance and use it if the others see a chance in it. What is more, for me one question is decisive: if not

the European Union, if we should not enter the circle of these values, these standards, these economic opportunities, these legal and political solutions, where our place should be?

*Exactly, do we have an alternative at the moment, at this stage?*

I am convinced that we have not. What is an alternative is a kind of a political and economic vacuum for the country which is big enough to get by but still is not big enough to conduct an autarchic, that is self-sufficient, policy; for the country which is certainly not going to associate itself with Belarus or Russia – this is totally not imaginable for me – or to be within another political framework, which in my opinion is incomprehensible. I am convinced that what is going on today, what has happened recently and what is going to happen in the coming months will be a final argument for those in doubt in favour of taking part in the referendum and voting “yes”.

*And what are they going to do with the piece of news that the price on sugar is going to increase when we enter the EU. This is a very important argument.*

An argument which is totally groundless. Why should it increase?

*So say the opponents.*

So they say ... It may be said that everything is going to get more expensive, or less expensive. These are groundless arguments. In the short term there is no reason to change the prices. With the very low Polish inflation, which is sometimes being criticised as anti-development, yet which provides for a strong stability of the prices, there is, in my opinion, no reason to anticipate that any radical price changes are going to occur. Especially that – please remember – Poland has been bound by the association agreement with the European Union for many years. We have liberalised the customs system and today there is no reason to lift a duty on something, to impose one, or to regulate anything.

*I have asked you the question, Mr President, as from the point of view of the campaign organised by the government the answer to this argument about the increase of the price on sugar is as follows: but we are going to be a member of the great European Community. Could you translate this into a language more comprehensible for those who still have doubts?*

In my opinion no big price changes are going to occur. My biggest concern related to the European Union is that many people who believe that from the entry to the EU a kind of a miracle is going to happen or there will be a visible,



fast progress, are going to be disappointed. On 1<sup>st</sup> May 2004 when, as I believe, we are going to be in the EU no unemployed person is immediately going to find a job and no one who earns little is going to start making significantly more, nor are the salaries in the radio broadcasting station or anywhere else going to increase. What is going to be tangible is that we travel without a passport or in a much facilitated way – it seems that Germany has already suggested that we can travel with the new ID cards. (...) The entry to the European Union is a long-term investment.

*Exactly. This is not something for today or tomorrow, this, is after all, for years.*

This is not a miracle or a magic wand; this is not a win in on the lottery. This is a long-term investment which in five, ten, fifteen or twenty five years should bring us development of the infrastructure, civilizational development, strengthening of the position of the Polish economy, strengthening of the Polish political position, better conditions for education and healthcare. This takes time. At the same time it is necessary to take care of the Polish place in the EU. I believe that we are a big, talented country with well-educated youth. When I see young Polish people who win a great computer science contest in the USA, and these are three students of the Warsaw University, my heart is growing as it is visible that we are doing just fine with such competitors. Poland with its potential may be an important player in the European Union.

*And is this EU, the current EU, the “fifteen” not afraid of Poland?*

Of course it is afraid, mainly because of our potential. We make up for nearly a half in this 10. They know what the scale of problems is – that the Polish agriculture is a competitor and a challenge for them – but they have made up their minds. I can tell you today after all the conversations I have had that all of them are going to accept, ratify the enlargement. There is no fear that something bad may happen. The Polish referendum is a critical point after today’s signature. It has often turned out that the Polish people are the biggest enemies of Poland but I think that this time it so not going to be so.

And here comes the role you have said you are going to play, that is the tour of the country and an attempt to encourage people to vote “yes”, despite things.

Yes. I am going to visit all the provinces (voivodeships); my campaign is going to be open for all pro-European groups, experts and politicians from various parties are going to appear at the meetings. It my very big personal desire to show that the entry to the EU is a historic event, that it is not related to the current

political or party setup, with my person or with other significant politicians. We will be gone and Poland is to be in the European Union.

*And to ensure that the referendum is not a report card for the current government.*

The entry to the European Union is going to be an issue for many governments to come. But I am not going to talk about the government but about myself. Ladies and Gentlemen – it is my request to all of you: let us think in terms of Poland, of us, our children and grandchildren, and not in terms of today's positions. I want to tell you – I will be gone as the president and Poland is going to play a significant role in the EU. And this perspective is encouraging for me, it is optimistic; it is not pessimistic only because I am not going to be the president. But Poland is going to last and play a significant role in the European Union. In the sunny Athens I have received an additional emotional boost for this belief.

*Especially that the view from your window is so optimistic, Mr President.*

It is wonderful, optimistic, so encouraging. This is our common Europe. You should feel a European, too.

*But it is even more beautiful in Mazovia, Mr President.*

In Mazovia, in the Mazury region and in my beloved Jurata, and in the Tatra Mountains. We are really not entering the community as a poor country; we really should not be entering it with complexes. We do not have the Greek islands, the Greeks have them, yet this is also going to be ours when we enter the European Union – in a very poetic sense.

Interview by: *Krzysztof Grzesiowski*

## 22. Appearance at the inauguration of the campaign before the referendum (excerpts) – Plock, 25<sup>th</sup> of April 2003

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Ladies and Gentlemen, Young People, Residents of Plock!

(...) Journalists often ask me what I see as the most important in my eight-year long presidency. Of course I could answer this question for a lengthy time as I feel satisfaction from so many decisions. I also sense the lack of fulfilment with regard to other issues. I am convinced that I am a participant and a co-creator of historic events in a period which is very important for Poland, when we have had to decide about fundamental issues, crucial for our fate not only for today and tomorrow but also for whole decades. When I think about the most important points in my presidency and things which we – the Polish people – have managed to accomplish I certainly recall the constitution which creates solid foundations for the democratic state of law. I also think about Poland's accession to NATO that is about the guarantees of security which we have not had for centuries. Today we are not only a country which can use the umbrella which NATO has put up for decades over Western Europe – due to the NATO enlargement, in which we directly took part, the Polish borders are secure. We have managed to build very good relations with our neighbours from the South, the West and the East. The friendly and partnership relations with all the neighbours are the third point on the list. This is not so banal. When I remind people that at the beginning of the Polish transformation in the years 1989-1990 we had three neighbours I often see astonishment on the faces of those with whom I talk and the young people who do not remember this.

Ladies and Gentlemen, without an aggressive policy on our part, without a change of the borders for even a centimetre – now we have seven neighbours. We have created friendly and neighbourly relations with them. This has not been either simple or easy but we have done this. Poland is today an exporter of stability and a state which is even able of creating economic, frontier and social relations with such difficult partners as Belarus so that they are appropriate for states which are guided by democratic standards.

Now there is the fourth goal in front of us, who knows if not the most far-reaching one – Poland's entry to the European Union. This is the structure which over the decades after the Second World War has proven that it guarantees development, prosperity, respect for human rights, respect for minorities and democratic rules in public life – the structure which has built citizenship societies proud of their distinction from the others, among which diversity does not cause conflicts and tensions but constitutes the common European wealth. Today Poland has a chance to join the family of European nations. Today Poland has a chance to become a member of the European Union. The decision is up to the nation. The weight of the decision is such that it must be made in a referendum. I am convinced that here in Plock, where there are many examples of patriotic postures and citizens' activities, the idea of the integration is going to be comprehended. Exactly from here a signal may be sent all over Poland not to waste this chance but to take it in a responsible way; to make use of this citizens' privilege which is the right to decide of the fate of Poland for the coming decades.

The EU enlargement is a great idea, it embodies the dream of many generations of Polish people about a stable, secure and modern Poland which has good, fair and loyal partners and which gains good prospects for the coming decades. (...)

For 14 years we have been carrying out the democratic transformation of our state. We have built foundations for self-government, we have developed local self-government structures, and we have built up the legal system – starting with the constitution which guarantees respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. We have reformed the economy. I know that it is difficult to talk about the economy with a full smile but, nonetheless, let us not lose sight of what has been achieved. Do we remember that in the year 1990 inflation was over 500% – today it is at the level of 0.5%? We have covered an unbelievable distance: from hyperinflation to the stabilized zloty. Over a dozen years ago 70% of our commercial exchange was within the COMECON; today a majority of it falls to the EU states. This has not happened only because “the railroad switch has been reset”; this has happened thanks to the effort to ensure that our products are better, of higher quality and more competitive, so that they involve lower production costs, they are better promoted and needed by many partners in Western Europe. This has been achieved with a tremendous effort of many people, managers, economists, engineers, technicians, technologists, lawyers and workers. It is necessary to understand that this fundamental change has been achieved at the price of a tremendous effort of millions of Polish people.

The structure of the Polish economy has changed. Obsolete branches of heavy and armament industry are being increasingly replaced by developing enterprises based on modern technologies; the services sector is growing. Since 1990 the Polish gross domestic product has increased by over 50% – more than in any other country which has gone through the transformation process. I am talking about this not in order to present “propaganda of success”. I am talking about this so that we may see everything in the right proportions. So that – talking about problems and difficulties, and experiencing them, worrying about unemployment, worrying about the degradation of many regions in Poland – we do not forget what we have managed to accomplish. A psychological balance of an individual, but also a psychological balance of a nation, is achieved when we see everything in the right proportions, when we see advantages and disadvantages, when we see the reality taking account of all information and not only of selected facts, affairs, passing states of frustration or political games.

Poland has achieved much. Our country is being shown to the others as an example; even our weaknesses bring us together as they show that although we have achieved many successes, we are not perfect, we still have much to do and we have to take further efforts. The entry to the European Union is a chance to overcome differences and augment all which constitutes the foundation of the healthy economy and the healthy state – the achievements of the Polish transformation since 1989.

Today Poland faces the fundamental question: what to do to ensure that the new stage means taking advantage of the opportunities we have. The simple reserves have been used up. We cannot achieve much taking the road we have taken so far. We must find new stimuli for development. They are here, in Poland, they are embodied in the Polish youth, in education of young people who should be better prepared for the new tasks and in many Polish business entities which are capable of dealing with international competition. Our capabilities are created by our market, our human potential – nearly 40 million people, our geographic location, and all of this is not enough if we want to really develop ourselves and make up for the civilization distance which we still have in relation to the highly developed European states. This principal pro-development factor is related to the European Union. It is related to our presence in it. That is why it is so important for us to say YES to Europe, YES to the European Union because this is just the pro-development stimulus – a combination of those reserves which we still have and the new prospects which are opening with the presence in the European structures.

With our entry to the European Union we will find ourselves within one of the most developed markets in the world. We will take advantage of the free flow of people, capitals, goods and services. We will belong to the structure which will comprise of nearly 400 million people. We will have an opportunity to take advantage of the inflow of new investments and technologies; we will open the labour markets of many West European countries for the young generation of Polish people.

I am convinced that, with our entry to the European Union, an investment boom is going to begin in our country. That is why we will be able to create new jobs. Independent experts representing various economic views, as well as political orientations, are in agreement: the GDP is going to grow at the rate of over 5%. This will be a way to decrease the disproportions between Poland and the developed members of the community.

The financial conditions of the accession obtained in the negotiations – as some are stressing with much jealousy – the best in the candidates group, mean that Poland is going to receive more from the budget than it will contribute to it. This is an important, undisputable fact confirmed by accounts. The money is going to aid the Polish economy, Polish towns and villages. It will influence the quality of life. Due to its potential, Poland accounts for almost a half of the inhabitants of the candidate states. This is almost a half of the GDP. By the way, few people know this in Poland and it is worth saying aloud, as we have got used to think about Poland as of a poor country: we are certainly a country which has a long way to go to achieve prosperity, but we are the country with the annual GDP at the level of EUR 200 billion a year. This is not a country which would be ranked among the last ones either in Europe or in the world. The more carefully we look at the surroundings in the region, the more clearly it is visible that the numbers are really impressive.

Almost a half of the financial means appropriated by the European Union for the enlargement will go Poland. I trust that due to our resourcefulness and consistency we will be able to use the money for the creation of new jobs, construction of roads and highways, development of rural regions, for increasing the life standards of its citizens and for the protection of the natural environment. Finally, I believe that we will also take advantage of the technical and technological progress to increase competitiveness of Polish companies. (...)

Ladies and Gentlemen!

I do not intend to talk more about the scenarios which are if not black, then at their most – grey. Poland deserves a multi-colour, optimistic scenario in

which our energy, especially the energy of the young generations may be used more effectively. I know that there are concerns in some circles of the society that the entry to the European Union will threaten our identity, our cultural heritage, our national pride and tradition. It will not. For 50 years the European Community has shown that each state has maintained its language, its tradition, its religion and its distinction from the others. The diversity is just the phenomenon of the EU which in many places in the world is a reason for conflicts, violence, and ethnic warfare, while here in Europe it is not a problem but an asset. It is a common value. This builds up the European heritage. Poland with its language, with its one thousand years of history, with its Catholicism, literature, music, science, traditions and all the great values, but also with its vices, weaknesses, with our bigos (stewed sauerkraut and meat) and oscypek (smoked cheese traditionally made of ewe's milk), and with whatever else you want, is entering Europe without resigning from anything but contributing all of these to the common heritage. I am convinced that exactly this type of positive thinking is not only reasonable, it is true. And it should inspire us not only to vote in favour of the EU but also to fight later on for a due position of the proud, heroic, experienced and full of energy nation of 40 million in the heart of Europe.

We are a young society. If there are a million and ninety thousand young students in Poland, this is nearly as many as the whole population of Slovenia, the whole population of Estonia and the whole population of Latvia. At the primary, medium and junior high schools we have nearly eight million youths. This nearly equals the populations of the Czech Republic or Hungary and is at least twice as many as the number of inhabitants of Lithuania. At the kindergartens there are over 600 thousand children. This is more or less the population of Cyprus and more than the population of Malta.

Poland contributes a great potential of youth and, in connection to this, energy. If we educate the society, if we give the youths access to modern science and technology, Europe may get additional support in the form of new ideas and new concepts. It will be able to make use of the scientific and cultural achievements of the past and to benefit from the output of talented creators we have in Poland – and some of them also belong to the young generation.

Do you know, Ladies and Gentlemen, that a world contest in the area of computer software was won by three students of the Warsaw University? They defeated everyone and there were several hundred teams from all over the world participating there. These are wonderful individuals. None of them wants to move abroad. They know that they have their opportunities in Poland but only provided that this is a Poland which is moving towards Europe, which is going

to become modern, which will give them jobs and finally presents offers which will be competitive in relation to those in the West.

We do not have the right to deprive the young people of their opportunities. It is our duty as of the generation of their fathers and grandfathers to open the doors and step over the threshold of Europe primarily for the sake of the youths. The Polish people are not returning to Europe. The Polish people are entering the European Union. Poland has been in Europe since the beginning of its history. We participate in the civilization and political development of the continent. It is worth reminding that the history of the Jagiellonian University dates back to the 14<sup>th</sup> century; this is one of the oldest universities in Europe. Many foreigners studied there. Europe should recall that we have enriched our European culture and science with works of Jan Laski and Nicolaus Copernicus, that Fryderyk Chopin and Ignacy Paderewski were Europeans in the whole sense of this world. Henryk Sienkiewicz and Wladyslaw Reymont enriched the European literature. Maria Curie-Sklodowska was every inch of a European at the time when no one thought about the EU. Contemporary Polish creators, poets, composers, painters, artists and scientists enrich Europe with their pieces of work. Yet, Europe must also remember that there has not been a war or historic event in which the Polish people have not shed their blood and have not fought "for our freedom and yours." Yet we remember in Poland that this piece of the European land has been a meeting place for various cultures, religions and many nations. European scientists, artists and architects came to Poland. The first chronicle in the history of Poland was written by a monk from Provence Gall Anonimus. Wit Stwosz from Germany presented us with masterpieces of Gothic sacral art; Italian painters immortalized pictures of Warsaw in their paintings and William Lindley, an English engineer created the Warsaw sewage and water supply system. The list of European names is very long and it shows that the idea of a common Europe is not one that was born in the last years, nor is it an idea which we have invented recently in Copenhagen or Athens. This is a great concept of Europe which can overcome boundaries, which rejoices in diversity, in multicultureness, and which builds up what is the most beautiful drawing from many sources and from people descending from various states, who have seemingly distinct but, in fact, common values and roots. This is how European heritage is being created. (...)

During his first pilgrimage to the Homeland in 1979 John Paul II said some prophetic words. He said that the Gniezno Congress opened the way to unity with the family of European states for Poland and at the beginning of the second millennium the Polish nation gained the right to participate in the creation of the new posture of Europe on the equal footing with other nations. The Pope already at that time predicted that his election might be a sign signalling



that both “Europes” – Western Europe and Eastern Europe – may get united. Then he added the famous metaphor of the two lungs, which must function together for the organism to be healthy and alive. These were prophetic words and few believed that they may come true, and they are coming true and this is happening fast – from the historic point of view. I am recalling these words not in order to abuse the authority of the Holy Father but to remind us of the weight of the decision we are making today at the beginning of the third millennium. Let us be aware of wisdom of our predecessors from over a thousand years ago. Let us not waste the opportunity which is today in front of us.

Taking this chance for Poland will require a decision of the whole nation and this will be conducted with the use of the most democratic procedure. These are not elections like any others. This is not a vote which may be repeated in four years, in a year or in two years. The European referendum is going to be a true test, one which may possibly be retaken, but in the indefinite future and it is possible that there is never going to be another opportunity for this. It is a test in historic responsibility; one taken in front of this generation of the Polish people and the future ones. We will be asked about the two days – 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> June – by our children and grandchildren. This decision is going to be described and discussed. If we dodge it, there is going to be no excuse for us. So let us do everything to be able to tell our dear ones with pride that we have not wasted the chance. (...)

This is a decision which must originate in our hearts; it must be supported with conviction that if we say YES to Poland, we are saying YES to our own future, our dreams and plans. “Yes” for life in a Europe secure, free from violence, injustice and xenophobia. “Yes” to a Poland which will be meaningful in Europe and “Yes” to a Europe which needs Poland and awaits it. Please, take advantage of the privilege which will lead us to the better future for the young and old, the educated and those without this kind of background, for inhabitants of towns and villages. This decision creates a chance for every Pole. Poland in the EU is a strong Poland; it is a Poland which may fulfil its aspirations. Europe with Poland is also more secure, stronger and better. (...)

## 23. Speech at a meeting with students of the Economic Academy in the course of the referendum campaign in Cracow, 24<sup>th</sup> of May 2003

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I cordially greet the Economic Academy in Cracow. The Academy not only teaches how to administer, use the capital and human thought but it is itself an example of such management. For this I am extending my regards to the community of the Academy. I wish to express joy that this Academy fits so well in the landscape of contemporary Poland. (...)

I trust that at an economic academy there is no need to agitate in favour of participation in the referendum or of voting “yes”. Why do I believe so? If we were not able to count on students and graduates of academies upon this act of democratic responsibility for the fate of Poland, who could we count on? What would be the source of serious thinking about the state’s matters and the sense that in a moment so important for history of Poland it is necessary to vote, to assume a share of responsibility for the decision which is being made? I am convinced that academic circles and the graduates will in great numbers participate in the referendum of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> of June. (...)

I have no doubts that the issue of education is going to be one of the most important elements of the modern world, including Poland and Europe. All the riches which used to decide about the power of a country – such as the natural resources, the strategic location, the industry’s stage of development – are not going to be of that much importance as in the previous centuries. Today the state’s power is primarily based on the intellect, education and creativity of the people who live in this country. That is why education is gaining so much importance. I am very glad that we are experiencing an educational boom in Poland. When I tell foreign partners that there are two million people studying in Poland in institutions of higher education this is impressive. This portrays the potential which we are contributing. Poland is a country entering the European Union and there is another “state” of individuals with academic educational status “inside” Poland. The boom is important and we must continue it. Studies should be taken up by as many young people as possible. We should support those who cannot afford this by means of various funds, foundations and support

for state's and self-government institutions, as this is a great asset. I believe that Polish institutions of higher education are better and better adjusted to the requirements posed by the modern world and the European integration.

Maintaining and even increasing the importance of young students education should be one of the main tasks in our development strategy as this may be our defining factor in the EU. If we educate young people, if we give them an opportunity to get acquainted with modern technologies, if we are ready to implement the Lisbon decisions in Poland in an effective way, then the question of what chances we create to ensure proper use of this education becomes crucial. Of course markets of Europe are going to be opened – even if as late as after the transition periods, as seven years is little or almost nothing from the perspective of this generation. First of all, it is important that Poland's development strategy should be receptive to new employees, so that the best ones do not have to locate their ambitions abroad.

This imposes upon all of us the duty to ensure long-lasting development for Poland and in my opinion this is only possible in scope of the European Union. If we do not enter the EU, the chances for development would be greatly reduced. It is impossible to build long-lasting development prospects for Poland based solely on our internal market. It is impossible to base them solely on lower costs of labour as these will change and will be subject to the equalization process. They cannot be located on the Eastern markets. It is difficult to find other factors which could guarantee us economic and social development. I am convinced that Poland can afford a proper entry to the European Union.

We cannot accept the argument that we are not capable of using the prospects related to our entry to the European Union, take advantage of the funds which are provided for in the Accession Treaty, that we are not able to adjust ourselves to the standards which decide of the success or failure of things. This is totally untrue that the Polish people as a nation are lazy and ungifted. For tens of years we have got used to operating under the most adverse conditions. The Polish people have displayed flexibility where others resigned and they have shown great talents in business activities. Therefore, I am appealing to the young people, to the students: do not let the others persuade you to believe in the philosophy of impossibility. The body of Polish achievements of the last fifteen years shows that it is possible to move on, to overcome weakness. These are tasks and not decrees. I am convinced that we can count on the young people and not only on the days of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> are we going to pass the test measuring our attitude to the future but also later on we will be able to develop ourselves and astonish Europe, which – as I have said in Saint Peter's square – should regard Poland as the “old” Europe but driven by new energy and having talented youth! (...)

## 24. Address by Mr Aleksander Kwasniewski during the extraordinary session of the European Parliament (excerpts) – Strasbourg, 14<sup>th</sup> of May 2003<sup>7</sup>

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Mr President, Ladies and Gentlemen Members of the European Parliament

To address the European Parliament is an honour and an unforgettable experience. I am happy that I can represent Poland in such an extraordinary time. A month ago the Treaty of Accession was signed in Athens. In three and a half weeks a referendum will be held in my country in which the Polish people – I profoundly believe – will say “Yes”; “Yes” for Poland and “Yes” for uniting Europe, “Yes” for themselves and the next generations. (...)

Europe is uniting itself and growing. This is no longer a vision, this is the present reality. This is a fact.

Today’s Europe expresses itself in what is common, such as the roots of our civilization – and at the same time in what is diverse, what is pluralistic, such as national cultures. Robert Schuman aptly noted that without its diversity Europe would not be Europe. And this is something else that distinguishes us – we owe it to the “founding fathers”, but also to the consistent efforts of several generations of Europeans. That something is the will to co-operate. That will is like a compass that guides us on the trails of history.

And this is the power of Europe. I do not know whether there exists a more transparent symbol of this than this multilingual, multinational Parliament. I do not have in mind the walls of this building, but you, Ladies and Gentlemen – flesh and blood people, full of emotions, your own experiences and desires. You are representatives of your national voters, but in caring for their interests you are guided by the good of the entire European community. From your everyday work the conviction grows that the success of my partners is also my success. That truth is the pillar of the common Europe, and now I am sure – we are going to strengthen this pillar together!

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<sup>7</sup> Based on [www.ms.gov.pl/files/file\\_library/31/0305\\_355.doc](http://www.ms.gov.pl/files/file_library/31/0305_355.doc) (edit.).

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Never in the half-century history of the European community has such a great and radical enlargement taken place. Ten new countries are going to join the fifteen present member states. For the first time the community will encompass in its circle countries from behind the former Iron Curtain. That is a new quality.

We got to know each other somewhat during the negotiations. Even though we filled thousands of pages with statistical data; even though many friendships were struck up among politicians, negotiators and experts – our societies still know too little about each other. Meanwhile, when we penetrate the curtain of simplifications and stereotypes; when we give free rein to our natural curiosity – we see how much we have in common. I am convinced that the strengthening of the European Union, numbering 25 states, does not have to be a conglomeration of different substances. Rather, it will make use of all of the potentials that the different regions of Europe have at their disposal. (...)

The history of our region has been stormy. Time and again we became a victim of the European powers. We fought for our lost liberty. The twentieth century brought independence to Poland and many nations of our region. Unfortunately, this same century also brought nationalistic ideologies and quarrels between neighbours. It is our great historical success that today we have managed to overcome them and follow the path of reconciliation, trust and co-operation. I thank President Pat Cox for mentioning in his introduction Westerplatte, the Gdansk Shipyard, Solidarity, the names Lech Walesa and Karol Wojtyła – Pope John Paul II. We appreciate the fact that Europe remembers; we need such a memory of Europe and about Europe.

Some people feared that the casting off of Soviet domination would release national conflicts and tensions in Central-Eastern Europe. Yet things have turned out differently. We have started to build bridges and not walls. Today we are entering the Union as a group of countries with friendly relations that are co-operating with each other. We are strengthening European stability and security – also through our good relations with Russia and Ukraine. We are making a significant contribution to the work of European openness, to the dialogue of West and East, and to opening new chances of integration.

That is how you are receiving us – as partners and members of the family, and “blood of one’s blood” of the European community.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The integration of Europe is becoming a fact, yet not by the power of magic. Facts are created by people. It is they who – more than a dozen years ago – had the courage to cast off the shackles of a totalitarian system and pursue the vision of a common Europe. The unification of the continent has been possible due to peaceful transformations in Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary as well as the aspirations for independence shared by the peoples of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. We have awakened ourselves to life in freedom and democracy. We accomplished this without resorting to arms and violence. Were it not for our bloodless revolution; were it not for the taking down of walls and wire entanglements – the project of a Europe united in peace, prosperity and stability could never have been realised.

However, I wish to also stress that the stance of the countries of Western Europe, which almost from the outset, without any preliminary conditions, expressed readiness to receive us into their community, determined the destiny of the continent. This has been a great, splendid gesture demonstrating courage, solidarity and a great sense of responsibility. The success of integration has its roots precisely in this attitude of western Europeans, who in the years of the great breakthrough in Eastern Europe saw us as partners and joint stewards of the continent.

Freedom and democracy know no borders. The united Europe does not boil down to the common market, funds and subsidies, but is first and foremost a community of values. As in the life of societies there cannot be just a bit of freedom, a bit of democracy, a bit of rule of law – so in Europe without the Berlin Wall there cannot be just a bit of unity, just a bit of co-operation and just a bit of solidarity. Europe is for everybody – and our European dreams are for everybody. I am happy that we are going to realise these dreams together!

Ladies and Gentlemen!

In a year the European Union will be an organism comprising the potential of 25 states; it will unite the energy, knowledge and capacities of 450 million Europeans. Before our eyes a real world power is growing stronger and developing. Let us not be afraid of this term. Let us be proud of it.

The strength of the European community has always rested in its progress by evolution, the capacity to adapt itself to the challenges of the times, to build in stages. The Chamber that I have the honour to address is a proof of this.

Thirty years ago there was no European Parliament. But since it has existed it has experienced changes and strives to strengthen the spirit of democracy in the institutions of the Union.

Let us look at the Council of Europe. It also did not exist at one time, but since it has appeared, its *modus operandi* has evolved constantly. That is healthy, normal. That is the entire history of the unification of the continent. It is not the Union's institutions that created the European community, but just the opposite. I say this especially to my fellow citizens – it is not the mythical bureaucracy in Brussels that called into being European integration, but rather integration forced the centre in Brussels to come into existence. That is how it is going to be today.

There is going to be an abundance of challenges for us: the European Constitution, implementation of the Lisbon Strategy, reforms of the Common Agricultural Policy, and work on the European foreign and defence policy. In order to resolve these issues successfully we need good communication and co-operation of all states; we need to listen attentively and respectfully to the arguments, needs and experiences of our partners. On the one hand, we ought to strengthen the community method, on the other – strive for ever-greater effectiveness. If we manage to do that – and I am confident that we will – Union institutions and procedures never will become the “bottleneck” of integration. If we are guided by forward-looking thinking and vision, solidarity and respect for mutual interests, moderation and compromise – we will arrive at the best possible solutions.

The united Europe is becoming one of the most important centres of development, one of the world centres of civilization. This raises questions that we have to answer, or at least ask them of ourselves in the Europe that is taking shape.

How do we see future relations of Europe with other partners, in particular with the United States? America twice helped Europe to return to peace and overthrown totalitarian systems. Let us remember that our, unfortunately our, European disputes brought on the European catastrophes. The transatlantic bond and American presence on our continent enabled Europe to live in peace and security for more than 50 post-war years. Today, more than ever before, the global dimension of our alliance and partnership is becoming a challenge. After all, if the question concerning the shape of transatlantic relations is important, it is just as important to examine the chances that the cooperation of Europe and America create for solving the problems of humanity as a whole. (...)

I am convinced that without good cooperation between Europe and the United States it will be impossible to guarantee lasting peace and security for the world. Without this co-operation we will not create hope for the triumph of human rights in every corner of the globe, for balanced development, for overcoming the harmful aspects of globalisation. Neither will we be able to defeat international terrorism. And what is tremendously important – we won't be able to activate a genuine and urgently needed dialogue of civilizations. We will not be able to ensure the United Nations a proper place and effectiveness, and that is why this cooperation is so vital.

I also am of the conviction that the European Union must increase its strength. One of these strengtheners is enlargement, which will take place soon. Another is the necessity to devise a common foreign and defence policy. We are ready to collaborate in this work, in the creation and implementation of such a common policy. The European Union will and must carry weight in the international arena, and our partners should understand that. By building this strength and collaborating with others we have the best chances of achieving a common success. I believe that this cooperation will be based on partnership, which among friends means the principle of equal rights. This principle of equal rights is nothing more than the everyday practice of the Union's principle of equality.

Another crucial question is that of the borders of a united Europe. The Union will be "whole" not only when it achieves political unity; not only when it receives Romania and Bulgaria in four years, but also when it encompasses the Balkans and resolves the question of Turkey. Another great challenge is to develop the co-operation of the Union with countries of the eastern part of the continent: with Russia, Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus. The Polish Eastern border will be the longest land border of the enlarged European Union. We want to participate actively in shaping the Union's eastern policy, to contribute to it our experiences and contacts to prevent a new curtain from arising in Europe – even if it were to be only a velvet one – between West and East. Europe – as our great countryman Pope John Paul II said – finally should breathe fully with both of its lungs: the Eastern and Western ones.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

We have come a long way. Determined will, hard work, and a wealth of experience. When next year we enter the Union – for Poland this will signify the finale of fifteen years of efforts. For other joining countries – likewise. All that we have accomplished in our countries, the difficult labour of transformation



has been at the same time our road to the European Union. The achievements of our transformations are at the same time the achievements of our preparations periods. And we know that this work is not finished, we know that we still have to make many improvements in our countries, we still have to learn a lot – but no one will be able to say that we took a shortcut to the Union.

We are bringing in to the community the entire treasure-house of our achievements. We have come to the Union by different paths, but what is extremely intriguing is the road of the states that after they cast off Soviet domination carried out such a difficult, sweeping transformation of their political and economic systems.

Democracy, the rule of law, development of the civil society – have become self-evident in our countries. The economic changes have presented us with enormous challenge, but we have managed to cope with this. The example of Poland may serve as an illustration of the success of the entire region. Since 1990 Poland's GDP has increased by more than 50 percent. The bulk of this product years ago came from the state sector, but now the private sector generates three-fourths of the GDP. That is evidence of the transformation of the structure of the economy. At the start of our road 70% of Poland's trade was with the countries of the eastern bloc, but today a similar and even somewhat greater percentage is with the countries of the EU. Thirteen years ago inflation was more than 500% annually – today it is 0.5%. Our economy has attracted more than 65 billion dollars in direct foreign investments. We are grateful to those who once risked, but who today are happy that in Poland they found a good place for their money, their investments and the development of their firms.

Let us add to this the potential of the young, dynamic Polish society – a society hungry for knowledge, studying, improving their qualifications. Today in Poland we have nearly two million students in our colleges and universities, and that is more or less the entire population of some of the acceding countries. But I know that these economic successes, social changes, great political transformations are not only a success of Poland and our satisfaction, but also – of the other acceding countries, that these states with equal energy are entering the Union. So I wish to say to the esteemed Members of the European Parliament, even though in your voting you have demonstrated what you think – the enlargement of the European Union is not a trouble for Europe, enlargement of the European Union is a great opportunity for Europe, an opportunity that – I am convinced – we shall not waste. Enlargement also strengthens the role of our continent at the global stage. (...)

Mr President, Ladies and Gentlemen Members of the European Parliament.

I bring from Poland hope for good days for Europe. I thank you that you are giving us such hope for good months and years in a common, integrated Europe. Together we are stronger; together we can do much more!

## 25. Television appearance – 5<sup>th</sup> of June 2003

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Ladies and Gentlemen, Fellow Citizens!

“Europe needs Poland. Poland needs Europe. The entry to the structures of the European Union on equal rights with the other states is both for our Nation and for the other brother Slavic nations an act of historic justice and, on the second hand, this may be an enrichment of Europe,” said the Polish Pope John Paul II to us and to all other Europeans in Saint Peter’s Square.

Let me recall the words of John Paul II – the great individual and visionary who has so much influenced the face of our Homeland and those of the rest of the continent and the world – a day before the national referendum. With reference to such a great matter – our future – we must not be indifferent!

Let us decide about the fate of our Homeland. About prospects for our children and grandchildren. Let us fulfil the patriotic duty towards those Polish people, which have come before us and those who are going to come after us.

Let this not be a decision which will be taken over our heads. It is us – all the Polish citizens – who are making it, in the most democratic procedure – the all-nation referendum.

Let us see far. Farther than the current situation in the country. Farther than likes and dislikes with respect to today’s parties and politicians. Farther than the everyday cares, disappointments and anger. Beyond the tiredness and frustration. Let us look around ourselves – where do we, as the nation, want to have friends and partners; who is opening the doors wide for us to beneficial and partnership cooperation in a sincere manner?

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Over the last weeks we have met each other and talked in Plock, Gronowo, Torun, Osieciny, Ciechocinek, Jedrzejow, Bielsko-Biala, Kalisz, Gorzow,

Wroclaw, Warsaw, Rybczewice, Olsztyn, Bialystok, Bochnia, Slupsk, Goraszka, Chorzow, Barzkowice, Drawsk Pomorski, Cracow, Rzeszow, Zduny, Lowicz, Glogow, Kedzierzyn-Kozle and in Gniezno.

I have visited each province (voivodeship). I have tried to answer questions; I have listened carefully to opinions about local problems. I know how difficult it is to live in many regions of Poland. In your words and in your faces there were both fears and hope. I have become convinced how much we need the latter.

I wish to thank cordially all the non-government organisations, social, regional and youth movements and political parties from the left to the right of the spectrum for the great effort taken to inform the fellow citizens and for the honest debate with them. This has been a truly wide movement beyond the divisions.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

With the entry to the European Union we have a chance to speed up the economic development, facilitate the state's functioning increase the level of life of the citizens. Good prospects are opening for the rural areas and agriculture. Financial support for self-governments is going to increase, the infrastructure is going to be developed; new jobs will be created; there are going to be benefits for science and culture. We will take a better care of the natural environment.

Poland in the Union means strengthening of the achievements of our democracy and rules of law. European standards facilitate transparency in public life and procedures. There will be a chance for a more efficient administration, for a more effective combat of corruption, for more safety in our living quarters and in the streets. There will be development of the citizenship society.

Poor and underdeveloped regions may benefit the most. Driven by the idea of solidarity, the EU takes care of graduate equalling of the level of life in the member states. What counts in the Community is the individual human being. Every human being, regardless of their wealth and the place of residence, their tradition, customs or knowledge of foreign languages. In the European Union – in the common European home – there is place for everyone!

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Obviously, it is necessary to have a sense of realism. The European Union is not an incarnation of paradise on earth, nor is it a cure for all concerns of the

Polish people. I know that many people have doubts, questions and concerns related to the new and the unknown, or poorly known.

But in such cases my advice is – let us believe facts. The European Union has proved itself. For over half of the century it has been an effective idea for a secure Europe without wars, with respect for rights and the dignity of a human being, strong with the European solidarity of nations. Everyone who has entered the Union has not lost but has gained. This is shown by the history of the nations which some years ago were not in a much better condition than in which we are at the moment: Ireland, Greece, Spain or Portugal. Their success is beyond doubt. This is why they can be good examples for us and may help us choose the right path for Poland.

Let us also consider the alternatives. What is the future for Poland outside of the EU?

Let us have imagination. It is true that a “no” for the EU does not mean an immediate economic disaster or a collapse of the public funds. Yet, in a longer term this means a loss of opportunities for growth, the chance for subsidies, investments, technological progress, and direct access to the one of the biggest markets in the world. This means incapacity to solve serious problems such as unemployment or poverty. It means pushing Poland for another time in history to the margin of the European economy.

Poland will be forced to solve its numerous economic problems while being outside of the EU and alone. Our international position will get complicated – we will find ourselves in a grey zone, hung between the West and the East. Our political and economic credibility will fall. A major part of our achievements on the international scene may be squandered.

Yet, I trust that the Polish people – so deeply hurt by history – will choose development rather than apathy; openness rather than isolation. I trust that they will opt for a Poland which is going to catch up with the best, has strong partners and wins increasing appreciation in the world.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

I am turning to the older generation: Poland's entry to the European Union is going to facilitate better use of your efforts and the achievements in creation of the Polish home; the Homeland is going to gain, so are you and your descendants. I am turning to young people: in the united Europe great opportunities are opening for you, to find jobs and follow your dreams. I am turning with

a special appeal to the Polish farmers. You, Ladies and Gentlemen, are going to be a social group which will immediately receive measureable financial support. This is a way towards the modernisation of agricultural farms and towards development of the rural areas. Aware of your diligence and resourcefulness – I am sure that you will be able to take advantage of this.

I am encouraging and asking you to go to the referendum stations on the coming Saturday and Sunday and to vote “yes”. But I am also turning to those who have not been convinced by my arguments, who have a different opinion and intend to vote “NO”. Although I do not share your opinion, I respect it. Let us do everything to guarantee that as many of us as possible take part in the referendum so that it is a real reflection of views of the Polish people. So that it is a proof of our democratic maturity.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

It is also needed to say that life is not going to finish with the referendum. In Poland we must take many actions which will strengthen our economy and which will be aimed at limiting unemployment, limiting poverty and corruption, and healing our public life. We are not going to be absolved from these tasks either by a positive result of the referendum or by the prospects of our membership of the European Union. We have to carry out this work on our own, here and now.

This is why as early as in the first days after the referendum I am opening consultations with representatives of the main political powers regarding solution of the most expedient problems. The aim is to make such decisions which will ensure that Poland enters the EU as a healthy state, making the best possible use of the great potential of its society.

Ladies and Gentlemen! Fellow Citizens!

Poland's presence in the European Union is going to be a natural continuation of our history and tradition, of our heritage of the one-thousand-year-long presence within the European circle. This will be a proof of being faithful to ourselves and to the way which has been chosen by our nation with the rising of the Solidarity Movement and the first free democratic elections held 14 years ago. This will supplement the endeavour to build consensus among the Polish people accomplished at the Round Table. This will add a purpose to all the reforms for which we have paid the great price of efforts and sacrifice but which already now are bringing good effects for Poland, and will do so in the future.

The independent Republic of Poland, the Polish nation having cultivated its identity and culture for centuries, having fought for its own freedom and that of the others, has earned a due position for itself. It has earned the right to be a co-author of the future of Europe and an important constructor of its framework in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

By strong work, courage and consistency we have created a great historic chance for ourselves. We have opened the doors to a world which whole generations of Polish people have only dreamt about. It is only up to our decision if we are going to step over this threshold.

By saying “Yes” to Europe, we will say “Yes” to our prospective future!

By putting the X mark with the word “Yes” we will guarantee a future for this and the next generations.

We will say “Yes” to Poland benefiting from peace and development!

## 26. Statement after the conclusion of the European Referendum (excerpts) – 8<sup>th</sup> of June 2003

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

I have the feeling that we have just participated in a historic event. We have waited long for this moment. I will not hide my emotion and I am convinced that this emotion is shared by millions of Polish people and for certain by all of those who are gathered here at the Presidential Palace.

A great thing has been accomplished. The Polish people in the most democratic form, in an all-nation referendum said “yes” to Poland’s accession to the European Union. Today we can say this aloud: we are returning to the great European family. We are coming back to the place which is due to Poland and to the Polish people on account of our one-thousand-year-long history; on account of the great brevity displayed by the Polish people for more than ten years when they have been transforming the face not only of this land but also of the European continent.

I am convinced that today’s decision opens good prospects for the nation, for the young generation and for the state. I am also convinced that the decision is also good for Europe. A big, proud and ambitious nation is entering the European structures. It’s Poland with its one-thousand-year-long tradition and great hopes for the future which it intends to co-create together with our European partners, our neighbours, in the great European family.

On this very special day I want to thank all the citizens of the Republic of Poland, our fellow citizens who have voted in the referendum. This has been a decision of great importance. I wish to thank all those who have taken part in the campaign before the referendum. The campaign has been different from all the others because of its social dimension. This has really been something fascinating to see non-government, social, regional and youth organisations in various parts of Poland – young people and very mature ones, who fought about the same, used very similar arguments and first of all agitated in favour of the



European Union with extraordinary energy and involvement. The campaign has transcended the party divisions. We have been able to form a pro-European front over historic divisions, over various individual walks of life which have led us to the same goal, over affiliation to various political parties. (...)

I wish to express my heart-felt gratitude to all those who have contributed to persuading the Polish society about the weight of the referendum and to communicating information regarding the accession. I wish to cordially thank all those who are today as guests at the Presidential Place and who also have had an enormous contribution – representatives of social organisations, scientific institutes and the Reflection Group which has co-operated with me. Before I turn to well-known persons who have especially earned praise, I wish to express my appreciation for the Polish media, for Polish newspapers, magazines, the Polish radio broadcasting stations – including commercial ones, for public and commercial television channels – all those who reached virtually all places with information about the referendum and about the European Union, those who have put much effort in the last weeks. This is not a causal compliment. I have seen this, I have heard this – all of us have experienced that. For this – many thanks, Ladies and Gentlemen, you have reasons for satisfaction that the result is as we have seen it.

I wish to address words of ultimate gratitude to the man who has been specially supporting this great endeavour for many, many years. I have mentioned his words spoken in Gniezno in 1979. I wish to thank Pope John Paul II for having been with us all the time, for having heartened us up, for his valuable advice and for having warned us against various threats related to the new prospects for Poland; for all of which the Polish Pope has done for us on this matter – and I may have the biggest knowledge of this of all those present here as I have had the opportunity to have dozens of conversations with him – thank you from the bottom of my heart on behalf of Poland and the Polish people.

I wish to thank the Catholic Church and all other Churches for their involvement, for the letter of the Episcopate which has been important for this referendum and for having reached all our fellow citizens with this point of view. I also wish to express my gratitude to all the clergymen from various Churches who have got involved in the serious social discussion, a serious debate with our fellow citizens.

Ladies and Gentlemen it is also necessary to thank with full conviction all the governments, parliaments and politicians who took to this road many years ago. We have Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki here with us. His government began this journey after the great breakthrough following the Round Table and

the elections of 1989. Then this was continued by the successive governments and successive parliaments – with various doubts, at various pace, but – as we can see this today – effectively. That is why I would like the words of gratitude to be heard from here, from the Presidential Palace addressed to all the Polish governments – starting with the government of Tadeusz Mazowiecki and finishing with those of Jerzy Buzek and Leszek Miller – the one which has led to the successful finalisation of the negotiations in Copenhagen. I have words of great gratitude for members of the authorities and members of the parliaments who have participated in this great and difficult process.

Finally, Ladies and Gentlemen, a remark about the past – the referendum has been just another proof that the Polish people have an extraordinary capacity of performing well just before the finishing line. After yesterday I honestly admit that my heart trembled and I was not an optimist enough to believe that the results which have just been displayed on the screen are going to be so good. It looked as if we were in for nervous moments but I remember that the same case occurred with the negotiations – they also began at various speeds and the finish was outstanding. This is how today we can assess the referendum, which on the finishing line turned out to be a success. I believe that the same will be true of the Polish preparations for the accession on 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2004. Ladies and Gentlemen, the finishing game is already on course as there are less than 11 months left before the day when we are going to become a fully empowered member of the European Union. This puts on us a tremendous responsibility to maintain the speed and even to accelerate in these areas where we are not sufficiently prepared so that on 1<sup>st</sup> of May next year Poland may be not only be a new member state in the EU but also a respected and significant one, proportionally to its capabilities and ambitions.

I believe that when we finally are in the European Union, we will learn not only how to approach the finishing line in an outstanding style but also how to work hard every day, carry out duties and perform tasks, how to be consistent from the beginning to the end – so that there is probably less emotion but there are many results coming from everyday work, sometimes tedious but first of all, creative.

Ladies and Gentlemen, a great thing has happened – we are returning to the European family! Poland in the European Union! Could anyone have dreamt about this over a dozen years ago? Ladies and Gentlemen! This is a fact – we are in the European Union! My fellow citizens and Poland should be applauded. We are also not forgetting about our European friends who have been with us for all the time, who have been with us during the referendum and who – as I know – will call us in a moment with congratulations because this has

also been a load off their minds. Europe awaits Poland – exactly this kind of Poland – dynamic, active, full of energy and new ideas; Poland which is going to have a significant place in the European community.

Ladies and Gentlemen! The important stage is over. From tomorrow we are beginning another one – the last months before Poland's accession to the EU. Thank you very much!

## 27. Interview for the Italian daily "La Repubblica" (excerpts) – 30<sup>th</sup> of November 2003

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Although Aleksander Kwasniewski is one of those who have joined the European debate the latest, he by no means intends to keep aside from it. "Our position is clear: the Treaty of Nice is untouchable for at least five years to come. We will discuss everything else – without haste. Naples is not the last opportunity; there will be more summits in Brussels and elsewhere." In his office in Warsaw the President of the Republic of Poland is kept posted by ministers who have been sent to Naples for the "conclave" intended to decide about the shape of the European Union. The directions are clear: the Polish people are ready to discuss compromises, to get acquainted with all the positions but there is one point on which they are inflexible: none of the major principles may be changed before the year 2009.

*What is the source of this tenacious objection against changes?*

Rules must not be changed when the game is still on. No one can impose changes which have not yet been assessed by the others. This cannot be so that "two Europes" will be formed: the strong one which will make decisions and the other deprived of initiative, which will only be watching this.

*Are you referring to the decision of the ECOFIN, which has in effect frozen the Stability Pact to the advantage of France and Germany?*

The decision has been made by the European "Fifteen". I am not going to introduce additional elements to the polemics. I am thinking about the future EU composed of 25 member states.

*Do you regard the Treaty of Nice as unchangeable?*

Not at all. The Treaty is binding until the year 2009, so we are going to have time to check its functioning and discuss all the changes which will be necessary to be made.

*Chancellor Schroeder has appealed to you to verify the Polish position, at least as far as the voting criteria are concerned, which – according to the Germans – would give Poland the same power to decide as that possessed by Germany, although Poland has half the number of citizens. What is your response to this?*

I wish to restate that the only thing I am trying to achieve is respect for the rules. The Treaty of Nice specifies that Poland is entitled to have 27 votes and Germany – to 29. This method – fair or not – has been discussed and adopted. Based on this, the Polish nation has voted “YES” in the referendum on joining the EU. How could we now tell the Polish people that things are looking differently?

*Do not you see any chance for a compromise?*

Please, take note that I am not demanding that Legia Warsaw football team should become stronger than the teams of Milan or Bayern Munich by the decree of law. I am only stating that if the teams are still playing with 11 footballers, no one can make them play with eight.

*The Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs Frattini is suggesting that the constitution should at the same time mention the Christian roots of Europe and the secular character of the institution. What is your opinion on this matter?*

Both Poland and Italy are states whose citizens are in the great majority Catholics but where there are also many citizens professing other religions. In any case, I am of the opinion that the European institutions cannot be other than secular. I support the Italian proposal.

*Yet, de facto, you are not allowing for too many hopes to be attached to the Naples “conclave”?*

There are going to be other opportunities for the discussion. A confrontation of positions or even polemics will be beneficial for all. In my opinion it is fortunate that at this difficult point the EU presidency is held by a country which very strongly identifies itself with European values. I believe in the effectiveness of the mediation.

*You have also expressed your fears of a French-German directory.*

We are all fully aware of the fundamental role of France and Germany. Yet also these states cannot afford to create a Europe in which they will be holding the steering wheel and the rest will be watching. The future fight for the growth

and development requires Europe to be integrated and based on the rules of equality. Chirac and Schroeder are fully aware of this.

*As of 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2004 all the new member states could benefit from a free flow of workers. Sweden has already agreed to this. Germany is asking for 2 years of delay. Italy has not taken a stance yet. What do you intend to do on this matter?*

I intend to exert pressure on the Italian government and governments of other states. I maintain that the fears are exaggerated. Poland is changing. Last year the Polish GDP increased by 3,5 percent. In the year 2004 we are expecting to have a 5 percent growth. You will see that there are not going to be too many Polish workers ready to emigrate. (...)

Interview by: *Nicola Lambardozzi, Paolo Garimberti*

## 28. Interview for the German newspaper "Der Spiegel" (excerpts) – 12<sup>th</sup> of January 2004

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*Mr President, after the failures of the Brussels summit there was talk about the "historic guilt" which Poland has brought onto itself by its persistency. Do you feel guilty?*

No, we do not feel guilty; we feel co-responsible. In the same way as the French and the Germans who, putting forward their own solutions, regarded them as nonnegotiable, in the same way as the Spaniards who said the same as we did. Maybe also in the same way as the Italians presiding over the EU who should have taken more effort to facilitate reaching an agreement. Yet, we are not going to overdramatize this. If Europe needs time to consider this, now the time is available.

*And until then everything is going to be as it used to be – to your delight.*

Let us not exaggerate! According to the Convent the rules of Nice are to be binding until the year 2009. I believe we need a European Constitution. Yet, from the point of view of the states joining the EU this is a difficult moment. For us the Constitution comes neither too early nor too late. It would be much easier now if we had received the constitution two years ago. Now we would be entering the EU aware of the fact that the Constitutional Treaty is binding for all of us. On the other hand it might be premature to adopt the constitution right now. In the Polish debate before the accession referendum we referred to the position of Poland as provided for by the Treaty of Nice. And today when we are not yet in the EU the rules would be changed again.

*After this flop the "two speeds Europe" is becoming immediately visible. And this is, after all, exactly what Poland wanted to prevent from happening.*

In my opinion the concept of the two speeds is an idea for integration effected by means of disintegration. Poland is doing everything to prevent this as then we would have two groups of states in Europe: the Champions League and the others.

This would mean a possibility of a deepening of economic and social differences in Europe, which might give a reason for conflicts. Thus, we would threaten the very nature of European integration defined 50 years ago. The purpose of integrating ourselves rests in equalling differences and not in deepening them.

*Is this why reaching an agreement would be so important?*

Undoubtedly so, but on the other hand we have time now; we can talk about compromise solutions. We can finally gain our own European experience. Maybe after two-three years of practice we will verify our views? I only want to remind you that the concept of the two speeds has not arisen with either the Constitutional Treaty or in response to the conference in Brussels, or in relation to the position of Poland.

*Do you see any solution?*

Certainly the magnitude of Germany should be reflected in the voting rights which should be granted to it. I am sure we are going to find a solution which is going to be acceptable. It has been suggested, for example, that Germany's number of votes could be simply increased in compliance with the system of Nice, which would not have caused bigger problems for the Poles. Yet, I am afraid that such a proposal could have inspired problems in France or in Great Britain.

*The, so called, double majority rule has been the main problem for Poland as far as the constitution draft is regarded. What one could have against it is that in the future decisions are made solely by a majority of votes of the member states if at the same time the majority represents at least 60 percent of the EU population?*

The concerns of Poland and Spain could be regarded as mirroring the fears of Germany and France, Berlin and Paris are afraid that the Poles and the Spaniards may block decisions made in the EU Council. In turn we are afraid that the Germans and the French could impose something on us. The first condition for compromise is that we have more trust towards each other. This is the key to the compromise.

*On his return from Brussels the Prime Minister was being welcomed as a hero. Since that time the moods have worsened much and the criticism of the spoilt European debut is prevailing.*

Leszek Miller by no means returned feeling like a hero. The delegation returned with the sense of a fiasco of the conference and at the same time aware of the opportunity created by postponing the debate. There was no triumph, at least



not on the part of the governing coalition, while there was some primarily on the part of the opposition. After all it was the opposition which invented the nonsense motto: “Nice or death”. Today we have to take the political and diplomatic but also social effort in Poland to get ready for the other stage of the Intergovernmental Conference. In February we are launching here in the Presidential Palace a serious debate which is going to be entitled “A Strong Poland in a Strong Europe”.

*We have taken the impression that the attitude of the Polish people towards the UE has worsened. After the successfully finished referendum on the matter of joining the EU last summer young people danced in the streets, the EU flags flew in the air. In turn before the summit in Brussels the European Union was being presented to the public opinion rather as an aggressor which needs to be repelled.*

This is true: currently the moods are not so enthusiastic but they are still pro-European. The Polish people are rational. Research has shown that a majority of the public opinion understands the need to seek agreement with the European partners. What has been disappointing was the position of a part of the political elites who highlighted the attitude of “to be or not to be”. Also the media have their little sins as they have imposed a very emotional and sensational note. Yet, I am not afraid of a debate around the Constitutional Treaty, I am afraid of exaggerated expectations that with Poland’s joining the UE on 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2004 everything is going to change for the better. The first frustrations may arise already at the end of the year because obviously this is not going to happen so quickly. (...)

*After the Brussels summit the states which are net payers have announced an intention to limit the EU budget despite the new additions. Poland could then receive less money than expected. How do you intend to counteract this?*

Such ideas appeared even before the summit. Of course we oppose them. Yet we have not voiced criticism that Germany and France had made it impossible for the European Commission to inflict a punishment in relation to the failure of these states to adhere to the criteria of the Stabilisation Pact. The large state must have the possibility, of course within limits, to have means of accelerating their economies – this is also in our interest.

*Despite these polite words there is a threat that the EU financial means may be reduced.*

The current situation does not compare to that of the previous enlargement when Spain and Portugal were joining the EU. The economic differences between

the European Union of the “fifteen” and the 10 states entering the EU are currently much bigger. That is why what should be considered is increasing the means or at least having the budget at the level not lower than 1 percent of the EU’s GDP. This is in the interest of the whole of Europe. Good transportation routes financed from the UE means are important for Poland but after all they are also European transportation routes. (...)

Interview by: *Dr. Martin Derry, Hans Hoyng and Jan Puhl*

## 29. Speech opening the debate “A Strong Poland in a Strong Europe” (excerpts) – 16<sup>th</sup> of February 2004

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

A Strong Poland in a Strong Europe – this motto best describes our plans and aspirations. We wish for a Poland strong economically and politically stable, with an influence on the European and regional policy.

We want a strong Europe, developing itself and secure, with its say in global politics. Therefore, the statement “A Strong Poland in a Strong Europe” expresses the Polish patriotism but also the European affiliation. This attitude accompanied us when we closed the negotiations in Copenhagen and signed the Accession Treaty in Athens. In such a spirit we opened the proceedings of the Intergovernmental Conference in Rome and conducted the talks at the recent EU’s summit in Brussels. (...)

I believe that “A Strong Poland in a Strong Europe” is a suitable motto for our joint action. On the one hand, it imposes on us the obligation of ensuring that Poland becomes stronger and it is fully prepared for the European cooperation. On the other hand, such a declaration manifests belief in the united Europe, in the EU institutions, the EU policies and in a significant position of Europe in the context of the transformation taking place in the world. That is why I agree that we can use both mottoes “A Strong Poland in a Strong Europe”, which remains the title of our meetings, but this should also read for us: “A Capable Poland in a Solidary Europe”.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

We have accepted the lack of agreement on the draft of the European Constitution without joy. There is, however, no reason for us to become overly pessimistic after the Brussels summit. After all, we had managed to reach agreement on many difficult issues before the Brussels summit. The Draft Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe is a document – although not yet enacted – which

already now shapes the thinking of politicians and citizens about the common European future. (...)

The aim of the debate, which we are holding today at the Presidential Palace, is to make the best of the time which we have at our disposal. We are aware of the significance of the future European Constitution. It prepares the EU – expanded by ten member states – to undertake new tasks and to function more effectively. Since, however, we have got the time and the decisions have been postponed, let us discuss together how to achieve this aim in the best and the most reasonable way – despite all the problems and doubts. Let us make use of this unique opportunity which has come upon us – those involved in this great project in Europe and in Poland – to discuss all the details and prepare as best as possible for the moment when the decisions will have to be made.

Seventy four days before the accession, that is, before 1<sup>st</sup> of May, we still have our “homework” to do in Poland. Strong political argumentation in favour of the accession to the EU must be supported by good preparation for the accession. The size of the country and the scale of the adaptation tasks cannot be used as an excuse for delay – either in the area of organizational or legislative matters. I am asking all politicians, from the governing coalition and from the opposition, from the central and local governments and all the experts and journalists for mobilization and cooperation for the sake of this great national endeavour – preparing Poland for the advantageous accession. Let us prove that we are cable not only of negotiating in a tough way but, first of all, of keeping our commitments; that we can respond to emerging problems, be responsible and consistent.

I am saying this because the European discussion in Poland in the last few months has been dominated by the subject of Nice. I am convinced that at present we need a less emotional but more practically-oriented debate. The catalogue of European issues goes far beyond that of making and blocking decisions in the extended Europe. If we want to be credible in our debates on the EU election system, as well as on the issue of making decisions, we have to be better prepared; we have to show that, as a new partner, we are reliable with regard to performance of the tasks which we have assumed.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

The time is short – which is convenient for us because for the Polish people the fuller the diaries and the closer the deadlines, the more outstanding performance they display. I have mentioned the seventy four days; in a while there will be only seventy three days left so, making use of this short time, it is it worth considering the question of what we, the Polish people, wish to contribute to the community.

Which collective tasks should be the most important for us and in which areas we can play our Polish, specially creative and active, role. Here, it is necessary to point to three crucial issues which should become the subject of the successive debates I intend to hold on a regular basis at the Presidential Palace.

Undoubtedly, we need a more in-depth discussion about foreign policy, especially its Eastern dimension. We are in need of a debate on security and defence policy. The European Strategy of Safety adopted in December 2003 gives us an additional momentum. This is the first package.

Second, we should reflect on what is and should be the Polish contribution to the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy, which is aimed at increasing the competitiveness of the European Union, and stresses education, studies and training, education of the young people.

Finally, the third point: we are facing the key question of the model of the expanded European Union after the year 2006. The debate on the EU budget is something more than just financial negotiations. By defining the budget policy of the EU, we will determine – de facto – its model of functioning in a longer perspective. The coming years will show if solidarity and support for the even development of the EU member states are going to remain the cornerstone, or if the announced concepts of the “two speeds” or the “hard core” or any other, which in effect are going to mean disintegration of the “twenty-five” and in the future “twenty-seven” or “twenty eight”, despite the integration talk which accompanies them.

Certainly, there are more questions. How to strengthen the Community’s regional policy, which is so important from the Polish point of view? How to combine further enlargement of the EU with increasing its competitiveness on the global scene? How to maintain balance between the big, medium-sized and small countries? This does not exhaust the catalogue; further important issues about which we can and should talk may be added to. (...)

On the other hand, it is necessary to say it clearly that in Poland and in the other countries of the “ten” there is the fear that we will be regarded as second-class citizens, as poor relatives, as those who still have not come of age and who are not ready to adopt the high-level legal, economic or social standards established in the fifteen old member states. There is a fear of being dominated. The main conflict related to the rules of voting on one hand stems from the fears on the part of the stronger that their decisions are going to be blocked by the weaker and, on the other hand, the fears on the part of the weaker that we may find ourselves in a Europe dominated or even directed by what has already acquired the name of “the Directory” for itself.

I am talking about this to avoid creating any taboos in our Polish debate. I believe we should talk about everything with absolute sincerity because we have to build trust. Lack of trust not only affects negatively the atmosphere of our last preparations but it also has a negative impact on the EU works, including undoubtedly the proceedings of the recent European Council in Brussels. Where there is mistrust, egoism grows bigger. That is why – let us look for new solutions. We want the European Union which grows as one and in a solidary way. We are against the “two speeds” and we are convinced that on 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2004 we will make one of the most important historic decisions on our continent for the last millennia. We can build the common Europe, which has been dreamt of by so many. On a few occasions, a long time ago we came close to implementing this idea, but it has never been implemented in full. We can build a Europe which can be strong and very creative in its diversity.

We would like 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2004 to be a great European holiday, to give satisfaction to those who did so much for the common Europe, who dreamt about it but, in so many cases, did not live long enough to experience this moment. We would like this to be the day when we will celebrate the reunification of Europe, a holiday on which we will show that the opened doors are a great power of our continent – so that may we say on 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2004, following the wish of John Paul II, that Europe is “breathing with both its lungs”. Let us hope that on such great moments, but also later in our every-day work we will be able to prove that the motto of our discussion “A Strong Poland in a Strong Europe” is not only attainable – it is more real than anyone could have thought.

It is also my desire that our debate serves yet another vitally important purpose. On 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2004 as citizens, as the inhabitants of the Republic of Poland, we are going to change the quality of our presence in Europe. Not only for the reason that we will formally become members of the European Union. Not only because we are expecting financial aid for all types of regional projects, for direct subsidies for farmers or other forms of support from the European Union. This particular piece puts us in the role of a constant petitioner or a beneficiary of the transformation, not to say – a client. I would wish my fellow citizens to believe that as of 1<sup>st</sup> of May we are not only re-entering the European family, in which we have been for over a thousand years, but also – and this I would like to stress – we are assuming our share of responsibility for the future of Europe. We may not avoid any of the important European questions. We may not say with reference to any issue that it does not concern us, that we are simply too far away, that we do not know the answer. Poland and the Polish people are expected to be co-architects of Europe in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We have been presented with a unique chance of contributing the body of our great accomplishments and potential to the construction of a common Europe. (...)

# 30.

Statement at the end of the sitting of the Cabinet Council (excerpts)  
– 29<sup>th</sup> of March 2004

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

We have finished the sitting of the Cabinet Council – yet another devoted to the assessment of the state of preparation of Poland for the entry to the European Union. The previous one took place on 6<sup>th</sup> of November – I am mentioning this to stress the constancy of my interests, as well as the continuity of the functioning of the Cabinet Council in this respect. We have listened to the Prime Minister and to a vast majority of the ministers who informed us in detail about the state of preparation 33 days before the accession.

The state of preparation of the respective government structures, local government administration and relevant agencies, as well as qualifications of the individuals who are going to deal with European issues – all of this I can assess as good, to say the least. I would like to inform you that today we have heard much significant information, which unfortunately does not get across to the public opinion simply for the reason of being too positive and, therefore, of too little interest for the media. I am appealing to keep the society informed about the advancement of the preparations at this last stage in such areas as taking care of the environment, national education and regional self-governments.

Equally important is information concerning the state of preparations for launching direct payments. There is an abundance of detailed information which should get through to the public opinion. I would like that, irrespective of all which is going on in Poland right now, we may be capable of informing the Polish public opinion as extensively as possible about all the opportunities which are going to be created as of 1<sup>st</sup> of May with Poland's accession to the European Union. We have agreed that we would try to pass on this information in three time perspectives. First, everything regarding the period before 1<sup>st</sup> of May – the state of preparation of particular structures for the accession day. Then, things regarding the period after 1<sup>st</sup> of May – the organizational, statutory and financial consequences of our membership. And only later on – this

which constitutes the most important debate which we are holding under the title “A Strong Poland in a Strong Europe” – we will discuss the long-term effects of the Polish presence in the European Union. Such a big country as Poland has to be held co-responsible for what is happening in the Union but that is a question for a more distant future. We would wish the plan of the Polish presence in the European Union to be written down into the National Development Plan for the years 2007–2013 to be approved by this government in April.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

The government of Leszek Miller, which will be finishing its mission on 2<sup>nd</sup> of May in this very chamber, faces the fundamental task of completing all things related to our accession. After the review of the state of affairs done at today’s meeting of the Cabinet Council, I can say that the current situation looks good, to say the least. A majority of works –legislative, organizational and connected with preparing the staff – has been accomplished. I trust that this last remaining month will be taken full advantage of by the government, so that on 1<sup>st</sup> of May we will be able to say that we are joining the European Union not as a poor relative but as a well-prepared, medium-size European state.

In conclusion, I would like to leave you with a thought which I have heard from Commissioner Verheugen, who knows Poland quite well, as he has negotiated the terms of the accession with us. He advised us that – while appreciating our self-criticism and the fact that we have a tendency to split hairs and notice negative things before the positive ones – we should not miss reasons for self-satisfaction and pride. One of the reasons for this rests in that none of the ten states which are about to join the European Union has gained any special treatment. All the states and nations have done their homework without availing themselves of any excuses. This is what differentiates us from, for example, the British or the Spanish or the Portuguese who were granted such special privileges. We should draw satisfaction from what has happened over the past fifteen years in Poland; from what has been achieved by our fellow citizens and by you, Ladies and Gentlemen. Let us be proud of the fact that today we are one of the countries which can join the European Union without any special allowances. As a member of the European Union we will be able to implement the standards binding in the European Union and make use of the advantages it offers. Poland’s entry to the European Union is a historic event. (...)



# 31. Address by Mr. Aleksander Kwasniewski President of the Republic of Poland during the official opening of the European Economic Summit (excerpts) Warsaw, 28<sup>th</sup> of April 2004

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I cordially welcome all the numerous guests who have come to the capital of Poland to attend the European Economic Summit. I welcome people of business, politicians, intellectuals, and representatives of the media. Looking at the faces familiar to me and seeing the list of participants and corporations that they represent, I think of our Summit with hope and confidence. In this body we have a great opportunity for a good, fruitful discussion, which should bring new impulses to Europe, to our countries, economies and firms. However, the most important thing is that this discussion and exchange of ideas will bring benefits to the citizens, to us – inhabitants of an ever-greater European Community.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

We are meeting in an exceptional moment. In two days an unprecedented event is going to take place, the biggest enlargement of the European Union in history. Ten new countries with a population of nearly 77 million citizens are joining the Community. The unnatural division of the continent, which took place after the Second World War, is coming to an end. The Iron Curtain was torn down, the Berlin Wall fell, and we removed economic and political barriers. Co-operation replaced confrontation.

On 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2004 Europe at last will overcome its tragic history. That makes this day vitally important. The dream of many generations will come true. The mission that was the duty of our generation will be completed. We dedicate this success to our fathers, mothers and grandfathers, who did not live to see this day. The mission that we have accomplished we also dedicate to the youngest generation, to those who are going to create the Europe of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

You are guests in a city that 60 years ago the occupiers decided to wipe off the map of Europe. That was to be the punishment for the love of liberty, for

resistance to the occupier, for the rising in the Jewish ghetto and in 1944 on the streets of Warsaw, the Warsaw Rising. Today, when you walk through the streets of Warsaw you will see plaques commemorating the patriotism and sacrifice of life of many heroes. Today, Warsaw rebuilt from the ruins is growing ever more beautiful and welcomes on its doorstep a Europe of peace, co-operation and solidarity. I regret that for security reasons Warsaw is not as it is normally. The shops are boarded up, and the streets are empty. But you realise that we had to take these security measures after the tragic experiences of New York and Madrid and also of Davos, Genoa and Prague. That does not change the fact, however, that you have come to a city risen up from the ashes and which with all of its warmth and charm welcomes you today. It welcomes you in this new Europe of peace, co-operation and solidarity.

You are performing an act of historical justice, but let us remember, and do honour to them, that this enormous change would have been impossible had it not been for people – the members of the opposition of that time and the hope of the citizens of the countries of our region. We recall and honour all those who in the divided Europe, in our region, who could not enjoy sovereignty or freedom, had the courage to speak the truth in a loud voice. We remember of the Committee for the Defence of Workers', which arose in 1976 in Warsaw; we remember the Czech Charter of 77; we remember "Solidarity", which was born in Gdansk – these events aroused dreams and people's faith in them. John Paul II, the Pope from Poland, played an important role in this transformation. From the very outset he supported with all his might the nations striving for freedom. I also would like to recall that the countries of Western Europe provided hard-to-exaggerate help to the peoples behind the Iron Curtain. On such a day, in such a place, and in such a body I would like us all to remember all of this.

Democracy and a market economy do not arise overnight. The changes of 1989 were just the start of a complicated process; they encompassed not only politics and the economy, but also law, education, and the social sphere. Today, with pride we can say: We achieved success. We have a sovereign, democratic, law-abiding state; we are a member of NATO and are joining the European Union. We have built an economy in which the private sector generates 75 of the GDP and 80% of the exports go to the European and American markets. Since 1990 Poland's GDP rose 50%, and in recent years an inflation rate of nearly 500% was brought down to less than two percent. Small and medium-size firms have blossomed. The constitution has introduced strict rules governing the state's financial policy. Independent institutions stand guard over the stability of the zloty: The National Bank of Poland and Council for Monetary Policy.

We achieved all of this in less than fifteen years. In such a short time we managed to carry out changes that in other countries took generations. That attests to the vigour and imagination of our society. For the country, for Poland, which fifteen years ago was mired in a deep economic and political crisis, you will admit that there are reasons for great satisfaction. But we also learned how important it is during the transformation to evenly distribute the burden of the reforms and modernisation efforts. Everyone should benefit from the reforms. To this end we must create conditions for fair access to education, acquiring new qualifications, using and processing information. Modernisation is real progress only when its results are universally accessible.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

The accession of the ten does not mean the demarcation of a new line of division. It is an opening of a door that should remain open for our partners and friends. Success of the community will be possible only if we are not egotists, when the Union will be an area of trust, co-operation and dialogue. After all, Europe is something more than just the European Union. That is why I am so glad to see so many friends from countries that do not belong to the European Union. Your presence is an important message for Union politicians and economic leaders.

The Founding Fathers – Schuman, Monnet, and de Gasperi – knew very well that the vision of unification of the continent needs tangible, real foundations. That is why the economic dimension of the community was formed as quickly as possible. If somewhere in the world one could cite an example of the “cunning of reason”, of which Hegel wrote, it is surely the European Union: Its power and effectiveness stems not from good intentions alone, but from a community of interests. The European idea has gained strong support in gradually ever-closer economic co-operation – starting from the European Steel and Coal Community up to the introduction of the euro. To the catalogue of values that brought us to the Union we add respect for the human person, European solidarity, the capacity to compromise, and building a community on diversity. One lives more confidently and securely in a world of such values.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

One must admit that the wounds from the wall that for half a century divided Europe are still visible from the economic point of view. Real labour productivity in Central and Eastern Europe is two times, three times, and in some countries even four times lower than in the western part of the

continent. The public administration in the eastern part of the continent is less efficient. As a consequence, the standard of living is lower. Enlargement of the European Union with the countries of the eastern part of the continent will certainly alter this situation in many fields, but the changes will not take place overnight.

So we are facing a daunting challenge. The more quickly we reduce the differences in the level of economic development of the two parts of Europe, the better this will be for the economic and social stability of the continent. I regard this as one of the most important tasks for Poland and for the other countries joining the Union.

I am convinced that the drive for innovation, building a modern and competitive economy must go hand-in-hand with concern to realise the principles of cohesion and solidarity. This conviction also comes from an analysis of the process of globalisation, and that is why it is important for all Europe, including the part of Europe that remains outside the borders of the Union. We cannot deal with the negative consequences of globalisation, which critics rightly point out, by shouting loudly "Stop!" There are no simple recipes here. Rather, we ought to ponder how to promote balanced development: how to ensure that most of our citizens participate in the gains of globalisation. Equalisation of the standard of living must start from equalising chances for development.

I address these words to alter-globalists and anti-globalists who declare that they are coming to Warsaw. My Dear alter- and anti-globalists: We are not deaf to your opinions, and social sensitivity is not alien to us. Contrary to appearances, we share many goals. Although we may differ at times on the means to achieve these goals, I am convinced that dialogue is possible and necessary. I believe that Warsaw will be a place of peaceful, open dialogue of those who think differently about globalisation but who want to and know how to talk to each other.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Our continent is proving that it is not afraid of new times and does not turn its back on difficult challenges. The Europe of the 21<sup>st</sup> century – notwithstanding all the difficulties and threats – is a Europe of co-operation, openness and solidarity! These are the goals that we must work towards every day. I am convinced that for this Europe the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2004 will be a great day, which for all time will go down in the history of the continent, in the history of our individual lives and the history of our nations. I also believe that such a meeting of people

of politics, the media, science and business, as the one taking place here in Warsaw is the right preparation and proper step on this road. May Europe after 1<sup>st</sup> of May of this year, an enlarged Europe, a Europe of twenty-five countries of the European Union, be a continent of co-operation, openness and solidarity? I believe that the deliberations will take place in such a spirit. Once again I warmly welcome our guests and thank them for accepting the invitation to Poland, to Warsaw. I am very happy that we can be together.

# 32. Address at the EU flag raising ceremony – Warsaw, Pilsudski's Square, 30<sup>th</sup> of April/1<sup>st</sup> of May 2004

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Speakers of Both Houses, Mr. Prime Minister, Your Eminence Cardinal Primate, and last but not least Dear Countrymen, Residents of Warsaw!

We are meeting today in a national sanctuary, before the Grave of the Unknown Soldier, in a place where the ashes of our heroes rest. We have come here out of respect for history and with great joy that we are completing the work of our fathers so beautifully. We say this to those who did not live to see this historic moment, to those who are symbolised by this Grave, and to our near and dear ones, to whom we want to say: You completed a great work. We also remember our mothers, grandfathers, and all those whose efforts preceded us on this important road.

In just minutes Poland will be in the European Union. We have waited for this day. We have worked hard for this historic moment. We can congratulate ourselves on Poland's independence and sovereignty, which we won with our own hands. We can congratulate ourselves on democracy and the rule of law as the foundation of our state, for which we declared ourselves unequivocally. These were challenging decisions. We were not always aware of their consequences. We still have much to do. We did not deal with all these consequences without error and once and for all. However, we have achieved so much already that we can say we passed this qualifying examination for entry into Europe that we took voluntarily. Today we are together with a united Europe – the symbol of freedom and democracy, tolerance and law and order, with Europe in partnership and co-operation.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

On this night we feel a special bond with the generations of our ancestors. Like in a mirror, in this event we look at one thousand years of our statehood and culture. We have participated in the European community since the times of Mieszko I and Boleslaw the Brave. The unification of the continent

also draws from Polish lessons and experiences. The Gniezno Congress, the Polish-Lithuanian Union, the Polish tradition of tolerance, and ideas of the Constitution of 3<sup>rd</sup> of May, the idea of fighting “for your freedom and ours”, the rich culture that developed even when Poland did not have its own state, and the awakening of the civil society at the instance of “Solidarity” – this is our Polish contribution to the European ethos.

For many years we have not been allowed to participate on equal rights in European institutions. Now what generations of Poles dreamed of and strove for is coming true.

In this exceptional moment we express words of respect and gratitude to those who did so much for Poland, for the Polish people, and for Europe. We thank Pope John Paul II. We remember the words of His Holiness uttered during his pilgrimage to Poland in 1999: “From the very beginning the Apostolic See has supported Poland’s integration with the European Union.”

As President of the Republic of Poland I wish to thank my countrymen for their hard work, which changed Poland and prepared the state and the economy for accession. I thank you for a kind of “levy in mass” during the days of the accession referendum.

Thanks are also due to my predecessor in the office of president, Lech Walesa, to the Sejm, the Senate and to the governments of the Third Republic, to the prime ministers – starting from Tadeusz Mazowiecki to Leszek Miller – to the foreign minister, to the negotiators and to the Polish Foreign Service, which worked hard for good compromises. I also would like to stress the contributions to integration of nongovernmental organisations. We have succeeded and I believe that today as well, on this night, in this Square, no matter what we hear, we succeeded in overcoming party divisions and acting in unison. Europe needs a harmonious Poland, a wise Poland, and a responsible Poland.

I am convinced and believe that we can also conjure up in us the European spirit in other important matters for Poland. Here, on this night, I wish to address words of gratitude to friends in countries of the original European Union, in European institutions – to all those who were conscious of the historic importance of this enlargement, who displayed courage and imagination, who rose above egoism and stereotypes. We thank you for your confidence, we thank you for your support, and I am very glad that you are here with us in this Square.

I ask you, now in a body of 25 states, to remember that the door to the European Union must remain open, that we invite all those who link their ambitions, hopes and dreams with the European Union. We greet the countries that are counting on Poland on their way to the European Union. We greet neighbours from Ukraine, we greet our neighbours in the Balkans, and we greet all those who see their future in the European Union.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

We are making history. So I appeal to all those assembled here and at the same time through the media to those who are participating in the ceremonies in Poznan and Wroclaw, on the Hel Peninsula and in Ciechocinek, in Cracow and in Lublin. I appeal to all the Polish people: Let us continue to act together, let us leave more good works behind us. Our membership in the Union opens up enormous possibilities – for us, for our children, grandchildren, and for future generations. But it depends on us how we take advantage of this opportunity. Will we give Poland good times? We are becoming citizens of the Union and assuming joint responsibility for the destiny of a united Europe. No one will remove this responsibility from Poland. We are building a strong Poland – a country with a growing economy, sensitivity to social issues, and building a strong Europe in solidarity. Today it turns out that we can achieve even the most ambitious goals. Today dreams are becoming a reality. Today Poland is returning to the European family. Polish women, Polish men, Europeans – welcome in a common Europe.



# 33. Interview for "Sygnaly Dnia", First Programme of the Polish Radio – Warsaw, 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2004

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*It is extremely busy here for the 1<sup>st</sup> of May celebrations at the Presidential Palace.*

No, it has never been peaceful here. This has always been a public holiday. True, today is a special day. Welcome to Europe.

*This mission is already behind you. Should I repeat it three times that we are in Europe? We need to believe this.*

I believe this. Yesterday I experienced truly memorable moments at Pilsudski's Square when the European flag was being raised. There was an exceptional atmosphere stemming from the sense that we have achieved the goal for which we, and the generations before us, have strived over the years. Plus the vicinity of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, this inspired everyone with emotion, joy and reflection.

*To those that held up the banner with the words: "No to the EU" you said that they were wrong.*

Because they are wrong.

*Completely?*

In my opinion, completely.

*In that case please use such arguments which will persuade them.*

We need to begin with the fact that Poland is democratic and that everyone can have as their motto anything they wish to. Second, I am convinced that every day, month and year of Poland's presence in the EU will provide evidence that EU membership makes sense, that it helps, that we are accelerating our

development; we are catching up with highly developed states, that we have a sense of security, that we live in a world of uniform rules and values.

*NATO, the European Union. What is next?*

Further development.

*Actually, I wanted to ask this question in a different way but I am afraid that it might be inappropriate. NATO – president Kwasniewski's first term in office, the EU – president Kwasniewski's second...*

There will be no third term in office because the Constitution does not provide for such a possibility. Therefore, I believe that my successors and Poland in general will show in NATO and in the EU that Poland is a solid and predictable partner and, at the same time, it is active and creative. Poland is not only one of the new member states of the EU but it is also a place where serious concepts and ideas originate, where there is much good energy, which is a very important asset in Europe.

*And what is your answer to those who criticize the results of negotiations and the terms on which we have been accepted? Will you say that this issue has to be looked upon from a long-term perspective?*

I think that this matter has to be viewed from a shorter perspective because it is the nature of all negotiations that one can always say: why only so little and not more than this?

It is characteristic of negotiations that at some point they must end. I am convinced that Poland has gained everything that there was to be gained in the course of the negotiations, and even a little bit more. Attacks on negotiators and the effects of their work are groundless. But this is all history now. We will see how much of what we have won in the negotiations we will be capable of using. Because in a year's time it is not going to be important on which terms we have joined the Community but to what extent we were able to make use of the assistance funds. Be it at the level of 100, 80 or 60 percent.

*If I understand it correctly this is a dream of the President of the Republic of Poland?*

Yes, I would wish for that. No one has yet succeeded to do so but why should not Poland be the first one? I would obviously be very worried if it turns out that we are only capable of using 60 percent.

*Are we ready for this?*

I think so. What is more, we have tested all the structures preparing us for the absorption of EU funds and this looks at least well.

*Are not you aware that we live in a world where there is a prevailing conviction that the EU is a kind of a rain of money which will pour on us and we do not have to do much on our part?*

In certain circles this is certainly the case, but this is a serious mistake. The EU is, on the one hand, a chance and on the other – a share of responsibility. I think that what we miss most from our perspective is the fact that as of 1<sup>st</sup> of May, as of today, we are going to be co-responsible for what happens in the family of 25 member states. Let us hope that this not going to be the case, but if an oil tanker crashes on the shores of Spain or Portugal it is just as much our problem as it is theirs. This is what the altered way of thinking is all about. This is not easy but it is necessary.

*Chancellor Kohl has said that it is not important what is good for Germany but it is important if this is good for Luxemburg.*

These are very wise words and I believe that in Poland we will also remember them. In Europe we must think about those who are the smallest. Only then can we build a real European solidarity. If Europe thinks from the point of view of the biggest, the richest, the strongest it will soon become a split continent, so what Chancellor Kohl was talking about and what we should acknowledge is the need to care for the smaller ones: Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Slovenia. The care is not less important than the fight for our interests. Although it is true that no one in the EU has stopped fighting for national interests. This is also a strength of the EU.

*Is there a place in the EU for national egoism?*

For egoism – no, for national interest – yes.

*The line is sometimes very thin.*

It is thin indeed. I generally think that egoism is a bad feature while reasonable catering for one's own interests is something completely natural. Why speak about the EU? Let us take marriage as an example. In marriage we can talk about interests by egoism as accompanied by trouble.

*About marriage? Not about partnership relations?*

Whichever you want. About relations between people.

*Poland is running to catch up with the wealthiest EU states. The EU will want to catch up with the United States. Will this take less time with the new member states aboard?*

In a certain sense, yes. This might seem a bit of a paradox but this is so. Europe must set the strategic goal for itself to enter the global game. The goal is to make Europe – which even now has almost half a billion people and, thus, is one of the biggest markets – a place for development, a place which will turn out to be competitive in relation to the other civilization centres, and these include not only the United States and Canada but also China, India, the Asia and the Pacific region – Japan, Malaysia, Singapore and the countries in that region. There is also Latin America with Brazil. So, as can be seen there are more centres. We have to face up to the challenges. As for Europe, it has taken in weaker members, which has led to a lowering of the national income rates; it has at the same time gained a tremendous boost for development. I am convinced that the enlargement of the EU is the best chance for Europe to become one of such civilization centres and centres of development.

*So is it worth to divide first only in order to multiply later on ?*

No, it is worth opening ourselves up. It would be bad if we see the enlargement only from the perspective of the market on which products may be sold. This is a great potential. Close to 40 million Polish people do not only account for a population number. These are educated, active people who will undoubtedly enrich the EU.

*Will there now be a new border along the river Bug? Not crossable for many years?*

The border will be established.

*I do not mean the economic one. I am referring to that drawn in mentality.*

That is our task. I think that if I were to name two main political tasks for Poland in the EU I would define them as follows: first of all, an Eastern dimension which means that it is impermissible for us to allow any kind of a curtain to appear in the East which would hamper our contacts. We must, therefore, be open towards Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia etc. Second, it should be one of

our major policy goals to strengthen the transatlantic bond and to maintain cooperation with the United States and Canada. It is needed, natural and, from the historical point of view, fully justifiable. There should be no new curtain on our Eastern border although we are the EU members state located farthest to the East.

*What about the diverging political preferences – if not political interests – in the sense that we feel closer to the United States than to France or German. Paris and Berlin feel closer to Moscow, over our heads. What will the situation look like in the future?*

Most certainly this is going to be somewhat the way you have described it as likes and emotions have their own logic. If the President of Russia and his wife are being invited for the German Chancellor's birthday, this is their absolute right – this is how things have turned out. Yet, I am convinced that the EU is such a strong organism that it must be and it is cable of maintaining solidarity, whilst taking care of equal rights. I have a conviction that there is no threat of a Moscow- Berlin-Paris bridge, or any other for that matter, to be created over our heads. When it comes to American issues I heard yesterday at the European conference here in Warsaw a thought with which I also agree. We should strengthen the transatlantic bond and not put it at risk so much as we did last year on the occasion of the Iraq conflict. This undoubtedly demands a review of the European-American relations and creation of ties which will give us a sense of security and real dialogue.

*Does the Iraqi issue still negatively impact our image in the eyes of French and German politicians?*

It is definitely an issue but not a problem.

*I am asking if the Polish people are entitled to have an idea of their own and to pursue it without consulting this with anybody, despite being in the common structure.*

It is our unquestionable right and no one can take it away from us.

*This is a question of sovereignty?*

This is a question of our sovereignty. But there is also the question of the effectiveness of policies and a policy is effective only if partners can be persuaded to sign up – if we are not alone, left on a margin. Generally speaking, dialogue is necessary and Poland is a place which has successfully proven that dialogue is

effective; it changes political systems and policies. This is a good example. Let us consider a small example – it may be said that if the European Economic Forum in Warsaw has ended without even one window pane being broken, without one incident, this is due to the Polish spirit which ensures that here such events take place without bloodshed or unnecessary aggressive reactions.

*Maybe this has been so because the Polish spirit had advised us to take security measures in advance, Mister President?*

That too. I think that it characteristic of the Polish people to be aggressive verbally but decidedly less so in action. And that is a good thing.

*Today's enlargement certainly is not the last step. There is talk about Bulgaria, Romania...*

Bulgaria and Romania are very close because Bulgaria will almost certainly finish negotiations this year, Romania and Croatia a bit later but it may be expected that in the year 2007 these three states will become members of the EU. The accession of Turkey is a far more serious and complicated matter. The negotiations are about to begin and the issue of Ukraine, Moldova and the other Eastern states which have declared their European aspirations is open but the issue is equally important for us and one which we support. Most certainly they are not yet ready to become EU members but we should not lose them from our perspective.

*The list of politicians present at the European Economic Summit suggests that these countries have their ambitions and may one day become members. But will this still be the European Union?*

But why not? You know, I think this is an issue posed primarily by the West, that we should define Europe as something concrete and very precise. I believe that the geographical boundaries in the UE are not so significant. Any real discussions of the question where Europe is in fact located in geographical terms ends with what I have experienced recently. Prime Minister Brazauskas said that the centre of Europe lies 22 km from Vilnius, president Iliescu says that it is somewhere in Romania, the President of Ukraine says that it is somewhere in the Ukraine and president Rau says that it is several tens kilometres from Frankfurt. I don't know where the centre of Europe is located in the geographical sense. What I do know, however, is that Europe is a continent which may be stretched out as far as to the Caucasian countries up to Azerbaijan, Armenia or Georgia, as long it shares common values and acts according to the same rules. Certainly there is a problem with Ukraine and Moldavia, and with prospects for

Belarus. Turkey is not only a transcontinental but also a transreligion problem. This would be the first instance when a Muslim, an Islamic country would enter the EU. A real problem, in political terms, is posed by Russia which must define its position, whether it is more European or more Euro-Asiatic or perhaps it belongs to a special category of its own and is playing a unique role. Let us not forget that, speaking about Europe, it is worth considering culture. Please give me a reason why Proust should be European and Dostoyevsky not? Both of them raised similar issues in their writings. Why should Ravel and his Bolero be European but not Khachaturian. After all, there are no boundaries here. We are in the same circle.

*Maybe because culture overcomes boundaries ?*

No, this is also not true also with reference to culture because there are also such elements in music where this division is clearly visible. And yet here there is no dividing line.

*Is the public opinion aware of the importance of Poland's entry to the EU? Is it fully aware of the opportunities, possibilities and perspectives?*

I hope so.

*Hope, such a beautiful word.*

You know, that's not how you go about it...

*Do we know? Because if our knowledge on the Union is to be limited only to that we are only allowed to transport 110 l of beer across the border, between you and me, it is knowledge about the functioning mechanisms but rather on a limited level.*

This is not a limited level; this is a very sophisticated one. I did not know about what you have said. I see that you are better informed than I am. Yesterday I saw the front pages of newspapers; they were all about the Union, they all featured the EU flags so certainly some kind of emotion is present. I expect that we will grow more mature about the EU. It is important to look at it in terms of chances rather than problems, notice more possibilities than fears. This will largely depend on you – the media, the journalists. If we begin discussions along the lines that this is not 110 but 100 l of beer or something else we would deluge the EU with a sea of trivia, with issues which are largely meaningless but can create a bad mood. I do believe however, that the Polish people have the awareness, and I certainly had that impression when I stood at Pilsudski Square in Warsaw and I was not alone in this – that it is an extremely profound moment.

*For whom? For which generation?*

For everybody. For us it is a chance and a great satisfaction, that we have brought things up to this point. If I regret anything it is the fact that I could not celebrate this with my father, who has passed away, with my mother, with many people who also dreamt of this, who could not picture this for themselves but for whom this was a dream. Maybe the vicinity of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier was yesterday so important during the EU flag-raising ceremony because we are now paying our dues to the previous generations, we are making their dreams come true; we are repaying the price of their sacrifice and bloodshed. I know that this sounds solemn and that maybe this attitude towards the EU stresses the war experience too much, but this was important. I would be genuinely happy if I could have my parents, who really wanted for this to happen, close to me. Our generation has accomplished this task, thus creating a huge opportunity for young people, for the next generation because it is they who will define the quality of our presence in the UE. We have established our presence and they will define its quality – whether we will count and how we will be looked upon. Having seen these young people who turned up yesterday in such great numbers at the Square I am convinced they are ready to take up this effort.

*Since you have mentioned regret, do not you regret that yesterday and today it was very solemn and with due ceremony and tomorrow there will be dismissals, promotions?*

There is a very good French saying *c'est la vie*, that's life.

*So why does this la vie has to be present right here?*

I can say that we are entering the EU in quite an original way. The dismissals have already been filed for; they are lying on my desk and will be signed tomorrow. It is also tomorrow when we will make all the necessary changes and let us hope that this is done in the good Polish style, that is, people are changing but we can, despite all the criticism, thank those who are leaving and at the same time encourage those who are coming in to take effort and work hard, as well as to give them the necessary support and credit of trust.

*Mister President, thanking you for the interview I would like to tell our listeners one thing, that we usually talk in the white room but today we are in the blue room. As I understand it has something to do with our entry to the EU?*



I will be honest; it is a pure coincidence although quite a nice one. I will be entertaining an official guest in the white room in a moment. As it is often the case in Poland casual events build up beautiful stories. The first meeting in the European Union with the First Programme of the Polish Radio for the first time in the blue and yellow room, so very much a European one.

Interview conducted by *Krzysztof Grzesiowski*

# 34.

Interview for BBC Radio (excerpt) – 2<sup>nd</sup> of May 2005

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*Mr President, it has been a year since Poland's accession to the Union. What has changed?*

To begin with, we can describe this year as very successful. Unrest, catastrophic visions have not come about. Poland has neither been flooded by cheap products from the West, nor has there been an outflow of workforce abroad, there is neither a disaster for the farmers or a lessening of the dynamics of the Polish economy.

In fact, we can say that everything is quite the opposite. Polish exports have increased by 40%, the Polish farmers have received additional funding, through direct subsidies to mention one and they can now invest and think about the future.

We have structural funds for many projects important for Poland. The Polish economy is making progress and what is important; Poland's political position in the European Union is quite strong. We owe this to our tough stance when it comes to fighting for our own interests but also to the fact that we are able to think in European categories as proved by our involvement in the Ukrainian crisis. We have shown the European Union through this involvement in Ukraine and its results that we are both competent with regard to assessing the situation and efficient when it comes to taking action. I think this situation has helped us build our position as of that of a serious partner in Europe, a partner who knows what he is saying and if he suggests a course of action it will bring a positive effect.

*Everything that you say seems like a strain of success. Is there anything that has not gone well? What doubts have you got? What worries you?*

I am worried by the general state of certain matters in the European Union. If I do have any worries today, they have more to do with the French referen-

dum on the Constitutional Treaty or with the discussion about the financial prospects of the European Union than with the situation in Poland.

If I have any problems today, they have more to do with the slowly progressing launch of the EU's common foreign relations and defence policy. This becomes visible with such issues as, on the one hand the problems of Pridnestrovie, while on the other hand, for example, the differences in relations no so much between Russia and the EU but between Russia and particular member states. There is a lack of coherence but this does not directly involve Poland. These are not matters which are decided here in Poland.

Undoubtedly, the European Union, the enlarged EU consisting of 25, soon to be 27–28, states has to be able to deal with numerous issues. This will not be easy and my expectations towards our partners from France, Germany, Spain and Great Britain are higher. I would expect more initiative from them. Poland will also react positively to such initiatives. (...)



## Chapter 5.

Secure and friendly borders – policy  
of reconciliation and development  
of cooperation with neighbours

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# 1. Lecture in Konrad Adenauer Foundation "Poland and Germany at the threshold of the 21<sup>st</sup> century" (excerpts) – St. Augustin, 18<sup>th</sup> of April 1997

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Ladies and Gentlemen!

I want to warmly thank the Konrad Adenauer Foundation for encouraging me to make a few remarks not only about present Polish-German relations and entering the European Union and NATO by Poland but also about everything that in the next century shall specify the profound sense of Polish-German "long duration", as Fernand Braudel says, in Europe. (...)

The year of 2000 has all the qualities to become a watershed in the history of Polish-German relations. Not the symbolic meaning is the point; however it is very important for this reason as well. The Polish people associate this date with the 1000<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the arrival of Emperor Otton III in Gniezno to meet the Polish ruler, Boleslaw Chrobry. In our history the convention in 1000 is considered a symbol of peace and understanding between Poles and Germans. So it is obvious that we wish to go back to this tradition.

The fact that for the first time both States shall find themselves in exactly the same geopolitical area which is dominated by the same philosophy of the State organization and relations between the States, is the major determinant of the entirely new status of Polish-German relations that is coming into view together with a new century. Actually I mean the prospect of the accession of Poland to the European Union and North Atlantic Alliance. We have to be fully aware that as soon as these prospects become a reality the relations between our countries shall have the quality that they never had before. (...)

Coordinated actions directed towards the eastern neighbours of Poland, the stability and development of which is in our common interest, may turn out to be especially efficient. Poland does not avoid providing assistance and taking initiatives, if our neighbours want that. We recognise this as our duty towards the region and towards Europe. Our experience of transformation and our

potential compel us into assuming part of this responsibility for the problems of the continent.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Poland that is strongly based on the French and German neo-Caroline “hard core”, can become a real keystone of Europe. It may be open to the East, attract Russia and emanate with democracy and prosperity towards its immediate neighbours, Lithuania, the Ukraine and Belarus, just like West Germany has radiated at us for recent decades. It is also noticeable that reconciliation between Poland and Germany has made an example for overcoming historical resentments between the states of Central and Eastern Europe. The achievements of cooperation between Poland and Germany are a model for the development of relations in the region.

Relations with the East can become a Polish “speciality” in the European structures. We pursue a sensible and constructive policy towards our neighbours. Close Polish-Lithuanian contacts and relations with the Ukraine that are developing perfectly serve as the best evidence here. Both in Kiev and in Warsaw we define them as a “strategic partnership”.

Also our attitude towards Russia is characterised by rationality and responsibility. We can find an important European partner in our eastern neighbour. In modern Europe the importance of this partner should obviously take on a modern dimension. In no case it should be similar to the comeback to the “concert of powers” that is known in history. In recent years Poland and Russia have been developing their mutual relations without the pressure of negative emotions. Now we are on the threshold of the removal of perhaps the last matter that despite Polish efforts, casts a shadow on the overall prospect of the development of our relations. We are expecting that a new chapter in our relations with Russia will open when Poland becomes a member of NATO. (...)

At the end of the present millennium Poland and Germany have liberated themselves from the political ballast of the past and have created an authentic strategic community of interests that is totally unique in recent history. The border between Poland and Germany, perhaps the most difficult border in Europe, that still during the times of the patron of this house was the bone of contention between us, today is a problem only in respect to the fact that Germans and Poles are equally irritated by the extremely long queues at border crossing points, smuggling and crime. Poles and Germans have managed to create a friendly border zone, and I am certain that the recent “war over bread rolls” in Frankfurt on the Oder has been the last war between Poland and Germany.



And here we come to the essence of Polish-German neighbourhood for today and for tomorrow. We are no longer divided by great historical problems. For thirty years, our predecessors have created a solid foundation, through first unofficial opinion poll in the fifties, through the memorandum of the Evangelical Church, a letter of Polish bishops, the new Eastern-oriented policy of Willy Brandt and Helmut Schmidt up to the historic achievements of the present coalition under the leadership of Chancellor Helmut Kohl.

The community of Polish-German interests is decided not only in cabinets and parliaments, but also at schools, editorial boards, companies and in the street. For seven years we have been recording enormous progress here. Germans are perceived in Poland as friends, and this kindness is constantly growing by two or three percent every year. This is a manifestation of both a growing acceptance of our western neighbours and also an increasing sense of our own value. In normal conditions, if the Polish people are not threatened by their neighbours, they relieve themselves of historical complexes. For the first time the Polish people can see themselves on the sunny, not the shadowy side of history. (...)

However, there is still a lot to be done in the social dimension of relations between Poles and Germans. I am not sure if the sense of Polish-German community has become a personal problem of all the members of the young generation of Germans. Perhaps if it were like that, the German surveys of public opinion would not be unfavourable for the Polish people. The situation seems a bit paradoxical. On the one hand Poland has a better opinion in German economic circles, while on the other, according to surveys, Poles are on the very bottom of the German hierarchy of liking.

Sometimes it seems that Polish-German relations need a new impetus, hard work and new ideas every day. The former romanticism of putting up the first bridges, overcoming the past, establishing a dialogue and building reconciliation has come to an end. Now, normality and domestic economic problems have been left. In the future that can be predicted, the change of generations will take place at the helm of German policy and social life. Will it be possible in those few years that thirty-year-old people in both countries shall be able to create a real lobby aiming at deepening relations between Poland and Germany? Or will Polish-German "osmosis" remain in the same economy, while not being too much worried about the fact that in the general opinion the consciousness of our community of interests is still quite recent and easily becomes subject to the ghosts of the past, prejudices and stereotypes rooted in the subconscious?

German historians sometimes say that the 20<sup>th</sup> century was the German century. And to a certain measure they are right as it was a German century in the dislocation of German existence as well as in an admirable way of overcoming the effects of the Nazi tragedy. Half a century ago the Germans were a condemned nation; today they are respected and even liked. The hopes of neighbours from the east and related to the enlargement of the European Union and NATO, despite problems with internal unification, are focused on Germany.

But if this 20<sup>th</sup> century that is coming to an end was a German century, it was also a Polish century to a certain measure. When it was beginning Poland was not on the map, when it is coming to an end Poland is a valued partner in Europe, a country whose neighbours expect from it to play an important role in the unification of our continent. Let us make the next century that will start in the year 2001, our common century, a century of an efficient, and yet diverse, European Union, in which Germans and Poles, remembering their common thousand-year history, will support each other. This vision is not too much utopian and the hopes are not too excessive.

## 2. Interview for Ukrainian Television, Channel "1+1" (recorded by Zycie Warszawy – a Polish daily) (excerpts) – 19<sup>th</sup> of May 1997

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*You are going to Kiev to sign the agreement concerning mutual relations. What is this declaration going to include?*

The point is to draw conclusions from the difficult and tragic past that shall help us build a good future, settle the score and create chances for everybody including the young generation, so that Polish-Ukrainian relations were full of understanding and reconciliation. So that they were wealthy in economic, political and cultural meaning. If Poland and Ukraine want to live in peace and friendship, neither the Volhynia tragedy from the period of war nor the Vistula Operation that took place in post-war Poland can happen again. It is very important to be able to overcome the evil past.

*What in particular is going to be done after this declaration is made?*

Works of the commission are taking place, textbooks are being changed, they are also being changed in Ukraine as well. It is very important to bring up our children on the strength of full information about the history and not to create new nationalisms on their grounds. Besides, Ukraine is still known in a one-sided way through books by Sienkiewicz or war history. However even those Polish people who used to travel during the 60s and 70s to Kiev, did not really notice the difference between where the Soviet Union was and where Ukraine was. We are discovering this new Ukraine now. I am convinced that both economic, political and cultural relations as well as the establishment of the Institute of Polish Culture shall contribute to it. From the point of view of tourism, Ukraine has also got a lot to offer, for example the Crimea or Odessa. There is a chance to get to know the history of such cities as Kiev or Lviv. More and more Polish people shall discover the new independent Ukraine and it is going to change its image, this old stereotype. Please keep in mind that 50 years ago we renewed the relations with Germans still having a much more difficult problem. And today Germans are treated as a country that is one of

the nations that are most friendly towards Poland. I am certain that it is going to be the same with Ukraine soon.

*Poland is aspiring to the role of the leader of East-central Europe. In relation to this, are you planning any meetings, for example with the President of Belarus, Lukashenko? Are you going to talk to Kuchma, the President about this?*

We want to have proper contacts with Belarus. They are our neighbours. But we have some problems. Not always do we understand the policy of Belarus. Sometimes we are judged by our neighbour in a wrong way. Unwanted words are said on the side of Belarus. I am convinced that we will talk about this with President Kuchma. He knows more because he has hosted President Lukashenko recently. If Belarus takes the initiative of multilateral meetings, I think that there are opportunities to meet with a group of neighbours, that is Ukraine, Poland and Lithuanian and maybe Latvia and Belarus and we can consider what we can do to make Belarus more democratic, to make its independence stronger and to help Belarus in very complicated economic matters.

*Do you think that there are still chances for that?*

In politics you can never use the word “never”. Sometimes actions are not efficient. But in general, I think that you have to maintain the dialogue. Although, if it is a dialogue of deaf people, it very quickly turns out to be nonsense. (...)

*Are you going to talk to President Kuchma about the negative balance in turnover between Poland and Ukraine?*

Yes. But I think that at this stage it is unavoidable. It is slightly similar to the same problem that we have with Germans and Italians. I think that what we have to see now in Polish-Ukrainian relations is to make import from Poland more investment related than consumption-related. In my opinion the problem of the trade gap with Ukraine is not the largest problem. It is important what we can do to make Poland more apparent in investments in Ukraine and what we can do to modernise Ukrainian industry.

*Are you planning Polish investments in Ukraine?*

Why not? I will tell you more, it sounds wonderful. We have our enterprises and we have bought some companies in Germany. At the beginning the Germans were totally surprised. How come? Poles are buying a factory in our country? And why not. We are living in the world that, if it applies the same principles, if it is the same system of economy, where there is no regular dollar and black

market dollar. If a Polish company can go into Ukraine with its investments. If it is profitable. If it has a feeling of security that this money is not going to be nationalised or wasted, then obviously this phenomenon is going to take place.

*You are in friendly relations with the Ukrainian President. Do you phone each other about non-political matters?*

We make phone calls. I really appreciate contacts with President Kuchma. We have started speaking the same language very quickly and on neutral grounds. It was a coincidence that our first meeting took place in Paris at the ceremony of the funeral of Francois Mitterrand. We met and established relations that last. Even if we start talking about other things it usually ends with talking about politics. But we talk about various problems. And I think that we understand each other very well.

*What else could you say about our mutual relations before the visit to Ukraine?*

Poland has a special obligation to explain to a lot of people all over the world that Ukraine is necessary for European security and for the development in Europe. Ukraine is a large country, a country with a 50 million population. It is located in a very important region in Europe. Ukraine is a country that only recently has appeared as an independent State and it is not known to many people. Poland and I treat this, that is telling my partners that Ukraine is a very important country, as a duty.

Interviewer: *Oleksandr Tkachenko*

### 3. Address to the Supreme Council of Ukraine (excerpts) – Kiev, 21<sup>st</sup> of May 1997

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Welmiszanownyj Pane Hołowo Werchownij Rady, Szanowny Deputaty!

It is a great satisfaction for me that today I can be a guest in the parliament of independent Ukraine and express the words of greetings from the Polish nation to the Ukrainian nation. I am certain that it is a historical moment.

The fact that we have developed our cooperation so much recently and how much we deepened our mutual understanding can be the subject of our common pride. And what is most important, is the fact that this new chapter of our history is being defined by ourselves, the Ukrainians and Poles, in the pursuit of a common benefit and success.

A great Ukrainian poet Taras Shevchenko was writing about the past of Polish-Ukrainian relations thus: “Szcze jak buły my Kozakamy, bratałyś z wolnymy Lachamy”. It is easier for liberated people and independent nations to reach an agreement. This truth is fully confirmed by our present times.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Neighbouring with independent Ukraine is unusually important for Poland. Both our countries have belonged to Europe for over one thousand years and they are both an important part of it. The value and potential of our countries prove that each of them is capable of playing an important role in the stabilisation of the situation in our region. Therefore the joining of our efforts that is expressed by the strategic partnership of Poland and Ukraine is even more significant. The security of democratic and independent Poland is closely related to the security of a democratic and independent Ukraine, and the peaceful and successful existence of Europe is hard to be imagined in isolation from the security and successful development of both our countries.

In December 1991 the Republic of Poland recognised the Ukrainian proclamation of independence as the first state in the world. On our side, it was both an act that came out of both political rationalism and a spontaneous act that appeared as the heart felt need. The independent Poland that walked on the path of democratic and free market reforms expressed the wish of success to its neighbours and Slavonic kinsmen in this way.

Together we started constructing our neighbourhood, with the awareness that we undertake a difficult task that is important but also prospective. We could bring out of us everything which was best. It is a strengthening proof of our power and abilities for us ourselves, the modern the Polish people and Ukrainians who undertake the challenges of the looming 21<sup>st</sup> century. (...)

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Delegates!

The enlargement of NATO and the European Union are as if they were two tendencies of the same, general process of European integration. They ought to be understood as moving the area of stability and security towards the east that takes place at a general assumption that European security is indivisible and the existence of any “grey” or “buffer” sphere is unacceptable.

NATO enlargement will increase the degree of European security and therefore it will also increase Ukrainian security. With pleasure we welcome the agreement on the Russian – NATO charter. We truly support the need of the establishment of the Ukraine – NATO charter. We want development of close cooperation, including military, between Poland and Ukraine. It is going to be unquestionable evidence that NATO enlargement does not lead to the appearance of new lines of division in Europe. Our soldiers have experience in cooperation under the auspices of UNO. Cooperation within “Partnership for Peace” has brought much good. A Polish-Ukrainian battalion capable of performing specialist missions in peaceful operations will be ready soon. Therefore unity of duties of the Polish army and Ukrainian armed forces is becoming obvious and both our armies guard independence of the state and territorial integrity so they cooperate in the construction of the European structure of security and peace.

I want to assure that Poland, also a member of NATO and European Union, will make efforts to support the strengthening of Ukrainian security and is going to support Ukrainian aspirations to participate in European structures.

We have to be aware that partnership between Poland and Ukraine is becoming a value that is appreciated all over the world. What we have achieved in

Polish-Ukrainian relations brings appreciation not only among our friends but also among former sceptics. The growing share of Ukraine in the work of stabilisation in our region is being observed. Initialling the Ukrainian-Romanian treaty, including Kiev in the process of the peaceful regulation of the conflict in Pridnestrovie, completing the delimitation of Ukrainian-Belarusian border are evidence of the maturity of Ukraine that solves difficult problems of neighbourhood in the spirit of reconciliation, mutual respect and compromise. In Poland we find these successes of Ukraine that is close to us, with satisfaction and benevolence.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

We are building the road to the future together. However none of these roads begin from zero because there has always been something before: history, people's experience and the lasting memory of them.

The history of the Polish-Ukrainian lot is complex. Neighbouring of our nations can be expressed in the prospect of the whole millennium. (...)

However we have to muster up courage to speak about what has been difficult in our history and which still raises emotions in some circles. I am certain that, while telling the truth about the difficult past in a clever and courageous way, we will find the road to real reconciliation that will strengthen the good neighbourhood of Poland and Ukraine. It is suggested to us not only by our political sense but also by morality.

Our nations mainly want to look into the future, youth and the wish to create and not to consider history, is dominating in them. But the expression "we are forgiving and ask for forgiveness" that is deeply human, has sense only when somebody is not threatened by direct responsibility for tragic events from the past. We are ordered to respect and offer sympathy to other people's sufferings. Therefore here, in the Ukrainian parliament, I want to say that we understand how tragic the history of Ukrainians who suffered in the "Vistula" operation was. It was the application of the principle of collective responsibility that is unacceptable both from the point of view of the law and dignity that is natural to each human being.

However we also want to find your understanding for the suffering of Polish people during tragic events in Volhynia, Eastern Galicia and Podolia in the period of war. Each evil should be called evil so that the need of reconciliation and friendship between people and nations could win.



The French and the Germans faced the challenge of a difficult past. It was faced by Germans and Czechs, Germans and Poles. It is a challenge that results from the tragic history of Europe. Coping with it turned out to be a triumph of European quality understood in a modern way. Polish-Ukrainian reconciliation is becoming one of the models, Europe could be proud of.

The special declaration that I will have the honour to sign together with Mr President Leonid Kuchma in several minutes has the chance to become the landmark on the path of the common overcoming of difficult history. We think that on the grounds of truth and reconciliation we can create a new model of Polish-Ukrainian relations for the future. I am impressed with the merits of Mr President, Leonid Kuchma, in the work of building friendship and cooperation of Poland and Ukraine. Here I want to express my thanks to Mr President for all these.

The Polish people know how many friends of our common case are here, in this hall. I want to express my true words of thanks to all the delegates and all the Ukrainians who contributed to the fact that Polish-Ukrainian neighbourhood is so good and progressive. (...)

The Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen!

We are witnesses but also creators of a great work. A Europe of peace, openness and cooperation is coming to existence. West and east are notions that are no longer opposing, but two wings of the same idea of civilization, that inseparably joins progress and development with liberty, law and democracy. It will be enough to look at the map to understand how important a role in this new Europe lies in Ukraine and Poland.

Here, in Kiev, a Golden Gate was once constructed. It has been bringing admiration of visitors from the farthest corners of the world. Today, together we are building something that will also cause the admiration of nations. We are building strong neighbourhood friendship. Here is the gate that is wide open and that guides Poles and Ukrainians to a successful future.

Long live democratic Ukraine!

Long live democratic Poland

Let friendship between our nations develop!

## 4. Common declaration of the Presidents of the Republic of Poland and Ukraine on agreement and reconciliation – Kiev 21<sup>st</sup> of May 1997

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Being aware of the historical responsibility towards present and future generations of the Polish people and Ukrainians and the role of Poland and Ukraine in the strengthening of security and stability in Central and Eastern Europe and also appreciating the significance of the strategic partnership of both countries, being guided by the provisions of the Treaty on Good-Neighbourhood, Friendly Relations and Cooperation of May 18<sup>th</sup>, 1992, being convinced that the future of Polish-Ukrainian relations ought to be built on truth and justice and profound as well as sincere understanding and reconciliation, wishing for both states to overcome the complicated heritage of Polish-Ukrainian history and to prevent the past from casting its shadow on today's friendly and partnership ties between the two countries and peoples, we declare as follows:

For many centuries of Polish-Ukrainian history of neighbourhood there have been many moving examples of genuine friendship, mutual help and cooperation between the two nations. There have been episodes of brotherhood-in-arms, mutual intercultural influence which have been enriching the two nations as well as neighbourly friendliness.

But we cannot forget tragic episodes such as the decades of war in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, the manifestations anti-Ukrainian policy of Polish authorities in the 1920s and 1930s, and the persecution of Polish people in the Soviet Ukraine in the period of Stalin repression. Polish bloodshed in Volhynia, in particular between 1942–1943 and the horror of the Polish-Ukrainian conflicts in the first post-war years must not be forgotten either. The “Vistula” Operation was a separate and dramatic chapter in the history of our relations that struck the whole Ukrainian community in Poland. Suppression or one-sided depiction of all these incidents does not ease the pain of those who suffered and their kin or help improve understanding between our nations.

The path to real friendship goes first of all through the truth and mutual understanding. We agree that no aim can justify crime, violence and the application of collective responsibility. But we also remember that sometimes the sources of these conflicts came from outside Poland and Ukraine and that they were

conditioned by circumstances the Polish people and Ukrainians could not control and by the non-democratic political systems imposed on our peoples against their will. We pay homage to the innocent, the Polish people and Ukrainians who were murdered, killed and dislocated by force. We condemn the perpetrators of those sufferings. But we also express gratitude to everybody who worked for rapprochement between our nations through all these difficult years.

At present Poland and Ukraine are independent states, good neighbours and strategic partners. That is why it so important to overcome the bitterness that is still remembered by many Polish people and Ukrainians. We are made to do so not only by recognition of democratic values and respect for human rights, elementary principles as well as rules and standards of international law but also by the wish to see Poland and Ukraine in the united Europe.

The specialists who should honestly investigate the facts and prepare objective assessments in the atmosphere of open-mindedness should take up the interpretation of our common past and its complex history.

For better mutual understanding between the Polish and Ukrainian nations it is necessary to stimulate the dialogue of opinion-forming circles. We have to use the capabilities of Polish citizens of Ukrainian decent and Ukrainian citizens of Polish decent who, through their work, contribute significantly to the cultural and economic development of our states. They ought to be the animators of close cooperation between Poland and Ukraine. On the other hand both states should look after them and support the development of the Polish minority in Ukraine and the Ukrainian minority in Poland.

The Republic of Poland and Ukraine will make efforts for the awareness of young Poles and Ukrainians not to be shadowed with memories of the tragic chapters in history. Let future generations live in a common European home in which there is no room for prejudice and distrust!

Being convinced of the above, we, the Presidents of the Republic of Poland and Ukraine decide to assume joint patronage over the strengthening of the idea of Polish-Ukrainian understanding and reconciliation.

In previous centuries our ancestors poured water on their swords to present the sign of peace, alliance and brotherhood. Today we, the Ukrainians and the Polish people, want to pour the feeling of friendship and solidarity into our hearts.

At the beginning of 21<sup>st</sup> century let us remember about the past, but let us think about the future!

## 5. Interview for a Lithuanian newspaper, "Lietuvos Rytas" – 19<sup>th</sup> of June 1979

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*Between the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of June this year, the President of Lithuania, Brazauskas is going to pay an official visit to Poland. What issues are the presidents of both neighbouring countries going to discuss this time?*

This is our successive meeting. I am delighted that Polish-Lithuanian relations have been developing dynamically and naturally and a meeting at a high level is taking place almost every month. It proves the strategic significance of cooperation for both states. Last year I was staying in Lithuania with an official visit. The visit of the President A. Brazauskas is a return visit. However we meet much more often, this year we have met in Hague, Tallin and Gniezno. Not to mention the forms of cooperation on various levels. During the present visit we are going to talk about the Committees of the Presidents that shall help us resolve everyday problems. We shall devote most of our attention to the problems of European integration. Poland is expecting that it shall be invited to Madrid to negotiate the accession to the North Atlantic Treaty. We also expect that after the conference in Amsterdam, both Poland and Lithuania shall participate in both of these structures, similarly to Latvia or Esthonia.

*The Parliamentary Assembly is coming in to existence and in the future the Intergovernmental Council will start working. Some sources indicate the number of fifty signed agreements and others count them in the hundreds. So why do the Polish people know so little about the Lithuanians and vice versa? Why are the neighbours interested in each other to such a small extent?*

I do not agree with looking at this problem in this way. I think that in Poland both the degree of interest and information is relatively high. The reasons are diversified, for some they are historical, for others they are home-related. On the other hand, I was really impressed by the fact that so many Lithuanians speak Polish. Some of them studied Polish while reading newspapers, some others, while watching TV. I do not know if we can find, in any other country, so many people who understand and speak Polish. It does not happen very

often that the President of a certain country speaks a foreign language, in this case Polish. Also the Parliament Speaker speaks Polish and when I meet Mr Cz. Jurszenas, he speaks Polish as well. Let me state that our relations prove the real mutual interest of our nations.

*Lithuanian Officials claim that Lithuanians are more active, and that they put forward more proposals. Maybe the Polish people have an opposite point of view?*

Certainly, we have appreciated that Lithuania has put forward a few very original proposals recently. Let us at least mention the suggestion of cooperation on parliamentary or government level, creation of a specific committee with participating ministries of both States. We understand that while cooperating with the Polish people, Lithuanians want to prepare themselves to join European structures. Because of the fact that such cooperation is something new for us, we need more time to think those suggestions over.

*In the context of bilateral relations, how important, from your point of view, is the problem of national minorities? Are there any stereotypes that ought to be broken?*

I think that we should always be sensitive to the problems of national minorities. It is a complex problem not only in our country. If we remember the history of Europe, great troubles have often been brought about by the problems of national minorities. It is not a subject that ever ends. Fundamental problems have been resolved. The agreement on spelling the names is before us. It is an annoying matter that causes a lot of emotions both among the Polish people in Lithuania and among Lithuanians in Poland. I think that in this matter (just as in the case of the Cultural Center in Pusk and A. Baranauskas's monument) meetings with President A. Brazauskas shall help us. We will make an effort once again to encourage the officials on both sides to resolve all the problems for our common benefit.

*Recently many positive things have been said about the economy of Poland that, as the only post-communist state has outrun the standard of the period of the former regime. Experts from abroad have even calculated that keeping this pace of growth at the level of 5 to 6 % until 2000 the Republic of Poland (Gross National Product) would achieve 200 billion USD, that is they would come up to half of the anticipated Gross National Product in Russia, although this country has four times more inhabitants and huge natural resources. The living standard is at least specified by the fact that last year Poles purchased 39% more new cars. We are interested in the prospects of Polish-Lithuanian economic relations as well as mutual projects: railroads, highways and power lines.*

We are also glad that Polish economy has been developing. This year the Gross National Product shall grow by over 5%, next year we are planning 5 – 5.5%. In 1996 Poles bought 360 thousand new cars. Together with used ones, the fleet of cars in the country has grown by half a million. We are among the leaders in the vehicle market in Europe. Without any doubt, it is decided by the growth of the economy as well as the specific view of the Polish people on cars. It is possible that up till now we have still had a living tradition that every Pole dreams about a good riding horse. Bilateral economic relations have to be developed. Going to Lithuania I invited a group of businessmen to encourage them to invest. However, we must not forget that economy is a matter of governments. The presidents can only create a climate, ask their ministries at which stage a project is on. We are interested in cooperation that includes third countries, such as, Latvia, Esthonia, Belarus, Russia and Germany. We want Lithuania to participate in the European agreement on free trade. Speaking about mutual projects I would like to mention the Presidents' Foundation that provides assistance to young people.

*Speaking about the future we cannot forget about a subject that is not very easy, the Polish-Lithuanian border. How can two civilised countries accept for so many years the mess that is observed at the borders?*

We used to have advertised borders of friendship, and at present we should transform them into friendly borders, that is, borders that help people commune, borders that people are not afraid of, at which we do not waste time. I think that on the Polish side we have already created a structure that normalizes the situation. I was at the border crossing in Budzisk. Everything has been done there on the Polish side, I do not know what the situation is like on the Lithuanian side, whether something additional has been built there. It has been promised that they will also invest in infrastructure. It seems to me that also funds from the European Union could be used for these purposes there. However in the contemporary world the borderline has to be guarded as almost every day we have problems with illegal emigrants. It is not easy. But if both sides make an effort, soon, that is within a year or two, crossing the Polish-Lithuanian border shall not be a problem.

*The present year is important for both Poland and Lithuania. The words you said last year to the journalists of "The Financial Times" about five minutes given by history, when, to the West of Poland there are friendly-oriented Germans and to the East there is Russia that is busy with its home problems and strengthening of democratic institutions, are coming true. This year Poland has real chances to join NATO and the EU. Obviously, Lithuania shall stay on the other side of the bar-*

*rier. Will Poland help Lithuania with its integration with European structures just like before?*

Lithuania will also receive its five minutes. These five minutes are given to all of Europe. The common Europe, we are talking about, is a Europe in which there is also enough space for the countries we call today the Western and Central Europe, Baltic states, Romania, Slovenia and Bulgaria. This Europe has the chance to create an economic community on the grounds of the European Union and a community of security through the development of NATO. Poland has already gone through the period of painful changes. Strengthening positive changes is the most important task at this stage. Lithuania, similarly, will experience the benefits of difficult changes started between 1990 and 1991, which, at the beginning, require much sacrifice. May it only have enough consistency and persistence. The turning of centuries that is coming soon shall be the time of Central and Eastern Europe in European history, however it may sound pathetic. Just like previously, we will support integration aspirations of Lithuania because we consider the accession of Poland into European structures a first step and the process ought to be continued. It is important that every state who wishes that, should join the structures called a common Europe. We want to develop contacts with Ukraine and Russia. Although these countries specify their strategic targets in a different way, they should also participate in the creation of a common future.

*What is your assessment of the meeting of five presidents in Tallinn that Russian press described as the establishment of a "Baltic and Black Sea pact"?*

Regional cooperation may be beneficial. We are going to organise more such meetings. In September we are planning a conference in Vilnius to which, apart from the participants of the meeting in Tallinn, the president of Belarus will be invited. At the meetings we can share experience as we all undergo transformations and we learn much.

*Will, in the process of integration of Poland in European structures, the idea of the so-called Weimer Triangle of France Germany and Poland be topical again?*

It is present all the time. Ministries of foreign affairs meet. Regularity of the meetings has been a little disturbed because of the elections in France, in September elections are going to take place in Poland but the meetings shall be continued. The positive influence can be enormous. It is possible that we will move them to a higher level in the future.

*You have mentioned that in September Poland is going to elect a new Sejm. Is it possible that this possible change of balance of political powers in the Sejm will influence the present good relations between Poland and Lithuania?*

I think that the voters are oriented on reconciliation and cooperation more than politicians because politicians sometimes lack the courage to overcome historical conflicts. The economy and Europe should be fundamental moments of the election campaign. With every election Poland becomes more European. Neither the left wing nor the right wing is strong enough to achieve a majority therefore the future government will also be a coalition and elementary elements of reforms are going to be developed. Therefore I do not think that Polish-Lithuanian relations may change. Similarly to Lithuania where the proportion of powers changed even those, who had not taken an active part in the process of Polish-Lithuanian friendship before, understood that it is necessary not only to our countries but also to the whole region and even Europe. I do not think that people who doubt the significance of our cooperation will be present in the new Polish Sejm. I am convinced that responsible politicians both in Poland and in Lithuania think similarly regardless of their political party affiliation.

Interviewer: *Osvaldas Aleks*



## 6. Speech made during the International Conference “Coexistence of Nations and Good Neighbourhood Relations as a Guarantee of Security and Stability in Europe” – Vilnius, 5<sup>th</sup> of September 1997

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President Algirdas Brazauskas, the Presidents, Prime Minister, Ladies and Gentlemen!

First of all, as a co-organiser of this Conference, I want to express my thanks for the acceptance of the invitations by such an outstanding group of heads of states and thank all representatives of the world of culture, the world of politics and the world of science who are participating in our meeting.

Without any doubts it is an unprecedented event that even today has a historical dimension. Vilnius is becoming a symbol. It is becoming a symbol of changes, that have taken place in Europe since 1989. Changes that specify the new political map of our continent that have taken place in a very short time and that have been taking place on the continent, that in the 20<sup>th</sup> century experienced two terrible and tragic world wars, on which there are graves of hundreds of thousands, millions of people, the casualties of conflicts that have happened to Europe. And Vilnius is a symbol of those changes that have taken place in peaceful way.

If we look even a little at the recent past we will realise how enormous the changes have been and how important their peaceful realisation was. We experienced the unification of Germany, the collapse of The Soviet Union, the rebirth of independent Baltic states and political changes in the whole of Central Europe. The fact that these were not marked with conflicts and the fact that today we can sit at a common table, resulted from the acceptance of irreversible principles of values that defined those transformations. These values include democracy, observance of independence of each of the states, respect for human rights, observance of international law, freedom of speech and political plurality. Openness towards each other and mutual tolerance are also such values.

Therefore looking into the future we are all the much susceptible whether these values are still respected. And it is in no way an interference in the problems of our neighbours or states that are close to us if, while being guided by this susceptibility, we pay attention to the incomplete use of these rights. Because for the last eight years we have convinced ourselves that the values of democracy, independence of the states and human rights make the grounds for peaceful transformations that have taken place on our continent.

The conference in Vilnius is taking place in an important moment in Europe. Here, in front of us there appear chances to build a common Europe, free of historical divisions, free of political walls that still divided Europe not so long ago. Poland is convinced that the enlargement of the North Atlantic Pact is a decision that strengthens European security. The decision that logically results from those processes that were started in 1989. We think that each of the states has the right to independently define its policy of security and membership in such a pact or such a system of security that it considers the best from the point of view of its interests.

Poland is also convinced that enlargement of the European Union will be a significant step in building a common Europe, that operates according to the same economic rules and that can apply a common enormous potential that we have on our continent. Enlargement of the European Union ought to be a way to departing from the policy of limitations in every state and from placing some European states at margins in economic processes and in trade.

We are certain that extensive and as good as possible cooperation with Russia is very important for building a common Europe. We hope that in spite of differences in opinions related to NATO we will be able to build, and we will build such contacts (economic, cultural and political contacts) that will offer chances to all the states to acquire common benefits.

With great satisfaction we received the signing of the agreement between NATO and Russia, with satisfaction we have welcomed the signing of the agreement between NATO and Ukraine. We think that these are important elements, important parts of the construction that we call a common Europe and that has a chance to be a sign of our continent in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

But, Ladies and Gentlemen, today Vilnius is also a symbol of Central Europe that is becoming more and more clearly a condition of European stability and European development. With the highest respect I refer here to the achievements that have already been mentioned and that show that in a very short time on political levels we have managed to overcome prejudices and overcome

the past that was often very bad and we succeeded in creating something that shall radiate for many decades.

Poland is delighted with its relations with Germany, Ukraine, Lithuania, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. We appreciate what has been achieved between Romania and Ukraine and between Romania and Hungary. With respect we refer to the understanding between Ukraine, Romania and Moldova. With delight we receive all the structures and all the agreements that increase the security of Central Europe and that specify a broad range of cooperation in this part of the continent. We would like these political processes to be continued.

I am convinced that the Vilnius Conference, as a very important event, is inscribed in such a way of thinking about Central Europe and it shows the world that the Central Europe of the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is a place of stability and a place that has magnificent prospects ahead. With pleasure I have received the fact that both the president of the USA and the presidents of France and Germany addressed our conference.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Today Vilnius is a symbol of new challenges; they have been mentioned. Today, cooperation and friendly neighbourhood can indicate not only political phenomena. They can comprise the whole extensive sphere of economy; they have to include cooperation in the field of new phenomena that have been discussed, such as, organised crime, environment protection and the struggle with disasters that do not know borders or political differences. I think that we should follow the example of the countries that have already gone through this, such as for example Germany and France and enrich the forms of our cooperation on these elements. I would add one more issue here, the problem of social relations, the relations between people.

It was not a coincidence that while making the decision to invite you here, together with president Algirdas Brazauskas, we wanted to have the representatives of culture and science and intellectuals within the group of politicians. Because we are sure that real good neighbourhood and real cooperation can take place only when the whole treaty sphere and the sphere of political contacts is side by side with understanding between people, the social understanding. Therefore I want to stress the significance of initiatives in the field of culture and education. We have to provide young people with textbooks that will not falsify our common history, and that will not return to past historical stereotypes. That will not support xenophobia and hatred but that will help running

dialogue and support as good an understanding as possible. Non-governmental organizations have a very important role to play here. I am certain that cooperation of regions is meaningful but I would like our Conference in Vilnius to give a clear message that presidents and politicians will do their best also in the sphere of human relations, inter-social relations to allow for rapprochement and removal of existing stereotypes that are still dangerous because they are evil, full of hatred and lacking understanding.

As the Latvian president said, the conference in Vilnius is proof of political optimism, and it really is. But I think that this Conference and this meeting that we experience together, the presence of so many presidents, the presence of so many representatives of states that together go through the period of outstanding historical changes is also a reason for political optimism. I would like our Conference to run in this spirit of political optimism so that it would bring as many real results as possible and so that every next meeting that we shall organise with the same or similar groups of participants, would confirm the stability of our states, stability in Central Europe and the growing importance in this part of the continent for the whole of Europe.

I am convinced that the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century may be the time of the countries of Central Europe. Ladies and Gentlemen, it depends on us if it happens. It depends on how we shall pursue the policy and how we can use the time.

Poland and I wish each of you and all the everyone present here, Central Europe and all our states to use their potentials and to give those values, large values that they possess, for the benefit of common European heritage.

## 7. Interview for the Russian Newspaper, "Izvestia" – 27<sup>th</sup> of June 1998

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*On the 29<sup>th</sup> of June you are meeting the President of Russia. What kind of meeting is it, on whose initiative and what is its purpose?*

We need good relations with Russia, we have to create them. They should be not only official contacts, we also need unofficial ones. Sometimes they are more important than all the protocols. I thought that it would be good to visit Moscow this year and to talk to the President of Russia about what is going on in our relations, in Europe and in the world today. And of course to see what Moscow is like. It is very interesting; I have heard a lot of positive opinions about your capital city that is called a "world metropolis". Besides, now the Tchaikovsky Contest is going on and my wife and I are interested in it. When I was talking to President Yeltsin in Strasburg we agreed that unofficial meetings are useful. It is going to be our first unofficial meeting, then the following ones are going to be organised. In my opinion it is necessary for political dialogue between our countries to develop. Waiting for official contacts is not enough.

*You have been the president of Poland for two and a half years, it is half of your term of office. The second half is beginning. What are your priorities for this period?*

I can see two predominant targets in home policy: maintaining the high speed of economic growth that is fundamental for just social policy and also preventing a negative attitude of the Sejm and government to divide society according to political and historical criteria, in other words, a division into communists and non-communists.

In foreign policy the European Union is my priority. Aiming towards this we will have to cope with many problems, annoyance and disappointment of the society. We have to go through these all and prove that a great country and a great nation, that Poland and the Polish people are, signify a profit for Europe and not a loss. Finally such a sphere of activity as Central Europe and Russia.

We really have the chance to become an important element in the dialogue between the West, Central Europe and Russia.

*You were saying about priorities. A few years ago the minister J. Primakow said in Warsaw that relations with East-European countries are a priority for Moscow. Have the people felt this? Or is it only seen by politicians?*

In my opinion, and it is related to tourism or visits, people react normally. Contacts between the Polish people and Russians are not bad. If we think about politics and economy it was very hard and I can understand why. Our intention to join NATO was difficult to understand by Moscow and brought some... how to express this ...

*Frictions?*

Yes, or doubts or something of that kind. It seems to me that we have to start a new era now. Of course we are happy that relations between Russia and NATO shape well and that last year you signed a Fundamental Act with the alliance. It is a historical step. For the first time Russia and NATO refer to each other as partners and not as enemies...

*Opponents...*

No, not even enemies. Poland individually decided to join NATO and next year it will be within its structure. But of course at the same time we would like to have good or even perfect relations with Russia. Just like other countries, the members of the alliance. There are no contradictions here. We have to make efforts for our dialogue to be the best in all the spheres, political, economic, cultural, etc.

I would like to give such advice to our neighbours and friends: the position of Russia, Russian culture and language is significant in Poland. I am also talking to you in Russian. But if we do not try to develop contacts they will be disturbed.

*The Russian centre of science and culture has already been closed down...*

What do you mean closed down?

*In fact, yes. It was moved to the area of trade representation, and they have permits there so people cannot get there freely.*

I did not know about this. Certainly it is very important. When Vladimir Wysocki came to Warsaw with the Theatre in Taganka, people were queuing for tickets for hours. Polish artists, writers and cinema were very popular in Russia. We have to return to this. Language and culture are the best ambassadors. We have been neighbours for over a thousand of years. We are neighbours for the whole life and we have to be friends.

*Recently in your interview for a Czech newspaper "Pravo" there appeared your statement that eastern borders should be "strengthened" in relation to the accession of the countries of Central Europe to European Union.*

Yes, we have to conform to general principles and prevent illegal emigration. On the other hand a Pole, a Czech and a Hungarian remember well what it means to be on the other side of the barricade, wait for a visa, beg and be checked at border crossings... We are morally obliged to help the free movement of people and not disturb it in any way. Our eastern borders should not be a sanitary cordon or a new "curtain". These are not "borders of friendship" as communists slogans were saying, let us forget about this, but they should be friendly borders, open for people. No bureaucracy and no policy have the right to close them and create new "divisions of Europe".

*Before meeting Yeltsin you will be staying in Ukraine. How do you judge Polish-Ukrainian relations?*

I judge them as close and good. Political dialogue is developing perfectly. Every month I meet president Kuchma. We do everything we can to build bridges of mutual understanding and to close very painful problems that have lasted not for years but for centuries. Next weekend in Kharkiv I am going to open a cemetery of Polish army officers, the casualties of the Stalin period.

I am happy that many Polish enterprises already operate in Ukraine. But of course there are also difficulties.

*Is not the picture of relations with Russia the opposite? Our economic cooperation seems to be better than the political one.*

I do not think so. Of course our task lies in undertaking the necessary political steps. The economy has been developing both in Poland and in Russia. We just must not disturb it but create favourable conditions for it. We hope that

this year the prime minister of the Russian government will come to us. Of course I would like to invite president Yeltsin once again. I would like him to come to us and see what the possibilities of development of our relations are. Anyway, all the contacts depend on politics. And as you say, it is politics that offers a positive stimulus.

Interviewer: *L. Kornilow*



## 8. Interview for "Der Tagesspiegel" (excerpts) – 1<sup>st</sup> of November 1998

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*(...) Gerhard Schroeder announced the policy oriented on interests. Where do the differences of interests lie? The media define them as the German fear of cheap labour force and the Polish fear of selling the country out to Germans.*

Such fears exist and they may expand. I have not read in our statistics that Polish land is being sold out to Germans in western territories. It is propaganda. The problem of future Polish emigration to Germany for money is also overestimated. Firstly, a lot of the people who wanted to do this did so many years ago. Secondly, if our economic development is maintained on the same level, most of those who we are talking about, will stay in the country and in their natural surroundings with pleasure. Actually, we have similar levels of development to our neighbours in the east and our experience: strong labour emigration has never exceeded an acceptable level. The influx of Ukrainians and Russian construction workers has not destroyed the Polish labour market. If fifteen years ago we had suddenly opened the western borders, at the time when in Poland, people had cards for food and dollars cost incredible money on the black market, then we could have had problems. The world has been changing. What would the workers from the Opel factory go to Germany for? We have to look for intelligent solutions that should not limit integration at the same time. I am not going to talk about other problems now; they will appear at the moment of accession to the European Union.

*The claims of return of property made by the Association of the Expelled.*

It is a political problem. These claims must not be accepted. A war has not changed borders in any state as it did in Poland, and it was not at the wish of the Polish people, but on the grounds of a decision of great powers. Poland shall not agree to question the status quo. With the new coalition we can be confident about that. I wanted to raise the question of cultural goods. This problem has to be resolved. (...)

*New incentives of the “Solidarity” government that was elected a year ago, where are they in the policy towards Germany? An invitation to a routine summit has not come. Is it caused by the lack of concept for the policy towards Germany?*

We cannot mingle these problems. Planning the summit was made difficult by the elections: in August last year in Poland, and this year in Germany. The year of 1998 is the year of political regrouping. I will invite Gerhard Schroeder to the summit in 1999 for extensive mutual cognition and far-reaching discussion of practical problems. When compared with “Solidarity” I am in an advantageous position because as the chairman of Social Democracy I have had close relationships with German social democracy...

*You are on familiar terms with Gerhard Schroeder, Oskar Lafontaine...*

Oskar Lafontaine was my first guest after I had been elected the President. I have often met Rudolf Scharping as well as with Guenter Verheugen. I know German social democrats.

*A lot of politicians from the Solidarity camp have accused SPD of close relationship with communists.*

I do not want to interfere in this but I can only give advice. We have the year of 1998. The activists of that period are not in political circles any longer. Schroeder, Lafontaine, Scharping have nothing in common with that. Some kind of trust is necessary. In the light of the first signals, there are no reasons to be afraid. Everything is going to be all right.

*Do not Poles and Germans look into the future too often; do they not pat each other on the back with pleasure because of an outstanding progress since 1989 while neglecting the present problems? In the meantime there is still enormous congestion at crossing points. On the Polish side only one lane for vehicles is open and often, there is insufficient staff there.*

It is one of the examples of the problems in which I expect new impulses. Grand words of reconciliation have already been said, now we have to improve the everyday actual state, that is, the situation at borders, cooperation of regions, also, we have to provide more means for exchange of youth, for teaching German in Poland and Polish in Germany. After 16 years of government, routine is threatening. On the other hand, in Poland we lack continuation and within those 16 years we have had 13 governments. The fact that in spite of this, our relations have been developing so well is almost

a miracle. At present an important impulse will come from an administrative reform: from January we are going to have 16 provinces instead of 49. They will be given more power which shall stimulate cooperation with federative states. (...)

Interviewer: *Christoph von Marschall*

## 9. Lecture Delivered at Vilnius University – “Poland and Lithuania – More than a Partnership” (excerpts) – Vilnius, 13<sup>th</sup> of April 1999

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Dear Mr. President of the Republic of Lithuania, Honourable Rector, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to meet with you – the illustrious representatives of Lithuanian politics, science and culture, and with the elite of the young generation of Lithuanians. I am immensely pleased to be here within the stately walls of Vilnius University that has been part of the history of European thought for more than four hundred years. (...)

It is an excellent place to talk about Lithuania and Poland facing the present-day challenges, as well as about our cooperation in an ever-changing Europe. We are acutely aware of the shared experiences, especially those gained while living under the shadow of Yalta and while freeing ourselves from the shackles it had placed upon us. Moreover, we recognize that over recent years we have covered an appreciable distance to bring our nations so close to each other. We have succeeded in transforming our mutual candour, restored trust and good neighbourly relations into a strategic partnership. We are aware of our co-responsibility for a secure future of our countries, for an auspicious destiny of our region and for the Europe of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The relationship between Poland and Lithuania that keeps growing and maturing today is much stronger than just a partnership.

I am utterly convinced that in the not too distant future we will become members of the same alliance as well as citizens of the united Europe. It is still a futuristic vision; however, its realistic shapes are starting to appear on the horizon.

More and more frequently the transformations occurring in Europe are termed “Brussels order”. These days Brussels, the seat of the North Atlantic Alliance and the European Union, becomes symbolic in the same way as Vienna, Versailles and Yalta used to be the symbols of the previous epochs in the European international system. (...)

The new distinguishing feature of this order is its foundation that is no longer based upon the political balance of forces, but on a set of such values as freedom, democracy and the rule of law. The Brussels order is something that has already been in existence in the form of the Euro-Atlantic and European Union structures but still continues to crystallize – before our eyes and with our participation. The initial stages of the construction of this order provide us, the inhabitants of Central Europe, with a historic opportunity. The run of bad luck in our history is almost over. Today the fortune is on our side and it will favour us in the future as well. Since we regained our sovereignty, we have been working hard to consolidate and deepen the achievements gained owing to such favourable historical circumstances.

It is of immense importance to Poland and Lithuania, as well as to other countries interested in the success of the Brussels order that this order should not be identified solely with the institutional facts. Needless to say, the membership in a given structure is absolutely crucial; it generates specific rights and obligations. Nevertheless, the Brussels order should also be perceived as a process, as “something that is still going on”. Therefore, one should not so rigorously discriminate between those who institutionally participate in this order and those who contribute to the European unity by holding the same values and taking great pains to undergo the transformation processes. Both are the builders of a new Europe, which, in terms of quality, actually forges a new bond between them. There is no doubt at all that such a bond is the most important and the unstoppable prime mover of the institutional facts. NATO and the European Union exist not just for their own sake; but also for Europe. Therefore, they should expand further – and they will. Poland expects this and is sure that it will happen. Should things turn out differently, the essence of the construction of the Brussels order would, in our opinion, be questioned.

We, the inhabitants of Central Europe, have the inalienable right to voice such expectations. It was the transformations that took place in our countries that to a large extent nowadays enabled Europe, which only ten years ago was split into two by the “iron curtain”, to start uniting to gradually become one entity. We have managed to combine the enthusiasm and energy for consolidating the independence of our countries and constructing a civil society with the development of good-neighbourly relations between our nations. We have succeeded in building bridges over the thorny past. What has been achieved owing to the joint efforts of the Polish people and Lithuanians – as well as the good Polish-German and Polish-Ukrainian relations – constitutes a crucial component, if not really the foundation, of the stability of this region, of Europe. And stability is not only peace and calm – it is first and foremost the opportunity to let life go on and respond to new challenges. (...)

Now the fifth anniversary of an event that marks a milestone in the development of good Polish-Lithuanian relations is approaching. The conclusion of a treaty between our countries turned out to have the same effect as a psychological breakthrough. Previous question marks, which used to hang over our relations, changed into exclamation points by means of which we today express the joy at our joint successes. The treaty paved the way for partnership, for the Polish-Lithuanian Consulting Committee of the Presidents, the Assembly of Deputies, the Council for Cooperation of the Governments and the Joint Local Government Forum. Poland appreciates the outstanding achievement of the Lithuanian political elites and of all the Lithuanians that have contributed to establishing such close cooperation between our two nations. I would like to most respectfully thank you for that. Poland does attach great weight to the issue of cooperation with Lithuania. Our independence and yours, as well as security and welfare, are intimately related. Being here, in the hall of Vilnius University, I would like to quote a passage from the speech delivered by Mr. President Valdas Adamkus at Warsaw University: “the solidarity of our nations and countries is the basis for our common freedom.”

The admission of Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary into NATO symbolically marked the end of the Yalta era and consolidated the Brussels order. It is a crucial step forward towards building new security architecture on our continent. Further steps should follow.

In a week's time I will be going to Washington, heading the Polish delegation to the North Atlantic Alliance summit meeting. Once there, Poland will make every endeavour to reinforce the NATO “open door policy” declaration by developing a credible and detailed programme specifying a further enlargement of the Alliance. Poland is of the opinion that the fundamental assumptions of the “NATO Enlargement Study” of September 1995, which played such an important role in initiating the process of the admission of new members, has lost none of its relevance. Poland is happy to hear the opinions that Lithuania is among the countries that are closest to meeting the NATO membership criteria.

The motives behind such actions are not only our liking and friendliness for the neighbour and partner, but our own interests as well. We have a deep interest in the NATO security guarantees strengthening stability in our region and in the the area in close proximity to Poland. It goes without saying that not everything depends on us. Yet, we will spare no effort to boost our security and yours. We do not endorse the view that the Russian sphere of influence, covering the former USSR territory, marks an insurmountable obstacle to the further enlargement of NATO. In the territory of the independent Lithuanian state there is solely a Lithuanian sphere of influence, whose aim is to safeguard

the interests of the democratically-elected authorities of Lithuania and of all the inhabitants of the country. (...)

The Polish-Lithuanian military cooperation is a significant factor that strengthens the security of our country and consolidates the stability of our region. I would like to say that I am extremely pleased that tomorrow, together with Mr. President of Lithuania, I will take part in the handing of a new standard to the LITPOLBAT – a battalion of Polish and Lithuanian soldiers. This battalion will have the task of participating in peacekeeping missions in the hazard- and conflict-prone areas. We regard that as a potent symbol of the brotherhood of arms and a distinct symbol of our future bonds within the Alliance.

The enlargement of the European Union should also take place in a few years' time. Our belief that it will happen is reinforced by the decisions taken at the recent summit meeting in Berlin. Although it is a complex and complicated process that depends not only on the political will but on the economic indicators and the rate of adaptation to the European standards as well – it is unthinkable that this process could become less dynamic than it is currently. Cooperation and European integration are the best responses both to the challenges posed by Europe's internal situation and to those that stem from global cooperation and competition.

The inescapable conclusion that can be drawn by Poland and Lithuania is that the common state frontier shared by our countries should be perceived as a future internal border of the European Union. We ought to unite our efforts to make it a gate that is thrown open to cooperation and enables most frequent contacts of honest citizens. On the other hand, it should form an impassable barrier against any unlawful phenomena and crime. Vigilance is of utmost importance, yet, reciprocal openness is still more significant. Drawing new division lines across our continent for the sake of the consecutive stages of the European integration would pose something of a bitter paradox. Such a belief is part of the Polish *raison d'état* – no matter whether we look West, North or East. Countries must possess clearly drawn frontiers, whereas civil societies should be provided with an opportunity to mingle with one another. As early as today the Polish-Lithuanian cooperation contributes to the construction of the unity of Europe, which can be easily seen not only in close-up but from the Central European and Baltic perspective as well. Our practice of developing good neighbourly relations harmonizes with the idea of expanding the northern dimension of the European Union. The said idea is supported by Finland that will shortly assume the European Union Presidency.

Both Poland and Lithuania are able to do much for European stability also by taking joint action in respect of the Kaliningrad Oblast. Combining Kaliningrad and other regions of European Russia with European processes is in our own interest. I can think of no reason why the Kaliningrad enclave should be isolated. Poland approves of the Lithuanian initiatives related to Kaliningrad. We are also interested in developing trade and economic exchange and reviving navigation and tourism in this area. Making the most of its unique location, Kaliningrad might become a rapid development zone, and cooperation with our countries might contribute to it. Similar hopes may be cherished in connection with, for example, the St. Petersburg area.

I am pleased that my visit to Vilnius is accompanied by the conferences of Polish and Lithuanian business people and bankers. Our meeting, with the participation of the representatives of Ukraine, related to the transportation issues in the area between the Baltic and the Black Sea will also be of profound significance to us. All of it shows that our partnership is not only a vision of the order we desire, but tangible and consistent action we take.

Such an undertaking will also be, here at Vilnius University, the creation of Collegium Batoriensis – a consortium of the universities of Central-Eastern Europe. It is an excellent idea. It will bear the fruit of jointly achieved scholarly successes. Moreover, Collegium Batoriensis creates an opportunity for our spiritual community to find new forms, new inspirations, in a dialogue of the young generation. The energy and insight – the typical features of the young, intelligent people – will be a driving force for the auspicious transformations in Poland, Lithuania and the whole of Europe.

The present moment in history, so promising for the White Eagle and the Vytis, witnesses the closest relationship between our countries, much closer than ever before. We are aware of the importance of this friendship for ourselves, for our joint success, for Europe.

Having crossed the river that separates the Yalta system from the Brussels order, both Poland and Lithuania are already “on its other side.” However, this bordering river actually flows in human minds and hearts. It separates the old from what is new and hopeful. It is the vision of the new order that is the strongest of the bonds between the Polish people and Lithuanians. The other bank of the river – more than partnership.



## 10. Interview with "Echa Dnia" (Echoes of the Day) (excerpt) – 24<sup>th</sup> of June 1999

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*The Polish-Ukrainian Local Government Forum attended by the heads of both countries, which takes place in Kielce today, is an event of immense significance to the Swietokrzyskie Voivodeship.*

The Forum is a very important item on the agenda for the visit of Leonid Kuchma, President of Ukraine, to Poland. We came up with an idea of arranging a local government meeting here in Kielce to enable our Ukrainian partners to see the functioning of the local government, as well as its strong and weak points. Therefore, at the beginning of the Forum the Polish local government officials will express their own opinions related to the self-government issues. Further more, we suggested a debate over the whole new perspective a process of the unification of Europe might open up for the local government, for both countries. Polish aspirations are, obviously, clearer, but European integration also creates a marvellous opportunity for developing cross-border cooperation between Poland and Ukraine. Much time will be devoted to a discussion on the possibilities for cooperation between our towns and regions. The Forum makes it possible for the local governments to establish strategic partnership between our countries. I do hope the debate will end by adopting specific mutual decisions. I am immensely pleased to hear that there are plans for joint declarations and agreements at all the levels of local government cooperation. Having managed to do so much for the purpose of developing a civil society in Poland, we set a good example that others might emulate. In all the countries undergoing transformations, the decentralization of authority and the establishment of the local government levels is very important, and we have concrete achievements in this respect. We adopted this reform very early, just after the change of the political system. As early as in May 1990 we elected the local governments at the municipality level. Recently, the elections at the poviat and voivodeship levels have been added. We have many valuable experiences we would like to share. I am convinced that our Ukrainian partners may find them inspiring.

*And what will Poland gain?*

As far as we are concerned, we will familiarize ourselves with the possibilities for establishing regional cooperation with Ukraine. This Forum affords local government officials the chance to get acquainted and make friends with one another. Moreover, it also creates an opportunity for some Polish regions, not only the cross-frontier ones, but others as well, say the Swietokrzyski region, to find good partners in Ukraine, which is worthwhile. Ukraine is a large country, a great nation, the nation we feel close to. I attach considerable weight to the cooperation between regions, between voivodeships, as well as between towns. I mean here contacts between schools, youth exchanges, cultural exchanges, joint sports competitions. It needs to be done if we wish to reach out to ordinary people with the declarations made by both presidents. We would like friendship to be established not only between Kuchma and Kwasniewski, but between the inhabitants of the Swietokrzyski region and a Ukrainian region as well. We wish for the human dimension in political relations.

*Don't you have an impression that we only to a certain extent take advantage of the ample opportunity for developing cooperation with the East?*

I do appreciate this cooperation and I try to do my best to see to it, in particular the cooperation with Ukraine. Let us not forget, however, that our partners have their own problems to deal with. There is no doubt that the cooperation with Russia would develop much better if it had not been for the economic crisis the country was hit by two years ago. It is a virtual certainty that we and Ukraine could do more in the sphere of economy and economics if the political situation in Ukraine were not so complex. But we cannot lose heart. What we ought to do is to show patience and consistency as they are our eternal neighbours. We will not make them change or replace them; however, thanks to the vigorous actions taken by the presidents we have contributed to the opening up of lots of new opportunities. The considerable progress that has been made in the Polish-Ukrainian relations during the past few years is an enormous success. I am utterly convinced that the Local Government Forum in Kielce will create a new dimension.

*Is it possible then that the Swietokrzyski region will play a crucial role in tightening the Polish-Ukrainian relations?*

Yes, it is. The Swietokrzyski region is as if a new pearl in the collection of our bilateral relations. (...)

Interview conducted by *Magdalena Fudala*

# 11.

Interview with Ukrainian Daily "Fakty" (excerpts) – 15<sup>th</sup> of January 2000

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*(...) In a few days you are going to play host to the leader of Ukraine – Leonid Kuchma visiting our country. On the eve of the visit it would be interesting to hear how you assess the Polish-Ukrainian relations.*

In my opinion, we have achieved much. It applies not only to the warm relations between the presidents, but also to the cooperation at the level of governments and regions. We have succeeded in breaking the deadlock over all the thorny, concerning the history of the passing century, problems in the Polish-Ukrainian relations. It has turned out that the Declaration on Reconciliation we signed in Kiev does not exist on paper only. Its provisions are being put into effect. It was not so long ago that we unveiled the monuments: in Jaworzno, in the Lychakivskiy Cemetery in Lviv and in Kharkiv. All this, from my point of view, proves conclusively that the reconciliation between our nations is not a hollow declaration, but an undeniable fact. I am genuinely pleased that social organizations have become involved in the cooperation process. It would be a sin to complain about the Polish-Ukrainian relationships in respect of international affairs. Poland promotes the bonds that link Ukraine with the European Union and NATO. Poland has always supported Ukraine's aspirations in the United Nations Security Council. In short, there is no doubt at all that during the past few years we have managed to establish warm and close cooperation. What still needs to be done is boosting economic ties to a desirable level.

*How did people in Poland react to the results of the Ukrainian presidential election?*

Contentedly. Leonid Kuchma is the man we completely trust. He has made a major contribution to the development of Polish-Ukrainian cooperation. Moreover, we have managed to establish cordial personal relationships. If we meet, say, anywhere outside our countries, we -as a rule- feel not like presidents of two countries, but like two intimate friends that are pleased at the opportunity to meet and spend some time together. I do believe and hope that Leonid Danilovic's second term as President will bring about a qualitative breakthrough in the reformation of the economy, the formation of a basis for establishing

a free market, the strengthening of the country's financial structures and its active participation in the European economy. Ukraine has a lot of potential but at the same time it struggles with many problems.

*Mister President, to what does Poland owe such a swift resolution of the crisis. Why, in your opinion, can't it be done in Ukraine?*

From the very start the situation of Ukraine was more complex. One cannot compare 74 years of socialist rule in Ukraine to 40 or more years of socialist rule in Poland. Poland has never faced international isolation but has always cultivated relations not only with other countries in our block. Our country has not broken off the relations with the diaspora (over 10 million Poles live in various countries all over the world). What is more, there have always been privately owned farms in Poland. Many Polish people have worked for a small business, many have owned restaurants and small shops. The Poles have always had opportunities to study abroad. I, myself, in 1976 had studied in the USA for several months, and in 1977 attended a training course in the Federal Republic of Germany. Moreover, Poland had put reforms into practice several times: in 1956, 1970 and 1980. All of that bore fruit in the early 1990s. The economic reforms went through more smoothly as a solid foundation had been laid for them. There was a firm foundation to build on.

Ukraine had a completely different starting position, a much more complex one. Nevertheless, I am of the opinion that much has been achieved so far. However, a reform of the legal system, and first and foremost a change in the mentality, require a great deal of strenuous effort. I believe that the young generation of Ukrainians respond to new trends more willingly (I mean here the principles of the market economy), they are ready to take giant steps forward.

*Is Poland ready to invest in the economy of Ukraine?*

I am of the opinion that it is a problem of the nearest future. We have already commenced carrying out some minor projects, but there is no doubt at all that soon large Polish businesses will start seeking partners in Ukraine. Your country is a very interesting partner for us. However, it is easier said than done. In spite of the fact that Poland has achieved so much during the last decade, it will take us a long time to become Germany. What Ukraine needs to do is to demonstrate not only to us, but to the whole world as well its political stability, economic development and predictable law. A situation in which one day we do something that tomorrow turns out to be against the law needs to be avoided. (...)

Interviewer: *Irina Kocina*

## 12. Address Delivered at the Conference “2000 Victoria Meeting” as Part of the Panel Discussion – “Central Europe: Myth or Reality?” (excerpt) – Warsaw, 26<sup>th</sup> of February 2000

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

(...) One of Poland’s most significant experiences of the past decade is the awareness that good neighbourly relations are of considerable, even fundamental, importance. Today it is our trademark, the contribution we make to European politics. It provides a sound basis for Poland’s active regional policy in this part of Europe. During the past decade we have succeeded in transforming Poland’s neighbourhood into the area where close economic, political and cultural cooperation develops dynamically. Needless to say, we owe this success to the goodwill that all our neighbouring countries have shown. Yet, we are immensely proud that Poland was, and still is, the *spiritus movens* behind these processes, that we keep on showing initiative, that we continue to develop and expand our cooperation with the countries in our immediate and further neighbourhoods.

As far as our relations with Germany are concerned, there is no doubt at all that they are better than ever before. Germany has performed a crucial role in the NATO enlargement and it is our advocate of the admission of new members to the European Union. Owing to the fact that the Polish-German community of interests has taken the place of the feud over the past, we have managed to establish an extensive network of good neighbourly relations which ranges from youth exchanges to close contacts between politicians and an efficient economic cooperation. I am of the opinion that the attitude of considerable openness towards the East that Germany has adopted is a golden opportunity for Poland and a key to stability for the whole of Central-Eastern Europe.

Moreover, we have successfully managed to improve the relations with our Eastern neighbours. In a way we had to discover them anew and familiarize ourselves with them. Today, however, our strategic partnership with Ukraine may be used as a model of regional initiative that creates a new dimension in

the European relations. We spare no effort to make the world rightly recognize the problems and aspirations of this great and ambitious nation. Since successful economic and political transformation is in the best interests of Poland and all of Europe. Moreover, our relations with Lithuania develop very well.

I do not need to say much about the Czech Republic. My recent visit to this country has shown that we have friends and partners there. We are happy about the transformations occurring in Slovakia that has traditionally been a nice and friendly neighbour to us. There is no doubt at all that Slovakia is definitely pro-European.

Russia is also one of our neighbours. We are bound with Russia by the provisions of the treaty on good neighbourliness. We strive to develop our relations with this country. So far nothing has been said about Belarus. As for our bonds with this country, the treaties we are bound by provide a sound foundation for our relations, which was also the case with other countries mentioned above. However, the restrictions on democracy and violations of human rights in Belarus hinder the development of our relations with this country.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our regional initiatives do not solely pertain to our immediate neighbours. We are in close partnership with the Baltic countries. We recognize and support the endeavours and efforts made by the Black Sea countries.

Today regional cooperation in the area between the Baltic and the Black Sea is a reality. It is also a challenge we take on for the sake of a better future for Europe. This purpose is well served by supranational structures established in Central-Eastern Europe, such as the Visegrad Group, the Central European Initiative, CEFTA, and by regular meetings of presidents of the countries situated in this part of Europe.

All these initiatives strengthen the stabilization in our region. They offer increased possibilities for the adaptation to the integration standards. We set a good example to others by acting consistently and jointly. We do not forget about our prior promises and commitments. As NATO members, we strive for the further enlargement of this Alliance. Being just about to join the European Union, we make every effort to help the countries that are less advanced in developing the legal and economic infrastructure needed for the integration purposes.

This is our response in the face of the growing threat from nationalist and xenophobic movements that have always been caused by poverty, ethnic conflicts, a lack of vision for the future. They strive to prevent the “outsiders” from coming into contact with societies. Moreover, they incite the Continent integration-related fears and anxieties. This is sometimes a manifestation of the egoism of those who, having fully satisfied their appetites and desires, regard the integration as an attempt that threatens their own prosperity. Parties of nationalist and xenophobic nature in some countries of Western Europe make use, among other things, of these fears to gain support in some countries of Western Europe. We do not accept the way they perceive the world. We are of the opinion that developing the international cooperation and increasing the integration pace is the best protection. We ought to accelerate rapprochement between our nations, boost a cultural exchange, open our borders wider to citizens, tourists and business people, but close them tighter to criminals. The more rapidly we heal the divisions and put an end to the disparities that exist in Europe, the more efficiently we will eradicate the sources of aversion to the “outsiders”. (...)

# 13. Interview with Czech Daily "Pravo" (excerpts) – 26<sup>th</sup> of February 2000

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*Mister President, does your present visit to the Czech Republic fall into a category of routine, diplomatic visits or is there anything special about it?*

I have been to Prague many a time and even more frequently I have met President Havel in different places all over the world. We maintain continuing working relationships, whose significance – from time to time – we confirm by solemn visits. My present visit to the Czech Republic is exceptional as it is, for the first time, a state one.

*Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary grew closer together in their attempts to join NATO and the EU. Don't you think that in the future within these structures, possibly together with other countries, we should set up a kind of lobby supporting our common interests?*

One common aim has already been achieved by us – we are members of NATO. Undoubtedly, the fact that the Czechs, Hungarians and Poles combined their efforts to be admitted to the Alliance was conducive to this achievement. I am convinced that the same applies to our preparations to join the EU. Along with being admitted into these structures, we will become part of a larger community. It does not mean that once we step across the threshold of the European Union, we should say our farewells and go in different directions. Quite the contrary, I am of the opinion that if we continue cooperating, not only us but our new partners will benefit from it as well. That being so, I would not like to talk of a lobby; however, we will definitely still have much in common. Firstly, our situation will be similar as our countries will all belong to a group of new members. Secondly, we all share similar historical experiences. Hence, there is no doubt at all that we will focus more on emphasizing the issues that result from these experiences. After all, that is what our partners expect from us as they regard us as a whole, as representatives of Central Europe. (...)

*So far Austria has also been a close partner of Poland and the Czech Republic in Central Europe. Are you of the opinion that Austria can remain such a partner*



*regardless of the fact that one half of the country's government is composed of Haider's ultra-nationalists?*

It is a serious problem; however, for the time being Austria remains our important partner. I believe that currently it is crucial that we differentiate between our doubts about Haider and our attitude towards Austria. Czechs and Poles will remember that they owe much to Austria. It is in Austria that many of them found shelter while our countries were under foreign occupation. Currently, it would be unjust to start perceiving Austria solely as a country governed by Haider. It would not correspond with the facts, either. On the other hand, both Czechs and Poles have every reason to intently watch what is currently going on in Austria. Both of our countries were victims of Nazism. Poland became literally a cemetery of millions of people that died as a consequence of Nazism: Poles, Jews and representatives of other nations. Therefore, we do not approve of anyone that nowadays, even to a minor extent, speaks favourably of Nazism. We say it out loud now and we will always do so, which we perceive as our moral right and obligation. It goes without saying that the people of Austria are entitled to the ruling coalition they elected. We will judge this government by the activities it will engage in. We will observe Austria attentively to check if it respects and promotes common European values. We will watch Austria dealing with the issue of war-time slave and forced labour compensation. We will see what attitude it will adopt towards emigrants residing in Austria. Moreover, we will see what stand Austria will take on the enlargement of the EU. I hope we will not receive bad news from Vienna.

*Might, in spite of the painful experiences you talked about, anything similar to what happened in Austria also occur in Poland? After the fall of dictatorial regime manifestations of xenophobia started to appear in many post-communist countries. There is no doubt that there have been some nationalistic and anti-Semitic trends in Poland.*

Here and there the marginal symptoms of what you have talked about appear. The important thing is that they should stay marginal. I am of the opinion that in present-day Poland there is no longer any room for any major political groups propagating nationalism or anti-Semitism. There are, however, some populist parties and it is possible that new ones will be established. The reforms we have been carrying out for 10 years are progressive. Still, quite a large part of the population feels slightly frustrated with them. There is no doubt at all that some individuals and political parties wish to make use of this frustration in their programmes or use it to achieve success. Such an attitude poses some risk. I in no way underestimate it.

*Two years ago in the interview given to our newspaper you said: "It would be sad if those who for years had demanded border opening, all of a sudden began to limit travel possibilities." What do you think about it now? Is there a connection between the criticism of Haider's attitude towards foreigners and the introduction of visa requirement for the nationals from the so-called problematic countries?*

My stance on that issue has not changed. It is our moral duty to prevent new barriers from being set up in Europe. During the meeting of the presidents of Central European countries, which was held in Lviv last year, I suggested that all of us, together with experts, should try to find a solution that would protect our countries against the spread of organized crime, drug trafficking and terrorism. On the other hand, while closing the borders to the above-mentioned phenomena, we need to leave them open to ordinary people, tourists, the youth. Poland is working towards such a solution. At the present moment we still have some time to do it. As a matter of fact, Czechs have already started introducing a visa requirement...

*That is the reason why I am asking about it.*

... but, for the time being, we keep on pondering over what can be done to avoid introducing such restrictions for our neighbours from Ukraine, Belarus and Lithuania. Let me repeat that seeking a solution that will leave the borders open, is our moral obligation since it is from our own experience that we know well what such limitations mean. We distinctly remember visiting various embassies asking for visas and feeling the intense humiliation we were subjected to. (...)

Interviewer: *Aleksander Kramer*

# 14.

Interview with Russian Weekly "Moskowskije Nowosti" (excerpts)  
– 14<sup>th</sup> of November 2000

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*Mister President, first of all, on behalf of "Moskowskije Nowosti" I would like to congratulate you on your sweeping victory in the election.*

Thank you for the congratulations. My certainty of winning was first of all based on the fact that my five-year term of office as President, which was a period of hard work, produced positive results that changed Poland for the better. I made two decisions that will undoubtedly go down in history. One of them is the new Constitution that was for the first time adopted at the general referendum held in 1997. The other achievement is connected with providing a security guarantee to the country by Poland's entry into NATO. I am aware that Russia does not much approve of this decision, however, for us Poland's becoming a NATO member is of immense importance.

I hope that after Minister Ivanov's visit to Poland, President Putin will make a visit to our country next year. I re-invited him to Poland when he phoned to congratulate me on my win in the election. He was one of the first persons to extend congratulations to me. A need exists to make "a new start" in the relations between our countries. We should not miss the opportunity that arises nowadays.

*In your recently published book – "Our Home – Poland" there is a chapter on Russia that you entitled "Why does Russia dislike making apologies?" Do you think that the Russian–Polish relations will improve as soon as Russia performs an act of penance?*

It is not easy to apologize but it is necessary. I know it from my own experience as a human being and a politician. I should feel responsible not only for my deeds, but for the political party I belong to and the historical past as well ... It is simply that one should say: "forgive" in order to to prepare the ground for new relations and to restore honour and dignity to those that had been deprived of them for years. Take Polish-German relations, for example, in

1970 Chancellor Brandt was willing not only to sign a treaty on the recognition of the Polish frontiers, but to kneel down in front of the Monument to the Ghetto Heroes in Warsaw as well. It is by making this gesture that Brandt created a piece of history.

There is also the question of Katyn, where in Poland Polish officers were shot. The factual extermination of the intellectual elite has not been forgotten, either. A gesture should be made in order to stop broaching this painful subject. The Polish side ought to make a similar gesture. We are going to pay homage to the 600 thousand citizens of the USSR interred on the Polish soil who lost their lives fighting for Poland's liberation. After all, they liberated it not for Communism, but from Nazism. It is not the fallen but the politicians to blame for what happened later.

You are Slavs and so are we. As for Slavs, they tend to take into account not only the letter of law and political declarations, but something that is referred to as poetry as well. Just think of the multitude of distinguished poets that both the Polish people and Russians have. Russian and Polish poets were awarded the Nobel Prize. We need at least a small amount of poetry in politics. I address my wish both to Russian and Polish politicians. Nowadays, society disapproves of anyone that would like to base Polish politics upon the problems of the past. This is what the results of the presidential election show.

*However, the image of Russia that has been presented in the Polish mass media over the past ten years is quite distressing to us. It is based on a stereotype: the East is the root of all evil in Poland...*

I look at the issue from three different angles. The first one is the opinion held by the common people. As for them, they have a positive attitude towards Russia. Prior to the election, I held over 220 meetings with the voters. I met with millions of compatriots. During each of the meetings I stressed the need for good Polish-Russian relations. Each time these words were greeted with applause. The second perspective, which I would refer to as a political-intellectual-journalist one, is obviously more problematic. Following the turnabout in our history that occurred ten years ago, the Left started to be afraid of maintaining too close contacts with Russia for fear that they might be considered to be unpatriotic, whereas the Right started to use the rhetoric that is unacceptable to Russians. The reason for such a state of affairs was that the relationship between our countries had not been strong enough over the past 10 years. There were neither political visits nor major social or cultural events. Even journalists and intellectuals stopped staying in contact with each other. What in the past used to be regulated by means of political orders have

turned into a void – nowadays. Take the screening of the movie “The Barber of Siberia”, for instance. Nikita Michalkov, who has many friends here who he sometimes argues with or drinks vodka with, was not present. Why was he absent? In our current relations we find it hard to make a complete break with the past. We ought to meet more frequently and talk.

There is also a third perspective. Please, note that a larger part of the negative opinions on Russia comes from ... Russia itself. Russians criticize their own country more strongly than it is done in Poland or in Western Europe. During a discussion in Berlin, I and Solana had to defend Russia against two or three Russian politicians.

*What, in your opinion, might reduce the stream of negative rhetoric directed at Russia?*

Facts, facts and, more facts. We have no influence over the mass media. Newspapers write what they want. Everyone sees things differently. Nevertheless, things like that also happen in Russia. What we can do is to convince the mass media by using observable facts such as the active political dialogue, development of cooperation, cultural events, ability to find satisfactory solutions to visa- and transport-related problems, tourism, youth meetings. Journalists are not to blame for having too little positive information since we, the politicians, too little contribute to it.

*The results of the public opinion poll reveal that nearly half of Russians think that “Polish support for the Chechen separatists” has the worst influence on our relations. 63 per cent of the respondents believe that Poland should, first of all, close down the so-called Chechen representative offices, especially the Information Centre and the “Poland-Chechnya” and “the Free Caucasus” Committees. What do you think of this proposal?*

It is a matter of our attitude towards different groups operating in Poland. We live in a free country, which means that anyone operating in compliance with Polish legislation may continue their activities. Everyone, including the Chechnyans, the Kurds, the Germans, the Belarusians and the Jews, has an equal right to do it. No infringement of the law by the Information Centre has been notified. At the same time, we have our own opinion about the Chechnyan problem that we frequently expressed in the presence of the representatives of Russia. We are ready to support any efforts made by Russia aimed at establishing the peace in the North Caucasus – the permanent peace, one that is not only connected with a cessation of military operations but with prospects of future development of the area. We are fully aware that it is a highly complex matter.

None of us questions the Russian Federation's right to defend its integrity. However, we may not fail to enter into discussions on the methods that are being applied to achieve this aim. For example, does a military aspect make sense? To this day the issue of martial law that was imposed in Poland in 1981 remains hotly disputed. Hence, we are well aware of the problems that need to be dealt with here. The most important thing is to select the methods and mechanisms that will be accepted by the international community and will make it possible to establish the permanent peace.

*There is one more painful issue: the NATO expansion to the East. Millions of Russians still consider this alliance to be an aggressive pact.*

The membership in NATO means to us that nowadays we are certainly able to ensure our country's security. I feel pleased that Russia recognized and accepted this viewpoint, although, I conclude that Russia did it without enthusiasm. I am glad to see that once more NATO is currently expanding its cooperation with Russia. As far as the war in Yugoslavia is concerned, we cannot speak of it the way we did a year ago. If today Russia accepts Kostunica and the democratic transformations in the Balkans, it means that Russia actually recognizes the fact that the ethnic purges of Kosovo Albanians, which took place and were carried out by Milosevic, were used as a tool in the power struggle. Could that be stopped using only diplomatic endeavours? What can be said about it now... One should perceive the entry of Poland and of other countries into NATO not as an expansion of the spheres of influence and a creation of a new division line, but as an establishment of a new European security structure in which there is also room for Russia. I see no reason why the Baltic States, Slovakia or Slovenia should not be granted the NATO membership. Firstly, being sovereign countries they have the right to make such decisions. Secondly, such a decision does not threaten anyone. Needless to say, this decision is not directed against Russia. The only thing that needs to be done is to get rid of a stereotype that the world was shaped once and for all in 1945. This historical period belongs to the past.

*Moscow also gets irritated that currently Poland encourages its neighbours to join NATO. Won't the problem of Kaliningrad, a Russian town that will find itself surrounded by countries-NATO members, arise after the Baltic States join the Alliance?*

Please note that the status of Kaliningrad, as a Russian territory, has not raised any doubts over the past decade. The Polish people are of the opinion that in this case the most important thing is to act in accordance with the international principle – *pacta sunt servanda* (*pacts must be respected*), which is also the

stance taken by Germany and the European Union. Nowadays the situation is different. One million people live there – what needs to be done to provide them with European living conditions? And this is the future of this region that might become one of the most interesting places in Europe as long as, obviously, they are not willing to turn Kaliningrad into an unsinkable aircraft carrier or a military base. Russia should throw open Kaliningrad to business people and tourists, which is a matter of utmost importance.

*While being surrounded by NATO countries?*

Both neutral Austria and Switzerland develop in close proximity to their neighbours -NATO countries, don't they? It does not have a negative influence on tourism. I would say jokingly that anyone in our region that will get bored with NATO will attempt to go to Kaliningrad to breathe in the fresh air. (...)

*Nowadays one could have the impression that Poland and Russia compete for influence in Ukraine: which of the countries will win Ukraine over? Might it happen that in the end Ukraine will be the greatest loser?*

The policy of both Russia and Poland should be based on the consensus concerning the most important issue: both of our countries need an independent and democratic Ukraine. If we are concerned about Ukraine's being an independent and democratic country, then the strategic partnership of Ukraine both with Russia and with Poland becomes natural. It should not resemble a tug-of-war. I am convinced that in this regard both Russians and Poles have the same intentions. I know that since during President Kuchma's inauguration ceremony, I was sitting next to then Prime Minister and nowadays current President – Putin.

*What is the core of Poland's opposition to the plan that envisages the construction of a gas pipeline linking Russia and Western Europe?*

It is a scandal that in the year 2000 one speaks of transit gas pipelines, crude oil pipelines, telecommunications networks and power lines in political terms. What does it mean? That is to say that we are constructing something to the detriment of someone else, hoping that they will be sitting by candlelight while I will be bathed in day-like light. Obviously, it is Russia, us and the EU that should ask themselves – what can be done to make Ukraine part of this project. Nowadays a need exists to construct a logic-based network system in which gas will flow to a place where there is a lack of it. In my opinion, a meeting of partners, including Ukraine, should have been held to eliminate this political aspect. In this way, all the fuss about the issue could have been

avoided. Unfortunately, while decisions were being made, Poland and Ukraine were not invited to join in. Just as if there were two partners – Russia and the EU, whereas two countries inhabited by nearly 100 million people were left out of this discussion. It is a matter of decency. The issue of the construction of European infrastructure cannot be turned into a political problem.

*After Vladimir Putin was elected President, you said: “He is a completely new phenomenon in Russia ...”.*

I am of the opinion that the most dramatic change that occurred in Russia is a change of the generations. President Putin belongs to my generation and, while looking at Prime Minister Kasyanov, Mr. Gref, and others, I begin to comprehend that the most important decisions are made by forty-year-old politicians. These people are not burdened with ideologies. For the time being, the world does not share their belief that Russia is able to re-achieve its strong position, I would even say, to regain its pride and glory. Faithfulness to the values of democracy and dialogue, openness to the world – that is what characterizes most Russian politicians. It seems to me that President Putin is such a politician: he is a very competent interlocutor. His chief qualities are, on the one hand, pleasant modesty and on the other hand – a gift for convincing others of the significance of the mission. The mission that is so important both to the country and to the world since we are all concerned about Russia being a stable, developing and democratic country.

Interviewer: *Valerij Mastierov*



# 15. Declaration of the Presidents of the Visegrad Group States – Pszczyna, 19<sup>th</sup> of January 2001

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We, the Presidents of the Czech Republic, the Republic of Poland, the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Hungary met in Pszczyna, on 19<sup>th</sup> of January 2001, on the eve of the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Visegrad Declaration on Co-operation between the Central European nations that we represent. In the face of the changes occurring in the uniting Europe of today, the document has not only retained its validity, but has even acquired wider significance.

We do really appreciate the ten years' achievements of the Visegrad cooperation. We express our readiness to continue this cooperation and deepen it. We are extremely glad to see the progress which was made in this area last year. We feel satisfied with the intensification of the dialogue held by prime ministers, ministers of various departments, the main negotiators in the talks concerning the accession of our countries to the European Union. What we consider to be extremely valuable and beneficial is the strengthening of contacts in the spheres of culture, education, science, youth exchanges and cross-border cooperation, the progress of which will be largely facilitated by the International Visegrad Fund that was launched last year.

Our most urgent priority is the accession of our four countries to the European Union. A rapid entry into the European Union, on favourable and equitable conditions, will not only be a fulfilment of our national aspirations for integration, but it will contribute to the dynamization of the European unification process as well. Close Visegrad cooperation on the EU issues, which is increasingly gaining in significance in our pre-accession period, will retain its immense value after this strategic goal has been attained.

The time that has elapsed since the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization has proved that the enlargement of NATO was the right decision. We unanimously opt for the Alliances' continued "open door" policy, which contributes to the strengthening of security and stability in Central and Eastern Europe. We fervently hope that Slovakia will soon

become a member of NATO. At the same time, the Visegrad States confirm their unflagging support for the successful development of the Common European Security and Defence Policy, while maintaining the long-lasting transatlantic bonds that are advantageous to the entire continent. We warmly welcome the decision of the North Atlantic Council of 15<sup>th</sup> of December 2000 to hold the next NATO summit in Prague, the capital of the Czech Republic.

In view of the coincidence of the strategic goals of the Visegrad Group States and the similarity of the methods we have adopted to achieve them, there are plenty of common challenges ahead of us. Once the challenges are responded to, the citizens of these countries should experience an increase in economic freedom, an improvement in the standards of living and a boost in the internal and external security. The dynamically developing Central Europe joins into the globalization processes that provide new opportunities for all our fellow citizens, especially for young generations that will decide on our common destiny in the century that has just begun.

The successes of the Visegrad cooperation have provided a model to be followed by many other Central and Eastern European countries since they stem from our breakaway from the totalitarian order in Central Europe and they are solidly founded on the adherence to the principles of democracy, market economy and state of law, and on respect for human and national minority rights and civil freedoms. We express our readiness and willingness to develop a broad spectrum of contacts between the Visegrad Group that we represent and other countries and subregional groupings. This will foster good neighbourly relations between the nations, aid in overcoming the past divisions on the continent and clearing the way for a secure, stable and prospering Europe.

# 16. Address Delivered at Plenary Session of the 4<sup>th</sup> Economic Summit Poland-Ukraine (excerpts) – Dnipropetrovsk, 4<sup>th</sup> of June 2001

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

(...) In 1998, during the first Polish-Ukrainian economic summit, in which President Kuchma also participated, I wished the future of Polish-Ukrainian and Polish-Lithuanian relationships would mean friendly borders. Moreover, I wished these borders would not divide people, but help them meet, talk, make mutually beneficial deals with one another. And I am pleased that what I wished for has become a reality. Our presence at this meeting is a sure sign that we do persist in making every effort to translate our partnership cooperation declarations into concrete actions such as joint initiatives, undertakings and projects. Many a time have I said that politics devoid of strong economic foundations was, in actual fact, not only hollow but hardly effective as well. I am convinced that the business people present here, coming from Ukraine, Lithuania and Poland, will help us, politicians, to build reality on strong foundations. The foundations that are based not only on political cooperation, but on good economic cooperation as well.

The annual meetings of business people and major economic organizations from Poland and Ukraine, with the participation of the representatives of both countries and their presidents, did not become – in spite of what some people had feared at the beginning – mere short-term political-economic events. The meetings held so far have shown that both sides regard them as an opportunity to seriously discuss and frankly assess what has already been done and what needs to be improved to make our economic ties stronger and broader so that both Poland and Ukraine derive greater satisfaction and mutual benefits from them. The information obtained from the Polish and Ukrainian Economy Ministers shows that this forum was a candid and serious discussion during which, first of all, new possibilities were being talked about. Moreover, the forum created an opportunity to ponder how to surmount existing obstacles. I am convinced that we have already done much on this issue. Each such meetings leaves a permanent mark behind in the form of not only new, personal contacts

or a better understanding of mutual expectations, but concrete achievements in the economic cooperation, investments as well. With each such meetings we make a step forward, we make progress.

I am heartily glad to see that we finally broke the deadlock and we are compensating for the consequences of the slump which, particularly in 1999, had an adverse influence on our mutual trade turnover. I cherish the hope that a gradual increase in the turnover, which we have been experiencing since the beginning of the previous year, is not a passing phenomenon and that these trends will continue and they will be consistent. There are good reasons to believe that these hopes will become a reality. I am glad to hear President Kuchma say that Ukraine makes strenuous but persistent efforts to overcome the economic crisis. The results achieved in the year 2000 are already a good reason for optimism. An increase in direct foreign investments, a positive balance of foreign trade, a marked revival in manufacturing – these are not only positive results achieved in the previous year, but good prospects for the future as well. (...)

I am convinced that such opportunities are opening up for you and that both Ukrainian politicians and business people alike will make every effort to take full advantage of them. Remember that you can be sure of not only Poland's understanding and goodwill but readiness to cooperate, to act jointly as well. I feel satisfied with the multi-layered dialogue between Poland and Ukraine and that more and more frequently we are involved in discussions on science and culture. I am satisfied that the cooperation between Polish and Ukrainian towns, social organizations and various non-governmental centres is shaping up nicely. The important and new thing about this economic summit is that on this occasion for the first time the representatives of the mass media have met here. Poland is represented by a group of both major public and private media staff that are interested in cooperation with their Ukrainian partners. I would also like to inform you that, before entering this room, President Kuchma and I participated in the opening of a center for management, business, entrepreneurship. The Centre, established here in Dnipropetrovsk, which is attended by one and a half thousand students and whose aim is to train professional personnel that will be capable of developing Polish-Ukrainian contacts. I do not need to and I cannot conceal the fact that I am more than pleased that the Centre has been called "The Kwasniewski-Kuchma Centre", i.e. "The KWA – KU Centre" for short. I consider it to be one of numerous monuments of the Polish-Ukrainian cooperation and reconciliation that both Leonid Kuchma, my friend, and I will leave behind as our presidential legacy.

There is a wide range of possibilities for developing our cooperation. I would like to stress very strongly that of all the different forms of our Polish-Ukrainian cooperation the economy is of utmost importance as it translates best into marked and concrete results. I fervently wish there were as many marked and positive results in our economic cooperation as possible. I hope that Minister Blaszczyk's wish expressed in the following words: "with each Polish-Ukrainian meeting, there will be no good old standby topics any longer such as bureaucratic restrictions, a certification issue, export warranties" will become a reality. We hope that we will also be able to overcome those barriers that are connected with the direct investment possibilities since although the previous year saw a 14 % increase in Polish direct investments made here, in Ukraine, they still account for as little as 1.6 % of all the investment. I am convinced that there is a much wider range of possibilities. Moreover, I am confident that a list of spheres in which we may cooperate is much longer. Hence, we can achieve much more than ever before. I was glad to hear some interesting suggestions. Take the proposal made by Mr. Szewc, head of the district administration, who is present here. He expressed high interest in the Polish specialists' participation in a joint search for and then the exploitation of gas deposits in Ukraine. Needless to say, an economic analysis is needed, however, it seems to me that this is the direction of our line of thinking we should take. I sincerely hope that there will be fewer of these standby topics, that our meeting in 2001 will give an impulse prompting the governments of both Poland and Ukraine to develop the methods and ways that will make it possible for both trade and investments, as well as direct cooperation, to develop with no unnecessary difficulties. This also applies to banking and financial cooperation. (...)

It is good to see that so many have gathered here in this room. Hence, I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to thank you for all you have done to strengthen our partnership cooperation. I am convinced that if this cooperation depended solely on those who are present here, it would be almost exemplary. Much goodwill, mutual understanding and willingness to cooperate can be distinctly felt here. However, there are other factors. There are problems our countries encounter that are frequently created by external circumstances. Nevertheless, we should not give up. We ought to overcome our weaknesses. I encourage everyone here present, the business people from Poland and Ukraine, the politicians from Poland and Ukraine, the mass media people from our countries to persist in their efforts to make our cooperation broader and deeper. We must not lose heart. We must not waste time. We must not look for easy excuses. It is history, Ladies and Gentlemen, the history of the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries that has provided us with a unique opportunity. We have been given the opportunity for enjoying sovereignty. What is more, we have been given a chance to build democracy and civil societies. We have been afforded

with an opportunity to build our mutual relations with peace and cooperation, not force, as their foundation. Hence, it is not only our chance, but our duty as well, to develop much stronger neighbourly bonds between Poland and Ukraine than ever before. It is an ambitious task, but a realistic one. I am convinced that in this room there are people that are willing to undertake it. We have quite a task ahead, the task of developing Poland and Ukraine, of establishing strong neighbourly and friendly bonds. May all of us present here, all our countrymen play a part in it.

# 17. Joint Interview with “Przeгляд” and German Weekly “Die Woche” with Presidents of Poland and Germany (excerpt) – 27<sup>th</sup> of June 2001

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*Mister President, what are the first associations that come to your mind when you think of Germany?*

President of the Republic of Poland, Aleksander Kwasniewski: A large neighbour, a great history, a great “industrial” nation. The country with which we are also bound together by tragic events. The events that affected each Polish family. Nevertheless, we have managed to establish truly friendly relations. I perceive the Federal Republic as the number one partner in Europe.

*Mister President, what connects you with Poland?*

President of Germany, Johannes Rau: First of all, I think of two 17-year-old boys from Poland who spent their summer holidays with our family last year. The young generations of Poles and Germans should get to know one another better, which is the number one priority. After all, what we deal with is not only the harm inflicted on the Polish people by Germans. We deal with a nation that in previous centuries was frequently divided, subjugated and deprived of freedom. I am filled with admiration for Polish pride and Polish liberation movements.

*Are the relations between both countries still being shaped by history or does history belong to the past?*

President of Germany: History will always be part of our relations. However, the crucial thing is the way we will deal with history and the significance we will attach to it. I was born in 1931 and I had lived through the war, although I was a child then. For me, this part of history is not over yet. For Poles of my generation, the wounds have not healed yet, either. For my children, it is the future that matters. They can only win the future provided we, the old, do not forget about the past.

President of the Republic of Poland: It is the natural order of things that more and more future decisions will be taken by post-war generations. Finding and telling the truth about the past is an essential prerequisite for getting over the past. We have made substantial progress in this sphere. Nevertheless, some problems have to be explained and described by scientists and contemporary people. I mean here not only the German side, but ours as well. I mean e.g. the expulsion of Germans after the Second World War. There are a few issues that became a taboo subject during the cold war. Only if we earnestly explain the problems of the past, our cooperation will really gain a solid foundation to build on.

*Former Prime Minister Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz recently said that the Poles' attitude towards Germans had changed much more than the Germans' attitude towards Poles. In Germany numerous prejudices against the Polish people are still fostered. Do you agree with this thesis?*

President of the Republic of Poland: I am not a sociologist. However, I have had lots of personal contacts with Germans since high school. I used to live in Bialogard, 150 kilometres away from Berlin. The distance from there to Warsaw was as much as 500 kilometres. I have the impression that I know Berlin better than a lot of prominent figures in Germany.

President of Germany: Unfortunately, I must admit it is true.

President of the Republic of Poland: And now, seriously speaking, I am under the impression that we have always viewed Germany from the victim's position. It is now that we are entering into a normal partnership. In Poland there has been a considerable change in the attitude towards Germany. Never will we forget the groundbreaking gestures. We will not forget Willy Brandt falling to his knees in Warsaw. We will not forget the gestures of reconciliation made by Helmut Kohl, Roman Herzog, Johannes Rau and Gerhard Schroeder. However, I find it a serious problem that on the German side such stereotypes about Poland as being a poorly organized country, having a badly organized economy are still in circulation.

*What is the reason behind it?*

President of Germany: I have the impression that in the German and Polish cross-border regions the prejudices on both sides are stronger than in the areas situated further away from the border. Close to the border special frictions occur, competition takes place there. However, we can overcome these practical problems. As regards psychological problems, let me give you an example.



When in 1999 I was with President Kwasniewski at Westerplatte, I delivered a speech on the occasion of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Nazi Germany's assault on Poland. I received plenty of critical letters from the circles of the expelled Germans. I was accused of having forgotten to mention the expulsion. The criticism was unfair. I did speak about the expulsion. Moreover, I mentioned the reasons for the expulsion and its consequences. Each party is selective in their perception of facts.

*In Germany the term "Polish economy" is commonly used.*

President of Germany: I remember this expression only from my childhood. However, the prejudices last longer than a human life. In any case – do you think that all the Germans are as unbearably hardworking as the proverbs say they are?

President of the Republic of Poland: While being presented with the German Entrepreneurs Association Award, I heard a new definition of the term: "Polish economy". At that time it was applied to refer to the successes of the Polish economy. I heard, for example, that our economic growth is higher than in your country, in Germany. However, I would not like you to suffer from complexes because of that, Mr. President.

President of Germany: No! Your joy is mine. (...)

Interview conducted by  
*Alina Kietrys and Pawel Dybicz from "Przegląd"*  
*and Jan Puhl and Tjll Schoenemann from "Die Woche"*

# 18.

Address Delivered at the 11<sup>th</sup> Economic Forum  
– Krynica, 6<sup>th</sup> of September 2001

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

This is already the third time that I have had the pleasure of taking part in the Krynica Economic Forum, and I am heartily glad to see the growing authority and significance of these meetings. The initiative, launched in 1992, met the expectations of the economic, political and intellectual circles in Poland, as well as in the neighbouring countries and in the other countries of Central and Eastern Europe that had been seeking opportunities for exchanging experiences.

During the previously held meetings Krynica had already hosted prime ministers, deputy prime ministers, ministers and parliamentarians. Last year Mr. Adamkus, President of Lithuania, was present here. Today he is also here with us. Let me address special words of welcome to him. There is a momentous occasion for me to do it – yesterday we jointly participated in the celebrations held in Warsaw to mark the tenth anniversary of the re-establishment of Polish-Lithuanian diplomatic relations. The independence of Poland and the independence of Lithuania are connected with each other. They support each other and best serve our two countries and the whole of Europe.

I am also pleased to welcome Mr. Rudolf Schuster, my bosom friend – President of Slovakia – the country that has chosen the same strategic goals as Poland. Let me also welcome Mr. Vladymir Voronin, President of Moldova. The presence of the country which, after 10 years of independence, is still making every effort to define its place and role, but is open towards Poland, towards Europe, and is ready to draw on our experiences, the presence of Mr. Voronin in Krynica proves that welcoming him we welcome the open Moldova that is becoming part of an integrated Europe. Let me welcome all the outstanding guests from 19 countries whose presence here confirms that Krynica has become a place worth paying a visit to.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The leading question of this year's Forum "Will Europe remain divided?" sounds a bit provocative. In fact, Europe is uniting and the process of its unification cannot be stopped now. The fact of the matter is that there is no alternative to integration. Nevertheless, a lot of people, especially from Central and Eastern Europe – feel anxious. Paradoxically, while some are filled with a fear of the challenges and requirements related to the integration, others feel a fear of being left aside in the process of integration. And to some extent these concerns are justified. On the one hand, a division into the spheres of influence has vanished. The area of stability and democracy keeps expanding. We are witness to the progressive multilateral cooperation at the economic, political, cultural, scientific and military levels. We are participants in the processes that are welding Europe together, strengthening freedom, security and democracy. On the other hand, there is concern that our continent might face the risk of being divided into one stable, prosperous part and the other part continuing to play the role of a poor relative. The danger is real. It particularly applies to those countries that, after a period of transformation, are now toiling at reducing the distance that separates them from the western world. There is a need for more mobilisation, more solidarity and cooperation on our part to prevent that from happening.

Let us also note that our future membership in the European Union will considerably change the lives of the citizens of our countries. Therefore, politicians cannot be the only part engaged in the integration process. It is the societies that need to be committed to these projects. They need to take an active part in them. What is needed is the broadly conceived education, close relations at the level of "little Homelands" – towns, municipalities and local governments.

Regional cooperation, the creation of regional policy, for example, in the spheres of economic cooperation, fighting unemployment and environment protection – is one of the ways in which this distance can be reduced more quickly. Moreover, it is a significant contribution to the progress and development of the entire continent.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have met here to attend the Economic Forum. Your search for the answers to the questions regarding the future shape of Europe will, first and foremost, deal with the economic aspect. Ten, twelve years ago the countries of our region broke free from the ideological umbrella and the iron curtain that had separated them from the world. The old, centrally steered economic ties belong to the

past. It is beyond the bounds of possibility that they will be established again. Today, the demands of the market and the scale of problems are different. The same applies to the social, economic and political circumstances. Our relations must correspond to the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. They must be adequate to match the possibilities and the potential of each country, and match up to their interests and expectations.

A new model of cooperation between Central and Eastern European countries is needed. A model of cooperation, not rivalry, since we have a common goal – to establish here, in the heart of Europe, an area of stability, security and prosperity. At every available opportunity I reiterate that successfully developing regional cooperation, in the spheres of politics, economy, culture, as well as ordinary interpersonal cooperation contribute to the construction of the European order.

This neighbourly dialogue takes place at numerous levels. We have more and more to say to each other. The transfrontier cooperation, the cooperation between towns and local governments and the cooperation between research centres and various non-governmental organizations is getting better and better. The same applies to our relations with Russia that show some improvement; and I am confident that we are capable of dynamizing Polish cooperation not only in relations of Poland with such countries as Ukraine and Lithuania that we perceive as the strategic partners. I am pleased that our relations with Russia keep improving. I am anxious for the dynamization of Polish-Russian economic cooperation that has had its ups and downs over the past ten years. I am of the opinion that the countries like ours, which have been linked together by proximity for centuries and whose economic potentials complement each other in a number of spheres – are able to jointly achieve much more.

It applies not only to Russia. Many customs and certification problems, related to the insurance, banking and guarantee-warranty infrastructures also occur in our relations with other Eastern partners. Therefore, it is a good idea that so many people have come to attend this meeting. That there are guests representing not only Central and Eastern European countries, but from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan as well. I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to make you sensitive to these problems, to call for showing more goodwill while resolving them. Trifles frequently hinder the achievement of ambitious goals. One must not disregard trifles – since as a wise man said: “do not disregard trifles as they are an integral part of perfection; whereas perfection is not a trifle.” Numerous issues could be dealt with more quickly and efficiently if one could eliminate the bureaucratic mechanism that hinders human resourcefulness and initiative.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Poland, like most countries of the region, places its hopes for successful development in the European Union. Our negotiations with Brussels, though tough and calling for various compromises, have already reached a decisive stage. Our membership in this organization will mark a new dimension in Poland's relations not only with the West, but with the East as well. It will mean not only the handicaps related to Schengen and the functioning of a homogeneous market. It will also mean new possibilities and new opportunities for all of us. Poland would not like a new line dividing Europe to appear along our eastern border. Let me assure all of you that we will do everything in our power to make Poland a bridge for international cooperation beneficial to us and our Eastern neighbours after the European Union border has moved eastward.

Our geographical location, which had been a curse for centuries, is becoming our asset nowadays. Poland can and ought to play a vital role of a transit country. We perceive it as a tremendous opportunity for our development. However, in order to make use of this new dimension of neighbourhood, after our joining the European Union, both parties need to make efforts. To our Eastern partners, it means showing perseverance on the path of economic reforms, the building of a solid democracy and a civil society. To the West, it means willingness to understand the problems, difficulties related to and the time needed for the successful transformation of Eastern Europe. If this takes place, if we make these endeavours, the door to the participation in the European process will open for them, which might happen sooner than we expect.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to express my gratitude to the Eastern Institute that has made the Forum a crucial venue for inspiring discussions. I am confident that such meetings are like a seed sown in the soil that will bear fruit in due course. It is my belief that this fruit will be the deeper agreement and understanding, more and more interesting and richer offer of cooperation, many new joint initiatives and concrete actions at various levels and in various aspects, building a promising future not only for our nations, but for the entire European continent as well.

It is the key to a stable and secure Europe, Europe with no divisions. It is the very key that contains the reply to today's question. I trust that we will manage to find enough solidarity and determination in ourselves, enough goodwill, to defy the possible danger of any new "iron curtains" being created that might be a threat to today's Europe.

# 19. Address Delivered at the Inauguration of the European College of Polish and Ukrainian Universities – Lublin, 6<sup>th</sup> of October 2001

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Dear Mr. President, Magnificent Rectors, Honourable Senates of the Universities, Dear Professors, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I was filled with joy, or I would say more, I was really overcome by emotion upon receiving an invitation to participate in a solemn inauguration of the European College of Polish and Ukrainian Universities in Lublin. I have come here to pledge my support for the undertaking that in a practical way and on a long-term basis links Poland and Ukraine together. Today, the strategic partnership of our countries translates into practice in a concrete sphere, i.e. in science, into the action that will be taken by this college. I would like to express my gratitude to the initiators and co-founders of this College.

Let me begin by paying posthumous tribute to a prominent columnist, dreamer, a great politician and a friend of Ukraine – Jerzy Giedroyc. He had always believed that we would live to see the times we are living in now. He believed it would happen even though then it had seemed to be sheer illusion. He believed that the rebirth of independent Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania was possible. He believed that the rapprochement between Poland and Ukraine might occur. He did not solely limit himself to holding the beliefs; he worked, wrote, persuaded, united people, encouraged them to fulfil this formidable task. Today, during this inauguration, it is no exaggeration to say that he is the source of inspiration for each of us.

I would like to give my warmest thanks to Professor Jerzy Kloczowski for all the efforts made, the efforts crowned by success. I would like to thank Professor Bohdan Osadczuk, who in June 1997 came up with an idea of establishing a Polish-Ukrainian college in Lublin. Moreover, I owe a deep debt of gratitude to the rectors-founders and to all the people of science and culture, columnists and politicians, who have contributed to today's inauguration. I am convinced that the joint education of young Poles and Ukrainians close to the border of our two countries is an excellent idea. Courage and responsibility are needed to

make such a vital step towards the future. It is a well-thought-out decision. It was born out of a need for European unity. The College has set itself a concrete, ambitious aim – to aid in accelerating the integration of Poland and Ukraine with European institutions. I am confident that it will be the university that will well prepare Poles and Ukrainians for responding to the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The challenges that over the past few months have turned out to be much more difficult and serious than we expected.

The new College, which is being inaugurated, is the first step. I hope that everything will go as planned and in the future the College will be transformed into an autonomous Polish-Ukrainian University. There are already some good examples. Ten years ago close to our western border, in Frankfurt (Oder) the Polish-German Viadrina European University was established. I wish that with the passing of time the College in Lublin would be comparable to or even better than Viadrina.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Poland and Ukraine have charted a common path. We are not starting from scratch. There is a complex history of Polish-Ukrainian experiences and the centuries-long coexistence. We are following in the best traditions today by overcoming the prejudices and getting over the difficult past. We are drawing on the treasury of culture and science that had been amassed for centuries. Today the time has come to act having the 21<sup>st</sup> century in view. Poles and Ukrainians look into the future with hope. What prevails is the willingness to create, to cooperate. I yearn and strive for broad and diverse relations between Poland and Ukraine. I wish the economic exchange would develop since interesting relations in the spheres of science and culture have already been established. Ukraine and Poland have a lot to offer to each other. The people of science, culture and the arts are capable of showing anything that is good and warning against anything that is evil. They know better than others how to win over the public opinion, young people. They are capable of building bridges of reconciliation. Science, as well as culture and art, were and still are mightier than borders, visas and passports. Both our countries can be proud that we have greatly enhanced our cooperation and deepened our mutual understanding over the past few years. That is the path we should continue to pursue. The partnership of Poland and Ukraine becomes something that is highly-valued and awaited in the world. When last March the President of the European Commission Romano Prodi delivered a lecture at the Catholic University of Lublin, he strongly emphasized the importance of relations between our countries. After the accession to the European Union, Poland will play a key role in contacts with Eastern neighbours of the Union. And our borders, the

Polish borders, cannot become a new line dividing Europe. On the contrary, Poland aspires to co-participate in fostering political stabilization and economic development in our region. Poland longs to be, and already is, an eager advocate for Ukraine's participation in the all-European integration process. Here, in Lublin, I want to assure President Kuchma that our practice in this respect, regardless of future parliaments or presidents, is and will remain the same.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

For the last few years a remarkable transformation has been taking place on our continent. The future of Poland and Ukraine depends on the way we prepare it and build it. The signs are that in the present century the position of our countries in the world and the position of the societies will largely depend on the broadly conceived science, education and culture. That might be the reason why today's celebrations in Lublin and the activity of the College become not only a symbol of but a tool for building the better future as well. They become a place where development of opportunities for Poles and Ukrainians, for our countries and nations can be easily defined. Many impulses may come from here. They will show us the direction we should follow in order to sagely strengthen our mutual cooperation, that will warn against potential mistakes, that will teach us how to be tolerant to and understand each other, and how to position Poland and Ukraine in present-day Europe.

These are very ambitious goals. However, since we have managed to launch this project, since we are inaugurating the College today, I am confident our success will continue in future years. I know that this college needs support and financial resources. Therefore, I would like to thank, first of all, all the founders of the College and would like them to regard President Kuchma and myself not only as friends of this college, not only as its patrons, but – I would add – as voluntary hostages of this college. Let me finish by saying that I am convinced that both the work you, the professors and students, undertake and the efforts you make will prove best of all that all over the world knowledge, goodwill and friendship between people recognizes no borders. Good luck!



## 20. Address Delivered at the Inauguration of the Days of Polish Science in Russia – Moscow, 15<sup>th</sup> of October 2001

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Dear Mr. President of the Russian Federation, Dear Presidents of the Russian Academy of Sciences and of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Honourable Members of the Academies of Sciences of Both Countries, Professors, Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are meeting on a red-letter day, one of the most significant scientific and political events of the recent years in Polish-Russian relations. It is the event that cannot be overestimated, but that – after all – stems from our decades-long and wide-ranging cooperation between scientists from both countries. I would like to congratulate the Russian and Polish organizers of this considerable undertaking. I would also like to avail myself of this opportunity to express my highest respect for Russian science. Its past and its present, and I believe that future as well, is a long list of impressive world-recognized and award-winning achievements, including the Nobel-Prize Awards. The long-standing cooperation between Polish and Russian scientists is our common wealth. As part of various programmes the projects that contribute to the academic achievements of our science and research centres have been carried out.

As President Putin said, we are facing a unique challenge nowadays. Science must help with the development and modernization of our countries. In the modern world, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is knowledge that is becoming the basic tool. It is not only a way to bridge the civilization gap, but it is the fundamental capital that may determine the power of the countries and their economies. Therefore, more ideas, new technologies and comprehensive, modern and up-to-date knowledge are needed. There is also a demand for close cooperation. We see a tremendous opportunity in the cooperation with the Russian Federation. It is the opportunity that we should still take better advantage of. We have a multitude of examples to refer to. Take research into Polish-Russian relations done by historians, nuclear power research, space exploration as part of the Intercosmos programme, research done by Polish and Russian chemists and mathematicians. I would like to stress the importance of the achievements in

long-standing medical research that found its application in practice. Up until today one of the main achievements is also our cooperation in the sphere of agricultural sciences. I cherish the hope that our meeting held today as part of the Days of Polish Science in Russia, in Moscow, as well as our meetings in Saint Petersburg, and in other places will help us to show what we have managed to achieve and also to seek for new opportunities for development.

Let us remember – and that is the most important message of this meeting – that science sees no borders. Science knows no limits. Scientists' accomplishments, though they are obviously the achievements of each of the countries they reside at, constitute – in fact – the heritage of mankind, the achievements of civilization.

I am convinced that both Polish and Russian scientists are fully aware of this mission and the responsibility that lies with them.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The event we are participating in is not only a scientific one, but has a significant political and social aspect as well. Poland and Russia need a new dimension in their mutual relations. This meeting is the beginning of a concrete contribution to the political relations between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Poland. I am enormously grateful that President Putin agreed to be the patron of these Days and in this way we are commencing our preparations for President Putin's state visit to Poland that will take place at the beginning of next year.

It is a long-awaited visit. The President of the Russian Federation has not been to Poland for eight years. I believe that it is high time for us to welcome the President of the Russian Federation to Warsaw. The best virtue of travelling to Warsaw – which the Russian scientists that have ties with Poland know well – is the fact that one can board a plane in Moscow at 3 and land at 3 in Warsaw. What is more, if the wind is favourable, one can also land at a quarter to three. Hence, we are looking forward to this visit. I am convinced that our meeting held today and our scientific cooperation will be one of the bases we will build our future Polish-Russian relations on.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The challenge scientists and politicians are facing is highly exceptional. We are passing through the stage of considerable changes. The transition from a centralized economy, a non-democratic system, a totalitarian country to

democracy, a market economy and a civil society is an experiment that our countries carry out day after day at quite a considerable cost to our countries. We are writing the history with our own effort, sometimes suffering, but – fortunately – not in blood. We are conducting a history-making and – in my opinion – a fortunate and very positive experiment. Therefore, I believe that the phenomenon of the transition period and the social, political and economic transformations, open up a tremendous opportunity for cooperation between Russian and Polish scientists. There is a need for cooperation in such spheres as cooperation between countries in the transformation period, cooperation between borderlands, cooperation in the sphere of ecology, etc. It will contribute to our common way of thinking at this marvellous moment of making the transition from the times that definitely belong to the past, the times that to this day have not been thoroughly examined yet. Scientists can help politicians much in this matter.

There is one more factor, a new one that needs to be taken into consideration, i.e. we have already entered the 21<sup>st</sup> century whose beginning we celebrated with revelry in the belief that the tragic, bloody, dramatic times of the 20<sup>th</sup> century had finally come to an end and that anything that was ahead of us might only be better. Entering the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we held a belief that the worst was behind us. The events of September 11<sup>th</sup> and the whole chain of events we are witnessing show us that it is possible that the most difficult – I would not like to say: the worst – times are still ahead of us – fighting terrorism, combatting the threats stemming from various fundamentalisms, violation of universal principles that underlie the modern civilization. One needs to react to what is happening in our region. Our reaction cannot be based only on political intuition. It must also be based on knowledge whose aim it is to recognize what is happening now and to foresee what might happen in the future.

Hence, I would like to say that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century the role of science, the role of scientists will not be diminishing. It is gaining significance and becoming crucially important in the times we are living in. And although I am aware that in our countries too little money is allotted to science and its development, engineering and modern technologies, I firmly believe that scientists do have a kind of mission to fulfil. The very mission consists in comprehending what is happening and what might happen and putting forward solutions that will be beneficial to nations and to all mankind. I am confident that Russian and Polish scientists can still achieve much in this matter. Our scientists have an exceptionally rich heritage of past achievements they can draw on. The cooperation between the Polish and Russian scientists might be helpful in their further research. Their mutual support will facilitate the development of science in our countries and will provide a solid foundation for the development of our

societies. Moreover, it will contribute to our quest for answers to challenging issues and will help in averting the coming threats.

I wish all the best to Russian and Polish scientists. I would also like to thank the Hosts – the Academy of Sciences of the Russian Federation for their hospitality. I do not know how many times two presidents have met here at the same time, but I am confident that we, Ladies and Gentlemen, are participating in a history-making event.

## 21. Address Delivered at the Meeting of the Presidents of the Baltic States – Vilnius, 22<sup>nd</sup> of March 2002

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Dear Mr. President of the Republic of Lithuania, Mr. President of the Republic of Latvia, Mr. President of the Republic of Estonia, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are participating in a vital meeting of the presidents of the Baltic States that is being held at a special moment. This autumn at the NATO summit in Prague a decision on the next stage of enlargement of the Alliance will be taken. By the end of this year all our countries plan to finish negotiations with the European Union in order to become members commencing on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2004. Therefore, our exchange of opinions is of profound and practical importance today.

Poland is deeply interested in the development of regional cooperation between the Baltic States and Central Europe. We have already managed to achieve much, but there are still issues that we need to deal with, such as infrastructure development and road infrastructure development, so that in the future – when all of us have joined the European Union – we will be able to contact one another not only via Brussels, but directly here, in this particular region.

The political cooperation between regions is at a very high level. It is crucial that concrete economic decisions and concrete actions of the governments should follow. There are a many examples of significant issues, take the famous Via Baltica, and opening of the borders wide to foster youth exchanges, cultural exchange, exchange between universities, scientific exchange, etc.

Once again Poland, as a member of NATO, expresses its unshakeable belief that NATO should be further expanded and that the Prague Summit should be the opportune moment for us to invite new countries to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization structures. We offer our political support to the Baltic States and develop military cooperation. I would like to stress that the soldiers from each of the three countries, i.e. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania took part in the large NATO exercise, codenamed “Strong Resolve” that we held

in Poland. I am pleased that the military cooperation with Lithuania includes the operations of Lithuanian soldiers and officers in the joint Polish-Ukrainian battalion during the peace mission in Kosovo.

Once again I declare that we will actively cooperate with all our NATO partners so that NATO will expand further. I am convinced that the next stage of NATO enlargement should finally put an end to the European divisions arising from the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact and the provisions of the Potsdam and Yalta Conferences. The decision on further expansion of NATO would have a historical dimension. It would finally put an end to the divisions that arose from the Second World War.

We are partners, not rivals. We should also cooperate, not compete, on the path to the European Union. Our mutual cooperation may help us to prepare better for joining the European Union. We look with some envy on all our partners, as they closed more chapters than Poland did, but we believe that we will have managed to finish our negotiations by the end of the year. The pace at which we are conducting these negotiations is very good and I am convinced that all of us will join the European Union at the beginning of 2004. We wish that, during our further negotiations with the Union, consultations between our countries would be held at different levels. I am convinced that it will be good and helpful to each side.

Once again I would like to state my thanks for inviting me to this meeting. I am impressed with the open, frank, practical and pragmatic discussion we had. Thank you very much.

## 22. Address delivered at the Summit of the Vilnius Group Countries "Riga 2002: Bridge to Prague" (excerpts) – Riga, 5<sup>th</sup> of July 2002

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is not the first time the top representatives of the Vilnius Group Countries have met at a joint conference. Thank you for having invited me to this meeting as I feel honoured and satisfied to participate in this grand assembly. I am immensely pleased that the concept of extensive regional cooperation, which I am such an ardent advocate of and which I try to promote to the best of my ability, is becoming a reality and is starting to take shape. At the meeting of the presidents of the Baltic States in Vilnius and at the conference in Bucharest you could tell that we understood one another well and that our community of interests was becoming consolidated. This conference, here, in Riga also confirms that. This belief is also being reinforced by a vast number of conversations I had a chance to have with the heads of the countries of our region. (...)

I would like to pay attention to one more challenge, a new one that we will have to face in the near future. The enlargement of NATO and of the European Union, which will occur in Prague and Copenhagen, will not only be a success in our integration efforts. It will also cause our region to find itself in a new geopolitical reality. The enlargement of these two organizations will not only mean a change in their current structure, a different international position of the new members. It will also mean that these countries of Eastern Europe that will not presently join these European structures will be put in a new position. And, paradoxically, it is the integration success that creates new challenges that our region will need to respond to. What will the real position of the countries from Central, Eastern and Southern Europe be in the structures of the European Union and the North Atlantic Alliance? What will our cooperation look like after the groundbreaking summits of NATO in Prague and of the EU in Copenhagen? Won't the integration of the majority of countries put other countries at the risk of being on the sidelines?

I am of the opinion that we – the inhabitants of Central, Eastern and Southern Europe – must actively join in the creation of new European qualities. So that the voice of our region is not only heard, but listened to as well. The consolidation of this part of Europe will facilitate the articulation of the vital interests of its inhabitants. Central, Eastern and Southern European countries should jointly cooperate for the sake of multi-vectorial integration – not only as part of NATO and the UE, but for the sake of integration with these neighbours that will for the time being stay outside the structures of these organizations as well. Therefore, I suggest that today in Riga we should use this meeting for joint reflection. Let us ponder not only over the current situation in the region in the sphere of security; not only on the preparations for the Prague summit, but let us look ahead into the future as well. Let us give some thought to establishing a joint platform for cooperation that would link together the best traditions of the numerous initiatives made so far.

For the time being the platform would consist of 13 countries of the Vilnius Group and the Visegrad Group. Its goal would be not to replace the current organizations and forms of cooperation, much less – not to duplicate them. The idea behind establishing such a Group would be to consolidate two trends in the integration of Central, Eastern and Southern European countries: with the European Union and with NATO. We should prevent the success of the Vilnius Group – which will be proved by e.g. the decisions of the Prague summit that are currently in preparation – from becoming of no use. The same applies to the positive experience of cooperation as part of the Visegrad Group.

The structure of cooperation of Central, Eastern and Southern European countries – designed as a pluralist institution based, by all means, on partnership and dialogue – would positively affect the foreign policy of the region, enhancing the articulation and the execution of its vital interests. Adding a new dimension to the current regional cooperation would bring considerable benefits not only to the countries of the region, but to the European Union and NATO as well. The countries from Central, Eastern and Southern Europe are not superpowers, but middle-sized or small countries that need cooperation and mutual support – as “in unity there is strength.”

At the same time, I would like to stress that, while coming up with an idea of cooperation as part of the Group made up of 13 countries, I do not rule out cooperation with other countries of the region. The functional rule of the structure, which I am putting forward, would be pluralism and openness. In the near future it could be the Group of 17 or more countries of the region, supporting one another on the path to stable democracy, a civil society and a strong market economy. As well as on the path to closer and closer cooperation



with NATO and the European Union. I cherish the hope that my initiative will arouse your interest and will be warmly received.

Finally, on behalf of Poland, the country that has been a member of NATO for over three years, I would like to warmly congratulate all the candidates gathered here on the progress made in the preparations for the membership. We know from our own experience that it is not an easy task; it requires much effort, consistency and determination. However, the most valuable are the successes achieved with effort, against all odds. I wish that you all, Ladies and Gentlemen, could soon with pride and satisfaction enjoy a happy ending, the fulfilment of your aspirations.

## 23. Address Delivered at the Meeting of the Presidents of the Visegrad Group Countries (excerpts) – Castolovice, 22<sup>nd</sup> of August 2002

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Dear Presidents, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We would like to thank President Vaclav Havel for holding the Meeting of the Presidents of the Visegrad Group Countries in the Castle of Castolovice, which is an exceptional, unique place. We are impressed.

On behalf of the Republic of Poland I would also like to extend our sympathy for the Czech Republic that has been struck by a severe flood. We understand what it means – in 1997 Poland was hit by the flood, the most devastating one ever to afflict our country. Then we experienced many gestures of human solidarity and received aid from our neighbours – including the Czech Republic. Today we are trying to repay our neighbours sending aid offered by both the Polish government and social organizations, as well as by individuals worried about the fate of the flood-affected people. Before I left Poland, I had been informed of the decisions made by various institutions. These are as follows: the “Ciech” Chemical Company donates one million Czech korunas worth of disinfectants as gifts, the Material and Sanitary Reserves Agency donates two million Polish zlotys’ worth of disinfectants; driers, jaundice vaccines, disinfectants worth approximately 100 thousand dollars will go to Litomierz – that is all today’s news. A social action is also well under way in Poland organized by RMF FM and Radio Zet and other radio stations, which are raising funds. Such an attitude of my compatriots boosts my morale. We are willing to continue this assistance, including specialist support. (...)

As far as the content of our talks is concerned, I would like to stress the main items. As for the European Union, the presidents present here decidedly adhere to the view that the agenda adopted both by the European Union and the candidate countries should be executed: the negotiations – to be concluded by the end of this year, all the necessary procedures – to be carried out in 2003, and the entry of new countries into the EU – at the beginning of 2004. We want to support our governments in the negotiations that are under way

and we are persuading the public opinion in our countries to support this momentous decision. We have also agreed that we will make every effort to convince the public opinion of the EU countries to support the enlargement so that the countries and societies of the EU members do not perceive this process exclusively in technical, negotiatory and purely economic terms – for a grand social, cultural, and also civilization work is being accomplished here. It is now that, following hundreds of years of divisions, wars and destruction, as well as barbarity taking place in our territories, totalitarian regimes, Europe can be finally united, may build a common, good future. This is the appeal that follows from today's meeting to all our partners, both the presidents, politicians, as well as the societies of the European Union. In particular today we would like to single out the citizens of Ireland that will presently vote in the referendum and we believe that they will cast their vote in favour of the Treaty of Nice, and that – first and foremost – they will foster the enlargement process. (...)

As far as NATO is concerned, the Prague Summit will have a special dimension – since for the first time it will be held in a country that used to be behind the iron curtain. In November we will probably admit new members – it will also be a momentous decision as once and for all it will put an end to the post-Yalta divisions. There is one more thing, a very important one that President Havel talked about – the Summit should emphasize the formula of NATO as a political-military alliance meeting 21<sup>st</sup> century standards. The Alliance that guarantees more security, understanding, respect for human rights and democratic principles, and that also guarantees to the world that the foundation we all need – the Euro-Atlantic foundation – will be consolidated. This is the foundation where both the United States, which is of immense significance and which has enormous influence upon what is going on, and Europe matter. We are convinced that the enlarged NATO is needed not only by us, but also by the world since it will export stability, understanding and will serve as a good example to other regions of what to do to make the world a better place, and not a worse one.

The Visegrad Group has achieved much. We are grateful to President Vaclav Havel for what he has done for the sake of our regional and Visegrad cooperation. He was the originator of this idea and he stood by it when politicians that thought differently and were not interested in developing this cooperation appeared. President Havel was steadfast in his belief that this path would lead us to the EU and to NATO. This cooperation turned out to be useful, needed and has not exhausted all the possibilities. Therefore, we see further prospects of developing this cooperation that is not in conflict at all with our

presence in the EU, or in NATO, but may only very successfully complement our membership in both of these structures.

And my last remark – my initiative from Riga is an idea that is not aimed against the existing forms of regional cooperation within the Visegrad Group or among the Baltic countries. It is a suggestion that we should ponder over how to cooperate with one another within the Vilnius Group and the Visegrad Group so that once NATO enlarges and we join the EU, some of the countries, especially those in the south, will not be left without any prospects. We may not create the impression that some have boarded the train and are heading for a promising future, whereas others do not even have anything to eat on the platform. Hence, we would like the cooperation with the countries that will only be NATO members, and not yet the EU members – such as Romania, Bulgaria, the Balkan States, Croatia, Macedonia, Yugoslavia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania to be an opportunity for passing on our experiences and for showing that the prospect of integration with the structures we belong to is still open, and that we can help one another on this path. And that as a region we can take a stronger and more robust stance on the global and supra-regional issues, say, the necessity to cooperate in the fight against terrorism or in counteracting organized crime. I am grateful that there is understanding for the Riga Initiative on the part of the Visegrad Group Countries and that we will also cooperate in this matter. There is no element of competition here – there are only elements of being sensibly complementary to one another. (...)

## 24. Joint Statement of the Presidents of Poland and Ukraine – Ivano – Frankivsk, 13<sup>th</sup> of February 2003

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President of the Republic of Poland Aleksander Kwasniewski and President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma met on 13<sup>th</sup> of February 2003 in Ivano-Frankivsk in Ukraine and discussed issues related to mutual cooperation and exchanged their views on the most important problems concerning international politics.

Both Presidents expressed their willingness to further develop the Polish-Ukrainian strategic partnership that constitutes a crucial element of all-European security – to build a strong, united, democratic Europe.

The heads of both countries confirmed their readiness to continue fighting international terrorism and to make joint efforts in order to strengthen security of Europe and of the world.

The Presidents of Poland and Ukraine joined in the appeals directed at Iraq to immediately and unconditionally comply with relevant UN resolutions, in particular the United Nations Security Council Resolution No. 1441. The Presidents declared their readiness to make a practical contribution to the efforts made by the Euro-Atlantic democracies aimed at achieving a successful resolution to the crisis and ensuring international security.

Ukraine warmly welcomes Poland's success on its path to the European Union membership. Ukraine positively assesses the document prepared by Poland concerning the "Eastern dimension" of the policy of the enlarged Union. Poland declares its strong support for Ukraine's European aspirations, for acquiring the status of an EU associated country, and later the status of a full membership in the European Union. Both countries confirm their will to cooperate closely in the sphere of European integration.

Poland warmly welcomes Ukraine's developed cooperation with NATO in such forms as e.g. the realization of the Action Plan, initiated by the work done by

the State Council for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, and supports Ukraine's aspirations for the Alliance membership.

Ukraine supports the Riga Initiative put forward by the President of the Republic of Poland whose aim is to promote mutual assistance among all the countries from Central, Eastern and Southern Europe on their path to the membership in European and Euro-Atlantic structures, to strengthen regional identity and to work out a common stance on the issues concerning this region.

## 25. Address Delivered at the Meeting with the Participants of the Ministerial Conference “Riga Initiative – Europe with No Divisions” (excerpts) – Warsaw, 20<sup>th</sup> of March 2003

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Your Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

May I heartily welcome you to Warsaw, to the Presidential Palace and thank you for your presence at this assembly. The meeting of the officials from sixteen Central, Eastern and Southern European countries that represent the area and the societies between the Baltic, the Adriatic and the Black Seas constitutes an event in itself. Moreover, the meeting gains additional significance due to the fact that it is taking place at a special moment: on the one hand, most of our countries are on their path to the European structures, to NATO, whereas – on the other hand – we can see what is going on around the world. The military action has begun in Iraq with various countries taking different stances on this issue – the action that, if it brings about more security and more effectiveness in fighting terrorism, will become the proper contribution, made by all of us, to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. (...)

We did not foresee that we would meet at such a history-making moment, but the fact does not change the ideas underlying the concept, nor does it diminish my gratitude for your being present here. I am convinced that countries represented by those gathered here constitute a special kind of community. We share a similar identity; the experience of being “in between” – in between different trends, forces and clashing European powers – has been part of our history. The fact of constituting a borderline between the West and the East – between interweaving cultures, traditions and mentalities – is deeply rooted in our history. Our nations, against their will, for many years had been within the orbit of the Soviet Union’s sphere of influence. It is symbolic that today’s meeting is being held in the very room where the Warsaw Pact was signed. Incidentally, the Pact was referred to as a “the Warsaw Pact” not because it was a Polish initiative, but simply because it was signed in Warsaw. It is here in this room that later the Round Table talks, which brought such momentous and profound changes for Poland, for our nations, took place. (...)

While being glad that decisions on the NATO enlargement have been made and that we have been invited to the European Union, we should remember that it does not apply to all the countries. Therefore, we ought to perceive this fact as a point of departure. Open doors should be the permanent quality of the European concept, we should be ready to admit, accept new countries that will meet the criteria, the conditions and will join this great area of cooperation, development and European security. Our inclusion into the European structures means to us, the countries that have gone through so much, more democracy, more rule of law, more civil society and more efficient, healthy economy.

The initiative that I came up with in Riga constitutes a complementary – and let me emphasize the word complementary – concept to this process. It is not meant to replace or be against anything, but to complement all the processes that are already taking place. The objective of this initiative is to prevent the countries that are currently neither among NATO nor among the EU candidates from feeling alienated or rejected, but to let them make use of our experience. At the same time we ought to shoulder the responsibility for political support for their European and Euro-Atlantic aspirations. A truly unified Europe will become a reality when all of us become members of the European structures, which – with us being part of them – will not decline in importance, but will substantially contribute towards the building of Europe as a significant center of the civilization of the present and, I hope, the next century.

Each political initiative makes sense only if it contains substance, and I am glad that my initiative is taking concrete shape. We are talking about different forms of this cooperation. I would like to thank the Polish government officials for their contribution, because all aspects need to be discussed – not only diplomacy, politics, economy, but infrastructural projects, borders, combatting crime, cultural and regional cooperation, cooperation of young people and education. I am confident that there is a long list of issues on the basis of which we can establish an interesting partnership and thanks to our cooperation make the path to NATO and the Union shorter, not longer, for the countries that are not candidates yet.

There is one more crucial aspect – we want to share our experience – both what we have achieved and what might have been our errors or weakness. The wisest way to learn is from the mistakes of others – it costs less. The countries that have already passed through the key stage and entered the European structures can share this experience with the countries present here: Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Croatia or with our great and significant friend and neighbour – Ukraine. All of these are the spheres in which we ought to cooperate. Please convey these words to your presidents, heads of governments.



At this moment of history there is a need for each form of good, honest cooperation. Never did we think that we would find ourselves in such a difficult situation, also within NATO and the European Union. Today it is our countries that may set an example of good cooperation and issue an impassioned appeal to our EU and NATO partners to resume the closest possible cooperation and not to neglect the dialogue that must take place.

In the world there are no better advocates of transatlantic unity and European cooperation than our countries. For many years we had been the victims of European divisions, but we managed to abolish these divisions. It is us who did it; it is our countries that succeeded in lifting the barriers. If the future of our region had been discussed between Moscow, Berlin, Paris and Washington, I can guarantee you that now we would be exactly where we were 20, 30 years ago. It was the courage of the people from our countries that brought about the change. The courage of those who wished to live in independent countries, who fought for democracy, who wanted to speak their own languages – in Ukraine, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania – the courage of those who were able to assert their rights in the Balkans. It is us that changed the rules and principles, and reintroduced the proper values.

It is a harsh judgement, but I am deeply convinced that without the movement here, in our countries, to this day there would be an ongoing discussion how to dynamically democratize totalitarian regimes. The change did occur and now we have the moral claim to demand consistency, cooperation, dialogue and action that would eliminate any disputes that might take us back to the old divisions.

Let us demand the closest possible transatlantic and European cooperation. Let us avoid the question: are we closer to America or to France, do we prefer Europe to the United States. These are fallacious and unwise questions. Our future is anchored in the Euro-Atlantic zone, where there is America, France, Germany, Great Britain and where we are. We – being treated as a serious, predictable and responsible partner, contributing considerable hope to the entire area.

If there is hope anywhere, though it may sometimes be naive, the hope is in us. It is the great power of our region and of the countries that we represent. We are capable of creating, we are not afraid of difficulties; we know how to overcome problems. I am convinced that the cooperation between those present here can bring considerable benefits and I hope it will happen. I perceive your presence here as an excellent beginning.

## 26. Address Delivered at the Ceremony of the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Volhynia Massacres – Pavlivka (formerly known as Poryck) in Ukraine, 11<sup>th</sup> of July 2003

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Dear Mr. President of Ukraine, Ladies and Gentlemen, Witnesses of the Events, Descendants of the Victims, Inhabitants of this Land and of our Common History,

Filled with pain and sorrow, today we recollect the bloody events that took place on this land 60 years ago. With compassion we recollect all the victims of the homicides and pogroms in Volhynia and in Eastern Galicia, as well as in the Chelm Land. We are searching for paths that from that terrible tragedy, from the blood shed, will lead us to reconciliation and enable us to heal the wounds of the past.

We are standing at the foot of the crosses. They are signs of torment, but also symbols of hope. These crosses rise symbolically above the graves of Poles and above the graves of Ukrainians. We have come back and we are standing here, Poles and Ukrainians, shoulder to shoulder – on the tortured land. The Volhynia massacre is a shocking example of the evil that was done between Poles and Ukrainians in the previous century.

Today we want to pay tribute to the victims, the truth, make a step forwards towards reconciliation. On 11<sup>th</sup> of July 1943 here, in Pavlivka, which was then referred to as Poryck and was a town mainly inhabited by Polish people, 300 people were brutally slaughtered. Men, women, children, old people died. It was one of the numerous assaults on Polish settlements. This organized, criminal action grew in intensity in Volhynia from the spring of 1943. Terrible things were happening. On the night of the 11<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> of July the units of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army simultaneously attacked as many as 167 towns, slaughtering approximately 10 thousand Poles. In total, by December 1943 between 50 and 60 thousand Poles lost their lives in the bloody tragic events in Volhynia. Most of the victims were defenceless civilians, frequently slaughtered with extreme cruelty. They were often killed by their neighbours, the inhabitants of the

nearby villages. Later, in 1944, the persecution of the Polish population also spread to Eastern Galicia.

Today the families of the slaughtered are here. They want to mourn for their loved ones and want a fitting burial for them. We are grateful to you, Mister President, and to all Ukrainians of sensitive hearts that understand this. Thank you, Mister President, for your words of compassion, sorrow and friendship. We appreciate the stance of independent Ukraine that acts as host to us today and that, filled with pain, reflects on the tragic vicissitudes of our common destinies. This is the tribute paid to the victims and to the truth. How valuable it is!

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Ukrainian nation cannot be blamed for the massacre of the Polish population. There are no guilty nations. It is specific individuals that are always responsible for crimes and misdeeds. However, a moral protest against the ideology that led to the “anti-Polish action,” initiated by part of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, needs to be expressed here. I know that these words might hurt many a person. No goal, no value, even such a noble one as freedom or sovereignty of a nation, can justify genocide, slaughter of civilians, violence and rapes, inflicting cruel suffering upon their neighbours.

Moreover, I want to say that we, the Polish people, understand better and better how strongly the Ukrainian Insurgent Army has ingrained itself in the historical awareness of Ukrainians – as a force fighting bitterly, until 1950 and even later, for the independent Ukrainian state. However, together – both you and us should distinguish between the bright pages of history and the dark ones. We want to build our reconciliation on the truth: calling good – good and evil – evil.

Therefore, I repeat – in homage to the victims and the truth – there is no justification for retaliation.

Being governed by the conviction that one must not accept collective responsibility rule, be indifferent to the sufferings of innocent people – in 1990 the Senate of the independent Republic of Poland condemned the “Vistula” Action. And on its 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary, as President of the Republic of Poland, I once again strongly expressed my regret over the evil done in the “Vistula” Action and the human suffering it caused. Together with you, Mister President, we paid tribute to the Ukrainian victims of the Jaworzno Camp.

We ought to mutually comprehend and respect the pain that is still felt by many of us. To the Polish people, the Volhynia massacre is excruciatingly painful. But establishing the truth about these past years' events also signifies that we need to take a bold and critical look at more than one aspect of our history.

It is today that one should talk about the mistakes of Polish policy towards the Ukrainian community during the interwar period of the Second Polish Republic. While the Polish people were enjoying the independence they regained, Ukrainians did not have their own, sovereign state. Many of them, being Polish citizens, endured unjustified wrongs and suffering. Let us recall and remember that in September 1939, 120 thousand Ukrainians, wearing Polish uniforms, defended the Republic of Poland, and 7 thousand sacrificed their lives.

Then, the war years hardened people's hearts. In the pincers between fascism and Stalinism the nationalistic thinking grew stronger, the fratricidal fights between Poles and Ukrainians occurred. It was all blood for blood. Ukrainian brothers and neighbours died at the hands of Poles.

The death of innocent people, Polish and Ukrainian victims, must evoke shame and sorrow in honest people. These were horrible times – the reason for which people were killed was solely because they were Poles or because they were Ukrainians. Blood, tears and human pain – both Polish and Ukrainian – were the same. Nowadays it is hard to accept the whole truth about those events as it is the truth about the atrocities a human is capable of perpetrating.

I bow my head in the memory of Poles and Ukrainians that were innocently slaughtered. I would also like to express my deepest reverence for all these people who were good-hearted in times of hatred. Those, who risking their own lives, saved the lives of their neighbours: Ukrainians saved Poles, and Poles saved Ukrainians. Many paid the highest price for it. They should be our teachers. With their sacrifice they gave us a model of mercy and humanity in every sense of the word.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am speaking here, before the President of Ukraine and before the Ukrainian nation, as the President of Poland. I cannot settle if the office I hold entitles me to forgive and express remorse on behalf of all the Polish people. These are the matters of the conscience and heart, not politics. However, I very much would like both sides to utter the words of forgiveness and reconciliation.

Pope John Paul II, the great moral authority of our time, encourages us to do so. In his moving message he stated: “The new millennium requires that Ukrainians and Poles should be no longer enslaved to their sad memories of the past. Pondering over the past events from a new perspective and undertaking the task of building a better future for everyone, let them look at each other with the eyes filled with reconciliation. (...) There is no justice without forgiveness, and cooperation with no mutual frankness would be fragile.”

Yesterday the words of reconciliation were uttered by the Parliaments of Ukraine and Poland. It is an important fact. I believe that today mainly those that feel pain, carry painful memories of suffering they experienced in their hearts will address such words to each other. And after they do so – facing the future with faith – we can and we ought to say these words, we – people of the younger generations, all Poles and Ukrainians.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In this moving place, at the foot of the crosses erected for eternal remembrance – I address today’s inhabitants of Volhynia and other Ukrainian lands, which also used to be inhabited by Polish citizens. Please, tend to the graves of our compatriots so that the victims’ families could visit the graves and pray at them in silence and concentration. In the gesture of sensitive conscience, compassion and kindness, with our hearts open we are responsive to the Ukrainians’ wishes that are similar to the Polish ones. Let us cherish the memory of the victims of the past discords and conflicts. Let us rescue each of them from oblivion: by their first name and surname. We owe it to the fallen and their families.

Let us not draw up a balance sheet of blood and suffering – it is a road to nowhere. Let us bow our heads in pensiveness, in prayer, in compassion.

Only today can we fully understand the tragedy in which our nations were entangled in the past. The experiences of the previous century, so tragic and painful, taught us to take a fresh look at patriotism, at national identity, which does not need to be directed against anybody or proved in confrontation.

Today’s ceremony is one of the milestones on the road for us to get over the difficult past and build a prosperous future together. We find what we have in common. We strengthen our trust and cooperation. There is probably no other country that would appreciate the role of independent Ukraine in Europe and kindly support its pro-European aspirations more than Poland does.

Never before have the words concerning Polish-Ukrainian cooperation, friendship and brotherhood sounded so sincere and meaningful.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today we are paying tribute to the victims and to the truth. We are making a step towards reconciliation. From here, from former Poryck, the place marked by tragic history, I appeal to Poles and Ukrainians for a frank dialogue, understanding and mutual sensitivity. Let us open our hearts, let us meet each other halfway. Let us build the world in which one man will be another man's brother.

Good is stronger than evil, friendship may conquer pain. Let us together bear witness to it!

## 27. Gdansk Declaration of President of the Republic of Poland Aleksander Kwasniewski and President of the Federal Republic of Germany Johannes Rau on People Subjected to Displacement, Flight and Expulsion in Europe – Gdansk, 29<sup>th</sup> of October 2003

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In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, tens of millions of Europeans endured suffering caused by displacement, flight and expulsion. A special place in the memory of the nations of Poland and Germany is occupied by the atrocities experienced by millions of people as a result of the war unleashed by the inhumane National-Socialist regime.

The death toll of these tragedies amounted to millions. Even larger masses of Europeans suffered pain, humiliation and material losses. It brought about profound changes in numerous national societies and still influences the relations among the citizens of our countries. The displacements, flights and expulsions are part of the history of Europe, hence, part of its heritage.

This bitter heritage ought to encourage us to join our efforts for a better future. We need to remember the victims and make sure they were the last ones. It is the natural right of each nation to cherish their memory, but it is also our obligation to assure that remembrance and mourning will not be misused for the purpose of dividing Europe once again. Therefore, there is no room for material claims, mutual accusations and juxtaposition of the losses that were suffered and the crimes that were committed by one nation against the other.

The Europeans should jointly re-appraise and document all the cases of displacements, flights and expulsions that occurred in the 20<sup>th</sup> century in order to make their causes, historical contexts and consequences clear for the public opinion. All this can be achieved solely in the spirit of reconciliation and friendship. This will even bring our nations closer together.

We appeal for a frank European dialogue on this vital issue concerning our past and future. We expect that the persons regarded as the highest moral

authorities, politicians and representatives of the civil society will be willing to participate in it. They will have the task of formulating recommendations related to the forms and structures of this European process of reappraisal and documentation.

We are convinced that the outcomes of such European dialogue will substantially contribute to the mutual understanding and the strengthening of our bonds as the citizens of Europe.



# 28.

Address Delivered at the Polish-Ukrainian Economic Forum (excerpts)  
– Yalta, 25<sup>th</sup> of June 2004

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Dear Mr. President of Ukraine, Ladies and Gentlemen,

(...) This year is the “the Year of Poland in Ukraine.” Our Forum emphasizes its significance and at the same time this “Year” emphasizes the importance of this event, i.e. marks this economic forum as an important event. It is as early as today that I would like to invite you to visit the large “National Exhibition of Polish Companies” that will open in Kharkiv in September.

These cyclic meetings, attended by government officials and business representatives, are really a very important part of Polish – Ukrainian relations. This forum is held in new circumstances; new in the sense that Poland has been a member of the European Union for two months. Together we are facing an enormous challenge nowadays. The fact that Poland participates in the political and economic community of 25 countries; that we have our share in the common market made up of 450 million consumers– means a qualitative change not only to Poland, but also to our relations with the Eastern neighbours; particularly, it is of special significance for our partnership with Ukraine, which we regard as strategic.

Poland has always stressed – and we still adhere to the belief – that Europe needs to be united wisely and sensitively so as not to create new divisions. Integration should not be limited to a certain circle, even if it is the widest one, if it would cause the erection of new barriers in Europe.

We advocate the building of a chain of cooperation between the Union and its Eastern neighbourhood, made up of such countries as Ukraine, Russia, Moldova; and Belarus. At the same time we wholeheartedly support the pro-European aspirations of our neighbours. Ukraine expresses its desires more and more unambiguously, which has even been recently reflected in your country’s new defence doctrine. Both in NATO and in the European Union, Poland, to the best of its ability, will spare no effort to make the doors to these structures

open up for Ukraine. I believe that the Ukrainians themselves also have to be so consistent. One should always remember that the internal situation in the country here to a large extent influences the policy of other EU countries towards Ukraine. (...)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Poland firmly supports Ukraine's aspirations towards being granted the international status of the market economy. We were glad to hear that six months ago Ukraine signed the protocol on the WTO accession. We will support the Ukrainian aspirations for membership in this organization. Similarly, we want to actively accelerate the progress on the issue of Ukraine's becoming the European Union associate member. This is a general outline for our policy aimed at placing the Polish-Ukrainian partnership into the context of European integration and the world economy.

This is also the purpose of a considerable joint undertaking that we are trying to realize. I mean the construction of the Odessa-Brody-Plock crude oil pipeline. It will considerably contribute to the diversification of crude oil supplies to the markets of Poland and the European Union. It will also be used for the integration of the Ukrainian crude oil pipelines with the European pipeline system. We discussed this huge challenge with Mister President Leonid Kuchma. As everybody knows, the Ukrainian part – from Odessa to Brody – is already in existence. Now the point is that it should be extended further – to Plock. We are interested in this project. However, we think that it should be economically profitable and governed by commercial rules. We have excellent prospects for the future. In the nearest future a Polish-Ukrainian company that will prepare a business plan of this undertaking is to be set up. We cherish the hope that the construction of the oil pipeline will be supported by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. It is probable that the works will start in 2006 so that two years later the crude oil could start flowing from Odessa using that pipeline.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

One of the important aspects of our partnership is the cross-frontier and regional cooperation. I want to express my satisfaction that this cooperation develops more and more dynamically. All Polish voivodeships maintain partnership relations with 15 districts in Ukraine.

So far, the cooperation between the Euroregions has been the most fruitful. We have managed to make good use of the European funds – PHARE and

Tacis. Even small-budget projects contribute to the creation of lasting social and economic bonds in “the Carpathian Euroregion” and the “Bug Euroregion” between the institutions and inhabitants of the districts of Lublin, Volhynia and Brest.

We are on the right track that is worth being followed. I am glad that the cross-frontier and regional cooperation between Poles and Ukrainians gains more and more support from other foreign partners, especially the European Commission. It is in our best interest and in the best interest of the whole of Europe to expand this circle of cooperation. We are starting to work on a new Poland-Ukraine-Belarus Neighbourhood Programme that will operate thanks to the European funds support.

That is how the idea I talked about at the beginning of my address is becoming a reality. The unification of Europe within the framework of the European Union should not exhaust all the integration processes that might happen in present-day Europe. We need as much openness, dialogue and cooperation as possible – and no one should be put on the sidelines of these processes. Poland, feeling deeply rooted in the centre of the continent, between the western and eastern part of Europe, with all its might wants to contribute to creating bonds between all the Europeans. The Polish-Ukrainian partnership in these aspirations is a magnificent joint achievement and a chief asset. Let us work for our homelands, for the prosperity of the region, for the future of Europe!

# 29. Statement Concerning Presidential Election in Ukraine – 23<sup>rd</sup> of November 2004

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Central Election Commission of Ukraine announced the presidential election results. On account of fundamental doubts voiced by international observers, and by Ukrainian groups, yesterday the authorities of the Republic of Poland expressed their attitude towards the first and second rounds of the election. It is the stance taken by the government, the President and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Numerous opinions on this issue have also been issued by Polish political parties, members of the Parliament and non-governmental organizations, social organizations. The Polish public opinion, which is rightly concerned about the development of the situation in a neighbouring country, spoke in a clear voice on this issue.

I would like to emphasize once again that Ukraine occupies a special place in Polish foreign policy. We are bound by the strategic partnership. We have always considered, and we still do, the development of Ukraine as a politically and economically stable, democratic and open country to be in compliance with the Polish *raison d'état*. Poland was the first country in the world to recognize the independence of Ukraine in 1991. In the years that followed, we tried to support Ukraine's processes of political, economic and social reforms. With all our might we encouraged Kiev to move towards the North Atlantic Alliance and the European Union membership, while sparing no effort to make these organizations, i.e. NATO and the EU, interested in the problems of Ukraine. The active relations I maintained with President Leonid Kuchma were fully in line with these strategic intentions, which – I believe – lie not only in the Polish and Ukrainian interests, but the European and global ones as well.

I would also like to stress that the past ten years witnessed a considerable rapprochement between our countries and nations. We have held an open, difficult, but fruitful dialogue on our common history. We have undertaken a tough

task of bringing about reconciliation and overcoming resentment that divides both nations, which we expressed during the ceremonies commemorating the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Volhynia tragedy, as well as our efforts made to preserve for posterity Polish necropolises in Ukraine and Ukrainian necropolises in Poland. Our countries cooperate as part of the NATO's Partnership for Peace Programme; Polish and Ukrainian soldiers have been serving together in the stabilization missions in the Balkans for years and in Iraq for nearly two years. The Polish-Ukrainian battalion (UKRPOLBAT) continues its operations. Economic cooperation continues to develop, the evident signs of which are the annual meetings of business circles during the Polish-Ukrainian Economic Forum, and an increase in the trade turnover and in the Polish investment projects in Ukraine, as well as an increasing interest in Ukrainian investments in Poland. The Polish-Ukrainian College has been established in Lublin, which educates young people not only from Poland and Ukraine, but our neighbours from other Eastern countries as well. Relations in the spheres of culture and science have also been developing. Another reason why I am talking about this is to view the whole context of the efforts, which have been made so far, and the achievements, which cannot be wasted.

Hence, now I would like to go on to the election and the crisis that can be seen in Ukraine. Right from the start Poland claimed that the presidential election would be a test of Ukrainian democracy, defining the credibility of Ukraine towards the world partners. Unfortunately, the test result cannot be regarded as satisfactory. Our country is deeply convinced that for the future of Ukraine and its position in the world a choice of a specific candidate for presidency is not so important as compliance with the international standards and the way in which the President of Ukraine will be appointed. While counting the votes, honesty and transparency of the current election are of major significance. We are of the opinion that the observance of these basic rules corresponds to the expectations of the Ukrainian society, and that all the structures of the Ukrainian state owe such a reliable, unquestionable compliance with election rules to their society.

After the first round of the election, we felt concerned and worried about the revealed irregularities. Today, after the second round, there are also many doubts, fundamental objections, protests expressed by Ukrainian citizens, by Ukrainian political parties, international observers, governments of European countries, and by international institutions – the Council of Europe, OSCE, the European Parliament. Numerous Ukrainian voters feel deceived. According to them, the election was not held explicitly, transparently, and much abuse and fraud was perpetrated.

We sympathize with the Ukrainian society. We try to be present at these events and we want to observe their further course. However, I would like to add one more aspect to the issue concerning the election irregularities – one that raises almost equal concern. The point is that this election made it distinctly clear to us that Ukraine is fractured. It is not politically split, as each election causes such a peculiar fracture. It is not even historically split, contrary to what occurred in Poland in 1995. It is regionally fractured and divided clearly into Western and Eastern parts.

In a way, it is a discussion of the Ukrainians that are much concerned about their linguistic, cultural identity, with those who feel quite assimilated into Russia – their Eastern neighbour. This crack places extraordinary responsibility on all the participants of political life in Ukraine.

This particular responsibility falls mainly on President Leonid Kuchma. In a while I will contact him by letter and by telephone to ask him to enter into a discussion and cooperation with both leaders of today's opposing political camps. To induce him to confirm what he said many a time during our frequent meetings – that the election will be compliant with the legally binding democratic principles. So I am making an appeal to the man whom I have always thought highly of and I still wish to do so, to make this enormous effort – firstly, to bring about the investigation of the election protests by competent Ukrainian institutions in an open and transparent manner and with access to mass media and international opinion. To enable the explanation of all the doubts regarding the voting irregularities in a large number of districts and oblasts in Ukraine that are being raised both in Ukrainian and international public opinion. I am addressing Leonid Kuchma to enter into a dialogue with two rival candidates – Prime Minister Yanukovich and ex-Prime Minister Yushchenko. I would like this dialogue to be carried out in cooperation with the most important European institutions, such as the Council of Europe, which Poland has been presiding over since 1<sup>st</sup> of September with Minister for Foreign Affairs Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz as its current formal leader, and the EU, which would be represented by Javier Solana. They should take part in these discussions and aid in breaking the deadlock. I mean providing bright prospects for a united, independent, democratic Ukraine. I believe that such an organized discussion will harm no one, but may produce impressive results. For the distant future, for the next years, which may not be easy, may be full of various conflicts, but may require an ability to engage into a dialogue, cooperation and joint action.

Thus, I am making an appeal to Kuchma and asking him to take such action. Literally a moment ago, just as I was entering this room, I heard he was ready to enter into such a discussion both with Prime Minister Yanukovich and

ex-Prime Minister and opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko. It is a good sign. If at a certain stage, the representatives of major European organizations I spoke about joined in, I believe the result would be even better.

In closing, I would like to make an appeal to the highest authorities of Ukraine, to the entire Ukrainian administration to enter into a dialogue and maintain self-restraint. Poland does not want to instruct anyone, Poland does not want to pry into other people's affairs. Poland deeply respects the sovereignty of its large and really great neighbour. At this difficult moment we want to share our experience with Ukraine. It is this particular place, this Palace, where 15 years ago the Round Table talks were held, that grants us the moral title, the moral right to say: "yes" to dialogue, "no" to violence, "yes" to cooperation, "no" to deepening of conflicts. All that will contribute to the consolidation of Ukraine's international position, will help to reach an agreement between the nations, will facilitate the reforms, many of which Ukraine has already undertaken, but more are still waiting to be carried out.

Hence, I would like to appeal to you and ask for your help so as, thanks to the power of your message, these words will reach our Ukrainian partners. At the same time I am informing you that I have already conducted proper talks. I will also write letters to those whom I have mentioned; these are as follows: President Kuchma, head of Council of Europe, Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz and Javier Solana, "Minister of Foreign Affairs" of the European Union.

# 30. Speech Delivered at the Meeting Related to the Preparations for the Organization of the "Polish-German Year 2005/2006" and the Future of Polish-German relations – 2<sup>nd</sup> of December 2004

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am glad that we can have a discussion in such a superb team of experts in the German, Polish-German and European issues. The topic selected to initiate our discussion is the Year of Poland in Germany and the Year of Germany in Poland. Needless to say, just like each spectacular event, it has its meaning, purposes, internal logic and scope. Hence, we should talk about what to do to make Poland benefit from this year and how to make it possible for Germany to learn more about our country, to make it part of Polish politics.

Let me remind you that it is not a wholly exceptional project since such events took place in Austria, Spain and Sweden. The Seasons of Poland in France and in Ukraine are under way. The range of the latter went far beyond initial ideas and plans. We started with a concert in Kiev and never thought that the Year of Poland in Ukraine would coincide with such a crucial moment in the history of Ukraine and Europe.

I frankly admit that the Year of Poland in Germany and the Year of Germany in Poland also serves as a pretext for bringing up the question what can be done to fully analyse the Polish-German relations, to see what is good and what is bad about them and ponder over the future concept of Poland's policy towards Germany and Polish – German relations for the nearest years.

In this completely new configuration that in a way coincides with a historical miracle – we are holding a discussion on Polish-German relations. For several years we have been together in the same military-political alliance, i.e. in NATO, and as from 1<sup>st</sup> of May we will be together in the European Union. These are undoubtedly new dimensions of cooperation. I very much would like us to – not only – see them, but to make good use of them as well.



At the same time, we cannot escape our past history in the Polish-German relations. I would not like to mention here all of the very significant moments in the Polish-German relations after the Second World War. Still, it is worth reminding that next year coincides with the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the Second World War and any political-propaganda consequences that result from it. It starts in a way with the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the liberation of the Oswiecim (Auschwitz–Birneka) camp, where we invited a large number of presidents and crowned heads of states. This event – according to our current plan – is to be based on three important speeches made by: the President of Poland, the President of Israel and the President of the Russian Federation. We plan that individuals representing both the victims and the liberating countries, as well as – as far as I know – the President of Germany are to be the participants. A large event that as early as today provokes discussion, has been planned for 9<sup>th</sup> of May in Moscow – a kind of re-enactment of the Victory Parade. Needless to say, various countries have different attitudes towards it.

I am of the opinion that 2005 will be a year of not only significant political events, but of a valuable debate on the history of the Second World War as well and its presence in the modern consciousness, especially in the consciousness of young people. In a way, this discussion is already under way. I do not know if you have already had an opportunity to watch the film “Downfall” that is now enjoying enormous popularity not only in Germany, but in Poland as well. It is one of the elements in the new generations’ discussions on the past that must not be ignored. The ceremonies marking the anniversary of the end of the Second World War will build the awareness and sensitivity of the generation of teenagers and people aged between twenty-one and twenty-nine, i.e. those that are the same age as my daughter.

I would also like to emphasize that in 2005 we will have been members of the European Union for a whole year. Hence, there will be reasons for various discussions, dialogues and joint political decisions, undertaken by Poland and Germany as part of the European Community.

I assess Polish-German relations as good. They are based on good principles of cooperation and trust. This is my evaluation of both the relations between the governments and the contacts between the Presidents, as well as relations on other levels of cooperation between our countries. However, some shadows or clouds, resulting from the property claims, or expulsions, or overreactions still keep appearing. All this is part of the modern Polish-German relations. It is important, in my opinion, that plenipotentiaries for Polish-German cooperation have been established – Professor Irena Lipowicz representing Poland and

Professor Gesine Schwan representing Germany. The good thing is that these are women as in difficult situations I believe solely in women and their unique abilities. However, there is one more subject to be discussed today – what to do to make the year 2005 connected with extraordinary initiatives, those going beyond routine, though not resulting from an extraordinary situation.

# 31. Lecture "Prospects for Regional Cooperation in a United Europe" (excerpts) – Prague, 7<sup>th</sup> of December 2004

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

(..) The recent enlargement of the European Union is not only a collection of successes of each of the new EU member countries. It has also created a new political dimension in our region, and also in the whole of Europe. Czechs, Poles, Slovaks, Hungarians, Slovenians, Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians – the nations of this part of the continent – for the first time in their history have been offered a real possibility for participating in the co-shaping of the face of Europe. Just like since time immemorial we have been taking part in the creation of European civilization, we are now grabbing hold of the rudder of the European politics. (..)

We see the last fifteen years as a remarkable triumph of our region. This success has two aspects. One of them comprises of individual achievements of each country, the tremendous effort put into reforms and political system transformation. The other aspect is the outcome of our joint cooperation, the reason and responsibility we have jointly shown and of pursuing a shared vision.

Our region has not become bogged down in antagonisms. Neither has it atomized. After all, there was a danger that when we got out of the artificial unity, out of the structures of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) and the Warsaw Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance, when the shadow cast by of the Soviet Union disappeared, the inveterate strife and historical grudges would be renewed. Hence, each of us could go their own way, not counting on one another. However, we have managed to channel our efforts into getting reconciled with one another. We have succeeded in creating a chain of partnership, consultation, regional cooperation. We have developed cooperation within the Visegrad Group, which I perceive as a great achievement. We have earned a good reputation of being those who consolidate stability; those who build. The success of our region was an exceptionally good piece of news for the uniting Europe and problem-stricken world. We have not

caused additional trouble for the continent, on the contrary – we have been listed among its assets.

Now that we have crossed the gates of the European Union, we are faced with the question – what should be done next about such beautifully begun work? How do we want to perceive our regional cooperation – simply as a stage of our journey into a united Europe or as a never ending source of our identity? We understand each other well and see Europe from the angle of our common experiences – but is this experience also a roadsign for the future? Are we willing to support one another in our aspirations, deepen our bonds, trully bring our societies closer to one another? It is the crucial question.

It is in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Europe that a perspective for cooperation between countries situated in the area spreading from the Baltic Sea, through Central Europe, to the Black Sea coasts is taking shape. It can develop within the European structures and within relations between the European Union and Ukraine, Russia and Turkey, which are getting closer and closer. It would be another positive breakthrough in the history of the continent. For the time being, it still remains a vision. However, it is certain that without our commitment, without developing our regional achievements, without openness to other countries standing in front of the European door this project will not be carried out. Today in our hands we are holding the real key to the future.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

There are many subjects that are worth raising in a discussion between Poles and Czechs. Let me focus on the most urgent one, i.e. Ukraine. Not only because the Ukrainian crisis attracts attention, arouses emotions, as well as anxiety. First and foremost, because the course of events in Ukraine, around Ukraine – is a test for a uniting Europe, for the community of our region and for each of us.

I want to explain why Poland, with such commitment and energy, became involved in resolving the Ukrainian political crisis. Why did I personally put forward the Round Table initiative and persuaded the disagreeing sides to negotiate? I perceive bringing the negotiations to a successful conclusion as one of the most important tasks of my political activity.

I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to thank warmly for all your support, advice and consultation, which I owe to numerous statesmen and to many countries, and for very valuable cooperation with Mr. President Vaclav Klaus and the Czech Republic.

Poland is deeply concerned about the fate of Ukraine as our Eastern neighbour. We are bound by strategic partnership. We think that security and sovereignty of our countries are based on mutual dependence. Poland was the first country in the world to recognize the independence of Ukraine, immediately after it was proclaimed in December 1991. We have made a huge contribution to building reconciliation bridges over the tragic episodes of the past. Our political and economic cooperation has advanced. Many Ukrainians stay in Poland, Polish and Ukrainian local governments and non-governmental organizations cooperate closely with one another.

We strive to make our relations with Ukraine into a model of cooperation, of creating an open and friendly border between a European Union member state and a country that is the Union's neighbour. The example of which is the visa agreement, under which Poles travel to Ukraine with no visas, and Ukrainians are granted visas without worthless procedures and free of charge. Poland is legitimately regarded as an advocate of pro-European aspirations of Ukraine in the European Union forum.

Yet, it is not the only reason for our involvement in resolving the Ukrainian crisis. We have recognised that the evident fraud committed during the second round of the presidential election in Ukraine is the gauntlet thrown down to the European values. It is a challenge of the sense of solidarity uniting the countries of our region. The "Orange," peaceful revolution in Ukraine, which is a large protest against the lie, against the manipulation of democracy – is a question that Ukraine is asking the uniting Europe and each country of our Community how much the European values are really worth and if all of us – in Prague, Paris, Brussels or Warsaw – are willing to defend these truths and values. It is us, the nations of Central-Eastern Europe, that Ukraine is asking the question so urgently and hopefully. The reason is that we had demanded freedom and democracy so persistently and for such a long time, and we achieved it, we have it. Nowadays, we can strengthen these values within NATO and the European Union. However, a question arises – are we open to the fate of those who are involved in a struggle we had been in years ago? The question, which should be put to each capital in Central and Eastern Europe that embarked on a journey of transformation a dozen or so years ago – is, are we still willing to and able to show our solidarity?

Poland – and I personally too – have undertaken a goodwill mission. We cooperate with other countries, with Lithuania, with representatives of the European Union – with anyone that is aware of the gravity of the situation in Ukraine, and that also recognize the opportunity offered to the entire democratic and open Europe by the awakening of the Ukrainian civil society. It is

of immense significance that the European Union has expressed its opinion on the Ukrainian election and that it has decided to act as a mediator. That boosts the chance of a peaceful and lawful solving of the crisis.

It is one of the examples that show as early as today the positive results that the enlargement of the European Union produces. The voice of the politicians and members of the European Parliament from Poland and other Central-Eastern European countries is of tremendous importance in the European forum. Before our eyes and with our participation something, that until recently has only been declared, is emerging: the common foreign policy of the European Union, especially the Eastern policy of the European Union. The partnership of the countries of our region will considerably influence the further development of this policy. And this should be the fundamental direction of our efforts.

It is obvious that charges also need to be answered. Some of them claim that Poland, in the international debate on the Ukrainian crisis, becomes involved on one side and on one side only. It is not true. The Polish state neither supports nor opposes any of the candidates for the office of the President of Ukraine. We stress that Ukraine is a sovereign country. If we participate in the mediation, we do it for a single reason. One should provide the Ukrainians with an opportunity so that they themselves, in a completely free, fair, reliable and transparent way, can – by means of election – make decisions on the matters that concern them. It is so little – or rather so much. From the bottom of our hearts we wish our Ukrainian neighbours, thanks to talks and lawful solutions, would find the ways to strengthen the Ukrainian independence, democracy and indivisibility, i.e. the unity of their state.

I would like to strongly emphasise that Russia is an indispensable partner in solving the Ukrainian crisis. The turbulence surrounding the Ukrainian issue should not be perceived as the occurrence of a new antagonism between the West and the East. It is obvious that Russia cannot be indifferent to the situation of tension, crisis and conflict that is taking place right behind its border. It is bound with Ukraine by numerous historical, cultural, economic and linguistic bonds and by the bonds of human fate. Russia should be a co-creator of the emerging agreement in Ukraine and one of essential allies in the efforts made to prevent the crisis from being resolved by force, so that such solutions can be found that will aid in building a democratic state of law. We are approaching Russia in this matter with a will of partnership-based cooperation, which is already a fact. We are convinced that our achievements of the cooperation arising from Polish and Russian transformations will be of assistance while dealing jointly with the Ukrainian problems. We

are confident and sure, and wish from the bottom of our hearts that a stable and democratic Russia would be the most active partner possible in shaping the European and worldwide order.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today Poland testifies to its adherence to European values. We cannot be indifferent to the violation of democratic principles and human rights anywhere, including the areas beyond our Eastern border. The same also applies to the Belarusian matters. Moreover, we would like to do our best so that this frontier, which nowadays is a formal border between the European Union and our Eastern neighbours, would not become a new curtain and would not be an obstacle, but so that it would be a friendly border, favourable to cooperation, open to the people of business, science, culture, politics, and at the same time tough on those who want to act unlawfully, foster terrorism, act in organized crime groups, etc. Under current circumstances, with the aid of international cooperation, there is a possibility of separating these two concepts effectively. To open the border between the European Union and our friends – neighbours in the East – to anything that is good and serves our future well. To counteract anything that is pathological, that is dangerous, and that poses a threat to each of us. It is here in Prague that I, with the participation of our Czech friends, would like to create such a way of thinking, such a political practice so that we, as a region of Central-Eastern Europe, become united not only by the activities we undertake to support our interests in the European Union, but so that we become a bridge to further integration as well. So that the open door idea would be spreading from our side, from our countries, so that we would facilitate the task of the integration of Eastern countries with European structures. Needless to say, nowadays it would be difficult to predict when we could talk of a more formal membership. I am certain that such a European mission is our historical obligation. It is a deliberate choice, and the goal behind it is the prosperous, stable Europe and the secure world.

Not so long ago – one, two or three years ago – a pessimistic question used to be asked if there would be any content of the Visegrad cooperation due to the fact that our countries had become members of both NATO and the European Union? We thought that setting the future tasks for these structures might be problematic. First and foremost, we considered anything that needed to be dealt with in our region. More open borders, more cultural cooperation, more interpersonal contacts, getting to know one another better. Recently, and it did not start with Ukraine, but earlier with Belarusian and Moldovan matters, it has been turning out that the Visegrad Group and our regional cooperation might be of immense importance for the European policy towards our Eastern

neighbours. That we can be those who will not only appeal for, but also undertake very concrete initiatives to aptly, for the benefit of these nations that are awaiting accession, spread the European idea, extend the space for European values, and spread the feeling of security for those who are part of this European space. I think that here, in Prague, in the Czech Republic we find people that understand both this idea and this project well. I am grateful for it and that is all I wanted to tell you now. Thank you for your attention.



## 32. Interview with "Polityka" – a Polish weekly – 18<sup>th</sup> of December 2004

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### *How did the round-table talks commence?*

When the demonstrations in Independence Square in Kiev started, a basic question arose: is it a spontaneous outburst or is it rather a kind of comprehensible, though passing, frustration? My instinct told me that it was a revolutionary outbreak, that if Kuchma showed disregard for the protesters he would make a mistake. Simply, people said "no." And that is how it started. Then Kuchma and Yushchenko – in this particular order – on Tuesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> of November, directly turned to me.

### *Why did they seek mediation?*

They were terrified. Both sides found themselves in a situation that was risky to them. Jushchenko, who was backed by thousands of people in the square, had no lawful authorization. He was merely a leader of the opposition in the Parliament. It was officially announced that he had lost the election. The support of the international opinion was a kind of bridgehead for him. However, Kuchma was in the opposite situation. Although he was the recognized president, he could not get to his office or anywhere else. He did nothing but stay in a sanatorium near his dacha (summer house) close to Kiev. The park looked beautiful in the snow, but I said to him: "as you stay in this village – it means you have no authority." I strived to turn the whole matter into a European issue, not only a Polish one. For Poland it would be hazardous to become a side in this dispute: Russia here, Poland here, Ukraine – in between and the splendid isolation of the European Union. Therefore, I immediately initiated talks with a representative of the Union – Solana, our members of the European Parliament exerted immense pressure and Solana was the first to understand that he had to take action. He asked me to explain the situation in other major European capitals. I made a few phone calls: to the Prime Minister of the Netherlands Balkenende, to Chancellor Schroeder, who I am in constant touch with, to President of the Czech Republic Klaus, the Chancellor of Austria Schuessel;

Chirac listened to my assessment of the situation in Ukraine with interest and uttered important words: Bon chance (Good luck), Alexandre.

*Not much. And how did Schroeder react? According to the German leaks, after your phone call Schroeder phoned Putin and Putin's response was tough that Yanukovich had won and that was that.*

The first talk was cold. I asked him to use his good connections in order to explain to Russia that such a hardline and unflexible stance must not be adopted as it would lead nowhere. We need Russia to help us solve this conflict.

*Didn't you fear the reaction of the USA?*

For years Washington has supported us, has been interested in Ukraine, probably more in its democratic part, because Washington had a bone to pick with Kuchma. I told Bush: I need your public support since it will invest the mission with significance. And, indeed, going to Canada Bush publicly declared that he supported my efforts.

*Don't the Americans play a double game. When Bush meets Putin in person he uses a different language. After all, Russia is their strategic partner.*

I understand the President of the United States; I also try to be on good terms with Putin. But I know as well that for each superpower Russia without Ukraine is a better solution than Russia with Ukraine.

*A Polish thesis.*

No, the American one. Is Russia that has Ukraine in the geostrategic interest of the USA? Russia is regaining its position in the world that is all right. But why should Russia also gain 50 million Ukrainians? In any case, thanks to these telephone conversations a mission to Kiev made up of Solana, President of Lithuania – Adamkus and myself could be organized. Adamkus came there also on the initiative of Kuchma. I formulated a plan which – I can proudly say – was executed: verification of the election results, no use of force, conducting a public dialogue.

*Did Yanukovich's people deny the election fraud?*

The first conversation I had with Kuchma was dramatic. Imagine this, please – in this village, with the president of a large country. It turned out he bore

a grudge against the whole world and against anything that was happening. The election was OK, and even if not, then in America ... America became the leitmotif of the meeting. Election fraud also occurs in America, there are also ills, what do you want from Ukraine? The situation was not bad, it was even worse. While I was talking to Kuchma, Putin phoned three times to suggest his representatives and finally Gryzlov was selected. When Solana arrived, the discussion deteriorated as Solana was reprimanded for all the sins that the Union had committed against Ukraine. The criticism was partly justified, but hardly constructive at this moment.

*Did Solana have to be persuaded to join in?*

Yes, but we managed to do it quickly, the main point was being granted a European mandate. The Russia – EU meeting held in The Hague the day before helped in this matter. In The Hague Europe could see an intransigent, Russian face. The Union grasped that in such a situation there was no other way out and that the Union should be there, in Ukraine.

*Who chose a venue for the round-table talks?*

I suggested meeting in the Mariyinsky Palace, in the centre of Kiev, close to the Verkhovna Rada, as if it were to be held otherwise we would show that there was no authority any longer, that there was only a strange country in the world with three presidents – the current one, the official one and one that was sworn in as president, but none of them could enter the presidential residence. It is the oddity that cannot be explained in any way. Kuchma promptly responded: “I don’t believe that there is a blockade.” I replied: “Then Yushchenko has to lift the blockade. We need to get there.” We managed to get there, but something more serious happened. While leaving Kuchma, we were told that the offensive of 40 thousand miners was scheduled to take place before 3 p.m. I immediately saw the fight in my mind’s eye... Our mission would have ended before the mediation started. My luck and connections rescued me, these nine-year-long contacts with all the politicians of Ukraine. I took Jacek Kluczkowski, who had a mobile phone and the Ukrainian politicians’ private telephone numbers, into my car. I managed to get through to Tihipko, leader of Yanukovich’s campaign, whom I knew. “Is it true about this march?” “Yes, as it cannot be stopped any longer, Luhansk, Donetsk, Kherson want to separate, it’s the end, the miners have revolted” – he replied. “Please, please do not do it, we are going to meet with Mr. Yanukovich at 4 o’clock, it means you are breaking off the talks. Please, do not do it under any circumstances.” He understood. I must admit that Yanukovich behaved properly. He went to meet with the miners and instructed them to call off the protest. By the way,

the place we were driving from is called Zaspa [Snowdrift]. This half an hour was critical. If then things had gone the way they could have gone, nobody knows where we would be in Ukraine nowadays.

*And who called you back to say that this march was not going to take place?*

They did. At 3 we started talks with Yushchenko, in his campaign's headquarters. A small room in the attic, in a little villa, of course, a revolutionary mood, everybody wearing orange. The heart of the matter needs to be discussed, but they say they are not going to talk to Yanukovich as he is a thug. "You don't want to talk to Yanukovich? Then, who do you want to talk to? He is officially recognized by the Central Election Commission, he is the incumbent Prime Minister, he represents – even if we subtract the rigged votes – over thirty per cent of the voters, from the Eastern districts alone." We persuaded him that a discussion was needed. What was the scope of talks? Force should not be used. The next step: obtain confirmation that the election was rigged.

*And how did Yanukovich greet you?*

The way he always does, but the situation was awkward as we have no good news for him, because we think the election was rigged. Yanukovich starts to present his stance: the election was correct, and even if the election was rigged – it happened in the west, and – in general – irregularities also occur in America. But we keep talking. What is the way out of the situation? He cannot see it, the court will decide, but he is sure the decision will be in his favour, he is the president, he is ready to talk, but there is no doubt he has won. Meanwhile, congratulations from Central Asia, arranged by his circle, start coming in. He shows them to us: look, I am recognized. Apart from that, remember that he was recognized by President Putin. It is no laughing matter: we are talking to the incumbent Prime Minister, who the CEC proclaimed President, whereas the other side is the "rebels." And the round-table talks begin with a brief introduction made by Kuchma, a disappointing one in the way that – following my advice – he will put forward his own plan for solving this problem. That was not an enterprising plan. Then Yushchenko and Yanukovich have the floor. Yushchenko wants to gain advantage, here comes the evidence; the evidence must show that a re-election will have to be held. Then Yanukovich says that the election has not been rigged and that he is totally opposed, that the demonstrators hinder the administration's activities, that the women going to work are being offended, etc.

*And what does he call for? A withdrawal of the demonstrators?*

To withdraw the demonstrators, start political discussions so that Yushchenko could probably become Prime Minister, such ideas related more to personal connections than to the political system. And then Volodymyr Litvin, chairman of the Parliament, took the floor. He played a positive role during the whole crisis period, he used to be the head of Kuchma's administration, nowadays he is the Speaker and made a mark by independent thinking. His basic idea: we are in such a complex situation that the solution to be sought is not a strictly legal one; it must be a political solution. This crisis cannot be resolved in the usual way, i.e. by admitting that nothing has happened. Then the mediators started to add their two penny's worth. My response was clear: it should be announced that the election must have been rigged. The runoff election should follow immediately, and force must not be used and political dialogue needs to be continued. Solana and Adamkus expressed similar attitudes. Then Gryzlov, as Russia's former Interior Minister, took the floor: these demonstrations were pre-arranged, these are provocations, the protesters are paid for by someone. Secondly, Russia thinks the election was correct. The CEC announced the victory, the whole matter needs to be taken further... Thirdly, there were also cases of violation of election rules in America, four years ago, and recently as well. He dwelled on it for a long time. It got my goat, I took the floor. I said that I had already seen such demonstrations, in Gdansk, in Prague, in Moscow. Don't say that it is not spontaneous behaviour, even if the beginning was intentional; we are now witnessing a massive movement. Yushchenko joined in, he said that if we waited for a few more days, he would also lose control over it, as it was beginning to go beyond the level at which such behaviour might still be controlled. I added that if I understood Mr. Gryzlov correctly, then I was ready to add a remark that should be incorporated in the minutes concerning the decisions made, that those present here condemn the electoral irregularities that took place in the United States. Vice minister Rotfeld took my hand, the rest did not even laugh, as saying so was much too blunt. So we agreed on the communiqué including the rules: no force, dialogue to be continued, teams of experts for detailed matters. And we are waiting for the Supreme Court proceedings.

*Does it mean that Yanukovich consented to it? Did he agree so easily?*

In this discussion he could only rely on Gryzlov's opinion. In any case, he fell into two traps, which were pointed out to him at the round-table talks. The first one was his own accusation that the election was also rigged in the west of Ukraine. Yushchenko reported 700 protests concerning the east, whereas Yanukovich reported 7 thousand protests concerning the west. If there is a total of 7,700 protests in total, it means that the election was unfair. And the other accusation: if he claims the election was just, and he is one million votes ahead,

so what is he concerned about? The runoff election? And he replies saying that he understands everything, but as the law stands the election result cannot be changed. Upon hearing this, I reply: it depends on the Parliament. In any case, we ended up with two major achievements. All sides decide to renounce the use of force, an immensely significant declaration of the President, the Prime Minister in the presence of such prominent guests from abroad. The other one is the statement that the dialogue will be continued.

*So Russia also accepted this round table. How did it come about that Gryzlov was present there?*

He was Putin's envoy. The first question Kuchma asked me, after I got off the plane, was whether I had anything against Putin's envoy. Of course, I don't – I answered. We have nothing to hide.

*So Russia also changed its stance during the meeting. It resigned itself to the plan.*

There was no announcement signed by everyone after the first meeting, it was Kuchma's communiqué. Gryzlov listened to it, we did not answer any questions.

*So the Russians could treat it only as a discussion, an exchange of opinions.*

But they could not question it because we turned to the Supreme Court to take a decision concerning the election. We did not say that the election had been rigged; saying it had been rigged was not the right thing to do. As for the two other elements of the agreement, Yanukovich could not polemicize about them. The renunciation of the use of force – and he says no? Dialogue – and he says no? As far as the Supreme Court is concerned, I sharply demanded that the sessions must be open and broadcast on television. It caused terrible confusion. How come, dictate something to the court? Why not, I say, what is wrong about the procedure being transparent? A discussion on expressions followed. Somebody came up with the idea that the whole trial would be held under the "glasnost" conditions and everybody liked that. But Kuchma says no, let's write that we expect an objective result. We cannot write it that way – I say – as each verdict must be objective and just. And with great difficulty glasnost was put down. And later, when I saw all these camcorders, I understood that it was the first taboo broken in the post-Soviet countries since the demonstrations broadcast on TV is one thing, but showing that one of the major institutions of the democratic country acts with an open curtain, democratically, is quite another. After all, judges have not only names, but they also have faces, and

they also want to go shopping, or with a child to the park. They want to be citizens. That is how 26<sup>th</sup> of November ended.

*To make things completely clear: the Union does not want to become involved in Ukraine?*

Some want to, others do not. So far some countries have been faced with a dilemma, more or less the same dilemma we are facing, America or Europe, which do we love more? However, in their country: Moscow or Kiev? Some capitals of the West decidedly chose Moscow, recognizing Kiev as a sphere of influence, as something that might or might not succeed, but something that is second-rate. Other countries, especially in our part, behave more actively. Nowadays everyone needs to ponder over their polity, because, according to what Yushchenko rightly pointed out, Ukraine is becoming not a part of the post-Soviet sphere of influence, but an independent, sovereign country, with a civil society that is getting stronger and stronger.

*But, in your opinion, does the new situation in Ukraine antagonize the relations of the Union with Moscow or not?*

In my opinion, it doesn't. The Union must not fail to recognize what happened to the stance of the Ukrainians and must verify its policy towards Russia. I believe it will happen. The Russians will swallow this bitter pill and will start cooperating naturally with Ukraine. One thing has to be shouted out. On the map of Europe a new sovereign social and political entity has appeared. A Ukrainian is not an erstwhile Russian. Treat this Ukrainian as a participant of European politics. And don't tell me that first Turkey will join the EU, and then we will think of Ukraine.

*We don't know why Russia had something against Yushchenko? Is he anti-Russian? Why did Russia not support both candidates from the very beginning?*

Because Russia decided that any Ukrainian trends aimed at cooperating with European structures should be stopped. If you could hear what Czernomyrdin, ambassador and ex-Prime Minister, was saying in the presence of Solana ... NATO is evil, the EU – is OK, but NATO is a threat to Russia. We smile hearing these words today. And they thought that with Yanukovich they would create something that would first be a Community of Independent States, as they planned a common currency, and some further plans were to follow. And they, obviously, cannot be carried out with Yushchenko. Nevertheless, I am convinced that Yushchenko will conduct open politics and the one that will be similar to Russia's, as there is no other solution.

*Why was another round of round table talks needed?*

During the next meeting in Kiev the core of the dispute was if the whole election or only its second round should be held once again. The government side claimed that Yanukovich was to be withdrawn; they wanted to prepare a new candidate for the time being that could take the votes away from Yushchenko, and at the same time would not – as everybody feared – play on separatism.

*Russia opposes the secession.*

I hope so. The East sounds beautiful. The mines, foundries. And subsidies. Let alone the fact it is really hard to carry out the secession, even in legal terms,. The second problem is adopting a platform of political discussion, decentralization of authority, a larger balance between the President and the Prime Minister. In Ukraine the President has too much power and the power is too alluring. It has always stirred up emotions and provoked disputes; not to mention that the President is not capable of assuming it effectively. And another issue – a change of government.

*And how about Gryzlov? Do you think his signature on the document was appended with the Russian establishment's full approval?*

I don't know anything about it, Gryzlov was late. Before making his decision, he waited for Yanukovich's signature. The document was a consequence of the compromise. At one moment, paradoxically, we started to be on the same wavelength with one another since everybody knew the name of the next president of Ukraine: Kuchma knows, and Gryzlov knows, and I know, and Putin knows. It is just the way it happened in Poland in 1990: various elections could have been made, but it was obvious that Walesa would become President. That cannot be stopped in any way. Yushchenko's problems became postponed for the future date as during the last few days he had become a real icon. Any way, I told him frankly: Remember, when you become President, the crowds will disperse, and the joyful cheers "Yushchenko! Yushchenko!" will be over, and from the icon role you will have to turn into the role of a politician who has to make decisions – good and popular ones, as well as those less popular and not always right.

*If it was so clear after the second round of talks, why did Kuchma immediately visit Putin? Was it a smokescreen?*

Desperation.



*Don't you find it odd that in the course of the mediation you phone Schroeder, Chirac, Bush – and you don't phone Putin? Wouldn't Putin pick up the receiver?*

During the previous meetings with Putin, we discussed these issues. I talked about Ukraine in the EU; he was of a different opinion. It is difficult for me to call him in the situation that our stances are so divergent. That is why I asked Schroeder, Balkenende to explain the whole sense of our mission in Moscow. Our mediation is not at all anti-Russian. It is not aimed at influencing the independent decisions of Ukraine. It is the Ukrainians that are entitled to make decisions. That is all. And at that moment Putin's state of mind was very different from mine.

*But can you imagine a joint visit with Schroeder to Moscow?*

Yes, I can, but it has to be a joint initiative, put forward by both Schroeder and Putin, not only mine.

*We heard the observers' impressions that the third round was rather not a discussion about the future of the country, but rather a fierce struggle for power?*

It was a bitter squabble, as the stake was raised by the verdict judgment of the Ukrainian Supreme Court. After which, it was known that the second round of the election would have to be held again and it would take place soon, i.e. on 26<sup>th</sup> of December. Our Ukrainian interlocutors understood it well that the issues that were crucial to them and to their political camps could not be postponed any longer. Therefore, the third round of the table talks lasted the longest, as long as six hours, although there were no new problems to be settled. Kuchma grasped that it was the last opportunity to save face and that is why he insisted that a constitutional reform should be included in the package of the decisions that were made. Yushchenko and his people expected the immediate dismissal of the government which, according to the information they had obtained, was implicated in the election vote-rigging. However, Yanukovich informed us that he was going on leave and argued against the dismissal of the government in order to save the economic situation. I soothed the emotions pointing out that the democratic election which would have to be fairly held on 26<sup>th</sup> of December was of utmost importance. All the other issues might be dealt with later.

*Moscow's reactions to international mediation efforts were negative. Don't you fear that in the future Russia will "punish" Poland for such interference in Ukraine's affairs?*

The Russian stance was dictated by the people who were incapable of predicting the situation and were themselves actively engaged in Ukraine. I believe that Ukraine, whose President will have a strong – as being democratic – mandate for holding his office, is a neighbour desired by not only Poland, but Russia as well. The Ukrainian nation will make the choice, and not Adamkus, Solana, or Kwasniewski. During my mission I pointed out that Ukraine should maintain good relations with Russia and with the European Union, including Poland. Many Ukrainian politicians understand this. Partnership, democracy and dialogue serve international relations better than pressure and paternalism.

*Can't the Ukrainian round-table experience, the presence of not only Mr. Solana, but also of the representatives of Dutch Prime Minister, Balkenende, form the basis for the joint EU policy towards the East?*

So far this policy has rather been a demand, a “spell” mentioned in numerous documents, a pang of remorse after the Union’s unsuccessful reactions to European crises, like in the Balkans. Nowadays in the situation of a political crisis occurring at the Union’s neighbour, we were able to help. However, the next step will be more important – what the Union will offer to Ukraine after the election, what attitude we will adopt towards the questions of Moldova and Pridnestrovie or Belarus.

*What is your vision of the future of Ukraine? Shouldn't we, if Yushchenko wins, appraise his politics after some time?*

The new president will be appraised by the civil society that is being born in Ukraine. It is a profound change. No longer do only parliamentary parties or economic clans participate in politics, but the citizens of Ukraine, who did not allow the election to be rigged, as well. Hence, I wonder how the new President will conduct a dialogue with those who are not indifferent to the fate of their country, political standards and the truth. Therefore, we should offer advice to our neighbours, as we cannot do it in their place. It is their country, their responsibility and their right to make assessments. The success of Ukraine, in which I believe, will serve all of us well.

Interview conducted by *Marek Ostrowski, Adam Krzeminski*

## 33. Telegram of Congratulations to Viktor Yushchenko, President-Elect of Ukraine – 28<sup>th</sup> of December 2004

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Dear Mr. President,

In connection with your victory in the election for the office of the President of Ukraine, I would like to convey, also on behalf of the Polish nation, sincere congratulations and best wishes for future success.

It is with regard and satisfaction that we acknowledge the democratic verdict of the election that expresses the will of the Ukrainian nation. The fact that deserves special recognition is that the political crisis was resolved in compliance with the Ukrainian law, with no recourse to the use of force. It is an indication of the sense of responsibility and commitment of the Ukrainian political circles to the building of a civil society. The reason for my personal satisfaction is my participation as a mediator in the international mission that effectively aided in working out a political compromise.

Ukraine enters the year 2005 with great hopes and expectations related to the change in its political face. As the President you face the challenge of fulfilling all these expectations and of giving an impulse to the process of Ukraine's further modernization and overall development. I want to assure you, Mister President, that Poland will continue its support for Ukraine's alignment with European and Euro-Atlantic structures.

Taking this opportunity, I would also like to ask you to convey our best wishes for future success and prosperity to all the citizens of Ukraine. I want to assure you, Mister President, that people in Poland think of you with great fondness and respect, and that we spare no effort to ensure a prosperous future for Ukraine.

# 34. Address Delivered at the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania (excerpts) – Vilnius, 10<sup>th</sup> of March 2005

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Mr. President of the Republic of Lithuania, Chairman of the Seimas, Mr. Prime Minister, Members of the Seimas, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour and great pleasure for me to be the guest of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania. I would like to profusely thank you for the invitation. Ladies and Gentlemen, please, accept warmest regards from Poland and the Polish people, which are also given to all the inhabitants of Lithuania. We extend our kindest greetings to you, (...)

Here, in the Lithuanian Seimas, I want to bow down to all the citizens of Lithuania that showed Poland their kindness, reconciliation effort, friendship. I would like to thank them cordially for that – here, in this special place. Here, where fifteen years ago, on 11<sup>th</sup> of March 1990, the popularly elected Parliament passed the “Act on Restoring the Independence of the Lithuanian State.” Here, where Lithuanian statehood was being forged once again. The sign of the Vytis towering over the Parliamentary Assembly symbolises indomitability, hope and victory.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

(...) Poland has always held the view that our security and sovereignty are linked to the security and sovereignty of Lithuania. Soon we will have been together within NATO for a year. The enlargement of the Alliance by admitting seven states, including Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, was an excellent piece of news, it also strengthened the security and stability of Europe. The NATO door should stay open to anyone that will fulfil the membership criteria.

The NATO membership induces our countries to accept heavier co-responsibility for international security. Polish and Lithuanian soldiers serve together in Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq – in the places that are often situated far away from our borders, but that are important to peace and global stability.

NATO continues to be the guarantor of the allied security and the fundamental forum for political consultation. We are glad to see the improvement in relations between Europe and America. We feel convinced that a strong transatlantic tie might be an effective answer to the threats faced by the contemporary world.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The transformations occurring in Ukraine are a spectacular sign of the times. We welcome them with joy and hope. The Ukrainian crisis was a significant test for the international community, especially for the European Union. Poland and Lithuania engaged in resolving it. We have made a substantial contribution to our joint success – mainly the success of Ukraine, but of the Union as well, and of all the countries that adhere to democratic principles. Poland and Lithuania have proven that their competence in the East-related matters is not a hollow declaration.

Our solidarity with the spurt of the Ukrainian civil society is a gesture stemming from the milk of human kindness and the expression of far-sighted thinking. Ukraine has embarked on the transformation journey that our nations initiated between 1989–1990. We heartily wish the Ukrainians good luck. We realize how difficult the journey is and how much effort it requires. At the same time, we have awareness – probably much greater awareness than other, remote countries – that Ukraine’s successful transformation will enormously boost the stability and development opportunities in Europe.

Therefore, Poland, and I am convinced that Lithuania as well, will strongly advocate Ukraine’s admission to participate in the European integration process and in the Atlantic structures. The relations that Ukraine has recently established with NATO and the European Union are a good, though still modest, harbinger. A successful turn of events depends mainly on the Ukrainians themselves. It cannot be only a “reward for the Orange Revolution,” it must be the result of the long-standing strenuous efforts put into effecting the reform of the state, army and economy. I believe that these endeavours will end in success.

Russia is a significant participant in the European processes. Good neighbourly and partnership relations with this country are an important element of Polish, and definitely also of Lithuanian, foreign policy. Successfully developing cooperation with the Kaliningrad Oblast, also within the “northern dimension” of the EU, is our common concern.

Now that we are EU members, our relations with Russia have been placed into a broader context. On the one hand, we are entitled to expect that the European Union institutions will fervently support us in all the matters connected with the vital interests of Poland and Lithuania. On the other hand, we are aware of the responsibility that we shoulder. We want to have a positive influence on the shape of the Eastern policy of the European Union.

Europe needs Russia, Russia needs Europe. One of the issues that should be the object of our common concern is the future of Russian democracy. An open dialogue on such complex topics as the ways of resolving conflicts in Moldova or in Transcaucasia is also needed.

Since the beginning of this year we have been celebrating the anniversaries related to the end of World War II. The ceremonies in Auschwitz–Birkenau became a significant event that attracted the attention of Europe and of the entire world. The 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the victory of the anti-Nazi coalition and of the end of World War II is approaching. This will be the moment worth our contemplation.

For us, the nations from Central-Eastern Europe, the recollection of 8<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> of May 1945 has an ambiguous overtone. First and foremost, a feeling of relief that the horror of the war came to an end. As well as concern about the future, about the sovereignty of our nations. Therefore, celebrating the victory over the Hitlerian Third Reich will not convey the whole truth about the recent history of Europe if we fail to mention the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact with its tragic consequences and the post-Yalta order that for nearly a half-century badly divided the continent. We want to pay tribute to all who shed their blood in order to defeat the Nazi totalitarianism and to liberate our land. However, we wish that the truth about the suppression of freedom and democracy on this side of the “Iron Curtain” would also be told. It is not the matter of various interpretations of history, but of its joint appraisal from the point of view of the values that we all share nowadays. I believe that we are capable of meeting each other halfway in the truth and in mutual respect.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The membership of both of our countries in the European Union opens up new neighbourhood prospects for Poland and Lithuania. We are beginning to “discover each other anew.” Excellent political relations at the highest rank are being more and more vividly complemented by daily contacts between the ordinary citizens.

Characteristically, during the last three months alone the Marshal of the Polish Sejm stayed in Vilnius, the Prime Minister of Lithuania stayed in Warsaw, and now the Polish President is paying a state visit here in the city on the Vilnia River. Moreover, we are equally glad that there is much activity at the frontier crossing points between our countries. More and more tourists from Poland come to Lithuania on holiday. Our cultural exchange and the cross-border cooperation keep developing. We meet in the world of science and culture.

We should also perceive the national minorities: the Polish minority in Lithuania and the Lithuanian one in Poland as an opportunity for dialogue, getting to know each other. Let us try to regard their needs, their commitment to resolve local problems not as a burden, but as our cooperation asset. It is a European, truly humane approach.

Our nations are deeply attached to their own identities. However, we have understood that looking down on others, building based on negation – do not take us far. We have been provided with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to set an excellent example of mutual trust and cooperation in a global world, in an integrating Europe. Let us not waste this chance, let us show that we are the worthy heirs of the best traditions of our culture! (...)

Fifteen years ago Lithuania's independence, gained with so much effort, began. Today both of our countries are members of the EU and NATO; today we contribute to the security in our region, in Europe. Nine years ago – here in the Lithuanian Seimas – I said “without a secure Lithuania, there is no secure Poland,” and today one can say that thanks to Poland and Lithuania Europe can be more secure and the world can be more secure. And this is the change that has occurred in the meantime.

I congratulate you on everything that you, our dear Lithuanian brothers, have achieved. I am happy about the Polish-Lithuanian friendship. I believe that it will become deeper and deeper regardless of changes in various posts, that new generations will also be willing to make Polish-Lithuanian relations as broad, as beautiful as possible, the relations that will serve all of us best.

# 35. Address Delivered at the Ceremonial Opening of the Lviv Eaglets Cemetery (excerpts) – Lviv, 24<sup>th</sup> of June 2005

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Dear Mr. President of Ukraine, Mayor of Lviv, Inhabitants of Lviv, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The opening of the Lviv Eaglets Cemetery is a fulfilment of the Poles' heartfelt need – and the sign of peace, reconciliation and friendship coming from the Ukrainian hearts. We do appreciate it. On behalf of Poland and the Polish people, overcome by emotion on this momentous, historical day, I say: Thank you!

We, Poles and Ukrainians, hold out our hands to each other transcending history, we hold them out transcending the graves, I am convinced that we are going into the future arm in arm!

The Lviv Eaglets Cemetery is a place of special significance; its turbulent past is interwoven with the tangled history of the town and of the stormy relations between Poles and Ukrainians in the past century. The ashes of the participants of the Polish-Ukrainian fights, mostly young people, that laid down their lives for preserving Lviv a part of Poland that was reasserting its position as an independent state then, rest here. It was then that two desires, two patriotisms, two national prides clashed. We, the Poles of today, bow our heads low as homage to the sacrifice of the Lviv Eaglets. We pay tribute to them, moved by their bravery, sacrifice, zealous devotion to the national cause.

At the same time, we think with reverence of the Ukrainian victims of the fights that also laid down their lives for the cause of struggle for freedom, for establishing a sovereign Ukrainian state. They also wished for the welfare of their homeland, they also demonstrated valour and their sacrifice deserves our respect.

Only now can we fully understand the tragedy that occurred here in the past. The past century experiences, so tragic and painful, taught us to adopt a new



stance towards patriotism, national identity that does not need to be directed against anyone or seek confirmation in confrontation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The place where we are standing takes on a new symbolic meaning. Once it bore witness to struggles. Today it becomes a symbol of Polish-Ukrainian reconciliation that started alongside the fall of the totalitarian regime. The reconstruction of the Eaglets Cemetery was only possible thanks to the emergence of an independent and democratic Ukraine. In 1997 our countries signed a declaration on reconciliation. Thus, we expressed our nations' wishes to establish the truth as the base for understanding and trust since it is the only way in which stereotypes and oversimplifications can be conquered. The memory of the troubled history becomes a caution – but no longer an obstacle! – in the task of building the future that we jointly undertake.

Reconciliation is always a two-way process. The Polish people do understand the sensibility of the Ukrainians. We feel obliged to repay the moral debts. I believe that also Ukrainians will have better and better understanding of the Polish suffering, of the Polish pained memory. The celebrations in Volhynia in 2003 show that reconciliation is possible, that the process is under way. I am glad to see that recently numerous interesting research projects and publications have appeared that help both sides to get to know and understand each other better. Let us support such undertakings since they make an invaluable contribution to the deepening of our dialogue.

Less than a week ago, on Sunday, the joint letter of Polish and Ukrainian bishops was proclaimed in Warsaw. On the day after tomorrow this letter will also be read out in Ukraine – here, in Lviv and in the sanctuary in Zarvanytsya near Ternopil. The letter reads as follows: “in the past century our nations bore testimony to the faithfulness that was paid for with death. The blood shed by the martyrs calls upon us to love both our friends and enemies, and calls out: **RECONCILE WITH EACH OTHER!** Let us go beyond the political divisions and troubled history, beyond the rites of our churches, even beyond our nationality – beyond both the Polish and the Ukrainian nationality” – the bishops appeal.

This act of reconciliation between Poles and Ukrainians is moving. With weighty responsibility and mutual mercy we build on the legacy of the great Pope John Paul II who so significantly changed the face of this land and transformed so many human hearts. It was him that in this town exactly four years ago appealed: “Let forgiveness – given and received – flow like a healing balm

in each heart. Let us all – thanks to purging the historical memory – value anything that unites us over anything that divides us so that we can jointly build the future that will be based on mutual respect, brotherly cooperation and genuine solidarity” – John Paul II pointed out.

And here we are today witnessing another, historical step. The fact that the President of Poland and the President of Ukraine are together in this cemetery; and that our nations are capable of talking to each other with mutual respect and sensitivity about even the most painful events of the past – all that shows our firm will and invincible conviction with which we go along the road of reconciliation and understanding. It shows the frankness with which we hold out our hands to each other transcending history, transcending the graves in order to go into the future arm in arm!

Thanking Mr. President Viktor Yushchenko I wish to convey the words of thanks to all our Ukrainian friends. To all those that have contributed to – and continue to contribute to – the rapprochement between Poland and Ukraine; that contribute to the enhancement of understanding, cooperation and strategic partnership between our countries and nations. We thank you Mr. President, we thank you, Viktor. (...)

In order to survive nations need to remember. We, Poles and Ukrainians – due to painful historical experiences – know what it means to preserve memory. But we must not only dwell upon the past. It is not enough. And it holds us back. We – Poles and Ukrainians, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, in the integrating Europe – must be quick to learn the lesson that the history teaches us.

It is the task given to each of us, first of all to young generations. For it is you, young Poles and young Ukrainians, that must cherish the shared memory. It is you that will deepen the relations between our countries and will strengthen our common Europe. And it is to you, the young people, in this special place, that today we dedicate Taras Shevchenko's words, the very words that he once addressed in the “To Poles” poem – We will rebuild this peaceful paradise of ours!

It is possible. It can happen. Therefore, it is today, here, transcending the history, transcending the graves, Poles and Ukrainians hold out their hands to each other and say – we want to go into the future together!

TV farewell address of President of the Republic of Poland Aleksander Kwasniewski delivered in the presence of the President's Spouse – Jolanta Kwasniewska at the conclusion of his presidential mission, – 22<sup>nd</sup> of December 2005

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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen, dear fellow Countrymen!

It was 10 unique and exceptional years. Exceptional for me personally, for my Spouse, exceptional for Poland and Europe. Today is the last day of my office as President. I am proud that for two terms I have been given the opportunity, by the voters' will – the citizens of the Republic of Poland, to hold the highest office in the state. Together, we have managed to accomplish great things. Our Homeland has been keeping wisely and consistently to the beaten track initiated by the "Solidarity" movement, the agreement of the Round Table and the first free elections.

Today, I would like to say with satisfaction: the basic objectives of my presidential office have been successfully accomplished. Polish democracy does work. We have the Constitution, the political pendulum swings from the left to right, yet this Polish democracy is still strong. We are safe, since we have joined NATO and we have security guarantees of the most powerful states in the world. We have great development chances, since we are in the EU. We have achieved a strong and friendly position in the region. We have built good relations with all our neighbours, because we have always been striving towards reconciliation and friendship. From here, from Poland, we have been exporting stability, dialogue and ideas of consensus. We have developed a strategic partnership with America. We have supported the "Orange revolution" in Ukraine. With the sense of joy and satisfaction I would like to say: I am happy and I do believe that it was one of the best and most fruitful periods in the history of our country.

When I look back at those ten years, when I observe the breakthrough changes, at Polish successes – I would like to most cordially thank all those who have

spared no efforts for our Homeland. I would like to thank the entire nation and all of you, all and sundry.

I would like to thank all parliaments, governments, and state institutions; prime ministers, ministers, state officials, Armed Forces, Police and other uniformed services, all who for all these years have been building, brick by brick, and contributed to our achievements and the high position of Poland.

My words of gratitude and respect go also to different circles and organizations – local, scientific, economic, cultural, sport; to Polish farmers, and youth; to – so numerous – NGOs. I am especially grateful to the Catholic Church in Poland for their input in strengthening and consolidating our independence and democracy; for contributing to the development of civic society. I would like to thank all other churches and denominations for good fruits of cooperation.

I had this unique and extraordinary honour and privilege, given to me by history, that the years of my office fell on the pontificate of John Paul II, the great figure of the modern world, who influenced so greatly the changes in our country, the fate of Europe, and human hearts. We all know very well how much we owe Him – every single one of us, Poland and the Polish people. I am overcome with emotions when I recall my numerous meetings and talks with the Holy Father. I will remember them and I will remember how much I owe Him personally.

Dear Fellow Countrymen! Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

It is my sincere wish that this farewell meeting would result in our shared conviction that the real strength and power lies in us as well, that it was us who created Polish successes; but for that determination and consistency in action of millions of my fellow countrymen it would have been much more difficult to achieve these successes; we shall also bear in mind that these changes would have been difficult to implement but for the sympathy and support of numerous countries and nations around the globe. Today, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to them all, today I confirm that we are a reliable and loyal partner and that the Polish people never fail their friends.

In a special way, I would like to thank you, Dear Ladies and Gentlemen. All citizens. You are Poland; it is you who build this country day by day. I am thankful for your determination, energy, and ambition: for that, not rarely anonymous, yet of crucial significance, everyday work and effort. I want to say from the bottom of my heart – it was a great honour and privilege to represent

the entire Polish Nation. I am glad that we have managed to achieve so much by working together.

I have always been striving for building the home for all of us – Poland. I was trying to unite, not to divide; to build, not to destroy. Never to be driven by the lust for revenge, but to show respect and generosity. I have always trusted people, and rarely – maybe too rarely – I have been suspicious towards them. But this is the Poland I want, the Poland I have built, where trust and respect are ultimate virtues and values; where people are given a chance to fulfill themselves and co-create their Homeland.

I look into the future – and I do believe in Poland's success and well being. I do believe in a strong Poland in a strong and solidary Europe. I would like to wish my successor, Mr. President Lech Kaczynski, and all of us, to have a Poland even more stable, safer, united beyond political polarization; I wish Poland to be a country that does not reject any man of good will, that is faithful to its thousand year long tradition, roots, and identity; yet at the same time to be a state without an inferiority complex, open towards the others, self reliant and trustful in its strengths and abilities. Such a Poland shall be handed over to the next generations, to our youth, which so eagerly acquire knowledge nowadays. To thousands, millions of young people who study here and abroad – who boldly conquer Europe, and who are a credit to us all, our entire nation and country. It is this youth, young generations, who are our chance and hope.

To all of us, I would like to say something that reflects the experience of this decade; that is sometimes unspoken, sometimes too sound, yet an important account of ourselves: we shall praise our capabilities, we are not free from faults and vices, yet we are a great and brave nation! We are a society that was able to withstand extraordinary dramas and obstacles; that proved to be flexible while facing the great challenges of the contemporary world. Sometimes, however, we shall be a bit more self-reliant and self dependant, we shall show more mutual respect. May we respect our neighbours, co-workers, ourselves – then we shall be more respected by others as well.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

Together with the First Lady, we would like to most sincerely wish all of you a Merry Christmas. All the best in the forthcoming New Year and in consecutive years as well. May all your wishes come true, all your plans concerning very intimate, family issues be realized; we do believe that this great project, great dream of many generations of Poles shall come true as well – that we are

strong, well organized, we are important players in Europe and throughout the world, that we can count and rely on each other.

Dear fellow Countrymen, Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

We thank you for everything! We thank Poland for the honour we had the privilege to fulfill during the last ten years. Poland – we wish you all the best. And for all of us, Ladies and Gentlemen, we wish that you may be happy and proud from living in this country, that you may give all that you have best. Thank you for everything, we love you! We do not say goodbye, we say – see you! See you again! Merry Christmas everyone!

## Conclusion

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During these two years and a half that have passed since the conclusion of my presidential mission, several important events have taken place in Poland. The Coalition led by the Law and Justice party (PiS) that came to power after the parliamentary elections in 2005, has questioned the achievements of the years 1989–2005, and undermined the legacy of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Republic of Poland and itself as the formula of a state. Attacks were conducted, aimed at discrediting the judiciary – the guardian of democracy, progress and development of civic society, policy of consensus and cooperation beyond divisions. On that ground, the construction of the 4<sup>th</sup> Republic of Poland had begun – a centralized state managed through consecutive crises that envenomed the social divisions, a state that headed to the limited and restrained democracy with clearly visible elements of autocracy. As far as international affairs were concerned, the hitherto existing policy of dialogue and activity was replaced with the policy of distrust and disputes, which in a relatively short period of time resulted in the aggravation and worsening of relationships with our closest neighbours, in fact weakening Poland's position within the EU.

Fortunately enough, democratic transformations and the development of civic society after 1989 proved to be long lasting, effective and stable. In 2007, however, the influence thereof on the society resulted in elections (provoked by the ruling party) and in the significant failure of the 4<sup>th</sup> Republic of Poland and parties supporting that notion.

What happened next can be called a stabilization period. The Civic Platform (PO) and The Polish Peasants Party (PSL) that form the present government have undertaken the effort to make up for damages both in internal policy and, first of all, in foreign policy; moreover, the coalition tries to, more or less successfully, solve Poland's problems, not to create them.

Months passing by clearly prove, once again, that gift boxes with promised solutions and decisions presented by the consecutive governments tend to be empty and worthless; however, the general intention of leading the politics

based on trust towards citizens and cooperation of different social groups, and not on exclusion, marginalization or even humiliation of different communities and peoples, is undoubtedly worth supporting.

\* \* \*

As far as my person is concerned, after having stepped down from the office of the President of the republic of Poland, I have decided to conclude my political activity, which was not equal to disappearing from public life. In Poland, my activity primarily concerns supporting the activities and patronizing the Management Board of the “Amicus Europae” Foundation, whose aim is to disseminate European ideas, support the integrative process of European societies, and acting for the benefit of the further broadening of European safety structures and cooperation. The Foundation implements three key initiatives: European Integration, Reconciliation and Dialogue and Transatlantic Relations. It is the initiator of numerous projects, including the Summer Academy of European Integration in Krokowa, the Task Force for Belarus Issues, the Academy of Young Leaders, the Initiative on “Direct Neighbourhood”, the European Council for Tolerance and Reconciliation. To advance its mission, the Amicus Europae Foundation organizes debates and international conferences with the participation of international leaders and various representatives of civic society, expert counseling, and publishing.

After having concluded my Presidency I have been involved in a number of international initiatives and entrepreneurship. In the beginning of 2006, I was appointed Distinguished Scholar in the Practice of Global Leadership at Georgetown University, where, as a faculty member, I teach American students in the School of Foreign Service about contemporary European politics, the trans-Atlantic relationship, and democratization in Central and Eastern Europe.

I am a member of the management boards of numerous international organizations and institutes, including, inter alia International Crisis Group, Atlantic Council and Bilderberg Group. I hold the position of the Chairman of the International Center for Political Studies in Kiev, Yalta European Strategy, the International Task Force on Belarus, and the European Council for Tolerance and Reconciliation.

I am going to continue and develop these activities. I am very glad that both the Polish and my personal experiences concerning such a unique period of transformation are so eagerly studied, analyzed, and used on a global scale. I wish the knowledge and advice of former politicians were listened to more



often. Well, it is not easy to be either a prophet or a former politician in your own country.

\* \* \*

During numerous meetings, I was being asked by young people and still active politicians: “What great plans does Poland have and what targets resulting thereof shall we set forth? After all, those biggest and most ambitious ones have been fulfilled. Poland is free, independent and democratic. We are safe in NATO and well rooted in the EU. What else shall we do? What comes next?”

It is quite difficult to identify more spectacular targets, of greater historical significance; many interlocutors can hardly accept the fact that what is the most important for us nowadays is to take advantage of those opportunities and chances Poland has today. We can improve the quality of our democracy, our position in Europe and participation in global processes. In short – change the impact of the great transformation into a strength and the long lasting role of Poland in a constantly changing world. It is not a very effective and popular task, by all means, it calls for great effort, knowledge, skills and abilities in finding the right place in the modern political world, convincing others to our reasoning, offering new ideas and solutions; still, it is indeed a very needed and valuable political idea. Since it shall ensure Poland stability, development and significance for many decades to come.

After generations of limitations and restraints, revolts, brave changes, the time has come for the generation of “top quality” and “competition with no leniency”. No more excuses such as “we had a difficult childhood”, “we have lost time”, no more room for extra points for merits or the right social class. The beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century forebodes the time of test – a peaceful one, yet tough.

Poland, apart from hitherto tasks and problems, will have to face new challenges. They result from the consequences of the speeding up of technological development in a global scale and the aftermath thereof – globalization processes, ecological threats, demographic changes, global and regional energy problems. Building up the economy based on knowledge and the resulting great educational challenges, solving the problems of social policy in light of the fast ageing of Polish society and the steadily decreasing population of people of a working age, ensuring the correct protection for the environment and sustainable development without impeding the economic growth and infrastructure construction, solving immigration issues – these are just a few of the tasks resulting from the above mentioned challenges that Poland has to face.

Persons responsible for undertaking those tasks and executing them successfully shall be the politicians in power – at present and in future – including my successors. While recommending this book, I would like most sincerely and heartily wish all of them good luck. While recommending this book, I would like most sincerely and heartily to wish all of them good luck. For upon them depends the future of Poland – the object of care and efforts of my life and the lives of many people belonging to my generation.

*Aleksander Kwasniewski*

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# Most important events of the presidency in photographs

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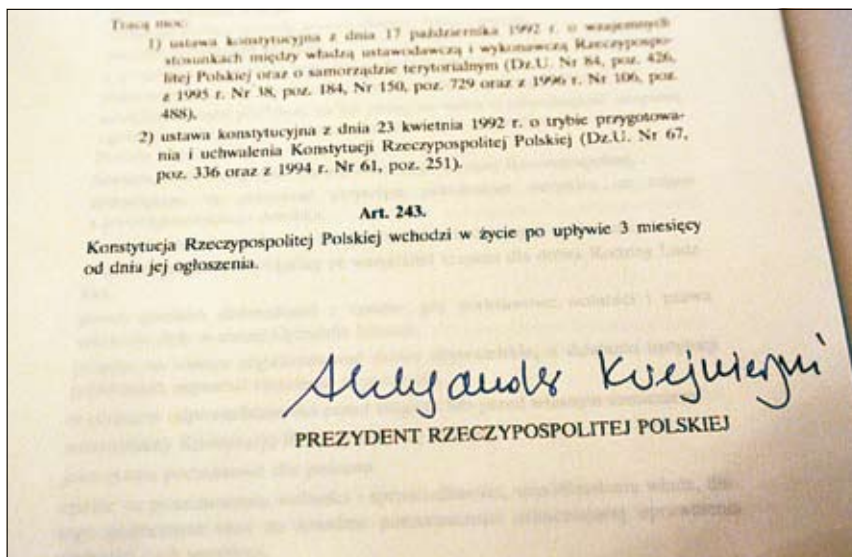




President Aleksander Kwasniewski delivering his address during the presidential oath taking ceremony before the National Assembly, 23<sup>rd</sup> of December 1995.



President Aleksander Kwasniewski signing the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, 16<sup>th</sup> of July 1997.



Text of the original Constitution of the Republic of Poland bearing the Presidential signature.



With His Holiness, John Paul II during the Papal visit to Poland, 5<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup> June 1999.



During the Papal audience with Pope John Paul II, prior to private talks with the Holy Father during the President's official visit to the Vatican, 8<sup>th</sup> of April 2000.



Meeting with representatives of self-government authorities in the garden of the Presidential Palace, 6<sup>th</sup> of June 2004.



Official mourning ceremony at the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the massacre of Jews in Jedwabno, 10<sup>th</sup> of July 2001.



President Aleksander Kwasniewski chairing the Cabinet Council devoted to Polish membership of NATO and the implementation of civic reforms, Presidential Palace, 23<sup>rd</sup> of February 1999.



Meeting with Warsaw inhabitants at Castle Square in Warsaw during the official visit of Bill Clinton, the President of the United States of America, 10<sup>th</sup> of July 1997.



Official visit to Poland of George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, 15<sup>th</sup> of June 2001.



Official talks during the visit of Vladimir Putin, the President of the Russian Federation, 16<sup>th</sup> of January 2002.



Official visit of President Aleksander Kwasniewski to the European Commission in Brussels, 17<sup>th</sup> of January 1996.





President Aleksander Kwasniewski together with his spouse voting in the national referendum on Poland's accession to the European Union, 7<sup>th</sup> of June 2003.



Announcement of preliminary results of the referendum on Poland's accession to the European Union, Presidential Palace, 8<sup>th</sup> of June 2003.



Official European Union flag raising ceremony by the grave of the unknown soldier upon Poland's accession to the European Union, 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2004.



Gdansk Declaration of President of the Republic of Poland Aleksander Kwasniewski and President of the Federal Republic of Germany Johannes Rau on People Subjected to Displacement, Flight and Expulsion in Europe – Gdansk, 29<sup>th</sup> of October 2003.



Together with the President of Lithuania, Valdas Adamkus, during the official visit of the President of the Republic of Poland to Lithuania, 13<sup>th</sup>–15<sup>th</sup> April 1999.



Aleksander Kwasniewski, President of the Republic of Poland and Leonid Kuchma, President of Ukraine at the Ceremony of the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Volhynia Massacres – Pavlivka (formerly known as Poryck) in Ukraine, 11<sup>th</sup> of July 2003.



Ukrainian Round Table; facing the camera from the left: Viktor Yushchenko, President of Poland Aleksander Kwasniewski, President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma, President of Lithuania Valdas Adamkus, Viktor Yanukovich, Javier Solana; facing away from the camera from the right: Secretary General of OSCE Jan Kubis, Chairman of the House of Representatives of the Russian Federation Boris Gryzlov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz (representing the Council of Europe); Kiev, 26<sup>th</sup> of November 2004.



TV farewell address of President of the Republic of Poland Aleksander Kwasniewski delivered in the presence of the President's Spouse – Jolanta Kwasniewska at the conclusion of his presidential mission, 22<sup>nd</sup> of December 2005.