

Minister's Annual Address 2005

Government information on the Polish foreign policy

presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Prof. Adam Daniel Rotfeld,

at the session of the Sejm on 21st January 2005

*Mister President,
Mister Prime Minister,
Mister Speaker,
Members of the House,*

I take the floor with certain anxiety and diffidence. For it is the first time that I stand on this rostrum as the newly appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs. What is more, I am to present to the House the priorities and tenets of Polish foreign policy prepared under your leadership, Mister Speaker, when you were executing the office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs with such success.

My address opens the fourth and last annual debate on foreign policy during this term of the Sejm. We have entered an election year. That is significant, since the clear line formerly separating domestic and international affairs has become blurred in our times. I mention this, because I would like to explain in the beginning that it is not my intention to become involved in any way in the pre-election campaign. The national interest of the Polish State obligate us to treat external policy and its instrument – diplomacy – in a way transcending party lines. I wish to ensure optimum effectiveness of our actions and continuity in all the undertakings initiated by Minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski in the autumn of 1989, and advanced over the next 15 years by his successors – Andrzej Olechowski, Władysław Bartoszewski, Dariusz Rosati, Bronisław Geremek and Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz.

*Mister Speaker,
Members of the House,*

With those assumptions in mind, I wish to present a list of priorities on the agenda of our foreign policy.

First, we shall continue consolidating our place in the European Union as a responsible state, for which the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the European Security and Defence Policy is a platform, on the one hand, for seeking a balance of interests, and on the other – for overcoming the still existent divisions and preventing new ones. We shall strive for a European Union budget for the years 2007-

2013 that meets Poland's interests. It is our goal to ensure the highest possible allocation for the policy of cohesion and agricultural policy for the new member states – so that the new budget accelerates the leveling of differences in the development of EU states. We shall seek to attain political compromise on the New Financial Perspective in June 2005. That is a difficult task. However, we hope that the negotiations will be marked by good will, without tactical delays and playing for time.

Second, as a member of the North Atlantic Alliance and the European Union we shall seek a new opening in the relations of the whole West with Ukraine. The democratic breakthrough that occurred in that country has met with the understanding and support of all responsible political forces in Poland. We shall do everything to ensure that this breakthrough gains the appreciation and recognition of the community of the democratic states of the West. After all, it is an event of historic proportions, comparable to the European “Autumn of the Nations” in 1989. The reforms in Ukraine require support, and its shift towards the Euro-Atlantic structures – reciprocity. Acting bilaterally, we wish to extend the essential assistance to the new president and government of Ukraine, and to share our experiences in developing and consolidating democratic and pro-European transformation. In particular, we shall seek to it that the European Union raises its relations with Ukraine to the level of Strategic Partnership and opens the prospect of integration, while advocating NATO offer of a Membership Action Program.

Third, we shall foster the privileged character of our relations with the United States. A president friendly to the Polish cause will stay in the White House for another four years. The government realizes that the special character of the Polish-American political relations has not been fully translated to all other areas of relations. There has been an improvement on economic issues and military cooperation - and we intend to maintain this trend. But things are not as good when it comes to the waiver of visas for Poles traveling to the United States. It would be irresponsible to promise a rapid breakthrough on this issue. We shall do everything to accelerate the momentum of changes that would meet the expectations of Polish society. As a new member of the European Union and a tested ally of America, we shall strive over the coming weeks and months to revive the spirit of the Transatlantic community, and to erase the memory of the grievances that hindered cooperation on both sides of the Atlantic over the last two years.

Fourth, after the elections in Iraq, we intend to elaborate - with the new government of that state and our allies in the stabilization coalition – a new formula of Polish engagement in Iraq. The elections in Iraq are an indispensable element of normalization, even if the conditions for holding them will not be perfect everywhere. Still, I am confident that they will bring positive changes. They will enhance the legitimacy and authority of the government, cooperation with Iraq's neighbors will improve, and the internal security structures will be able to assume greater responsibility for the situation in that state. The present Polish Military Contingent will be reduced. The relevant decisions that have been taken will not undermine our capacity to fulfill our tasks. We intend to make further reductions, at the same time facilitating the assumption of responsibility for the security of Iraq – by the Iraqis. But neither we nor anybody else should harbor any illusions: normalization of the situation in Iraq will take years and will require active support by the international community. For many reasons, Poland should not shirk participation in that joint

endeavor, though our contribution may take different forms. Our presence in Iraq is likely to be of an increasingly civilian – rather than military – nature. Increasingly, it will be Polish companies – rather than troops – that will facilitate the stabilization of Iraq.

Fifth, our priorities include seeking jointly with the government of the Federal Republic of Germany a future-oriented formula of relations between our states – a formula, that would finally put a closure to the burdens of the past and open qualitatively new prospects for the development of relations between Poland and Germany. In recent months we have managed to realise some significant achievements. Let me recall that the German Chancellor has unambiguously declared a lack of support of the German government for individual property claims that could be made by citizens of the Federal Republic of Germany. The newly-appointed plenipotentiaries of the foreign ministers of Poland and Germany for bilateral cooperation, have initiated their activity. We must take a sober view – free of illusion – of the problems in relations between our states. Such matters are not resolved by a single act, or some magic formula. It is a process. The Polish government is under an obligation to care for the interests of the Polish state and its citizens, mindful not only of the coming months or years, but of future generations – with an awareness of the historic perspective of that task. We shall strive to secure Polish interests, cooperating constructively, in the spirit of European partnership, with the government of Germany.

Sixth, the government shall spare no effort to ensure that Poland as host and organizer of the III Summit of the Council of Europe - an organization that has integrated democratic states of our continent for over fifty years - performs that role well. Let me remind you that the Summit meeting will take place in Warsaw in May of this year. It is our ambition that the Warsaw summit should elaborate the future tasks of that important European institution, becoming an opportunity for deep reflection on the state of the architecture of security and cooperation in Europe, and in Euro-Atlantic relations. Also, we would like the Polish presidency of the Visegrad Group to revive the sense of joint action, primarily in the framework of the European Union. Finally, we want to leave a good impression of the Polish presidency of the Council of Baltic Sea States. We shall also continue our active involvement in the work on the reform of the United Nations, presenting our vision of a New Political Act of that organization in the 21st century.

Seventh, we want the coming months to change the way we think about Poland's possibilities of action in areas out-of-Europe. The government issued a political signal for such an approach with the adoption last November of a comprehensive strategy addressed at the developing countries. We would like to see the adoption and implementation of a Law on cooperation for development, and the creation of the appropriate organizational structures.

Eighth, Polish foreign policy has the task of attaining objectives serving the Polish economy and Polish companies. The economic transformations, privatisation and significant liberalization of trade require corresponding changes in the structures of Poland's foreign representation. That means continued integration of the resources and instruments of foreign policy in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in the diplomatic missions. That goal should also be served by the launching of the planned

Polish Agency for Economic Promotion. The economization of Polish policy – despite considerable departmental resistance – is necessary and requires substantial acceleration in 2005, in view of Poland's participation in the common commercial policy of the EU and the need to shape the EU policies in the interest of the Polish economy.

Honorable Members,

The challenges that Polish foreign policy has had to face in recent months, have caused - apparently for the first time - divisions on our political scene. Oftentimes, this Chamber has witnessed heated disputes over such issues as the Constitutional Treaty for Europe, or the Polish presence in Iraq. This indicates, first and foremost, that the development of the international situation poses questions that often do not have one simple and easy answer. However, I do not share a commonplace view that this is supposed to mean the end of national consensus over the main themes and tasks of Polish foreign policy. That claim has been refuted by the conduct of the Polish people and unity of action of Polish politicians over Ukraine. That issue confirmed the truth that when we speak with one voice – we are effective in pursuing our national interests. It would be harmful for our common interests if the fundamental issues of Polish foreign policy were to become entangled in short-term electoral calculations.

It is my ambition to ensure the continuity of all the processes that serve Poland well and were launched by my predecessors. The new political alignment and the new government are likely put their own imprint on foreign policy. However, the issues of fundamental importance to Poland, to its security, should be continued. For this to happen, it is essential to hold a thorough debate on questions that are of fundamental significance to Poland and its foreign policy. Hence, it is necessary to recall some elementary concepts and issues, axioms of sort, to refresh the way they are understood. I believe this debate will mark a substantial contribution to this process.

Members of the House,

On 1st May 2004 Poland became a member of the European Union. It is too early to make a full evaluation of that historic event. Still, one thing is beyond dispute: our entry into the Union has conclusively discredited many false predictions, fears and concerns that were prevalent in Poland and abroad.

It has turned out that the accession of Poland and nine other states did not undermine the political cohesion of the European Union. Poland did not become – as had been claimed – a “Trojan horse”, and we did not need to be taught on how to be good Europeans. The events in Ukraine demonstrated something quite contrary: that there are situations in which it is worthwhile to listen to Poland very closely and that Poland's actions enhance the prestige of all Europe.

Members of the House,

Our membership in the European Union has become a tangible stimulus of Poland's development. We have received the first EU funds and more importantly – are making good use of them. No one has lost on our entry into the EU. Everyone has benefited. The best example of that is the improved situation of our farmers - the social group on behalf of which most concerns were expressed in connection with Poland's EU membership. Our national identity has not been undermined. We still live in our own country, though now it is modernizing faster. There is a natural and quite pronounced need for a frank public debate on the vision of Europe that we desire and our place in it. This is so, because the next few months will bring intensive discussions in all the member states on the vision of Europe, its future development, its boundaries and identity in a globalized world. An inspiration or a catalyst to launch such a debate has been the process of ratification of the Constitutional Treaty, discussion on the New Financial Perspective, the question of Turkey's future membership, and - what is also, or even more significant from the Polish point of view – an elaboration of concrete conditions and a date for opening of the accession negotiations with Ukraine.

Our agenda today not only includes the issue of ratification of the Constitutional Treaty, but also ways of boosting public support for our membership in the EU. Ahead of us is the debate preceding the constitutional referendum. The sovereign decision we take will not only have crucial impact on the future development and shape of the European Union. It will constitute a kind of test of Polish aspirations.

Members of the House,

The Constitutional Treaty signed last year is more of a conclusion, systematization and rearrangement of earlier decisions, than a road map to the future. However, rejection of the Treaty by Poland would doom our country to self-isolation, and at best – to revival of the idea of a Europe of “two speeds”, or a Europe of a “hard core” and a periphery. The greatest weakness of the Treaty is its language; a search for a compromise formula is often expressed in a bureaucratic jargon, a lingo of civil servants addressing other civil servants. Treaties written by representatives of 25 states are rarely simple, clear and legible. However, it is a Treaty that despite all its flaws – rooted in its compromise nature – duly takes into account Polish interests.

At the same time, it is the point of departure for defining our vision of Europe's future. We speak of a Europe that is in solidarity as well as cohesive, efficient and effective. For that reason, implementation of the Lisbon Strategy will be of key importance to Poland – today and tomorrow. It is a project that provides for strengthening Europe's competitiveness in the process of globalization, first and foremost, through investment in knowledge, new technologies and innovative technical, economic and organizational solutions.

It is in the Polish interest for the European Union to be an important subject of international relations, partner-like in political relations and competitive on the global economic scene. The rivalry on the global stage is on the rise. It poses a strategic challenge to all the European states, including the largest ones. It is ever more

difficult for them to compete on their own against such powers as the United States, or China or India, both growing in strength. Only as one can Europe face the new reality effectively. The casting of Europe in a strategic dimension is in accordance with the Polish national interests. From that perspective, further enlargement of the EU eastward is to the advantage of Poland and the European Union as a whole.

Our membership in the European Union has shifted the focus of our diplomatic activity. Increasingly, the most important objective is to promote our interests and win the support of EU partners for our goals. We have demonstrated that we can be tough campaigners in pursuit of our goals, without losing sight of the interests of the entire EU. We have not let any one put us in the corner, nor have we sunk into self-isolation. We neither want to – not should we – move on the margins, or only use the brake, or focus on damage control. The brakeman can only reduce the speed of the joint journey, but he certainly has no influence on its direction. We want to be, and are, an active subject of EU policy, with growing influence of the shape of Union decisions.

Members of the House,

A key question is on the agenda – and it merits serious discussion: with whom and in what way do we want to pursue our interests inside the European Union? Our strategy envisages three basic areas of contacts. First, we cultivate close contacts and collaboration with our strategic partners, mainly Germany and France, and also Great Britain – with which we share the same appreciation of the significance of the Transatlantic relations. Second, we nurture close ties with the states of our region, particularly members of the Visegrad Group. And finally, third – we seek good relations and cooperation with all Union partners, with whom we share interests on specific issues. In other words, we are not inclined to creating durable coalitions within the EU, but define our position on a specific matter and look for allies, whose approach is similar or close to our position. We firmly and unequivocally reject the concept of a “European Directorate” or a “hard core” of Europe. And any way, there is no tendency today to revive those concepts. The spirit of European cooperation is good.

Members of the House,

Our membership in the European Union has induced us to examine our bilateral relations in a new light. This applies in particular to our main European partners – Germany, France, and also Great Britain.

The relations with Germany were in recent months and years the subject of many, occasionally emotional debates – usually in reaction to the activity of various political circles in Germany. It is understandable that Polish-German relations – also today, after the enlargement of the European Union – have significance that transcends bilateral relations, with a dimension that is not only historic and determined by the past. To optimize our policy, we need to answer the following question: how do these relations impact the implementation of our – that is Polish and German –

broader aspirations, both in the context of the whole Europe, and in the Transatlantic dimension. From the Polish point of view, those relations can and should be an instrument and a key lever of our role in Europe. We would like to build a new model of Polish-German relations that would be firmly rooted in the European and Transatlantic context. Close cooperation of Poland and Germany is particularly needed to dynamise the policies of Western and Euro-Atlantic institutions addressed to our neighbours in the East, that is Eastern Europe. A joint Polish-German document, which ministers Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz and Joschka Fischer presented in Luxemburg last year, could become the foundation of new EU policy toward Ukraine. Other areas of Polish-German cooperation include the future of the Transatlantic relations, and also the political and defense identity of Europe.

This cooperation must be based on respect for the equality of the partners. We recognize the role of Germany in the European construction; we hope that on the other side of the Oder River, too, the negative stereotypes of Poland – also in social perception - will be replaced with an image of a friendly and helpful neighbour. Such a future-oriented model will not become the basis of policy unless past problems – which are again introducing elements of distrust, uncertainty and destabilization into Polish-German relations - are closed once and for all. Our relations require explicit declarations and clear decisions by all the main political forces and parties in Germany. The future of the relations between our peoples must not be determined by those who are forever stranded in the past. We believe in the power of our arguments. They are historically justified and have a strong legal basis. We should discard complexes and not be guided by emotions in our policy toward Germany. Our position meets with understanding and a will for cooperation on the part of the Federal President, Chancellor and Minister of Foreign Affairs.

*Mister Speaker,
Members of the House,*

The year 2005 marks the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II. For us, it also means the 60th anniversary of the return of the Western Territories to the Homeland. We have gained sufficient distance and historic perspective to reflect deeply on the responsibility for the war, its consequences and its presence in the contemporary awareness of states and societies. It is the Polish role to safeguard the historic truth, to resist its distortion and falsification.

Allow me, Mister Speaker, to make a short digression at this point. I believe the time is ripe, 60 years after the end of the war, for the elementary truth about what really happened in occupied Poland to come to the awareness of the representatives of the media in the community of the democratic states – in Europe, the United States and Canada– about who was the aggressor, the occupier, who built the death camps and murdered people there, and who was persecuted, subjugated and subjected to the German, Nazi policy of extermination. It was in Polish territories that the Germans created the largest camps of annihilation, where – alongside the Jewish people – Poles and members of other European nations were murdered on a mass scale. A few days from now, on 27th January – marking the 60th anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi camp of Auschwitz –Birkenau - the leaders of almost 40 nations will come to attend

ceremonies in remembrance of those murdered at the site of that death camp. Today, a few days before the ceremonies that will focus the attention of the whole world, I call on representatives of press organizations, the Association of Polish Journalists and other organizations representing the Polish media, to address – independently of the appeals, corrections and diplomatic representations of the Polish MFA - a letter to their colleagues, and partner organizations of journalists around the world, telling them that the thoughtless or intentional use of the term “Polish death camps” is insulting and shameful. It not only conceals the truth about the perpetrators of that crime, but slanders our nation, which was the first victim of the criminal practices of Nazi Germany.

*Mister Speaker,
Members of the House,*

Our relations with France. I do not have to explain what a crucial role in building the European identity has been played by that country. France is a leading foreign investor in Poland. That creates a favorable basis for further development of an enhanced partnership. The climate of our mutual relations has improved perceptibly. The best illustration of this was the recent visit to Poland by the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Michel Barnier. Let me put this succinctly: our mutual intentions concerning the future of Europe are much closer than is being presented in the press, commentaries and political debate.

The question occasionally appears whether the Weimar Triangle has not exhausted its political potential. The answer is simple: institutions of this kind have proved themselves and constitute a useful platform of political cooperation and discussion on European problems. We shall particularly count on an active role of France in the development of the EU's relations with our Eastern neighbours.

We put high value on our partnership with Great Britain. We are linked by a community of views on many European and global issues. In the recent period, the British government has been active and imaginative in co-shaping the mechanisms of European cooperation, particularly including questions of defence policy, security and common foreign policy. That has made it easier for us, as well, to formulate our European policy. British policy illustrates the theory that states have greater impact on shaping the future of Europe when they take positions on issues of key and central significance – than when they distance themselves from important issues, relegating themselves to the periphery of European politics. We hope for tight cooperation with Great Britain, particularly in creating a modern model of the Transatlantic relations – relations between America and Europe – which is of crucial significance to our security.

Members of the House,

The state of the Transatlantic relations – as all relations between states – is not a value granted once and for all. Therefore, those relations must be an object of our

constant care and concern. Today, the main issue is to discard any grievances and prejudices left behind by the differences over the intervention in Iraq. I note with satisfaction that there is political will on both sides of the Atlantic to restore a good climate of collaboration. However, the problem does not boil down to the climate and atmosphere of the Transatlantic relations. Joint action is the order of the day.

From the Polish point of view, the new consensus in the Transatlantic relations should concern two strategically important areas. First, we are talking about a joint response of the West to the democratic breakthrough and pro-Western aspirations of Ukraine, and also about a common political line toward the other partners in the East of Europe. Second, we need a closer Transatlantic partnership in the so-called Broader Middle East. That is particularly necessary for reviving the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, assuring international backing for the normalization of the situation in Iraq, and also to attaining lasting and comprehensive resolution of the problem of Iran's nuclear program. Transatlantic collaboration on all these issues would guarantee that appropriate ways and means are applied to effectively resolve these problems. Let me add, that chances for new openings are appearing with regard to all these issues.

When we speak of the Transatlantic relations, we should recognize that differences of view on both sides of the Atlantic are a normal development. However, the new approach signifies that Europe and the United States will seek – in a partner-like way – a common denominator, showing respect for each other's interests. In the context of Iraq, it is possible to ascertain – after two years' experience – that neither is America capable of getting everything done by itself, nor is the temptation of playing the role of a “counterbalance” to the United States a constructive option for some Europeans for succumbing to. At the same time, we must be ready for a serious debate on the structural model of the Transatlantic relations. That particularly concerns the role and place of NATO.

The engagement of the Alliance in Afghanistan, and also in the training of troops in Iraq, is an expression of a completely new strategic role of the Alliance. We have given backing to this new quality, though it is Poland's priority to maintain the classic function of the Alliance as an instrument of collective defence. We support the selective globalization of NATO's stabilization activity, because such a role of the Alliance finds practical use in the modern world. In the view of the United States, it is the key function of NATO as a global force. That is so, because Europe is no longer perceived in America as a potential target of armed aggression on a mass scale, requiring American protection and guarantees, but as a partner of the United States in confronting global threats. NATO must be an instrument of such global partnership. Otherwise, it will wither away, and the interest of the United States in the Alliance will become problematic. That, in turn, would herald the beginning of the end of America's presence in Europe.

I do not have to add that Poland should be – and is – interested in maintaining the presence of the United States in Europe and its role as a peculiar European power. For, the presence of America in Europe introduces an unquestionable value added. That manifests itself, first and foremost, in Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and Central Asia.

We, in Poland, are aware that our close – even privileged – relations with the United States are not an alternative to our engagement in European integration. We ask ourselves this question: how can we take advantage our particularly close relations with the United States to improve the Atlantic relations overall? Our commitment to improving the Transatlantic relations will not be credible unless it is coupled with an equally strong commitment to the development of European cooperation.

The prestige of Poland in Washington is today higher than at any time in the past. This prestige is our new asset and a priceless value, even if it is a value that cannot be measured. Let us be frank: other countries spend years striving to have such relations though without success. The kind of position that we have in the United States is not gained through lobbying. That prestige has gained in significance since our entry into the European Union. Our relations with the United States are important primarily because only America is in position to extend security guarantees to Poland – in their most credible version. This factor must not be underestimated even in the present situation, when the horizon is fortunately clear of any threats to our security.

*Mister Speaker,
Members of the House,*

The triumph of democracy in Ukraine, attained by peaceful means, is a great achievement of millions of Ukrainians. It is also our Polish success. The mediation of President Aleksander Kwaśniewski - who won the support of European Union representatives for the cause, the engagement of numerous Polish politicians, the activity of Polish parliamentarians above party lines, the involvement of Polish Euro-deputies and thousands of young election observers – these and other actions contributed to an auspicious resolution of the crisis, and constitute an important investment for the future. The mass solidarity of Poles with democratic Ukraine is a good point of departure for a breakthrough in the relations between our societies. Relations at presidential levels are important, but it is the people who will determine the future of our states. In the recent weeks and months, the Ukrainians and Poles have shown utmost political maturity and proper understanding of the *raison d'état*. And because of that, we shall spare no effort to create solid and at the same time practical foundations for the development of mutual relations at the level of societies, so that the change is tangible for millions of the citizens of our states on both sides of the border.

I wish to express the conviction that Ukraine and all Eastern Europe have permanently returned to the agenda of important issues that occupy European and Transatlantic institutions. We must translate this into a positive reevaluation of the present policies of the West toward our neighbours, and in particular – to elaborate a realistic and substantial “opening package” for the reformist team in Kiev. The myth that our Eastern neighbours were incapable of meeting Western standards of democracy and human rights has been debunked. Also, the theory has been challenged that the nations in that part of Europe belonged to the sphere of another civilization and culture, to another “zone of influence”. Finally, the myth has been invalidated that the societies in that part of Europe were mired in apathy, and were incapable of building a civil society on their own. The earlier events in Georgia, and

the orange revolution in Ukraine, have forced politicians to reassess their views and opinions based on prejudices and stereotypes.

Members of the House,

The state of affairs in Belarus – with which we share a common border - causes understandable concern in Poland. We support the democratic and pro-European aspirations of that country's society. Together with our European and Transatlantic partners, we are trying to co-shape the policy of the West in such a way so as to ensure full solidarity with the democratic and freedom tendencies in Belarus. We are not forgetting about Moldova, either, and the need for a greater engagement of the West in solving the conflict in Transdnistria.

Members of the House,

Relations with the Russian Federation are of key importance to Polish foreign policy. Let us make this clear: our involvement in what happened in Ukraine was not directed against Russia. Our engagement was motivated by support for fundamental values – and not by a play of interests. It was important for us to make sure that the sovereign will of the people was expressed in Ukraine. No foreign plot was involved. In fact, we deeply believe that what happened in Ukraine is in the interest of Russia. Never in its history, had Russia as many supportive and friendly states on its Western border as it does today. We would like Russia to have the closest and strongest possible ties with Europe, the North Atlantic Alliance and the European Union. I have in mind not only - and not primarily - ties in the form of networks of oil and gas pipelines, though such links are very important. However, as concerns Poland and Europe – it is the common standards of democracy, freedom of the press and human rights that are the most important factors of consolidation and security, at the same time constituting a common denominator. A stable, prosperous and democratic Russia will be a much more important center of influence in the whole post-Soviet space than if it followed a policy based on anachronistic concepts of the so-called multipolar “zones of influence”. Furthermore, Russia's relations with the democratic Western institutions should not be a zero-sum game either. The modernization of Eastern Europe and the prospective integration of Ukraine, Moldova, and also Belarus, with Euro-Atlantic and European institutions is in the common interest of a democratic Russia and the West.

For Poland, our membership in the European Union also offers an opportunity to build a new platform of bilateral relations with Russia. We shall spare no effort to make progress in resolving many outstanding problems. A certain experienced Finnish politician advised that one should seek enemies who are far away, and friends who are near. It would be desirable if our two countries were guided by that in their mutual relations.

Members of the House,

A new challenge for Poland is our participation in the joint discussion on a new vision of relations in our immediate region after the enlargement of the European Union. Accordingly, it would also be worthwhile in our internal debate to consider the place and role of regional policy within the overall tasks of foreign policy.

Cooperation in the framework of the Visegrad Group, the Central European Initiative and the Council of Baltic Sea States has enhanced the identity of Central Europe and ensured stability in the whole region. After our accession to the European Union, but even 2 or 3 years before its enlargement, some of our partners expressed doubts as to the point of preserving the sub-regional structures. Our view on this matter is different. What is more, we have managed to use concrete initiatives - including those connected with our current presidency of the Visegrad Group – to define the needed direction of the evolution of cooperation in the region, so that its desirability and usefulness is convincingly manifested. This also concern to the Regional Partnership launched in 2001 – which affiliates the states of the Visegrad Group, as well as Austria and Slovenia. Our partners have had an opportunity to become convinced that Poland does not treat the region as a base for its political ambitions at the EU forum. Nor do we make pretensions to playing the role of a regional leader. We have other goals: we want to use our prestige and position in the European and Transatlantic family to promote the interests of the region.

The enlargement of the European Union and NATO, the total change of the geopolitical picture of Europe, and also the emergence of new challenges, has altered the context of action of the whole institutional construction in Europe – and not only of the sub-regional links. These institutions must determine a new sense for their existence. That, too, is a task for our policy.

Members of the House,

We would like the May summit meeting of the states of the Council of Europe in Warsaw to generate a specific vision of the future and place of that organization in the context of other European structures. The point is to ensure that the visions being elaborated by the respective institutions, such as the Council of Europe or the OSCE, are coherent visions. For, those institutions require total reconstruction. It is especially important to eliminate the overlap and duplication of actions, as well as institutional rivalry. We should counteract the tendency of the respective organizations to focus on their own internal problems. And let us not delude ourselves that one-off solutions or miracle cures are possible.

At the turn of January, Warsaw will host another session of the Warsaw Reflection Group, which affiliates distinguished analysts and researchers from Europe and North America. It will have the task of preparing a report on the complementarity of the European structures. It is most important not to lose any of the normative, political and operational achievements of the institutions functioning in Europe. The matter is urgent. It is the case, because the last OSCE Ministerial Council in Sofia demonstrated how the natural identity crisis of that organization may be exploited for

the pursuit of particularistic political goals. This is how we perceive the attempts to restrict the activity of that organization in the human dimension. Such an approach is short-sighted and may lead to effects that are opposite to what was intended. For our part, we are considering a constructive, joint search for new solutions. The appearance of new challenges and asymmetrical threats, such as international terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and new phenomena, such as failing or failed states, highlights the need for a redefinition of the global international order. In shaping Polish foreign policy, we act on the assumption that effective multilateralism is the key to ensuring world peace and stability. We shall make every effort to preserve and strengthen the multilateral institutions of global management, particularly the United Nations.

In this context, reform of the UN is the most urgent matter. In autumn of 2002 the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, pointed out the need to restructure the UN. At that time, he put forward the initiative of elaborating a New Political Act for the United Nations for the 21st century. Changes were necessitated by the fact that while the system of world security is dynamic, the structures remain static. In effect, that leads – first of all – to a conceptual inadequacy of the organization. The UN often lacks the means to counteract new types of threats and resolve new problems. The issue is that for many years now the major conflicts have been emerging inside states, rather than in the relations between them. On the one hand, the international community usually expects the UN to intervene quickly and effectively, and on the other – the Organization does not possess suitable norms, procedures and instruments.

Secondly, it is a case of political inadequacy, which means that the alignment of forces inside of the organization does not reflect the actual balance of power in the world. Thirdly, there is institutional inadequacy, which causes United Nations bodies and officials to work in an ineffective and outdated way.

The Polish initiative, therefore, was a comprehensive vision of UN reform. We proposed that a draft of the changes be prepared by a Group of Independent Personalities. As known, the Secretary General established such a group over a year ago and it presented its report last December. The year 2005 will test the capacity of the United Nations, and especially its member states, to take action for reform. The scheduled high-level meeting on the anniversary of the Millennium Declaration should bring political consensus on the package of changes. The question is: Will it deliver? The question remains open. There is no simple answer.

In its commitment to changing the UN, Poland does not pursue any hidden goals. We are not demanding a permanent seat on the Security Council, we are not advocating institutional change. We are acting on the assumption that first, you have to identify the problems, define a new mandate of the Organization – and only then deliberate on the institutional changes. Our approach is guided by the interests of the international community; we are moving beyond regional parochialism. Our initiatives primarily comprise an intellectual contribution; it is an attempt at innovative, creative thinking.

Members of the House,

A serious domestic debate should be devoted to the future profile of Poland's political, military and economic engagement in a global set of relations. I am referring to Poland as a state that – through its accession to the European Union – has entered a new system of international relationships, of which the Union is a collective subject. Stanisław Wyspiański wrote with a sense of irony in “The Wedding”: “The whole damn world can take up arms, provided Poland's countryside remains at peace with no alarms”. That is not and must not be the motto of Polish foreign policy in our times. Security has become truly indivisible, and threats to our national security may originate in exotic and highly remote regions. Therefore, it is the imperative of Polish foreign policy to seek national security in the framework of international security, in cooperation with other states. Our role in Iraq should be examined from precisely that point of view.

The problem is that the demand for such difficult and costly roles to be played by NATO and European Union is not likely to diminish. NATO is militarily engaged in Afghanistan and expects that Poland, among others, will also make active contribution. The European Union is establishing battle groups. The humanitarian disaster in South-East Asia points to the need for remodeling the concept of such groups, so that they will be able to deliver effective international relief in such crisis situations. The situation in Sudan also indicates the need for such actions. Therefore, we face the need of drafting a sensible doctrine of international engagement of our military forces in similar operations. We are talking mainly about humanitarian interventions. That kind of Polish involvement will require broad public understanding.

Until now, the obvious though relatively recent postulate that we should transform ourselves from a country that was helped by others into a country helping those in greater need, could have sounded as an empty, abstract declaration. The tragedy in Asia has demonstrated how important it is for Poland to join relief efforts and show solidarity. Helping those who are weaker, poorer, afflicted by disease, hunger and disasters should henceforth change our sensitivity and awareness, but it also should have its organizational and financial dimension.

*Mister Speaker,
Members of the House,*

Poland's entry into the EU structures and policies necessitates a reassessment of our relations with non-European states and a redefinition of our place in the global system. Europe is increasingly perceived as an entity. We should be influencing the shape of the EU policy toward the non-European regions. We have certain advantages: we have never been a colonial state, we have a developed network of missions, numerous communities of Polish expatriates, as well as a large pool of experts and researchers. Our greatest weakness and restriction are the modest resources at our disposal. You cannot pursue an active policy without adequate funds.

The government's recently-adopted strategy toward the non-European developing states is a signal of political will, and of the need for action. It is an important signal, since it is of a concrete and systematized character. This strategy goes beyond general declarations. It is a task for years to come. The rank, significance and attractiveness of such partners as China, India, Pakistan, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, some Arab states, the RSA, Nigeria, Angola, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Mexico and many others, will continue to rise. In order to take advantage of the opportunities provided by Poland's participation in global processes, we must consistently modernize our system of management of foreign policy instruments.

Members of the House,

The fact that many Poles, people with Polish roots live abroad is part of our national identity. Over the past years, we have built a comprehensive government strategy of cooperation with expatriate Polish communities. There is a proven mechanism for the realization of that policy. Some issues here deserve special attention. That particularly applies to the assistance for Poles in the East, who often find themselves in a difficult material situation. That applies to the implementation of the Polish minority postulates in Lithuania. That also applies to the possibility of self-fulfillment of the cultural identity by Poles in Germany. I wish to take this opportunity to express my appreciation and thanks to both houses of parliament for their help, assistance and active work with the Polish expatriate communities.

*Mister President,
Mister Premier,
Mister Speaker,
Members of the House,*

The balance sheet of foreign policy in recent years has been impressive. The accession to the European Union crowned many years of efforts and opened a new chapter in the history of our state. We have built a strong position in the Transatlantic relationship, and high prestige in Europe. The changes in Ukraine have opened new opportunities for our policy in the East. We have started actively moving into areas outside of Europe.

The international environment in which we operate is exceptionally unpredictable and unstable. The situation is prone to dynamic changes. That sharpens the dilemmas we face and complicates the search for the right responses.

I have attempted today to focus the attention of the Members of the House on these fundamental dilemmas, tasks and priorities. Many states face similar challenges. And in today's world, the only effective response to most international problems is a collective response.

In conclusion, allow me to repeat my conviction that the effectiveness of our foreign policy is largely determined by the following elements: continuity and consistency,

and also recognition of the national interest above party lines – which is reflected by the joint or convergent positions of the main political forces on the goals and tasks of foreign policy of fundamental significance to the state and nation.

Thank you for your attention.