

- As mandated by Polish law, the Minister of Foreign Affairs presents the Parliament with a yearly report on foreign policy priorities in the form of a solemn speech, or the *exposé*. Customarily, the speech is delivered at the beginning of each year, with both the Polish president and diplomats accredited to Warsaw in attendance. The tradition of the Minister's formal report on foreign policy goes back to 1919, shortly after the rebirth of the Polish independent state.

## **Information of the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the Polish Government's foreign policy in 2016**

29 January 2016

Mr. President,  
Mr. Speaker,  
Madam Prime Minister, Government Ministers,  
Members of the House,  
Dear Friends from the Diplomatic Corps,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the great honour, as a representative of the Government of the Republic of Poland, to deliver to the Sejm, the guests present here today and the citizens of our country information on Polish foreign policy tasks in 2016. I would like to thank Mr President for being here. When it comes to foreign policy, the Constitution provides for cooperation between the President, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Given the difficult tasks facing us today, harmonious cooperation between the President and the Government is extremely important. This cooperation strengthens Poland's position.

This is **the first address of the minister of foreign affairs in the new cabinet**. My task, therefore, is to outline the objectives of Polish diplomacy in 2016 and our vision of foreign policy for the next four years. This is all the more important because technological and social changes, armed conflicts, economic crises and migration have led to a gradual erosion of the post-Cold War or even post-World War II world order. Europe weakened by recession, split over different visions of development of the European project, and beset by wars waged at its doorstep has been pulled into the centre of this global uncertainty and instability. Poland, which is a part of Europe and from the beginning of its history, share in its fortunes and misfortunes has also been through this negative experience. In the case of our country, this situation takes on a particular meaning – although a quarter-century has passed since Poland's liberation from the imposed communist regime, we cannot say that we have achieved all the objectives the Polish society voiced in 1989.

When we joined NATO, and later the European Union, it seemed that we stood on solid ground and could forget the difficult dilemmas of a country situated between the East and the West. Today, more than ever, we feel that the assessment we had of our position was too optimistic. Though built on shared strategic interests of member states, the institutions we acceded to do not eliminate differences in priorities of specific countries, but only set civilized rules of political play for the debates surrounding them. It is not enough to be a

member of this or another international organization; we should rather be actively seeking to shape its policy while maintaining our sense of subjectivity, strive to realize the interests of the Republic of Poland, and ensure real security and conditions of development for all citizens. The current Government is determined to achieve these objectives, pursuing a bold and realistic, and above all an **effective foreign policy, based on four premises:**

Firstly, we will seek to **root foreign policy in the political will of sovereign states**, which - if they share deep common values and interests - are ready to work together to achieve common goals. This is the base of NATO and the European Union.

Secondly, we will **base our foreign policy on the primacy of international law** over brute force and the idea of a concert of powers dividing the world into spheres of influence against the will of populations. Hence Poland's attachment to the principles of the United Nations, the OSCE and the Council of Europe. We will act in the spirit of the motto that President Andrzej Duda formulated at the UN forum: "peace through law, the force of law over the law of force."

Thirdly, **our model will be the community of values of the democratic world**, which form a space that unites societies around peaceful development and cooperation, regardless of the cultural differences and historical experiences. From this imperative stems the idea of a strategic partnership with non-European nations. This means that for the Republic of Poland, a community of interests is underpinned by the values forming the heritage of the European civilization. These values include Roman law, Greek philosophy and Christian ethics, rationalism, common good, and respect for human rights. The protection of these values and tenets of our civilisation will be the sense of our diplomacy. In this context, let us recall that Warsaw was and will continue to be a centre of dialogue for democracy. The capital is the seat of the Community of Democracies and is host to the annual international conference, Warsaw Dialogue for Democracy. Warsaw also hosts the ODIHR – the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights – which organises annual meetings to review the human dimension. The promotion of human rights and democracy has been and will continue to be a priority of Polish foreign policy. The idea of a strategic partnership with non-European nations stems from this imperative.

Fourthly, we believe that international relations, though sometimes perceived as a sphere of brutal and destructive competition between states, also form a **space of economic exchange** and mutual understanding of societies, including those very distant in terms of tradition and historical experience.

Members of the House,

In 2016 **Poland will have to face three major crises** that have hit Europe: the crisis of security on our continent, the crisis of neighbourhood and the crisis of the European project itself. Each of these can have very serious and far-reaching consequences for our country.

**Security is the dimension of international relations which raises the most concern.** For several years now we have seen a gradual, dramatic deterioration of the situation in the eastern and the southern neighbourhood of the European Union, including directly at

Poland's border. The current system of international security is becoming marginalized. Institutions such as the OSCE and regional organizations, established to defuse tensions through dialogue, prevent conflicts or solve them on the basis of generally accepted principles are disregarded and ignored. This creates a situation that favours the politics of force which brought so much misery to European societies in the twentieth century.

In this respect, most concerns are raised around the policy of our big neighbour to the east, which aims to revise the post-Cold War European order. The new “National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation” allows for the use of force in the implementation of interests. Such logic is illustrated by the Russian aggression against Ukraine and the war which de facto has been ongoing in this country for the second year. Russia seeks to expand its own sphere of influence and inhibit democratic transition of those Eastern European countries which aspire to rapprochement with the West. It is a policy supported by the expansion of the Russian military potential and hybrid activities, including propaganda. I regret to have to conclude that one of my predecessors was naïve when he believed, a few years ago, that Russia adhered to democratic values and the principles of international law and suggested inviting it to join NATO.

Secondly, the deterioration of our security is closely intertwined with the **crisis of the European neighbourhood**. In Eastern Europe, the Russian policy plays a destructive role, but it is not the sole source of concern. Also corruption and the lack of consistent reforms of the political system and free market have a negative impact on this region. In the southern neighbourhood, the same or similar phenomena have led to the collapse of countries like Syria and Libya and have shaken the stability of many other countries. The Middle East is plunging into chaos. This Middle East peace process suffers on this account. To the south of Europe, major problems today are armed conflicts, terrorism and disintegration of state structures. A growing concern is the huge wave of economic migration and refugees. Action is needed to adapt Polish foreign and security policy also to those challenges. However, I would like to stress that Polish diplomacy, using instruments of development aid and taking an active part in solving the problems of Africa and the Middle East, will seek to maintain an appropriate balance between the commitment of our partners and allies from NATO and the EU to prevent and solve problems in the eastern and southern neighbourhood.

The third important task for Polish diplomacy and Polish authorities in general consists in tackling the **crisis of the European project**. We are a member of the European Union and our security and prosperity are directly affected by the EU's condition. The Greek debt crisis and the prospect of Britain's exit from the European Union are manifestations of the EU's crisis. The massive violation of rules at the Schengen area's external borders threatens to destabilize the whole system of free travel within that area. Polish diplomacy will oppose the internal differentiation of the Union, the idea of a mini-Schengen and discrimination of Polish citizens living in EU countries. We will also oppose any solutions that would strike at the interests and economic security of Poland and Polish entrepreneurs. We are hopeful that the Dutch presidency will take note of these problems.

The most important issues which I have pointed to are complex and long-standing in nature. They oblige Polish diplomacy to increase its activity, so that Poland is able to mitigate emerging threats. Therefore, I repeat what the Prime Minister said in November while

addressing the House - the priority of the Polish government for the coming years will be to ensure widely understood security to the state and its citizens. Security understood both as classic military security and stability of our borders, and more broadly – as economic security.

Mr Speaker,  
Members of the House,

**The North Atlantic Alliance remains the foundation of Polish, European and transatlantic security.** Amid the worsening situation on NATO's eastern and southern flanks, the Alliance's role will be to enhance its deterrence function, and its capacity to collectively (in solidarity) repel an external aggression. It is our hope that today, as in the past, NATO will be able to strategically adapt to the changing security environment and geopolitical situation. Polish diplomacy spares no effort or initiative to actively influence this process. Mr President's involvement in this field is especially valuable. This was demonstrated in Bucharest last November by his successful participation in the meeting of Heads of State making up NATO's eastern flank, and by his recent productive visit to Brussels and NATO Headquarters in Mons. In the coming days, the Prime Minister plans to visit a number of capitals of our major European partners. Security of our region will be high on the agenda of the Prime Minister's consultations ahead of an important defence ministers' meeting this February. My calendar of international consultations is also full.

Once the request made by Poland and other countries of our region is met and **NATO's eastern flank receives military reinforcements**, the calculations of those who destroy peace in Europe will no longer include a sense of disbelief in the Alliance's cohesion. Instead, they will have to face up to the existing reality. The execution of this plan will eliminate the temptation to test NATO's cohesion, and will be a step towards reducing the risk of conflict.

The Alliance should be made stronger in a sustainable way, for the long run. The Allied commitments represent a common, collective duty. This principle should be reflected during the upcoming NATO summit in Warsaw next July. We want Warsaw to be the place where, through practical steps, the Alliance reaffirms the credibility of security guarantees vis-à-vis countries of its eastern flank. Our proposals in this regard are now subject to Allied consultations. What they amount to is eliminating evident disproportions in defence infrastructure between the so-called old and new NATO members. In talks with our Allies, we make it clear that what we want are no privileges. **Our goal is an equal security status for all the NATO Member States across the entire territory of the Alliance.** Returning to 'grey areas' or security vacuum is out of the question in our part of the continent. We have a clear message for our Allies and non-NATO partners and we want to remind them: the Alliance's military infrastructure did not, does not and will not pose a threat to anyone.

Sovereign decisions of states about future integration with the North Atlantic Alliance likewise pose no threat. NATO's attractiveness and effectiveness are also manifested in the gravitational pull it is exerting on potential members. In this spirit we support the Alliance's 'open door' policy, as long as the enlargement process strengthens NATO's defence functions.

Our aim is to further **develop security cooperation with the United States**. Both bilateral and multilateral cooperation, in particular within NATO. 2016 is the time we should set about implementing the Polish-American missile defence agreement, and start building a missile defence base at Redzikowo. It is also the time of increasing the presence of US troops in Poland, notably during the Anakonda military exercises. We will seek to more permanently anchor elements of the US armed forces in Poland. One such opportunity is the project of US army military depots in our country. In the run-up to the NATO summit in Warsaw, we expect a strong US support to enhance security of the Alliance's eastern flank. Within our Alliance, solidarity should bind everyone and be equal in all directions. Once it was operations in Haiti, Afghanistan and Iraq that needed support. **Today it is NATO's eastern flank that requires special attention.**

Challenges and threats of today's security environment confront not only Alliance members, but also NATO partner countries. We want to develop and cultivate collaboration with these states, foster their sense of security. We are thinking, in particular, about partners from NATO's immediate neighbourhood, such as Finland, Sweden, Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia, but also about Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq. It is equally important to sustain ties with a group of politically close, strong partners that are a bit further away, including Australia, Japan and the Republic of Korea.

Recognizing the Alliance's lead role in upholding transatlantic security, we **advocate a closer and more effective cooperation between NATO and the European Union** in solving complex international problems. Poland will become involved in strengthening the **EU's Common Security and Defence Policy**. The more defence elements, the better. It is in Poland's national interest that common mechanisms of rapid reaction should be worked out in the EU. I am referring to the EU's capacity to deploy peacekeeping and stabilization missions, and ensuring the requisite civilian and military capabilities. It is important that these solutions do not duplicate or compete with the existing North Atlantic Alliance.

Regional cooperation with our Nordic, Baltic and Visegrad Group partners takes on special significance in today's security environment. Through this cooperation **we should sensitize NATO and the EU to the north-eastern dimension of Europe's security**. Together with our Visegrad partners, we are placing a swift intervention battlegroup at the EU's disposal this year. The unit currently comprises four thousand soldiers, half of them from Poland.

Whilst focusing on problems in our part of the continent, we also take note of the threats posed by the so-called Islamic State. Poland is a member of the international coalition fighting this criminal group. We back our allies and partners in their fight against international terrorism. In this context, we recall that religious minorities, especially Christians, should also be defended. We are also providing humanitarian aid to the victims of the war against terror. We plan to give a concrete answer to the requests we are receiving from the United States and France. The Minister of National Defence is already holding relevant consultations.

Our ambition is to broaden the scope of engagement in the security of the international environment. In this spirit we are making a **bid for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council** in 2018-19. Such a status entails responsibility, but also prestige and a

chance to promote experience of democratic and political transformation to a wider audience.

We are working to **increase Poland's participation in UN peacekeeping missions**. For many years, Poland took an active part in peace missions, a good tradition we want to return to. But any decisions will be taken deliberately and with responsibility for the lives of our soldiers, and mission security.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

A far-sighted and ambitious **Eastern policy** is one of the key dimensions of Poland's foreign policy. This point of view is entirely justified by the challenges for our and European security coming from the easterly direction. It is in Poland's interest that, true to the letter and spirit of the UN and OSCE Charters, East European societies should have the right to a sovereign choice of their path of development, political system, and alliances, without fearing for their security. That is the only way Eastern Europe can stop being a source of unrest, and instead become a stable region resting on sound foundations. Our aim is to foster stabilization processes in the countries that want to implement them, and to cultivate good relations with those partners who do not share our outlook all the time and on everything.

One way of pursuing such policy is by putting the available European toolkit to an effective use. In this respect, it is key to create a new **instrument of the EU's positive impact on its eastern neighbourhood**. Along with our regional partners, we will take into account all positive aspects of the Eastern Partnership, and add new elements that will enhance regional cooperation. I have already started talks on this with our partners from Sweden, Finland, Lithuania and Romania.

We hope that the entry into force of the association agreements with Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine, and the European Commission's green light for abolishing visas for Georgians and Ukrainians, will help stabilize the region and foster regional cooperation. In the spirit of an individualistic approach, we will also support Europe's cooperation with Belarus, Armenia, and Azerbaijan.

Members of the House,

Pragmatic and substantive relations with the Russian Federation are in the interest of Poland and Europe alike. No easy task, though, given the different approaches to international relations that our neighbours treat not as a place of cooperation but of geopolitical rivalry. But like our Western partners, we believe in keeping communication channels with Moscow open even in these difficult conditions. Last week's consultations between deputy foreign ministers is one example of this approach. Rather than based on one-sided concessions, cooperation with Russia should be built in the spirit of constructive dialogue, and respect for bilateral agreements and international law. That's why in relations with the Russian Federation we seek to ensure a level playing field, and take into account our interests and expectations. Mutual trust – so much needed in relations between states – is built through concrete gestures. Honest cooperation in explaining the reasons for the Smolensk crash, returning the wreckage of the Presidential aircraft, and declassifying all archival records on

Stalin's crimes against Polish officers could be such gestures from the Polish perspective. A bilateral agreement of such issues would be a positive step, avoiding the need to look for international solutions.

Thinking about Russia, let me repeat the words of President Andrzej Duda: "Poland has no eternal foes." Despite a difficult past we have managed to build friendly relations with Germany. Many people in Poland believe and expect that a similar process is possible in relations with Russia. We stand ready to resume substantive contact with Moscow that would lead to resolving at least some concrete issues. We have demonstrated our readiness recently by sending a diplomatic mission at the working level. Expert meetings, such as the Forum for Civic Dialogue, could also improve mutual atmosphere.

Members of the House,

Polish diplomacy will take part in formulating a loyal and consistent Russia policy of the European Union and the North Atlantic Alliance. Our coherent position should take into account Russia's conduct towards the EU and NATO, specific member states and our strategic partners. We are not saying no to calling a NATO-Russia Council, provided that its agenda will include Crimea and the war in eastern Ukraine.

It is in Poland's interest that **Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity should be supported**. A democratic Ukrainian state that is politically and economically stable is an important part of the European order and security, built after the political transformation of 1989-91. Over the last two years, the independence of our eastern neighbour has been put to a harsh test, like never before during the past quarter century. The scale of pressure, coercion and attempts at destabilization corresponds to the scale of the Ukrainian people's aspirations to freedom and democracy. The pro-European reforms, which Ukrainian society stood up for on the Euromaidan, need Western support and Poland's active engagement. This engagement was declared by President Andrzej Duda during his first state visit to Ukraine in December 2015. The same month, Minister of National Defence Antoni Macierewicz also paid a visit to Kyiv. We will be helping Ukraine. But at the same time we will require that this help be used effectively.

We have been supporting our Ukrainian partners in key domains of modern state organization, such as: setting up a system of local governments, cutting red tape, fighting corruption, building an efficient state administration, and reckoning with difficult and painful historical matters. The MFA has been advising, helping to draft bills, and training civil servants. We have been helping people displaced by the hostilities. In 2016, we plan to continue humanitarian and development projects for war victims in eastern Ukraine. Poland has thrown its door wide open for hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian nationals who want to or have to find a place away from their homeland for economic or security reasons.

We will seek to consistently implement the EU-Ukraine association agreement and the deep and comprehensive free trade area agreement. A closer economic cooperation and fair competition between Ukrainian and European entrepreneurs will offer the best incentive to carry out reforms that will modernize Ukraine's economy in a lasting way. It will also be a concrete response to the attempts at destabilizing the country's situation. The introduction

of a visa-free travel regime with the EU for Ukrainians will be an additional instrument for building our solidarity with Ukraine. As regards support for Ukrainian reforms, we are also working together with non-European countries, including the United States, Canada, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand.

Members of the House,

We welcome the **reinvigoration of EU-Belarus relations**. Polish diplomacy does not intend to interfere with politics of any country. What we do expect, especially from neighbours, is respect for standards that have been set by law and international organizations. The release of political prisoners by Belarusian authorities is a step in the right direction of complying with international standards. But if we want to walk down this road, more joint actions are needed. We want to deepen cooperation on infrastructure, increase the capacity of border crossing points, and simplify the rules of passenger traffic, notably by implementing a local border traffic agreement. That said, we are aware that some difficult issues cannot be avoided in our dialogue with Minsk. Problems of the Polish minority in Belarus will remain high on our agenda. I hope to be able to discuss these issues in Minsk soon.

We continue to hope for the **success of reforms in Moldova**. The South Caucasus countries, whose diversity requires a well-balanced approach on our part, are an important area of economic and political cooperation for Poland. **Georgia** has been making consistent steps towards the European Union and NATO. We strongly **support Tbilisi** in these efforts. We keep our interest in starting the Tbilisi Conference, an initiative launched in April 2015 that is modelled on the Utrecht and Skopje Conferences, and aims to share experiences that will help Georgia in its integration with the EU on the basis of the Association Agreement. We will continue our efforts to foster dialogue with Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Members of the House,

**A debate about the future of a European Union** beset by crises is of fundamental importance today; crises that were sparked off by not always realistic integration projects such as the common currency, overregulation and economic governance. We should be looking at these as the reasons behind the Greek crisis and the United Kingdom's questioning of the idea of an ever-closer Union. Both cases have placed a question mark over the EU's unity and cohesion.

Poland benefits from European unity. The cracks that have appeared on the European edifice so successfully built for several dozen years are undesirable and dangerous symptoms. **We want to build a Union of free nations and equal states**, economically solidary and competitive, and enjoying high standing in the world. But we also think that the path to that goal should not lead through a two-speed Union i.e. ever closer economic and political ties among the Eurozone states.

An effective European Union that respects the sovereignty of its members has no alternative other than a concert of powers, of which Poland has had bad experiences in the past. At the same time, we can see what is flawed about the European project, and we are pointing it out. We can hardly give our consent for the EU's departure from the principles enshrined in



the treaties to secure immediate gains; for delegating decision-making and executive powers on various policies to informal circles; for decisions taken without consultations with other partners. We are seeing attempts to shift some of the consequences of such decisions onto the states that had no part in the decision-making process and which are then presented with a *fait accompli*. Disregard for the equality and sovereignty of the EU states that are no European powers is the wrong track — it weakens European nations' willingness to continue the integration process and undermines its achievements. The unity of the European Union is in the interest of the Republic of Poland. But this unity requires support from the member states' citizens. The practice of "more Europe, less democratic control over its actions" leads to the erosion, not strengthening, of the integration process. Guided by legitimate concern over its success, we must persuade our EU partners to recognise the danger lurking behind.

The dispute over the future shape of the EU is echoed by some European politicians as criticism of the changes taking place in Poland. Actually, the dispute is not so much about the contents of a statute adopted by the Polish Parliament, but rather about the extent of interference by European institutions into the internal affairs of the Member States. In other words, **it is about the sovereignty of the Republic of Poland** and other Member States. Poland's *raison d'état* is unequivocal here: sustainable and strong sovereignty is in Poland's interest, a sovereignty that fits well into the European construction built by the treaties. It is important that the nature of this dispute be generally understood in Poland.

**The European Union should go back to its roots**, to the four fundamental freedoms: the free movement of people, services, goods and capital. Proponents of close integration of the eurozone want economic governance to be coordinated and a *de facto* political union to be established. Unfortunately, today there is no fair and democratic way of electing legitimate authorities of such a union. Nevertheless, we still have a lot to do to achieve those fundamental principles of the single market. A single market of services is still a long way off. We have been struggling to implement the rule of the free movement of goods as regards energy resources. Question marks are starting to appear about the free movement of people.

One can sometimes get the impression that the idea of an ever closer union is treated as a kind of a forward retreat, as if to conceal mistakes made in connection with the single currency and recently with the migration crisis. The principle of subsidiarity falls victim to this attitude. That is the way in which we should interpret a situation where, having made errors in border protection, asylum and migration policies, some European politicians want to impose mandatory migrant quotas on the Member States and even intend to establish a European border guard that would operate outside the Member States' control. We aim to restore the principle of subsidiarity to the place it deserves in European policy, because this principle best guarantees a balance between the prerogatives of EU bodies, often suffering from a clear deficit of democratic mandate, and the powers of the Member States, whose governments uniformly derive legitimacy directly from their citizens' electoral decisions.

Mr Speaker,  
Members of the House,

**Regional cooperation** is an integral element of Poland's European policy. We have high hopes for it, but we also take notice of the problems we will have to deal with along the way. Central Europe has fallen victim to the migration crisis. Measures that seem rational and appropriate from today's perspective originally came under fire of criticism from many European politicians only to be considered justified later. The ideas of a closer European integration or the so-called mini Schengen are addressed mostly to the countries of the "old Europe." Our region is being sidelined. We will voice our protest against such solutions.

The current government will be pursuing a regional policy rooted in Poland's unique location in Europe. Our country links two large European areas – the broadly understood Baltic Sea region and Central Europe with the Baltic States and the Adriatic. We will be not only engaged in various regional formats of cooperation, but we will also work to bring Europe's North and South closer together to allow them to create a new regional identity in the framework of the EU. Such thinking has found its political manifestation at the aforementioned summit of Central European leaders in Bucharest, which was organized on the initiative of Poland and Romania, our important regional ally. In the economy and transport area we will make efforts to turn the Via Carpatia into a link between Europe's different regions. We will also support and advance further infrastructure projects in countries linked by the Carpathian range.

**The Visegrad Group**, modelled after Benelux and drawing on its experience, is a proven constituent of the European architecture and a format for the common representation of Central and Eastern Europe's interests. The twenty-fifth anniversary of the Group falling this year shows us how successful our region has become. Poland takes over the one-year presidency of the Group in mid-2016 — we will be seeking to increase the effectiveness of cooperation, particularly on the European agenda, defence, energy security, cohesion policy and infrastructure. We will be looking for synergies with Slovakia's presidency of the Council of the European Union, e.g. in reviewing EU budgetary issues, developing the digital market, an Energy Union, the migration crisis, and developments in Ukraine. We are going to enhance cooperation with the Visegrad partners also in bilateral formats, among others through hosting a number of intergovernmental consultations with the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Close cooperation with Hungary, our third important Visegrad partner, will be reflected among others in the joint celebrations of the 60th anniversary of the 1956 events, in June in Poznan and in October in Budapest. By decision of our countries' parliaments we will be also celebrating the Year of Solidarity that commemorates the events of that time. With equal commitment, we will engage in **cooperation with our northern neighbours**, especially in security policy, the European agenda, and the extensive sectoral cooperation. In working together we also rely on bilateral channels, leveraging Poland's current presidency of the Council of the Baltic Sea States. Poland wants to be a responsible partner that brings others together around shared values and ideas, and that is why we so much value dialogue in the Visegrad Group–Nordic and Baltic states format.

Poland is now holding the presidency of the Council of the Baltic Sea States. This forum is increasingly becoming a platform for exchanging experiences between states with diverse potentials and economic development. Besides that, we attach great importance to bilateral cooperation with the region's states, which is manifested by my first visits to Stockholm and Helsinki.

Members of the House,

We will keep up dialogue and regular consultations at various levels with the most important European partners, **in the first place with the United Kingdom**, with which we not only share understanding of a number of major items on the European agenda, but also have a similar approach to European security. The shared perception of European issues was reaffirmed during my recent visit to the United Kingdom among others. At the same time I want to strongly emphasise – Polish authorities will not agree to breaching one of the EU's pillars, i.e. the right of EU citizens to move freely within the EU, also because of the significance employee mobility has for a robust single market that is facing global competition. We will not accept solutions that would discriminate against our fellow citizens in any Member State.

Members of the House,

Poland will continue **friendly relations with Germany**, our most important neighbour and economic partner. This year marks the 25th anniversary of the Treaty on Good Neighbourhood and Friendly Cooperation between Poland and the Federal Republic of Germany. It is a good time for a positive reflection on the shared interests in Europe as we have a lot in common, contrary to some opinions and stereotypes. But it is also a good opportunity to take stock of issues between neighbours.

Polish-German relations will get even better if accompanied by honesty and openness instead of the sometimes pretended, superficial attitude of conciliation. It was just this spirit of honesty and openness to cooperation that permeated the recent visits by President Andrzej Duda and me to Berlin, and Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier to Warsaw. We intend to keep up the good atmosphere also during Prime Minister Szydło's forthcoming visit to Berlin.

Furthermore, this year's 25th anniversary of the Weimar Triangle will be a good opportunity to take stock of **cooperation with France** and Germany and map its new directions. **Paris** will continue to be our important reference point with regard to European and political and military issues. Poland's most important European partners will traditionally include Italy, Spain and the Netherlands, which took over the Presidency of the EU Council in January.

Members of the House!

A while ago I mentioned the **migration crisis**, its European aspect, but Europe is not the place to look for its root causes. Polish foreign policy does not ignore the South's problems. We regard Africa and the Middle East as a region which creates both opportunities and challenges. Political instability, regional conflicts, terrorism, uncontrolled migrations, operations by large organised crime groups – these are just some of the fundamental phenomena and problems facing the region. Due to their scale and nature they represent a direct challenge for European security and thus engage the European Union's forces and means.

The migration and refugee crisis is one of the most serious challenges facing Poland and Europe. We may assume that further weakening of state structures and the growing poverty of those societies will generate new waves of migrants to Europe. These issues will engage Poland globally in the UN, EU and NATO, as well as bilaterally.

In order to combat the negative effects of the current crisis, the EU should first of all regain control over the flow of people arriving in Europe. Effective control of EU's external borders is needed to stem the stream of migrants. Such control will enable us to escape the permanent mode of responding to the crisis. Hence, we will analyse the European Commission's proposals for EU's external border management, in line with the principle of respect for the competences of Member States. We will also underscore that better border control can also be achieved by fully implementing and improving the existing mechanisms of cooperation between national border services. Poland plays an important role in protecting EU external borders not only on account of its geographical location. In addition to their regular tasks implemented on their own territory, over one hundred Border Guard officers were assigned to a difficult duty also in other EU countries last year. This year will be no different. Polish border guards are also working in Slovenia and Greece now.

In order to effectively counteract the migratory pressure, a properly directed cooperation with third countries, among them Turkey, is also needed. A package of measures agreed on at the end of last November between the EU and Ankara has created an opportunity to partially stem the flow of migrants. Poland will make its financial contribution to the implementation of this agreement; what is needed, however, are determined actions also in other trouble areas of the southern neighbourhood. The measures and decisions on the relocation of refugees inside the EU have not yielded the expected results. They were mere reactions to the growing influx of refugees to Europe and have not touched the causes of this phenomenon which lie outside the EU.

Poland has been consistent in implementing its migration policy. As I have said before, since the outbreak of the conflict in Ukraine, our country has accepted increasingly more citizens of this country (twice as many between 2014 and 2015).

When it comes to the relocation of refugees, we are not dodging commitments made by the previous cabinet, however, we shall consistently seek to preserve the basic rules of security. A necessary condition for accepting refugees in Poland will be a full identity check of the persons concerned, and preserving the rule of full discretion in choosing Poland as the country of final settlement.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In today's global environment, the importance of the **economic factor**, as an element that impacts relations between states, **is growing**. It exerts a strong influence on an assessment of the security conditions and on how national interest is perceived.

Today Poland has strong ties to the European market, which accounts for over 60 percent of our foreign trade. On the one hand, we are glad to see Polish entrepreneurs doing so well on one of the most difficult global markets, but on the other it is a source of concern that we

are so dependent on the business cycle of just one economic area. The current government will therefore consistently support the **development of economic cooperation with non-European partners** and will also support entrepreneurs operating outside the borders of our country. It is estimated that in 2016, thanks to their hard work and talents, Polish exports could grow by as much as 10 percent.

Together with the Ministry of Development, the Ministry of Agriculture and other central offices, we will be improving the instruments of economic diplomacy. A system of surveying the satisfaction of enterprises, now being implemented, will help us to better identify the needs and preferences of Polish businesses.

An important area of MFA activity will be supporting technological cooperation. Polish economy needs partners to engage in an optimum way one of the most valuable capitals – the intellectual capital. Building a knowledge-based economy requires supporting Polish companies and R&D institutions in relations with countries that have achieved spectacular successes in commercialising high technologies.

We shall continue trainings the aim of which is to increase the participation of Polish companies in tenders and projects of international organisations. We note with satisfaction that an increasing number of companies is participating in such trainings and workshops. We intend to use these organisations to support the expansion of our entrepreneurs on foreign markets.

At the same time I would like to declare that the whole Polish diplomacy is open to initiatives of Polish economic groups, if they are interested in and oriented at strengthening Polish economic presence abroad. I also plan a series of meetings with representatives of the most important Polish business organisations in the near future.

A number of geographical directions deserves special mention here.

**In relations with the United States**, our partnership increasingly encompasses the economic sphere, energy cooperation, as well as the promising area of innovation and development of high technologies. Polish-US economic relations are a component of the European Union-United States economic partnership, which we intend to develop for the benefit of all the parties under the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). The present government has been engaged in efforts to maintain the dynamics of expansion of Polish enterprises in Asia; it will be especially important to strengthen cooperation with countries with which we have entered into strategic partnerships: Japan and Korea.

We are successfully developing cooperation in this partnership format with the **People's Republic of China**, also in the framework of the 16+1 initiative between Central and Eastern European countries and China. The recent visit by President Andrzej Duda marked an important landmark in the development of relations with this country. Regional and global initiatives, such as "One Belt, One Road", or the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, could produce tangible benefits for Poland stemming from handling the exchange of goods between Europe and Asia and the influx of investments. I hope to be able to continue the possibility of implementing various initiatives during my first Asian visit in China and during

the visit of the Chinese President in Warsaw. We count ASEAN and India among our important partners on the Asian continent.

We also want to expand our economic cooperation with Asia by re-creating diplomatic posts in such countries as Mongolia and the Philippines.

We will forge closer ties, including economic ties, with Latin American countries and the Caribbean. These efforts should be fostered by democratic changes, a stable economic and social situation, the growing liberalisation of trade with the EU, as well as a strong and well-established presence in this region of the Polish diaspora. Opening our posts in Panama and Ecuador can also contribute to economic cooperation with this region.

In the field of international economic cooperation, we will attach special importance to **energy policy**. In December 2015, the LNG terminal in Świnoujście was opened – the project was initiated by a former coalition cabinet with the Law and Justice Party in 2007 – making Poland less energy dependent and opening up new opportunities for cooperation with exporters of this raw material. A significant advance in the diversification of gas supplies does not in any way suggest that the Republic of Poland will attach less importance to energy policy in Europe.

Polish strategy assumes a two-track approach to investment projects at home and to measures undertaken at EU level. The Energy Union project should move from the conceptual stage to the implementing stage. Following the December conclusions of the European Council, we expect in the next few weeks an ambitious legislative package in the area of security of gas supplies. We are critical of the Nord Stream 2 project, an economically ineffective venture the aim of which is to make the European Union more dependent on supplies from one direction. By diminishing the importance of Slovakia and Ukraine as transit countries, this gas pipeline would undermine not only the economic interests of our southern ally, but it would also weaken our eastern partner. In this sense it conflicts with the international commitments of UN and OSCE member states not to support aggression in any form. Actually, Nordstream2 is not a business, but a political venture.

Poland will take active part in the **development of the European climate policy**. This was evident during the recent climate summit in Paris. The concluded agreement does not contravene our national interests. Specifically it provides – in our opinion – no grounds for increasing the EU's 2030 reduction goal. Poland will seek in the first place that the agreement is signed and ratified by the world's biggest economies. At the EU level following the COP21 conference, our priority is to negotiate legal regulations that would be beneficial for Poland in the scope of the earlier agreed gas emissions by 2030.

Economic interests, as well as efforts to gain support for our candidacy to the UN Security Council as a non-permanent member call for **increased activity by Polish diplomacy in Africa and the Middle East**. Depending on how the situation develops, we are thinking about re-establishing our missions in Baghdad, Damascus and Tripoli. Taking advantage of our close relations with both Israeli and Palestinian authorities, we will also support international efforts leading to resumption of the dialogue on the Middle East peace process.

The continued interest of Polish tourist in travelling to Egypt and Tunisia places those countries among our important partners. Algeria has been consolidating its position as a significant economic partner. Morocco and Jordan, politically stable and influential in their region, as states that enjoy privileged status in relations with the EU and offer concrete benefits for Polish companies deserve more attention from our side.

Poland will continue to be an **important partner also for the Persian Gulf states**. In 2016 we will undertake efforts to win major investments from countries in this region. Main tasks involve deepening cooperation with Saudi Arabia and Qatar, important countries for the diversification of energy supplies to Poland. We recognise enormous potential in the development of relations with Iran, with respect to which the European Union has recently lifted its economic sanctions. The United Arab Emirates – our most important contracting party in the Arab world – will continue to occupy a special place on the map of Polish interests in the Middle East.

We intended to continue and develop the GoAfrica programme. We will seek to increase Polish economic presence on the African continent. Recreating the network of Polish diplomatic missions in Africa should help to achieve this goal. Embassies in Senegal and Tanzania should be opened first, and probably in Zambia in the near future. In 2016 we will strengthen our relations with the four countries which are a priority for Polish development cooperation, namely Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Senegal. The Republic of South Africa will continue to be our important partner in Africa.

Members of the House,

It is estimated that as many as 20 million of our countrymen or people of Polish origin live outside Poland today. Obviously we do not want another hundreds of thousands of Poles to leave Poland in search of their life opportunities, as was the case in the last few years. We want them to have decent living conditions here. On my recent visit to Edinburg, I appealed to members of the local Polish community to return home. At the same time we see opportunities for active promotion of Polish interests in such a numerous Polish community abroad. Confronted by the challenges that we have to address today, we want Poles living abroad to become advocates of the interests of the Republic of Poland. We hope that our compatriots will become important allies of the government in promoting the Polish reason of state, Polish culture and national remembrance, and Polish historical narrative. Polish Institutes abroad will actively support Polonia in such activities.

I appeal to the Polish community abroad, please react when Poland's good name is being defamed. When history is being distorted or outright lied about. When people write about Polish death camps, while thousands of Poles Righteous Among the Nations are being ignored. I ask you to be ambassadors of Poland and Polishness. I appeal especially to the Polish community in Allied states to support Polish efforts aimed at raising the level of our security.

Polish diaspora policy will be carried out not only for the benefit of the Polish community abroad, but first of all with their involvement. We will develop the network of Polonia Consultative Councils operating at Polish missions abroad. We will support Polish community

organisations abroad. But first and foremost we will support Polish media and education which are carriers of Polish culture and national tradition. This year we plan to fund activities carried out by the Ministry of National Education so that more teachers could be assigned to Polish communities in the East.

We intend to make significant changes in the Pole's Card. Persons who declare their Polish nationality and who have Polish roots will receive our help in settling in Poland, integrating with the country of their ancestors and in obtaining Polish citizenship. We intend to draft a new law on repatriation, which not on paper but in real terms will enable Poland to meet its obligations towards those who were deprived of their Motherland by force. Our fellow countrymen in the East, especially in Lithuania, Belarus and Kazakhstan can count on our special support.

We will assert Poles' rights whenever they are not properly respected, availing ourselves – if necessary – of multilateral fora. We want the Polish community and Poles in neighboring countries and everywhere where large groups of our countrymen live to obtain all the rights arising from bilateral agreements and European standards. We want to make the teaching of the Polish language more widely available to school children. Poles living abroad – let me stress once more – must be treated the same way as other European Union citizens.

Mr. Speaker,  
Members of the House,

The **consular service** which reports to me fulfils a special mission towards Poland and Poles. For years it has promptly and effectively evacuated our citizens from many distant countries. The Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of the Interior provided support to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

On account of the hostilities in eastern Ukraine which pose a direct threat to the life and health of the inhabitants of Donbas, inhabitants of Polish origin, last year the MFA, supported by the MoD and MI, organized transport for 178 people to Poland. In November 2015 another 180 people were brought from Mariupol to Poland. We expect the last seven persons to arrive in the coming days.

Poles who had been kidnapped in several places in the world has been successfully released. These examples reaffirm the effectiveness of operations of the consular service and increase citizens' confidence in the state.

Actions in the area of visa policy were a significant success of the consular service. In 2015 Polish consular posts issued a record number of over one and a half million visas, of which more than 900,000 were issued in Ukraine and 400,000 in Belarus. Responding to the growing interest in Poland, we will see to it that the process of applying for Polish visas is carried out properly. An effective visa policy is an important instrument of support for the development of economic, trade, cultural, and social ties in our immediate neighbourhood.

Members of the House,



In 2016 Poland will host **major international events** that carry a significant promotion potential. I have mentioned the Warsaw NATO Summit. The **promotion of Poland** connected with World Youth Day organised in Krakow will also be an important task for the MFA. We will show Poland as an important and inspiring country that has played a significant role in the history of Christianity and Europe. May the involvement of the Polish state in this event be an element which can be defined in terms of diplomacy of values – defence and promotion of the values of the Latin civilisation, which connects the citizens of our continent. Let us also remember that this year Wroclaw is a European Capital of Culture. This is yet another opportunity to recall Poland’s contribution to the development of Europe and its heritage. I will also do my best to see that Lodz, a city close to my heart, is awarded the organisation of the so-called small expo exhibition in the near future.

In 2016 we will strengthen Polish **historical diplomacy**. We will effectively promote the history of our country, nation and state in connection with this year’s celebrations of the 1050<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Baptism of Poland and the upcoming 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of regaining our independence. The reformed Polish Institutes will play an important role in this process.

Equally important priority will be to intensify efforts to counter negative stereotypes and defaming Poland. An example of the MFA activities in this field will be promotion and media support for the upcoming opening of the Ulma Family Museum of Poles Saving Jews in Markowa near Rzeszow.

We will more effectively **inform foreign public opinion** about the most important Polish affairs. We are witnessing attacks against Poland and the Polish government, foreign readers are being misinformed, attempts are made to give them an impression that democracy in Poland is under threat. For this reason, out of concern for the good name of our country, we will pursue an active media diplomacy, a good example of which was the recent publication of my article “What Europe does Poland want” in 26 of the most important, opinion-making European journals. The **information portal poland.pl** will also serve this purpose.

The MFA intends to develop **the mechanism of supporting the local government** and citizens’ dimension of Polish foreign policy. Thanks to it, cooperation between the MFA and the regions is improving and this in turn makes local communities more familiar with the priorities of Poland’s foreign policy thus contributing to the developing of a civil society. We will continue to provide direct access to information about Polish foreign affairs and activities on the international stage to our citizens through the network of Regional Centres for International Debate.

Members of the House,

**Polish foreign policy is regaining the empowerment** it lacked during the last few years and to which some of our partners were not accustomed. This is where we should look for the sources of polemic opinions about Poland which in recent days have been heard from different European politicians. Poland’s foreign policy is an assertive policy, which does not mean that it will be a confrontational policy. Poland does not intend to aggravate relations with any of its foreign partners. Its policy will be firm but also open to dialogue. The

necessary correction that this government will make in foreign policy will benefit Poland, our region and Europe.

We are facing difficult challenges. In time of dramatic changes, uncertainty and instability in international relations, strengthening the Republic of Poland's position requires special care and effort. To make it happen, a harmonious cooperation between the most important centres of power – president, parliament and government – is necessary. There is also a place for the opposition here. A country's sovereignty is created not only through activities carried out abroad, but perhaps and more importantly at home.

I ask the House to accept the information of the Government on the tasks of Polish foreign policy in 2016.

Thank you for your attention.