

Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy

2009



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Celebrations marking Schengen area enlargement, 21 December 2007:

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Signing ceremony of the Treaty of Lisbon amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community, Lisbon, 12 December 2007
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From the Editor

Over the past years, the Polish foreign policy debate has been overwhelmed by disputes about how this policy should be conducted. The new government, formed after the 2007 election by a coalition of the Civic Platform (PO) and the Polish Peasant Party (PSL), trumpeted a retreat from the approach to foreign policy that was widely seen as a hallmark of the Law and Justice (PiS) party—namely a distinct, assertive presentation of the Polish position, even at the expense of tensions in relations with partners, which in the longer run could restrict that policy's room for maneuver. In the annual foreign policy address presented to the Sejm on 7 May 2008, Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski declared that the government would place emphasis on cooperation with key partners. Predictability of foreign policy moves, as reflected in early-stage presentation to partners of Polish interests and the Polish position, was embraced as a condition of effectiveness. This approach required a restoration of the country's image as a partner capable of cooperation, and it also called for commitment and a vigorous effort on the part of the Polish diplomatic service. As declared by the government, an open attitude towards cooperation with partners was to be instrumental in pursuing the goal of building Poland's strong position within the European Union. Putting down the conflicts stirred by predecessors was a must, as was sending clear signals about a changeover in the Polish approach, and sometimes also in Polish policy—especially regarding the position towards Russia and EU-Russia negotiations on a new partnership and cooperation agreement (PCA). Poland's weight within the European Union was to be increased by this country's active involvement in shaping the Community's policy towards Eastern Europe, most notably Ukraine and Southern Caucasus. Harmonization of the development model for member states of the EU and NATO has traditionally been a long-term strategic goal for Polish foreign policy. The pursuit of this vision in the course of 2008 was to be furthered by tighter cooperation with Central European countries, Germany and Sweden.

Regarding EU-Russia relations, Poland declared an interest in working out a common position, so the rhetoric and conduct of policy towards Russia had to be changed. Poland wanted to refute the stereotype about "anti-Russian" prejudice driving its relations with Russia, which was seen as a drag on the country's efforts to contribute to developing the EU's policy line on Russia. Readiness was declared to cooperate with "Russia as it is."

NATO's role in the Polish government's foreign policy in 2008 continued as that of the fulcrum of transatlantic relations and a real factor strengthening the

security of Poland and the whole continent. The Polish position was that the Alliance should stick to its open door policy, meaning that enlargement and reaction to local conflicts should remain integral elements of the allied strategy. NATO should keep a balance between out-of-area missions and the capacity to defend allied territory. Elements of NATO infrastructure should be deployed in Poland. Strategic partnership with the U.S. remained an important part of Polish security policy, and the government wanted this partnership to be reflected in the United States' contribution to the modernization of Polish armed forces. Visa waiver was a secondary goal.

There are grounds to conclude that those broad foreign-policy objectives were pursued in 2008 in a manner that was adequate and transparent. Where choice had to be made between goals of importance for Polish foreign policy, preferential treatment was given to a search for cooperation with partners and building coalitions, as large and as coherent as possible, which would offer chances for a common position to be worked out by the EU and NATO. But the political tensions over these issues building up between the government and the president had adversely affected the shape and conduct of foreign policy in 2008.

The top three achievements of Polish foreign policy in 2008 were no doubt the following: a good outcome of negotiations on the climate and CO2 reduction package; the Polish-U.S. agreement on the deployment on Polish territory of antiballistic interceptor missiles (to which was added a declaration on strategic partnership); and the European Council's approval for the Eastern Partnership proposed by Poland jointly with Sweden. As for the biggest failures, these included the following: failure to grant a Membership Action Plan (MAP) status to Ukraine and Georgia, which postponed the prospect of these countries' entry into NATO; lack of progress in fulfilling some Polish expectations in relations with eastern partners (Belarus and Ukraine); and failure to take advantage of, or promote, highlights of Minister Sikorski's address to the Atlantic Council in Washington on 19 November 2008.

Contributions by PISM analysts, contained in the present volume, will provide the reader with detailed presentations of selected questions of Polish foreign policy. Enjoy your reading!

Sławomir Dębski

I.

The Basis of Polish Foreign Policy

Government Information on Polish Foreign Policy in 2008

(presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Poland, Radosław Sikorski)

Mr. Speaker,

Members of the Parliament!

Honored guests, your Excellencies and members of the Diplomatic Corps!

For the last 18 years, the Republic's ministers of foreign affairs have stood before this High Chamber in order to present their policy plan for the next year. This honorable duty has now fallen to me. As this is the first *exposé* of a minister of foreign affairs of the Civic Platform and Polish People's Party government, I wish to sketch a more panoramic picture of Polish foreign policy for the coming years. It is for this reason that I beg your forgiveness for this debate taking place somewhat later than tradition would demand. The reasons for this, after all, were beyond my control.

Foreign policy—the daily cooperation and confrontations between states and nations, as well as the intertwining of their goals and interests—is like a mirror in which we can examine ourselves. In it become evident grandeur or pettiness, prestige or obscurity, development or downfall. The change in these reflections over time shows us where we have come from, who we are and what we should do in order to strengthen the Republic.

I say this, conscious of the fact that this year we shall celebrate the 90th anniversary of our regained independence; an anniversary of the days when Józef Piłsudski sent out telegrams letting the world know of the rebirth of the Polish state. Telegrams, thanks to which, after nearly a century and a half statesmen returned to Poland from abroad.

Neither by diplomacy, nor by arms, were we able to defend our independence. Despite great achievements, the 21st anniversary of the Republic's rebirth was never celebrated, for Poland no longer existed on the political map of Europe.

Esteemed Members of Parliament:

Just as with that anniversary, next year's celebration of the two decades that have passed since we threw off the communist yoke prompts historical reflection. Especially contemplation of **what constituted the strength, and weakness, of the Polish state.**

Let us remember that twenty years ago, in 1988, Poland, even though international law recognized state, was neither a sovereign, democratic, nor a

modern. Our Polish-ness and European-ness was limited to mockery, conspiratorial cultivation of the traditions of liberty, to enduring faith and loyalty to the Church, and to protests in times of desperation and hope.

This manner of affirming our Polish-ness and European-ness informs our self-image to this day. After nearly three centuries of countless tragedies, it is hard to believe that we have finally reached a friendly port.

Honoring all of this—all that is heroic and great in the struggles of freedom-fighters of past, and present, generations, let us not yield to the temptation of holding on to past wrongs and persisting in suspicion.

We live in a free, sovereign and democratic Poland. We are members of the European Union and NATO, which ties Europe to the United States. All of us, therefore, have reason to feel satisfied and secure.

Patriotism should not devolve into a cult of victories and tragedies; we have plenty of other claims to praise.

Acknowledging the “underground state” of multiple Polish insurrections and uprisings, let us respect the “grounded state”—with the necessary modern infrastructure, productive economy, efficient administration and strong military. Pragmatic calculation is more friendly to the democratic spirit than revolutionary fervor. Conscious of the problems we have yet to solve, let us be guided by a vision of modernity that depends more on self-esteem and openness than on suspicion and closing ourselves off from the world.

Dear colleagues,

The breakthroughs of 1989 shaped our history in ways reminiscent of the civilizational leap taken by Poland under the Piast dynasty, a thousand years ago. It was then that Poland accepted ancient traditions and a Christian identity. Relations with the Czechs and Hungarians, as well as treaties with the German rulers of the Holy Roman Empire, lead Poland onto the political stage of the Roman world.

Conciliation with the Germans, cooperation with the Visegrad countries, and especially Polish membership in the institutions of the Western world are evidence that the Piast spirit once again animates our identity—both Polish and European.

That which the Piast’s lacked several centuries ago—integration with the main current of European civilization—we have accomplished today in the blink of an eye. No one gave this to us. We alone—though with the help of our friends—achieved this. Having done so, Poland, just as 600 years ago, has become the standard and model of transformation for our Eastern neighbors, in

particular for the kindred nation of Ukraine. Then, in the Jagellonian era, the Republic spread examples of noble liberty and tolerance, become the cohesive force that over subsequent centuries kept together the multiethnic mosaic of elites in our region. It is for this reason that we believe that the mandate of the Lublin Union will be fulfilled only when our Eastern European brothers find themselves within the European Union. This is not an old-new messianism, but a practical observation that strengthening liberty and democracy in our region also serves the interests of our Republic.

Poland will be a normal European state when it will have normal European neighbors, on either side of its borders.

The style of diplomacy depends, in large measure, on initial assumptions. Ideologues eagerly avail themselves of concepts—often arbitrarily defined—such as “national interest” or “raison d’état.” How many times, in recent memory, have we heard of “national interests” in regard to our Western and Eastern neighbors? Anyone who defined them differently was either ignorant or a traitor.

It might be worthwhile, therefore, to consider a convincing **definition of the “national interest”** for contemporary Poland. We can all agree, I am sure, that the most important thing of all is that our nation retains a sense of control over its own fate. It does not suffice to be free—we must be competitive. And so, we must grow stronger. Growing stronger means rising to the level of development of our partners in the European Union. Poland’s membership in the European Union inspires to achieve a civilizational leap. **Such civilizational development is in our national interest.**

Thus, our Polish national interest is not contrary to European integration. Quite the opposite. Peaceful European integration is in our immediate national interest. We are not afraid of this process; we do not threaten our fellow citizens with the rise of a European super-state, invoking an imaginary servitude to those bigger and stronger than us. This is neither the history nor the intent of European integration. We are not the only ones to reject servitude; no European nation would accept it.

The European Union is not a threatening “Other;” we are Europe and the Union.

The consequences of this misunderstanding were manifestations of “hard diplomacy,” which shocked our EU partners, just as Don Quixote’s crusade against windmills shocked the people of the Renaissance.

In today’s Europe, extravagant rhetoric is simply counterproductive. Our place in the European family, and in the world, will not be shaped by

passive-aggressive words. That place will be defined by the health of our democracy, the level of our economic development and innovation, the competency and efficiency of our national and local administrations, a dependable judicial system, independent media, an active civil society, and the ability to cooperate with partners both at home and abroad. In one word: an awareness of shared goals, professionalism, and effectiveness.

We need to comprehend Western integration so that it can serve the ends which Poland desire. Which ones? Strengthening our position in the Union. This is conditioned on our influence on the actions of our European partners. It requires understanding and identifying with the EU community. In the European Union, **there is nothing to be won by going it alone, but much to be lost.** Naturally, we expect others to share this attitude. This organic interdependency between the national and the European good was understood already by the conservative and Christian-democratic founding fathers of Western integration. This view was shared by European social-democrats. They all worked towards European unification for over 50 years.

In Poland, on the other hand, we are only now beginning to grasp these truths. Soviet-style integration, which meant hegemony and intervention in the spirit of the Stalin-Brezhnev doctrine, did not give rise to such unificatory attitudes. Quite to the contrary, it forced satellite states to close themselves off, as much as they could, in order to protect the fundamental national substance, which was increasingly one-dimensional because it was devoid of creative inspiration from without and wasting away from anachronism and autarchy.

That is why the affirmation of European values—which serve as the foundation of solidarity, as the source of compromise and cooperation—is so important to us. More than 80% of our fellow countrymen support Polish membership in the European Union because they know that it is we who benefit from this solidarity.

I believe that understanding the developmental needs of today's European Union is a challenge not only for the inhabitants of the continent on this side of Laba and Litawa. Just as nothing relieves us of the obligation to understand the Union, so too we expect from our more tenured partners not only knowledge of, but openness to the specific stage of development in which our society and economy find themselves. Europe will not unite in spirit until our Western neighbors go to the trouble of understanding, really understanding, that **our fight for freedom in the latter half of the 20th century is as much as European experience as their prosperity in that same period.**

We expect this especially because recent years have shown that the enlargement of the Union has neither lowered its decisiveness nor affected its competitiveness. Quite to the contrary, the new members of the EU are now among the avant-garde of dynamic development and societies full of hope in the future of the Union.

Members of Parliament!

Our primary national interest is the need for a civilizational leap, which requires a friendly and secure international environment. In the longer term, it is the rise of our nation to the first ranks of European states. This strategic goal will be served by the realization of five priorities.

First: Poland strong through the solidarity of the European Union.

The European Union is a unique phenomenon in international cooperation. The Union is neither a “super-state” nor a regular international organization. Fundamental to the Union is the equality of various spheres of functioning, making of the Union a space of self-willed limitations and creative compromises, reached in the name of achieving new developmental goals. It is important that the nature of the Union has reoriented us, just as it has other member states, away from national egoism and towards the common good and altruism, towards shared conditions and challenges, shared chances and threats, shared interests and benefits.

Primary importance, therefore, must be given to strengthening and making more effective the legal and institutional foundations of the European Union. Let us hope, that once the Sejm and Senate decide that Poland should join the group of nations that have ratified the Lisbon Accord, President Lech Kaczynski's signature will make that decision a reality.

The Union stands before an important budget debate, resulting from an analysis of the Union's budget for the years 2007 – 2013 as well as from the need to work out a new, long-term financial perspective for the next 7 years. The truth is that drafting a budget comes down to the art of equally dividing disenchantments and disappointments. This cannot, however, be a moment in which new challenges and obligations multiply. After ratifying the Lisbon Accord the reform of EU agricultural and social policy will also become a challenge. We will not agree to their transfer to the budgets of member states. We do, however, support the realization of the Lisbon Strategy. We decidedly support maintaining the Union budget at a level exceeding 1% of the GDP of the entire European Union. We do this conscious that there will come a time when a modern and affluent Poland will become a provider of funds for the EU budget and will be able to help others. We shall endeavor that changes to the mechanism

for financing education and technology in Poland will lead to great harmonization with the research and innovation policies of the European Union. Introducing the common currency—the Euro—in Poland remains a long-term goal. We will set a date for entering the Euro zone, taking into consideration the developments of our economy as well as society's readiness for such change.

The Lisbon Accord created opportunities for strengthening the Common Foreign and Security Policy. Poland has good reasons for being a key actor on this stage. Greater integration should proceed hand-in-hand with an ever-greater role for the Union in its own neighborhood and on a global scale. We are concerned that the European Neighborhood Policy is properly shaped, especially as it applies to the East. This is a result not only of Poland's geographical location on the Eastern boundaries of the EU, but also from our consciousness that East of our borders lie **European neighbors**, while to the South—in North Africa and the Middle East—lie **neighbors of Europe**. This is a fundamental distinction.

Nonetheless we value the efforts of those members of the European Union who, through the Southern European Neighborhood Policy, wish to bring about peaceful development, stability and prosperity in all Middle Eastern states. The world will be safer when peace reigns in the Middle East and proper conditions arise for the development of millions of young people in their own countries.

Poland should continue to specialize in shaping common foreign policy towards the East. Especially due to our geographical situation, historical experiences, cultural ties to the East, and our competency, we not only feel predestined to such an Eastern specialization, but are encouraged to take it up by our partners in the Union.

We aim to do so with our closest partners, with whom we shared a common fate in the past: with the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary; with Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia; and also with Romania and Bulgaria. Additionally, a special partnership presents itself in the form of our relations with Sweden. The neighborhood policy towards the East should serve to raise the social and political standards of our neighbors to Union levels. As a result, this neighborhood policy will fulfill their individual agreements for partnership and cooperation with the Union, which will create a European perspective for the most advanced countries.

Precisely such a moment has arisen in the case of the agreement between the Union and Ukraine. Ukraine is an ever more trustworthy candidate for membership in Western institutions. We encourage our partners and allies to creatively combine incentives for reform with evidence of transformations

already taking place. We assure our Ukrainian friends that it is their readiness to act that will decide about Ukraine's membership in the institutions of the Western world.

The accession of Ukraine will confirm the strength of the European model of civilization.

At the same time, the deadline draws nearer for commencing negotiations between the European Union and Russia about a new Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation. Polish stipulations regarding the elimination of embargoes on export of animal and plant products as well as the consent of the European Commission to take up negotiations with Russia regarding questions of energy solidarity, have been met.

Let us consider, however, the lessons learned from the current crisis in the negotiations. For the European Union they are indisputable—only by speaking in one, deliberate and purposive voice, when it comes to controversial matters, has any effect. The signal sent at the EU – Russian summit in Samara was understood. It showed that the consolidation of the Union is important not only for the Union itself, but that it results in a more constructive policy on the part of Russia.

The message being sent to Russia amounts to showing it that the European Union, and the Western world in general, wants wide-ranging cooperation. It wants cooperation, but without one-sided reservations. We, as Poles, just as other members of the European Union, believe that the trust of all parties to such cooperation would flourish if it were based on common values. However Russia persists with its own system of values, rooted in its own traditions and cultural codes, in the meanwhile EU – Russian cooperation based on mutually agreed to “rules of the game” must suffice. Evidence of this attitude is Prime Minister Donald Tusk's statement—made in the realist spirit—that rather than ineffective implacability, **“we will cooperate with Russia, such as she is.”** Polish – Russian mechanisms for cooperation and dialogue, such as the Committee for Strategic Cooperation, the Forum for Civic Dialogue, and the Group for Difficult Issues, are ready, at least on the Polish side, to fulfill their mission. Let us give them a chance to do so.

I wish to turn to our Belorussian neighbors and assure them that Belarus can count on Polish support as long as it respects human rights, the political rights of the opposition, dialogue, compromise, and openness towards Europe. We will be ready, just like the rest of the European Union, to aid in Belarus' development. This is a stipulation and interest of Belorussian supporters of independence and democracy, as well as of the Belorussian minority in this country.

A priority will be the efficient enactment of Schengen regulations. Protection of Union borders cannot lead to the creation of new barriers. We want such regulation of individual travel as to not create unnecessary limitations for arrivals to Poland. We would say to those that consider us to be Rusophobes that we would like citizens of the Russian Federation, just as those of Ukraine or Belarus, Moldova or Georgia, to have the easiest possible access to the European Union, that they might freely sojourn in the EU as tourists, students, and entrepreneurs.

At the same time, we are concerned by the rising tensions in Georgia and the attempts to violate its territorial integrity. We direct towards our Georgian friends expressions of solidarity and assurances that their security, as well as Euro-Atlantic integration are close to Poland's heart.

Members of Parliament!

A common European foreign policy, in order to be effective on any dimension of importance to the Union—be it in regards to China and the whole of Asia, to the Mediterranean world and the Middle East, or to Latin America and Africa—requires intra-Union consolidation. Large member states, among them Poland, have an important role to play in this process.

A coalition of member states, especially along regional or sub-regional lines, can also influence such consolidation. We turn our attention here to the need to strengthen cooperation with our partners from the Visegrad Group. We have in mind the possibility and necessity of fortifying relations with Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, especially in regards to energy security. We are faced with the great task of increasing cooperation among the Baltic States. The Baltic has become an intra-Union and Russian sea. Our friends in Sweden take such cooperation quite seriously.

Crucial to creating a common foreign policy for the European Union will be the attitude of our Weimar partners—Germany and France.

Some have not yet understood that **Germany, today, is our ally.** It is true that Germany is a country that, after reunification, is undergoing a process of redefining its own historical, political and cultural identity. This process, however, is taking place within a wholly democratic and European framework. Let us remember that in 1990—the year of German reunification—Chancellor Helmut Kohl said: “Germany is our fatherland, but Europe is our future.” We would add: **for us this is a common future and common European interest.** In terms of the depth and constancy of the democratic and European choices, today's Germany—in contrast with its past actions—has made an unprecedented choice. Our Western neighbor is trusted by European and American allies.

Poland also hopes for dialogue and the possibility of close cooperation with Germany, which would allow us to overcome our historical differences. **We cannot, and should not, forget.** The great achievement of Polish bishops in 1965 remains intact.

Nonetheless, in addition to political-historical integration, Poland expects from Germany strategic dialogue, modeled on German – French relations. We count on the realization of extant treaties and agreements. We are geared towards cooperation on issues important for both our countries and for the whole of the Union. The Eastern dimension of common European policy, which for many historical and contemporary reasons draws the attention of both Poland and Germany, presents the best opportunity for such cooperation.

France also remains an important partner for us. Polish – French friendship remains as fundamental and self-evident to many Poles as the great victories of Napoleon. Today we are pleased by the appreciation of France's Atlantic azimuth, as well as by Paris' greater involvement in the East.

The abovementioned signals coming from Germany and France bode well for dynamic cooperation in the Weimar Triangle. We see greater possibilities for cooperation—not only to the East—with our Visegrad, Baltic, and Nordic neighbors as well as with Great Britain, the Netherlands and Union's Mediterranean countries. We support peaceful transformation in and integration of the Balkans.

We are trying, together with our partners, to discern the direction that the rise of new powers on the world stage might take, especially that of China. We support the cooperation of the Union and NATO with non-European democracies, especially Japan and India. We are aware of global threats and will not waver in taking the appropriate actions to thwart them. Our geopolitical compass is not only the East – West axis. We feel ourselves evermore—precisely in the spirit of solidarity—responsible for a globalized world, including the North – South axis.

It is impossible, however, to take on such responsibilities without guaranteeing the appropriate position for our representatives in the institutional hierarchy. “Nothing is lasting without institutions,” the co-creator of the European Monetary Union, Jean Monnet, used to say, “but nothing is possible without people.” Still relatively few Polish experts and politicians hold responsible positions within the Union. Given the formation of a European Foreign Service and the planned Polish leadership of the Union in the second half of 2011, we will strive to open the door for Poles to assume leadership posts within the Union.

Honorable Members!

Our second priority is the strengthening of Poland's role in the global security system. It is an accepted truth now that never before in modern history has the threat of global conflict been so small, and yet that of local conflict so high. What's more, never before has there been such danger of the use of weapons of mass destruction in such a conflict. The question remains therefore: how should NATO, the strongest military alliance in the world, which for decades successfully countered the Soviet military monster, react to such untraditional threats now that the Soviet Union is no more?

The uniqueness and asymmetry of current threats, to which the unlikely response of a military counterattack or the impossible formula of revenge, give rise to frustration and doubt about whether in such conditions the response of our allies is trustworthy. In some countries questions are asked about the need for alliances or military forces. These are superficial dilemmas, only for those who, due to a fortunate geographical position, believe they inhabit a postmodern paradise, where armed conflict is simply *passé*. We, as a country on the borders of the Alliance, must remember about the saying that **every country has an army—its own or foreign**. Many times we have been persuaded that having one's own is by far the better solution...

The North Atlantic Alliance retains two essential characteristics. Politically, it remains a crucial institutional link between two branches of Western civilization: North American and European. Militarily, it still guarantees the allied countries adequate protection from a multitude of threats.

Honorable Members!

Poland aims to remain an initiating actor in NATO. We believe that the time has come for NATO to create a new strategy. Its integral element should be a vision for enlarging the Alliance, the harbinger of which would be a declaration—satisfactory to us—that Ukraine and Georgia are potential candidates for membership. We support this modernization of NATO and its adaptation to contemporary threats and are will be engaged in the Alliance's military activities, including expeditionary and stabilization operations, such as those in Afghanistan.

Our engagement in Alliance actions brings with it costs and risks, but also benefits. Engagement is a confirmation of Poland's trustworthiness as an ally. Additionally, veterans of stabilization operations, especially in Iraq and Afghanistan, now constitute the core of the Polish armed forces.

In return, we expect from our allies and from NATO, maintaining a balance between actions undertaken beyond the territory of the Treaty and the ability of

the Alliance to defend its own borders. We expect, also, that Poland will become home to certain elements of the Alliance's infrastructure and military installations. We would like for Polish officers, to a greater extent than has been the case, to be chosen to highest posts in the Alliance's leadership and included in strategic planning and operations, especially in the case of operations in which Polish soldiers take part.

Honorable Members!

When it comes to security we must also turn our attention to the strategic partnership that binds us with the United States. This partnership exceeds political dialogue and military cooperation. Waiving the visa requirement for Polish citizens traveling to the US would be both a symbolic and practical fulfillment of this partnership.

The most important issue, however, is something else. I am convinced that Americans are aware of Poland's trustworthiness as an ally, of which we have given proof more than once and continue to do so. They know, also, that Poles have noticed the United States' readiness to undertake risk and sacrifice in the name of liberty and democracy across the world. This mutual respect and sympathy should become concrete. For this reason, accepting with good will American arguments regarding the anti-missile shield, we expect that in keeping with President George Bush's statement after meeting with Prime Minister Tusk on March 10th, the US will **play a more active role in the modernization of the Polish armed forces**. This, and not the question of visas, is the most important question in our relations. It will also be a testament to our continued partnership and an indication of the intentions of our friend.

Members of Parliament!

We are convinced that the European Union should also take an active part in guaranteeing security as well as returning—by military means as well—peace and stability regionally and beyond Europe. Such engagement by the Union should complement, rather than duplicating, NATO efforts. We do not want to choose, **we want to have two complementary insurance policies**. In the context of the European Security and Defense Policy we will concentrate on such issues as crisis reaction, humanitarian assistance, training and the European Defense Agency. We will support the development of the European Defense Force. We will take active part in the discussion about revising the European Security Strategy.

Poland will continue to stand against the weakening of arms control measures and disarmament agreements, as well as carrying out responsibilities

related to arms export control and relevant sanctions. We are guided by the hope that the Treaty for Conventional Armed Forces in Europe will be ratified.

We will seek ways to overcome the OSCE crisis. The demands of the European Council towards its members, in regards to respecting human rights and democracy, should be strengthened. This organization should not serve to make shocking compromises and should not close its eyes on the brutal practices of member states.

Esteemed Colleagues,

Especially important for us is energy security. When energy becomes an instrument, or even weapon, of international politics, it stops being an economic issue and becomes a matter of national security. This is not a dilemma that can simply be solved by pressing several free-market buttons labeled “liberalization,” “competition,” etc. We consider the mandate for a unified energy security policy contained in the Lisbon Treaty, as a test of Union values. We consider the following to be especially important:

- **firstly:** concrete Union regulations, resulting from the spirit of energy solidarity and translated into the language of practical standards, that no energy projects will be financed by the Union if they will be found by any member states to conflict with their needs for energy security. We support greater competition in the energy market, especially the Third Energy Packet, which foresees the differentiation of production and transportation licenses.

- **secondly:** unified and decisive counteraction of the Union and other states, against any pressure or blackmail from non-Union energy providers. Contracts with providers should contain solutions for eliminating such practices.

- **thirdly:** the diversification of sources and routes for the delivery of energy resources to EU countries as well as the creation of a network of connections and warehouses allowing for the transportation of raw materials between member countries, that—for outside reasons—are experiencing a shortage of energy resources.

Poland will take part in fighting other non-military threats to security such as: international organized crime, trafficking in arms and narcotics, as well as in people, an especially painful phenomenon occurring in Poland as well. We will take part in international endeavors aimed at limiting the impact of climate change. The entire world will turn to Poznań in December, where the 14th United Nations Conference on Climate Change will take place. Being concerned with global security, we cannot overlook the United Nations. For this reason we will support UN reform, aimed at preparing it for new challenges and needs. We

support the creation—in the context of reforming the UN—a joint, EU representative to the Security Council.

Protecting human rights as well as the rule of law and democracy have become a Polish passion. The Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the OSCE is in Warsaw. There, as well, will be created the secretariat of the Community of Democracies, which could play an important role in promoting democratic values throughout the world.

We would like to make sure that such promotion of democracy is more closely tied to development aid, addressed to countries close to us. This conviction results from the belief that our particular experience in the creation of democratic institutions and economic transformation can be translated into effective support of similar processes in other countries. A new Polish strategy of promoting development for the years 2008 – 2015 assumes the inclusion of Poland in Global Partnership for the support of global solidarity.

Mr. Speaker,

Honorable Members!

The third priority of our policy is to strengthen the image of Poland in the world. Since the majority of foreigners leave Poland with a better image than they arrived with, our “brand” must be worse than our reality. Our image is, unfortunately, still weighed down by negative stereotypes. We will decidedly oppose any attempts to slander our country, misrepresent or falsely distort Polish history.

Such defensive actions, however, are not enough. I will take care that the Foreign Ministry support policies aimed at fostering common knowledge about Poland and her history, especially the most recent. In the coming year Poland will undertake actions to memorialize and highlight the role of our country in the transformations of 1989. It was in Poland on the 1st of September 1939, that the world order that threw a shadow over the whole globe for 5 decades began. And it ended in Poland as well, in 1989. We are pleased by the creation in Gdansk of the European Solidarity Center, an act symbolizing our effective fight for independence, democracy, and human rights.

We should talk about history. But foremost – I appeal - we should always highlight the contemporary aspects of what it means to be a Pole. Let us show that we are rightly proud of our modern Polish state and nation, for never to date—allow me to paraphrase Winston Churchill here—have so many Poles attained so much in so short a time. We are becoming a modern, open society, at home among the institutions and states of the West, and engaging other peoples with trust. This is the best promotion of modern Poland. As the success of the

just inaugurated Polish Year in Israel demonstrates, promoting a Poland open for debate about its own history, proud of its many achievements, and curious about the outside world, is met with a positive response.

Honorable Members,

Promoting the image of a successful Poland, we will strive to promote Poland as a country where one can invest safely, produce and sell freely.

Our culture can not only attract, it can also fascinate. In the coming year we will begin Polish Season in Great Britain. In 2010 we plan on organizing a global celebration of the 200th anniversary of the birth of Fryderyk Chopin, who might not need promotion but—standing for prodigious re-interpretation of local Polish values and traditions into universal ones—gives us yet another chance to promote Poland in the furthest reaches of the globe.

In 2011, our presidency of the European Union will provide a unique occasion to promote Poland in the world. For 6 months Poland will be the face of Europe.

The hallmark of modern Poland in Europe will be the European Championship in football, *Euro 2012*, which we are co-hosting with Ukraine. May the spirit of the great Kazimierz Górski watch over us...

Members of Parliament!

A crucial element in Poland's image abroad are our fellow countrymen scattered across the world: representatives of old Polish expatriate community, settled for good in new homelands, Poles from the most recent migrations, and members of the Polish minority in the countries to our East.

This is the **fourth priority** established by the government of Donald Tusk. Our concern is that **Poland be strong through the achievements of our countrymen, and that they be proud of Poland.**

A responsibility of the Polish Foreign Service is safeguarding high quality consular service and care to all Poles abroad. With this in mind we will increase the number of consular offices in countries where there are the most Poles and where there is the greatest need for such service. It is important to us, as Prime Minister Tusk highlighted in his *exposé*, that our countrymen—with new experiences, qualifications, capital, and openness to the world—return to Poland. But we will also support those who want to realize their aspirations and lives abroad. They should know that they can always count on us—especially in times of need. They should be convinced that their nearest consular office is nothing more than a modern municipal office, where they can take care of all

their Polish issues, that this office will be neither a fortress nor a humiliating bureaucracy.

Currently, due to the never before seen professional mobility of Poles, we will undertake, together with the Ministry of National Education, a reform of the Polish educational system abroad. It should serve to guarantee the continuation of Polish education to children gaining experience in foreign educational systems, as well as reintegration upon their return. We will initiate changes in electoral regulations to make it easier for Poles living abroad to take a greater part in the country's political life by voting via post or internet. We want to guarantee that Poles, especially in Belarus and Lithuania, are accorded full minority rights. This goes as well for Poles in Germany. A new, important task of the consular service is the realization of regulations for a "Polish Charter."

Honorable Members!

The fifth priority that I submit to you is that **we cannot conduct foreign policy commensurate with our ambitions without a modern diplomatic corps.**

This reform should not be understood as replacing one set of persons with another, with the pseudo-program "regaining the Foreign Ministry," with ideas of building Polish diplomacy from scratch, with a revolutionary "zero hour." A real program of change is not served by trivial myths, and certainly not by treating people with disdain. The truth about Polish diplomacy is complicated, just like any program for reforming it.

Such a program must contain organizational and financial elements. Diplomacy should not be a job, like all others, but service for one's country. First and foremost, it should be a competent diplomacy. With deep understanding of the mechanisms of the European Union, which we will be leading in three years. But not only that. We also require a much broader knowledge than we currently possess of the languages and cultures of Russia and China as well as the Arab world. There has been no work done in this area in the last several years. Absolutely critical is the ability to react to crises, cooperate effectively with foreign media and non-governmental organizations.

Such diplomacy requires many investments: first of all in people, but also in infrastructure and equipment, especially in the most advanced communications equipment. I would at this point like to thank the High Chamber for understanding the most basic needs of the Ministry shown in work on this year's budget. Thanks to your decisions we are enacting a new educational policy at the Ministry. Polish missions abroad, for the first time in several years, are organizing celebrations of our national holidays while employment offers at

Ministry no longer evoke lukewarm responses, as was the case even last year. The Foreign Ministry is also beginning a new model of cooperation with Polish experts and educational and research institutions.

I will present shortly a project to amend the regulation for Foreign Service. Thanks to the merging of the Foreign Ministry with the Office of the Committee for European Integration after January 1, 2009, a new, modern Foreign Ministry will be born. It will embody a sorely needed synthesis of classical diplomacy (concentrated on issues of security and bilateral relations) and the unique potential resulting from the knowledge about European cooperation, created in recent years by the Office of the Committee for European Integration.

The time of Poland's integration with the European Union has passed, today the whole of Poland is in the European Union, the entire administration and every citizen. That much greater must our competence in EU matters and our abilities to coordinate our interests and initiatives be. I trust that the perspective of the Polish EU Presidency will enable us to carry out investments, which will in turn provide us with new instruments and a new image. The incumbent government began its work with an immediate decision to purchase a new headquarters for our representation in Brussels, so that Poland, during its EU Presidency, will have a headquarters corresponding to its significance and position in Europe. I am convinced that, unlike its predecessors, this government will not need another 10 years to build a new chancery in Berlin. It is my dream that in several years the Polish budget will also allow us to build new headquarters for Polish missions in Washington, Moscow and Kiev. We do not need castles with huge entertaining spaces. We need functional and secure offices, whose architecture and interior decor will serve as testaments to Polish art of design and skill.

I am aware of our responsibility to tax payers and the money they have entrusted us with and therefore I will not miss an occasion to save and rationalize our expenses. A more modern and a more mobile diplomacy will allow for a redefinition of the map of our diplomatic presence in the world. I have already started and will continue to revise both the localizations of our outposts and the number of diplomats working there. I will not allow the model of extensive Foreign Service to continue. We should maintain our missions only in regions where we currently have real interests. We will also get rid of wrongly chosen or useless real properties. Poland needs diplomats more focused on fulfilling pragmatically formulated tasks, operating from a smaller number of missions, but missions stronger as far as infrastructure, competence and communication are concerned. We need fewer, but better rewarded diplomats.

Mr. Speaker!

Honorable Members!

For a considerable number of Solidarity members, the achievements of the last 20 years would have been considered a bold dream in the past. But if all this and more turned out to be actually possible, what could the next 20 years bring? There seems to be a unique opportunity for Poland to close the civilizational gap with Western Europe in the upcoming decade. Today, the standard of living in Poland does not reach even half of that of the most prosperous EU states, such as Germany, France, or Italy. However, if the current pace of our economic growth is sustained, and on the assumption that the highly developed EU members stay at the present rate of development, Poland has got a real chance to come closer to those countries in the next 20 years. I will repeat what I said not that long ago – it is worth planning for Poland and Europe as early as today – a Poland and Europe of our dreams.

We all wish for Polish foreign policy to contribute to the ever-greater prestige of our Republic. Let's direct it even better to realize this task then. And let's avoid making Polish foreign policy a subject of internal party or ideological arguments, more than is necessary in a democracy. Let's also feel responsible for the language of our debate, as daring statements, even though addressed to the Polish audience, very often quickly acquire an international dimension.

Members of the Parliament!

Let me recall my 5 priorities:

– **Poland strong in Europe, a patron and a promoter of Europe's eastern policy**

- Poland as a strong link in the North Atlantic Alliance
- Poland as an attractive brand: a country of success embracing freedom and able to share it
- Poland as a country supporting its diaspora, empowered by their vitality
- Polish diplomacy as an effective service

I am well aware that many in the audience might feel disappointed that certain issues have not been raised, or that this or that country has not been mentioned. I'd like to explain, that the choice of a problem based structure of this statement, has unavoidably resulted in certain important matters being left out for further debate. Detailed positions can be found in the "2008 Polish Foreign Policy White Paper", a Council of Ministers document with an important contribution from the President of the Republic of Poland.

There are also issues that we all know about, but which do not have to be revealed to the world.

Thank you for your attention. I am counting on your understanding and I am asking the High Sejm for its acceptance of this statement and approval of the hereby put forward plan of action.

Polish Policy in the European Union

The fourth year of Poland's membership in the European Union, 2008 was also the first year in the Schengen zone and a time of an appreciating zloty and stable economic growth, although the latter slowed perceptibly in Q3, reflecting the global financial and economic crisis.

Determinants

The signing by member states of the Lisbon Treaty on 13 December 2007 closed the penultimate stage in the Community's institutional reform. The next step was to be the treaty's ratification by the end of 2008. But in yet another twist of the reform process, the Irish rejected the treaty in a 12 June 2008 referendum, thus perceptibly changing the political landscape and making treaty ratification the major determinant of Polish policy in the European Union in 2008, a policy resulting from the dynamics of European integration.

In September 2007, the European Commission released a document¹ that started a public debate, continuing until April 2008, on the future of the EU budget. The nature and structure of the Union's future financial framework were to be defined in consultations with member states and stakeholders. The outcome of the budget debates of 2008 may serve as a basis for negotiations on the next financial perspective of the EU, covering a period after 2013.

The Council's presidency was held in 2008 first by Slovenia and then by France. The priorities set by the former included: Lisbon Treaty ratification, energy and climate change, EU enlargement, European Neighbourhood Policy, including Kosovo status, and intercultural dialogue. The Slovenian presidency coincided with the beginning of a successive, three-year stage of a revamped Lisbon Strategy. As for the French presidency, it was greatly influenced by the outcome of the Irish referendum, and its set of priorities reflected President Nicolas Sarkozy's high ambitions. Combined with a complex international

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¹ Communication from the Commission "Reforming the Budget, Changing Europe," 12 September 2007, SEC(2007) 1188 final, <http://ec.europa.eu>.

situation in the latter half of the year, it was one of the most distinctive presidencies in recent years.²

The European Union has been involved in the Balkans could be seen since the end of the war there in 1995. Countries in the western part of the Balkan Peninsula have found themselves at various stages of relations with the EU, with real accession chances enjoyed only by Croatia, which is seeking to close successive negotiating chapters as soon as possible.³ Under the Slovenian presidency, the long-simmering conflict over Kosovo independence flared again. Despite efforts by Slovenian diplomats and EU High Representative for CFSP Javier Solana, no common position was reached on the matter. A compromise declaration adopted on 18 February at a Council session held at the foreign ministers level noted the Kosovo independence announcement, and reiterated that individual member states should decide on their own what kind of relations they would enter into. A total of 22 member states, Poland included, recognized the independence of Kosovo.⁴

On 7 August 2008, an armed conflict broke out between Russia and Georgia, dividing EU member states over what diplomatic strategy to follow. France and Germany took a neutral stance towards both parties, whereas Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the United Kingdom, taking the side of Georgia, undertook diplomatic measures to persuade the EU to adopt a firm common position towards the Kremlin.⁵ Despite differences in the perception of Russia by individual European capitals, a common stance of the whole Union was soon worked out, and expressed by the European Council during the 1 September summit.

An economic recession, which affected all member states, was induced by the breakout of a global financial crisis in the latter half of 2008. At the European Council summit held on 15 and 16 October 2008, rules were laid down for measures to be taken by EU institutions and directly by member states with a view to stabilizing the financial system, restoring confidence among

² For more see S. Parzymies, "Francuska prezydencja w Unii Europejskiej," *Sprawy Międzynarodowe*, no. 1, 2009, pp. 63–86.

³ For more see *Balkany Zachodnie a integracja europejska. Perspektywy i Implikacje*, pp. 7–10, www.ukie.gov.pl.

⁴ Recognition was withheld by Spain, Romania and Slovakia, i.e. the countries experiencing problems with ethnic minorities within their borders. A similar approach to the issue was taken by Cyprus and Greece, anxious about the Turkey-controlled northern part of Cyprus.

⁵ See the Presidency Conclusions of the Extraordinary European Council of 1 September 2008, discussing Georgia developments, www.ue2008.fr.

financial-sector actors, and protecting the interests of bank clients. These measures largely included bank recapitalizations, periodic guarantees for inter-bank lending, and liquidity loans to be made available to banks. A decision of importance for individual clients was the Economy and Financial Affairs Council's consent to raise the minimum deposit guarantee level from €20,000 to €50,000 for a period of at least one year.

In Poland, the post of prime minister went to Donald Tusk, following his Civic Platform (PO) party's victory in a parliamentary election in 2007. That gave rise in 2008 to competence disputes between the new head of government and President Lech Kaczyński, representing a rival political camp.⁶ There was also a conflict between the government and the opposition, which included European policy as well: the new governing coalition, which the PO formed with the Polish Peasant Party (PSL), changed rhetoric in relations with the EU, thus provoking the opposition's fire. For these reasons, Lisbon Treaty ratification had its domestic dynamics, too. The Sejm passed a law authorizing the Polish president to give final consent to the country being bound by the Treaty, but after the Irish referendum's "no" Lech Kaczyński suspended the adoption procedure.⁷ As argued by the president, an entirely new situation developed, which necessitated postponing the decision until the Irish pronounced themselves in favor of the Lisbon Treaty in a repeat vote.⁸

Throughout the year, the main political actors were trading arguments over who was to represent Poland in European policy. This was reflected in disputes between the president and the prime minister over who was to head Polish delegations to European Council meetings,⁹ and over an approach to a future eurozone accession. According to Prime Minister Tusk, President Kaczyński wanted to contribute to foreign and European policymaking to a higher degree than warranted by his constitutional powers—and so he refused to make a government plane available to the president (leaving for the European Council

⁶ Disputes between President Kaczyński and Prime Minister Tusk are of a systemic nature, coming as another twist in a series of conflicts between a dozen PMs and three successive presidents.

⁷ A bill authorizing the Polish president to ratify the Lisbon Treaty was passed by the Polish Sejm on 1 April 2008, and by the Polish Senate on 2 April 2008. The president signed that authorization law on 10 April, but the Ratification Act itself was still waiting for his signature.

⁸ "Tu nie chodzi o traktat," interview with President Lech Kaczyński, *Dziennik*, 20 March 2008, www.prezydent.pl.

⁹ A similar dispute between President Aleksander Kwaśniewski and Prime Minister Leszek Miller was about signing the Accession Treaty in Athens in 2003.

summit of 15–16 October)¹⁰ and then asked the Constitutional Court to interpret the provisions of the Constitution on the separation of powers between the head of state and the head of government.

Goals

The goals for Polish policy in the European Union were defined in Prime Minister Donald Tusk's inaugural address to the Sejm, in Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski's speech and in official pronouncements by President Lech Kaczyński. The Polish priority in 2008 was Lisbon Treaty ratification along with the strengthening of the Union's institutional architecture and of the Common Foreign and Security Policy. Pursuit of these goals was expected to help build the country's strong position within the European Union.¹¹ Minister Radosław Sikorski emphasized the need for Poland to coordinate with other member states, especially Weimar Triangle partners (Germany and France), its Europe policy and policy towards third countries (China, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East). And Poland's position was to be bolstered by joining the reform effort with respect to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), the budget and EU cohesion policy. In this context, President Kaczyński argued that a good position for Poland should be sought within the Union while retaining a maximum of sovereignty.¹² The president-PM dispute over Lisbon Treaty ratification was about how to protect Polish negotiating achievements within the framework of the Polish legal system. In the president's opinion, the Lisbon Treaty included arrangements making it possible to depart from that document's provisions just by the consent of all governments, bypassing the ratification procedure.¹³

Another government priority, as indicated by Minister Sikorski, was to strengthen the Polish presence in the eastern dimension of the European Union's foreign policy. Poland, according to Prime Minister Tusk, is well placed to contribute to the development of this line of EU policy—and so the government paid special attention to relations with Ukraine and Russia, and also to the situation in Belarus.¹⁴ Speaking in a similar vein, Lech Kaczyński pointed to

¹⁰ Interview with Prime Minister Donald Tusk, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 7 November 2008, www.kprm.gov.pl.

¹¹ "Government Information on Polish Foreign Policy in 2008," see above, pp. XX.

¹² Interview with Lech Kaczyński, *Gazeta Polska*, 14 May 2008, www.prezydent.pl.

¹³ "Tu nie chodzi...", *op. cit.*

¹⁴ Prime Minister Donald Tusk's inaugural address to the Sejm on 23 November 2007, www.kprm.gov.pl.

Poland's partnership within the European Union with Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, and expressed the Polish desire for the club to be joined by Ukraine. "For the past years, we have demonstrated that we want to and can campaign for Ukraine's integration with the EU," said the Polish president.¹⁵ While backing the European aspirations of the country's eastern neighbor, Lech Kaczyński said Poland also sought an EU enlargement in the southern direction, to embrace Croatia and other countries in the region.¹⁶ The eastern dimension was found to be "Poland's specialty," for reasons which include traditions, experience and geographic proximity, with Poland's partners in this respect to include countries in Central and Eastern Europe, the Baltic states and Sweden. Minister Sikorski spoke in favor of offering European prospects to Ukraine, and he said negotiations on a new partnership and cooperation deal with Russia would be unblocked, following the removal by that country of the embargo on food products from Poland. Another matter of priority was to seek regulating the movement of people in a new situation that had developed after the country's accession to the Schengen zone.

Prime Minister Tusk spoke in his inaugural address about the need to form a professional and non-politicized diplomatic service worthy of the 21st century,¹⁷ which would take over responsibility for Poland's preparations for the EU Council presidency in 2011. To help achieve this goal, government agencies in charge of European and foreign policy were to be revamped and integrated. Radosław Sikorski found it necessary to strengthen the organizational and substantive potential of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Still prior to the minister's Sejm speech, it was announced that the Office of the Committee for European Integration would be incorporated into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by the end of 2008, with a view to building up the Ministry's "European" potential.

Greater energy security, an issue which had also been the concern of previous cabinets, was described by Prime Minister Tusk as Poland's *raison d'être*.¹⁸ "Poland wants Europe's energy security to be founded on a solidarity of the entire European Union, and not to be affected by short-term exigencies and advantages dictated by political or economic egoism," he said. The questions the prime minister found to be important in this context included passing EU regulations to counter blackmailing by suppliers, supporting measures aimed to

¹⁵ "Tusk może liczyć na moje wsparcie," *Fakt*, 6 March 2008, www.prezydent.pl.

¹⁶ Lech Kaczyński's address to the diplomatic corps, 16 January 2008, www.prezydent.pl.

¹⁷ Prime Minister Donald Tusk's inaugural address ..., *op. cit.*

¹⁸ Prime Minister Donald Tusk's interview for Radio ZET, 12 December 2007, www.kprm.gov.pl.

widen competition in the energy field within the single market framework, diversifying energy supply sources, and creating a network of connectors between national oil and gas infrastructures in the EU.

Polish Policy in the European Union

Political relations. In September 2008, speaking at the Economic Forum in Krynica, Prime Minister Tusk said Poland should join the Economic and Monetary Union, thus delivering the most important political declaration from a Polish head of government since the decision to seek European Union membership. Eurozone accession would provide the final stage of integration with the European structures. Mr. Tusk noted that the launch of the single currency would represent the meeting of an earlier commitment arising from the EU accession agreement.¹⁹ The adoption of the euro also has its purely domestic aspect, not influencing Polish policy within the Union, and therefore the subject was not expanded upon in the prime minister's inaugural address.

On 28 October 2008, the government released a document on Poland's accession to the Economic and Monetary Union in 2012, known as a roadmap for eurozone entry.²⁰ The benefits from euro adoption include eliminating the exchange rate risk, reducing transaction costs, boosting foreign trade and providing Polish businesses with easier access to the European Union's capital market. On the downside, the launch of the single currency makes it no longer possible for a country to autonomously resort to monetary and exchange-rate policy instruments. It is also necessary to change the Constitution so as to sanction the new legal tender.

Poland could enter the ERM2 exchange rate mechanism in 2009,²¹ and the Maastricht nominal convergence criteria, including inflation, budget deficit and public debt, would be met by 2011.²² That would make possible the adoption of the single European currency on 1 January 2012, after first receiving the nod from the European Commission. In connection with these plans, on 15 January 2009, the government created a plenipotentiary for the single currency, with the post going to Finance Vice-Minister Ludwik Kotecki.

¹⁹ Release by the Prime Minister's Chancellery, www.kprm.gov.pl.

²⁰ *Rada Ministrów przyjęła mapę drogową wejścia do strefy euro*, 28 October 2008, www.kprm.gov.pl.

²¹ Pronouncements by Prime Minister Donald Tusk and Vice-Minister of Finance Katarzyna Zajdel-Kurowska.

²² Release by the Prime Minister's Chancellery, www.kprm.gov.pl.

Despite initial misgivings, the central bank (NBP) eventually backed the adoption of the single currency. “The benefits of euro switchover in Poland are greater than the costs,” observed NBP Deputy Governor Witold Koziński. And in its report on Poland’s full participation in the third stage of the Economic and Monetary Union, the central bank devoted much space to the costs and threats involved in EMU accession.²³ The decision to launch the European currency is in line with the trends in the whole EU, where on 1 January 2008 the eurozone was joined by Cyprus and Malta, successive new member states to do so among those admitted to the European Union in 2004.

The year 2008 was also a witness to detailed agreements on fighting climate change, where the European Union has for several years played a leading role globally. Back in 2000, a European climate change programme was published, fleshing out the Kyoto Protocol goals. On that basis, instruments with which to cut greenhouse gas emissions were developed, the most important being the European Union Emission Trading System (EU ETS) launched in 2005.

The European Commission’s proposals of January 2008 on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, greater share of renewable energy sources, and a 20% improvement in energy efficiency by 2020, known as the 3 x 20 package,²⁴ took almost a year to complete, and the final version of the agreement was adopted on 11–12 December 2008. That was possible thanks to the amendments made in the Commission proposal with respect the ETS reform’s impact on the electricity industry and energy-consuming sectors, and in view of the creation of a solidarity-based financing mechanism that took into account the specific situation of Central European countries, including Poland. The main elements of the package included: a directive modifying the operation of the EU ETS after 2012, a decision on reductions of greenhouse gas emissions in sectors not covered by the system, a directive on renewable energy sources and a directive on carbon capture and storage. While the long-term deal was clinched swiftly, the methods of its practical introduction and also the level and the sharing of its costs gave rise to heated exchanges, with a compromise only reached at the European Council level.

The divisions among EU member states were over how the mandatory purchase of all CO₂ allowances on the market after 2013 would impact the

²³ See *Raport na temat pełnego uczestnictwa Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w trzecim etapie Unii Gospodarczej i Walutowej*, www.nbp.pl.

²⁴ Communication from the Commission on European Energy Policy, 10 January 2007, SEK (2007) 12.

electricity-generating sector. Poland, producing more than 90% of its energy in coal-fired plants, was the main contestant, arguing that the proposed arrangement would translate into drastic energy price increases after 2013, thus adversely affecting economic growth, the labor market and energy security.

Despite Polish entreaties, the European Commission initially did not agree to any revision of the document, thus prodding the Polish government to start building a blocking coalition,²⁵ while presenting its own proposals on dispute settlement. Intense negotiations were started by Polish diplomats right after the European Council of 15–16 October, culminating in a climate change meeting of Central European leaders in Gdańsk on 8 December 2008, and attended, in addition to Prime Minister Donald Tusk and President Nicolas Sarkozy, by leaders from the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. The positions of France and Central European states were brought much closer at the meeting. For the same reason, Chancellor Angela Merkel's visit to Warsaw on 9 December 2008 assumed considerable importance.

The outcome of the 11–12 December meeting in Brussels was seen by the government as favorable for Poland, given the extent to which the original burdens, to be imposed under the Commission's initial proposal, were eventually reduced. While the European Union did not abandon plans to scale down CO₂ emissions by 20% by 2020, Poland was granted a transition period to the end of 2019, during which free emission allowance will be available, thus relieving domestic industry of the requirement to buy such allowance on the EU market (which would lead to a spike in energy prices from 2013). As part of the so-called solidarity fund, Poland was promised PLN 60 billion for the modernization of energy generation. Another success was the recognition of the country's specific situation. But this success will be contingent on whether or not the resources saved in negotiations will be channeled to energy sector modernization and expansion, development of renewable sources, and—importantly—energy efficiency programmes. Remembering about the capital- and time-consuming nature of energy-sector investment projects, one will notice that the negotiated period of transition, lasting until 2020, is hardly a long one. Consequently, the related political and legislative measures should be initiated as soon as possible.

²⁵ *Informacja dla Sejmu i Senatu o udziale Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w pracach Unii Europejskiej w okresie lipiec–grudzień 2008 roku (podczas Prezydencji Francuskiej)*, Europe Committee of the Council of Ministers, 20 January 2009, <http://orka.sejm.gov.pl>.

The Polish position was also taken into account in the Second Strategic Energy Review.²⁶ The long-term vision of EU policy was supplemented by arrangements to enable reaction to short- and medium-term threats. Noticing the new member states' high dependence on Russian supplies and recognizing this as a challenge to the EU's security, the Commission inserted energy solidarity provisions into the document, something which had been long sought by Poland. And the specific features of individual countries and regions were reflected in the part describing the determinants of energy-source diversification and imports in the Commission as a whole. Responding to the demands of Poland, among other countries, the Commission laid emphasis on gas supplies from markets other than Russia—to be obtained via the Southern Stream gas route from the Caucasus. But the Commission balked at the idea to appoint a special plenipotentiary for external energy policy, finding an effective planning and coordination activity between the European Commission and the governments to be more important.

On 26 May 2008, in Brussels, the ministers of foreign affairs of Poland and Sweden, Radosław Sikorski and Carl Bildt, presented the idea of an Eastern Partnership,²⁷ a forum for the European Union's cooperation with its eastern neighbors: Ukraine, Moldova, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia and, to a limited degree, also Belarus. A month later, the European Council asked the Commission to propose an operating mode for the Partnership, and on 3 December 2008, the Commission presented a detailed package, fleshing out the Polish-Swedish initiative. Its main tenet was to widen the EU's cooperation with six Eastern European countries as part of a broad programme of the European Neighbourhood Policy, and to present in greater detail the instruments of that policy.²⁸ The programme provided for the countries concerned to be getting closer to EU standards through an integration of their economies and legal systems, along with the creation of a free trade area (incorporating agricultural goods and services), and a gradual easing of the visa regime—but it offered no membership perspective. The Commission documents also provide for the possibility of

²⁶ Communication from the Commission on Second Strategic Energy Review, 13 November 2008, <http://ec.europa.eu>.

²⁷ For more on the Eastern Partnership see B. Wojna, M. Gniazdowski (eds.), *Eastern Partnership: The Opening Report*, www.pism.pl; also see L. Jesień, "Eastern Partnership: Strengthened ENP Cooperation with Willing Neighbors," *PISM Strategic Files*, no. 3, 2008.

²⁸ Communication from the Commission on Eastern Partnership, 3 December 2008, <http://ec.europa.eu>.

entering into cooperation agreements with individual non-member states along the lines of an agreement with Ukraine, now at a negotiating stage.

Initially, no new institutions of the Eastern Partnership were planned nor any increase in the European Neighbourhood Policy budget, but at the end of the day an added €600 million was provided, making the project more realistic. The new initiative has mapped out a new line in the European Union's foreign policy, supplementing the Mediterranean dimension (previously, most conspicuous)—and for this, Polish diplomacy should be given credit.²⁹

In September 2007, the European Commission initiated consultations with member states and stakeholders on the future of the EU budget, as a phase preceding a budget review to determine the nature and structure of the future financial framework. Poland took a position which reflected its status as a net beneficiary.³⁰ Any decrease in the overall budget amount has the effect of diminishing chances for the implementation of new projects, and so the Polish government, seeing the EU budget as an instrument to support the implementation of Community objectives, pronounced itself in favor of an evolutionary character of changes in budget structure. The government emphasized the importance of cohesion policy as a means to meet head-on the development challenges facing the Union. Therefore, the reforms of other policies should take account of their impact upon the cohesion policy.

On the one hand pointing to the importance of the European Union's Common Agricultural Policy in efforts to counter climate change, Poland was against the proposed arrangement providing for lasting co-financing by national budgets of climate change-related agricultural policy projects. On the other hand, Poland backed the proposal for the EU budget to be used to pursue Lisbon priorities, including initiatives for nature conservation and the EU's external activities serving to promote European values. Lest the budget review morph into negotiations on the allocation of financial resources among pre-determined uses, Poland expressed its support for the concept of seeking new revenue sources to be more independent than a budget based on national contributions.³¹

As part of a discussion on the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy, Poland presented at the Agriculture and Fisheries Council of 17–18 March 2008 its position on direct payments, cross compliance, market mechanisms, crisis

²⁹ E. Tulmets, "Przygotowania do prezydencji w UE: Udział Czech w tworzeniu Partnerstwa Wschodniego," *Polski Przegląd Dyplomatyczny*, no. 1, 2009, pp. 61–82.

³⁰ The position was approved by the Council of Ministers on 8 April 2008, www.kprm.gov.pl.

³¹ Release by the Prime Minister's Chancellery, www.kprm.gov.pl.

management and the “new challenges” for agricultural policy. In May 2008, the European Commission presented a package of legal drafts related to the assessment of CAP functioning. The work was continued within the Council of Ministers of the EU until autumn, while simultaneous discussions were held at meetings of the Commission, Council and Parliament, resulting in agreement among member states. Its outcome was of major importance for Poland not only in the context of agricultural policy in 2009–2013, but also because the discussion about CAP’s post-2013 future took a direction that suited Polish priorities.³² The final version of the proposal received backing from the Polish authorities, which found it to be compromise-based and close to Polish demands.

Favorable for Poland was the EU Council’s consent to link the pace of the application of cross compliance in new member states with the level of farmers’ direct payments, and also to treat the soft fruit sector, which is of importance for Polish agriculture, in the same way as other sectors of special interest to other member states. Regrettably, though, no conclusion was adopted on the future of common agricultural policy after 2013, which the Polish government put down to lack of will to make concrete decisions among member states.³³

On 18 April 2008, Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski and Secretary of State at the Office of the Committee for European Integration Mikołaj Dowgielewicz revealed their intention to merge both institutions as early as 2009.³⁴ This translates into the dissolution of the Committee for European Integration, a top-level state administrative body for policy planning and coordination on matters involving the European Union. The reform of the diplomatic service seeks a uniformity of the public administration’s activities in European policy and, consequently, the service’s greater effectiveness in dealings with EU member states.

The economy. As shown by data published by the Commission towards the end of the year, the latter half of 2008 saw a pronounced deterioration in member states’ economic situation, coming as a result of the global financial crisis. The

³² The Polish priorities, as specified in the document “Polska wizja Wspólnej Polityki Rolnej po 2013 roku,” include: narrowing a development distance in agriculture between Poland and the EU-15, and within Poland, between rural and urban areas; providing a level playing field for the agricultural sector in Poland, as compared with other member states; keeping the CAP on an evolutionary path, by eliminating instruments which have lost their rationale and introducing new ones which improve this policy’s effectiveness and efficiency, www.minrol.gov.pl.

³³ *Informacja dla Sejmu i Senatu...*, *op. cit.*

³⁴ Release on the merger of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Office of the Committee for European Integration, www.msz.gov.pl.

Commission projection, published on 3 November 2008, put the GDP growth in 2008 at 1.4% for the EU-27 and 1.2% for the eurozone. In Poland, however, the figures released by the Central Statistical Office (GUS) indicate that 2008 was another year of relatively stable growth, although the economy slowed in the last quarter.³⁵

Just as most other member states, Poland supported the Commission-presented concept of dealing with the financial crisis.³⁶ In compliance with the Council's decisions, Poland raised bank deposit guarantees to the equivalent of €50,000. Finance Minister Jacek Rostowski expressed his doubts that questioned whether pursuit of the goals set in the package would not damage the EU's budget stability, although he did not question the package as such. He did, however, oppose one key element: the channeling of €5 billion in unspent funds from the prior year EU budget into the expansion of pan-European energy, transport and internet networks. As he pointed out, the proposed mechanism favored the older, more affluent member states.³⁷ In the course of negotiations, Poland and other member states backed the Commission's proposal for earmarking 1.5% of the EU's GDP (€200bn) for the strategy's implementation.

Poland supported the position of the Slovenian presidency for Lisbon Strategy implementation to be growth- and jobs-oriented. As a result, the presidency conclusions reflected several questions raised by the Polish government, such as support for the Lisbon Strategy for 2008–2010, which should provide a basis for the development of national reform programmes, the idea of a small business charter, and emphasis on the role of entrepreneurs in the single market.

Poland also participated in working out the conclusions of the Competition Council concerning the second strategic review on better regulation. The Slovenian presidency focused on removal of administrative barriers and streamlining of regulations (with a view to increased competitiveness of European companies), while at the same time seeking a greater effectiveness of European law. In line with Polish expectations, the Council of the EU adopted a resolution concerning the European Commission's recommendation on the management of intellectual property rights.

³⁵ Data from the website of the Central Statistical Office (GUS), www.stat.gov.pl. For more on the subject see A. Gradziuk, "Poland's Foreign Economic Relations," below, p. XX.

³⁶ Communication from the Commission to the European Council on a European Economic Recovery Plan, 26 November 2008, COM (2008) 800 final.

³⁷ "Polska podtrzymuje wątpliwości w sprawie unijnego planu odbudowy gospodarki," *Gazeta Prawna*, 12 December 2008.

With the European Union presidency passing to France, that country opened its labor market to eight new member states, including Poland, as of 1 July 2008. France was among those member states where restrictions on Polish workers stayed the longest. As predicted, the French government's decision did not trigger any major influx of job seekers from Central Europe.

Restrictions in labor market access for Poles stayed in the course of 2008 in Austria, Belgium, Germany and Denmark, but they were eased somewhat due to labor shortages in some trades. Among the four member states sticking to transition-period arrangements, the most ready for an opening seemed to be Belgium, which introduced accelerated work-permit procedures for Poles and Slovaks.³⁸ Still, Poles had to apply for work permits in that country until the end of the second part of the transition period, i.e. until 1 May 2009.

Germany and Austria are likely to prolong their labor-market closure until 2011, the maximum period allowed under the Accession Agreement. The Austrian government, however, partly removed the restrictions, responding to a growing shortage of labor on the domestic market. After seasonal agricultural workers, work-permit facilities were extended to cover some other trades.³⁹

Assessment

Poland pursued an active Europe policy in 2008, and one that proved to be quite effective in reaching its goals. The country's priority in the Union was to build a strong position within Community structures—and it looks like the objectives set in the inaugural addresses of Prime Minister Donald Tusk and Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski were largely attained. It remains an open question, however, whether this really strengthened Poland's position in the European Union, or just improved its image. It will take some time before this question can be reasonably answered.

Polish activity was particularly visible during negotiations on the climate change and energy package. A turning point came at the European Council of 15–16 October 2008, when a Polish-built Eastern European coalition (Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Bulgaria, Romania) pushed through an arrangement requiring the European Council's final climate change decisions to be taken by unanimous vote. This arrangement made

³⁸ "Ostatnie 4 stare kraje UE przed decyzją ws. otwarcia rynków pracy," *Gazeta Prawna*, 17 November 2008.

³⁹ *Ułatwienia w dostępie do austriackiego rynku pracy*, www.migracje.gov.pl.

possible the meeting of major Polish demands, which greatly altered the climate package architecture.⁴⁰

Poland played a key role in creating the eastern dimension of the European Union's external relations. The Eastern Partnership programme, put forward jointly with Sweden, was the greatest success story in the country's four years of membership. This first Polish initiative to be approved by other member states provides a good example of Polish diplomatic engagement the an active development of a joint proposal concerning the European Neighbourhood Policy. The project was adopted in a climate created by the Russia-Georgia war, which additionally prodded the EU to formulate a new and noticeable political initiative targeting the eastern neighbours.

Poland was also strongly committed to the settlement of the Russia-Georgia conflict. The Caucasus war exerted real influence on Polish diplomatic activities within the country's Europe policy in 2008. One example is provided by regular consultations with European Union leaders and with the European Commission. Minister Sikorski was present at an extraordinary General Affairs and External Relations Council meeting devoted to the conflict, and the European Council of September 1 was attended by President Lech Kaczyński and Prime Minister Donald Tusk. The presidency conclusions adopted at the summit reiterated not only the need to end the war as soon as possible, but also a call for Russia to respect Georgia's territorial integrity.

The next year of Polish activity in the EU forum should bring gradual improvement in the country's position among other member states. This will be of importance for Poland in the years ahead, when a major debate opens on the new EU budget and—at the external relations level—on the European Union's role in the global order.

⁴⁰ *Informacja dla Sejmu i Senatu..., op. cit.*

The Political and Military Aspects of Poland's Security Policy in 2008

Background

Toward the end of 2007, Poland's political and military geostrategic situation was somewhat less favorable than it had been the previous year. Although it is true that the risk of an armed conflict in Europe was negligible and that threats related to terrorism (in Poland or in neighboring countries), to the activities of non-state entities (such as organized crime) or trans-national threats (uncontrolled mass migrations, epidemics) were not much greater, Russia's policy toward its neighbors (including Poland) as well as some other Western countries was becoming increasingly confrontational. Russia's suspension of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and its staunch opposition to the prospect of NATO enlargement eastward and to the planned deployment in Poland and the Czech Republic of America's missile defense system installations coupled with Moscow's threats to reduce energy supplies to some of its neighbors, are indicative of Russia's unwillingness to cooperate with some European countries. For these reasons, Russia's foreign policy was the most important factor negatively affecting the geostrategic situation in Poland's immediate vicinity. In addition, preparations for the declaration of Kosovo's independence and growing instability in Georgia (as a result of mounting differences regarding the status of the separatist republics of South Ossetia and Abkhazia as well as disputes between the president and the opposition) increased the risk of regional destabilization that accompanied unresolved conflicts in Europe.

Poland's security policy was also shaped by changes in the global situation. In the United States, the country with the greatest impact on world security, the presidential campaign preceding the November 2008 elections was gaining momentum. Consequently, in addition to the American authorities' growing focus on domestic issues, as is customary under the circumstances, the international position and ability to act of the departing George Bush administration was weakening, with the administration increasingly unpopular, both abroad and at

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home. This hampered the effectiveness of American diplomatic and military efforts to improve international security towards the end of the presidential term in the hope of finishing with some measure of success. As a result, the situation remained highly unstable in regions of greatest geostrategic significance—the Middle East and Central and South Asia. Thanks to the efforts of the United States and its partners, the situation in Iraq was improving gradually throughout 2007, but this did not mean full stabilization. At the same time, the situation in Central and South Asia was deteriorating significantly, chiefly due to the mounting conflict in Afghanistan and progressing destabilization in Pakistan. Attempts to boost the Middle East peace process (the conference in Annapolis on 27 November 2007) brought no results, no progress was achieved in the resolution of the Iran nuclear crisis, and attempts to denuclearize North Korea led to only partial—and temporary, as it has turned out—success. In addition, the first symptoms of the world economic crisis were perceptible, especially in the United States.

An important factor affecting the Polish security policy in 2007 was the evolution of organizations that are its most important instruments: NATO and the EU. The nature of changes in the North Atlantic Alliance was primarily determined by difficulties in the ISAF mission in Afghanistan due to the strengthening of insurgency—despite the allies' greater military and non-military involvement following the Riga NATO summit in 2006—and by the weakness of the Kabul authorities. In addition, growing tensions in Kosovo forced the Alliance to pay more attention to the situation in the Balkans and to maintain readiness to intervene should the need arise. A discussion was launched in the Alliance at the end of the year in connection with the upcoming April 2008 Bucharest NATO summit devoted mainly to NATO enlargement about the integration of Western Balkan countries (including the Republic of Macedonia, which constitutes a complicated case given its conflict with Greece) as well as Ukraine and Georgia, which intensified their efforts to be granted a Membership Action Plan (MAP). The Alliance's military transformation ran into obstacles, so the readiness level of some NATO Response Force (NRF) units was lowered in October 2007.

In the European Union, the long debate about comprehensive institutional reform ended with the signing, on 13 December 2007, of the Lisbon Treaty, which did not depart significantly from the provisions of the Constitutional Treaty in terms of the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP), envisaging its reform. The adoption of the Lisbon Treaty thus opened new opportunities to renew the European integration process and speed up the development of the ESDP. These hopes were reinforced by the steps taken by

France's new president, Nicolas Sarkozy, to stimulate European cooperation in the sphere of security (with France assuming the EU presidency in July 2008) and also by earlier achievements of that policy (such as the inauguration of EU battlegroups in January 2007). At the same time, great difficulties encountered in the organization of the EU's humanitarian operation in Chad (involving fewer than 4,000 troops) reflected the still-limited capability of the ESDP. The situation was additionally complicated by the need for the EU's involvement in the resolution of the Kosovo independence issue reflecting serious differences between EU member states.

In the domestic sphere, Poland's security policy in 2008 was no doubt affected by the change of government following the early parliamentary elections of October 2007. During the electoral campaign, the victorious Civic Platform (PO) had declared changes in the manner in which foreign policy was conducted to make it more conciliatory, also in the sphere of security, but less so in terms of specific objectives and priorities (an exception here was the PO's determination to end Poland's engagement in Iraq). The basic aims of the coalition government formed after the elections by the PO and the Polish Peasant Party (PSL) were defined in Prime Minister Donald Tusk's *exposé* of 23 November 2007. One element important in the context of security policy (besides issues directly related to foreign policy) was the plan to professionalize the Polish army by 2010—a very ambitious goal given its scale and complexity. A relatively high level of public support (which did not, however, imply equal support for all government foreign and security policy priorities) favored the pursuit of the new government's aims.¹ The critical approach of the opposition, particularly the Law and Justice (PiS) party, which had been in power prior to the October 2007 elections and now constituted the main opposition force, made matters more difficult. Even more significant was the reserve shown by President Lech Kaczynski in connection with the steps taken by the new government. This

¹ In December 2007, support for Donald Tusk's government stood at 57%, while disapproval was at 13%. The November 2007 decision to end the participation of Polish soldiers in the international stabilization mission in Iraq in 2008 was supported by 90% of Poles, while 83% did not support the participation of Polish troops in the NATO mission in Afghanistan (61% definitely not), although the government declared that it would increase its military involvement in that country (December 2007). The deployment of elements of the American missile defense system in Poland, an issue in which the Polish government intended to continue negotiations, was opposed by 57% of Poles in November 2007. See *Stosunek do rządu Donalda Tuska. Komunikat z badań* (CBOS), December 2007, BS/183/2007, p. 1; *O terminie wycofania żołnierzy polskich z Iraku, stosunku do ulokowania w Polsce elementów tarczy antyrakietowej i obawach przed terroryzmem. Komunikat z badań* (CBOS), November 2007, BS/176/2007, pp. 1–2; *Zagraniczne misje zbrojne w opinii Polaków. Komunikat z badań* (CBOS), May 2008, BS/76/2008, p. 1.

signaled that significant differences might arise between the two centers of executive power, making a cohesive security policy difficult to implement.

Objectives

The most important guidelines and goals of the Polish security policy for 2008 were laid out by Prime Minister Donald Tusk in his November 2007 *exposé*. Therein he named NATO and the EU as the main pillars of this policy and stressed Poland's will to be a credible and active member of those organizations, one that contributed to the development of their potential and ability to act. He pointed out, however, that Poland would strive—especially in the case of NATO—for a more just division of costs and benefits in the hope that its engagement (in expedition missions, for example) would incline its partners to show greater interest in regions and problems vital to Poland (Eastern Europe, energy). He also stressed the importance of cooperation with the USA in the security sphere, declaring that his government would seek a stronger U.S. presence in Poland and an increase in the battle-worthiness of the Polish armed forces in collaboration with the United States. He also declared that Poland would withdraw its contingent from the international stabilization mission in Iraq by the end of the year.²

Reporting on Poland's 2008 foreign policy to the Sejm on 8 May 2008, Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski elaborated on the aims of this policy,³ naming the strengthening of Polish security to make Poland a strong component of NATO among the five foreign policy priorities—listed in second place, after tasks dealing with Poland's membership in the EU. The minister attributed clear priority in Poland's security policy to the Alliance as an institution playing—from Poland's viewpoint—two fundamental functions: a political one (“a key institutional link between two branches of Western civilization—North American and European”) and a military one (a measurable guarantee of collective defense capability). In declaring Poland's intention to stimulate the

² For more on the subject, see *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy 2007*, p. 67.

³ As Minister Sikorski pointed out in that speech (and in many others), the speech—as the first one presented by a minister of the PO-PSL coalition government—outlined the foreign policy program (including security policy) of the new government for its entire period in power, not only for 2008. For this reason, Minister Sikorski presented it before the Sejm later than parliamentary custom would have it (similarly to his predecessor, Minister Anna Fotyga, who was severely criticized on that account at the time, also by the PO). See *Biuletyn z posiedzenia Komisji Spraw Zagranicznych Sejmu RP (nr 34)*, no. 611/VI, 6 May 2008, p. 3. For the text of the speech see above p....

Alliance to greater activeness, he called for the initiation of work on NATO's new strategic concept, one that would reflect the vision of an enlarged Alliance, in particular including Ukraine and Georgia. He reiterated Poland's unchanging commitment to modernizing the Alliance and its operations, seeing this as a way to confirm Poland's credibility as an ally. At the same time, he formulated—in a more emphatic manner than Prime Minister Tusk had done in his November *exposé*—Poland's expectations to maintain a balance between NATO missions and its ability to ensure collective security in the traditional sense, to locate NATO infrastructure in Poland and to increase the participation and visibility of Polish representatives within NATO structures.

Minister Sikorski also stressed the significance of a strategic partnership with the USA. He expressed clearly the Polish government's expectation that the United States would fulfill its promise made during talks on the missile defense shield to play a more active role in the modernization of the Polish armed forces.

Speaking of the EU in the context of security, Minister Sikorski stressed the need to boost its ability—including military—to build international stability and declared that Poland would continue to participate in the shaping of the European Defense Agency, battlegroups and the EU's ability to react in times of crises or provide humanitarian assistance. He also signaled Poland's interest in the debate on revising the 2003 European Defense Strategy. At the same time, he reiterated to the EU's complementary role with regard to NATO in the political and military dimensions of security, pointing to the EU as the basic instrument for building energy security, and he promised that Poland would strive for the Union to function in keeping with the principle of solidarity and be capable of effectively counteracting pressure from non-EU energy suppliers through diversification of supplies and development of distribution infrastructure.

Minister Sikorski also listed participation in efforts to further arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation as well as combat non-traditional and non-military threats, such as organized crime or unfavorable climate change, among the tasks of Polish security policy. In addition, he reiterated Poland's desire to seek measures to overcome the crisis within the OSCE and to prevent attempts to weaken the position of this organization. He also called for a continuation of efforts to improve the effectiveness of the UN.

In addition to a more specific presentation of Poland's expectations toward its partners and the world at large than in the preceding years, the minister's pronouncement was notable for accentuating the high priority of the trans-Atlantic relations in Polish security policy. Importantly, this concerned

primarily NATO, and less so cooperation with the USA.⁴ The EU was given a secondary role, at least in the political and military dimension. Emphasis on the importance of NATO as the fundamental instrument of Polish security policy was indicative of the new Polish authorities' rejection of the previous government's doubts about NATO's credibility, of its greater trust in this organization and belief in its persisting usefulness (or at least in its high potential as an instrument of Poland's security). And so, the PO-PSL government recognized the consolidation of Poland's position within the Alliance as its primary security-related task. This aim was of a general (strategic) and long-term nature, however, and so its realization went beyond 2008. In practice, this meant that successful completion of talks on missile defense, reorganization of Poland's expeditionary involvement and progress on the subject of Ukraine and Georgia's integration with NATO became Poland's three key security policy tasks for 2008—given both the decisions taken in 2007 and the degree to which they were implemented (the termination of the mission in Iraq and the negotiations on the anti-missile shield), as well as external circumstances (the NATO summit in Bucharest and the new American presidency).

NATO and “Strategic Partnership” with the USA

Poland's activities in NATO in 2008 were dominated by two issues: on the political plane, the enlargement of the Alliance and, more specifically, its ties with Georgia and Ukraine; on the military plane, the reinforcement of the Polish involvement in the ISAF mission in Afghanistan.

From the beginning of the year, Poland sought for the NATO summit in Bucharest (2–4 April 2008)—during which the allies were to decide on inviting Croatia, Albania and Macedonia into the Organization—to grant a Membership Action Plan (MAP) to Ukraine and Georgia.⁵

⁴ It is characteristic that the first basic function of NATO to be mentioned in the speech was its role as a cornerstone of the trans-Atlantic security community, i.e., as a means to maintain ties between Europe (including Poland) and the USA.

⁵ From the Polish point of view, the issue of membership of Western Balkan states in NATO was of secondary importance and did not give rise to controversy. Poland unequivocally supported—also with a thought to the credibility of its open door policy—the accession of those countries. The opposition of Greece ultimately meant that NATO did not invite Macedonia to join the Alliance, though the country was prepared to do so to a similar degree as Albania, which was invited. This decision had an unfavorable effect on the cohesion and the image of NATO enlargement policy, something that Poland, not having any effective means to pressure Greece, could not have single-handedly countered. See the *Bucharest Summit Declaration*, www.nato.int/docu/pr/2008/p08-049e.html.

In the end, this aim was not reached during the Bucharest meeting on account of some NATO members (especially Germany and France) fearing Russia's reaction and of their doubts about the two candidates' readiness to accept MAP. Thanks to the efforts of the Polish delegation, including President Lech Kaczyński and Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski, the summit's final declaration contained a promise of future membership for Ukraine and Georgia as well as the announcement that the progress made by these countries towards integration with the Alliance would be reviewed during the North Atlantic Council ministerial session in December.⁶ After the Bucharest meeting, the Polish president, without fully coordinating his steps with the government, on several occasions—partly in response to Russia's announcement that it would tighten relations with the Georgian separatist republics of South Ossetia and Abkhazia (16 April)—called on the Alliance to grant Georgia candidate status and promise a proper reaction in case of a threat to Georgia's territorial integrity, adding that this decision should put NATO's credibility to the test.⁷ After the outbreak of the Russian-Georgian conflict, Poland called on the Alliance to support Georgia in a decisive manner and fully approved the establishment of the NATO-Georgia Commission.⁸ In the following months, the Polish authorities continued their efforts to get the Alliance to grant the MAP to Ukraine and Georgia during the December session of the North Atlantic Council, but these efforts stood no real chance of success in view of the weakened position of the incumbent U.S. president, who had until then been the principal spokesman for the integration of both countries with NATO, Russian opposition and consequently growing skepticism of some allies; and, above all, the complicated domestic situation in both Ukraine and Georgia. Hence in the final months of the year Poland focused instead on trying to prevent any undue slowing down of Georgia and Ukraine's integration with NATO. In this light, decisions taken at the December session of the North Atlantic Council (2–3 December) with a view

⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁷ Such a formulation was used by Lech Kaczyński in his pronouncement to the press after his meeting with Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili in Jerusalem on 15 May 2008. See *Rzeczpospolita*, 15 May 2008, www.rzeczpospolita.pl.

⁸ Poland proposed that the inaugural meeting of the NATO-Georgia Commission be held on 15–16 September in Tbilisi. NATO's stance with regard to the Russian-Georgian conflict was also significantly affected by the activeness of President Kaczyński during the conflict, including the visit of four NATO heads of state (Poland and the Baltic states) and Ukraine in the Georgian capital that took place on his initiative on 13 August 2008. See *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 14–15 August and 12 September 2008.

to some expansion of cooperation between those countries and NATO can be seen as a success.⁹

During as well as after the conflict over South Ossetia the Polish government was a proponent for the toughest possible NATO stance with regard to Russia. Poland supported the suspension of political cooperation within the NATO-Russia Council immediately following the outbreak of the conflict, looking with reserve at the suggestions put forward in the fall by several Western European countries (France, Italy and Germany) about the necessity for NATO to renew talks with Russia; it also pointed to the confrontational nature of Russia's policies toward Western countries (reflected, for instance, in threats to deploy Iskander missile launchers in the Kaliningrad District). In the end, during the December ministerial session of the North Atlantic Council, the Polish foreign minister agreed to resume informal political dialogue with Russia although he at the same time emphasized the need for all allies to remain prudent.¹⁰

In the area of operational allied cooperation between Poland and NATO, the ISAF mission in Afghanistan remained a top high priority, just as a year earlier. Despite the efforts of the international force and the Kabul government, the situation there was deteriorating steadily.¹¹ At the end of December 2007, the Polish authorities announced that Poland's engagement in Afghanistan would be reorganized: the contingent there would be strengthened by 400 more soldiers (to 1,600) and additional equipment (including combat and transport helicopters), and Polish units would be concentrated in one province and responsible for its security.¹² The aim of this reorganization—in addition to raising the effectiveness of Poland's involvement—was to make its actions in Afghanistan more visible to its allies and the international community. This was to boost

⁹ The most important change was the introduction for Ukraine and Georgia of Annual National Programmes, defining the precise aims of internal reforms and cooperation with NATO. It only significantly affected the Alliance's cooperation with Georgia, however, because cooperation with Ukraine was already based on yearly action plans.

¹⁰ See Ł. Kulesa, M. Madej, "Spotkanie ministrów spraw zagranicznych NATO w Brukseli," *Biuletyn PISM*, 4 December 2008.

¹¹ The year 2007 was the bloodiest in the history of the conflict: 232 soldiers of the international coalition died in battle and at least 1,980 civilians, whereas the total number of casualties of the conflict grew by 50% in relation to 2006. See www.afghanconflictmonitor.org/data.html.

¹² Initially, it wasn't decided whether the consolidation would include about 100 men from the special GROM unit, which had until then operated in the particularly unstable province of Kandahar in the south of Afghanistan. Ultimately, following the selection of the region of concentration of Polish units, it was decided that the special units would also be relocated in order to strengthen the security of the other forces. See *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 22 April 2008.

Poland's influence on decision-making and planning in the operation, reinforce its credibility as an ally and safeguard its position in the Alliance at a level corresponding to its involvement.¹³ These changes were to be implemented during the deployment of the 3rd rotation of the Polish Military Contingent (PMC), which was scheduled to begin its service in May.

In March, it was decided that the Polish forces, which until then had been stationed mainly in the provinces of Paktika and Ghazni in the east of Afghanistan, would be concentrated in the latter—a poor province characterized by lower intensity of insurgency than in the south of the country and a less developed production of narcotics, but of strategic importance given the vital Kabul-Kandahar highway running there. The end of April marked the beginning of the transfer to Afghanistan of the 3rd rotation of the PMC under the command of General Grzegorz Buszka with the aim of eventually attaining a strength of 1,600 men.¹⁴ It officially replaced the 2nd rotation of the PMC (a 1,200-strong force commanded by General Jerzy Biziewski) on 15 May, and immediately triggered stabilization and patrol missions and set out to accomplish its principal task: to concentrate all Polish units in the province of Ghazni and to prepare for the takeover of responsibility for the security of this area from American units. The start-up—despite financial and personnel difficulties—on 28 June of the Polish group as part of the American Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Ghazni was a success.¹⁵ However, given the organizational and technical requirements

¹³ The reorganization did not signify a change of the place of Polish units in the ISAF structure, within which they remained subordinated to the Regional Command East led by the Americans and closely connected with the 101st U.S. Airborne Division. See www.wp.mil.pl/pl/artykul/6019.

¹⁴ When the third rotation of the Polish Military Contingent began its operations, not all of its units had been deployed in Afghanistan. This concerned, among others, the crews and personnel of the Autonomous Airborne Group, which did not arrive in Afghanistan until late June and, on account of additional training, did not reach full operational readiness by the end of the third PMC rotation. For this reason, according to official NATO data, the Polish ISAF contingent numbered 1,200 men by October. See www.isaf.wp.mil.pl/aktualnosc_390.html; *NATO ISAF Placemat*, 6 October 2008, www.nato.int/isaf/docu/epub/pdf/isaf_placemat_081006.pdf.

¹⁵ The greatest challenge turned out to be staffing the civilian component of the team as part of the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT). This factor and limited finances were the reason why Poland did not organize the Provincial Reconstruction Team in Ghazni alone, but with the aid of the USA, which kept the command of the team (and covered most functioning costs). This is indicative of the continued dependence of Poland's involvement on U.S. assistance (also in intelligence and logistic support), at the same time limiting the PR effect of the reorganization of Poland's presence in Afghanistan in the eyes of both local communities and Poland's allies. See www.isaf.wp.mil.pl/aktualnosc_389.html; A. Giustozzi, *Koran, Kalashnikov, and Laptop: The Neo-Taliban Insurgency in Afghanistan*, New York, 2008, p. 165.

(the need to expand the bases where Polish soldiers were to be stationed—the main one in Ghazni and the Four Corners, Warrior and Giro bases outside the provincial capital), problems with equipment (the helicopters—four combat and four transport—did not arrive in Afghanistan until August and September¹⁶) and the growing intensity of anti-government insurgency, the concentration of the PMC in Ghazni *de facto* lasted until the end of September, and responsibility for the security of the province was not officially taken over until 31 October. It is then that the 4th rotation of the PMC (1,600 men under the command of General Janusz Adamczak) went into service. Some analysts and officers indicated that the Polish contingent needed further reinforcement considering the tasks that had been placed before it—at least by 500 soldiers,¹⁷ but the government announced that it would decide on any possible increase in the contingent's strength after assessing the effectiveness of current engagement levels.

The so-called Nangar Khel Syndrome—PMC soldiers' fears to use force while on duty as a result of imprecise and restrictive regulations governing use of weapons during operations, as well as pressure from certain politicians, the military high command and the public at home—proved to be a challenge for Polish troops in Afghanistan in 2008. Despite a partial review of the regulations governing use of arms in expeditionary missions, this question was not fully resolved by the end of the year (and also because investigative and legal proceedings against soldiers accused of war crimes during the shelling of Nangar Khel on 16 August 2007 had not been completed).¹⁸ Polish society's critical approach to the country's participation in the ISAF mission persisted throughout the year, enhanced by the contingent's casualties and material losses higher than in 2007.¹⁹

¹⁶ As early as February, the Polish government undertook to provide two helicopters to Canadian troops in the province of Kandahar. Although this decision undoubtedly carried some PR weight (Poland aiding allies in need), in the opinion of many experts, including soldiers, it made it more difficult to provide appropriate air support to Polish troops in Ghazni. See www.isaf.wp.mil.pl/aktualnosc_424.html; *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 5 February and 7 April 2008. Hence in November the Polish authorities announced that 15 additional helicopters would be sent to Afghanistan in 2009. See *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 3 November 2008.

¹⁷ “Wygraliśmy bitwę,” a discussion with Brigade-General Grzegorz Buszka, *Polska Zbrojna* no. 46, 2008; *Rzeczpospolita*, 30 October 2008.

¹⁸ *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 20 June and 15 December 2008.

¹⁹ Between the beginning of 2008 and the September opinion poll (the last before the publication of the report), the number of opponents of Poland's participation in the ISAF mission stood at over 70%, and even reached 77% in April. The losses of the PMC in Afghanistan amounted to seven soldiers in 2008. *Stosunek do operacji militarnej w Afganistanie. Komunikat z badań* (CBOS), September 2008, BS/142/2008, pp. 3–4; www.isaf.pamieciopolegnych.mon.gov.pl/?a=true.

Poland's involvement in NATO operational activities was not limited to the Afghan mission. The country's contribution to the KFOR mission in Kosovo—285 soldiers from the Polish-Ukrainian POLUKRBAT battalion deployed in the east of the country—was maintained at the same level. In 2008, units of the 18th PMC KFOR rotation (March–October) for the first time played the role of a rapid reaction force.²⁰ From 15 March to 1 June, four Polish Mig-29 PKW Orlik fighters that were then based at the Siauliai airfield in Lithuania protected the airspace of the Baltic countries as part of the Air Policing allied mission. In addition, in 2008 two Polish warships were part of NATO units conducting the Active Endeavour anti-terrorist operation in the Mediterranean Sea (the frigate ORP *Gen. K. Pułaski* in July and August 2008 and the submarine ORP *Kondor* from October 2008 onwards), while Polish military instructors (initially three, but 20 by the end of the year) participated in the NATO Training Mission-Iraq (NTM-I).²¹

Poland also took part in the development of NATO's potential and in the transformation of its military capabilities. This was partly connected with negotiations with the USA on the anti-missile shield. Although at the Bucharest NATO summit this was not a priority for Polish diplomacy, Poland nevertheless welcomed the decisions adopted at the summit with satisfaction, albeit with some reserve.²² Later, following the conclusion of the agreement on the anti-missile shield with the USA, NATO's unequivocal support for the project gave it more weight from Poland's viewpoint, especially in light of the skeptical attitudes manifested more and more openly in the fall of 2008 by the politicians of some Western European countries (including France, Germany and Italy). For this reason, the North Atlantic Council's recognition, on 2–3 December, of the American system in its present shape (i.e., along with the European component to be installed in Poland and the Czech Republic) as an instrument reinforcing European security and a sound foundation for the development of allied missile

²⁰ "Przeciwnolotnicy schodzą z utartych ścieżek," *Polska Zbrojna*, no. 49, 2008, pp. 34–35.

²¹ For more on the subject, see www.do.wp.mil.pl/strona.php?idstrona=11.

²² Poland's reservations about the decisions taken at the summit in this respect were reflected in the remarks made by Minister Sikorski on 8 May before the Sejm Foreign Affairs Committee, who stated that in Bucharest NATO *de facto* failed to support the anti-missile shield project, merely taking note of it. See *Biuletyn z posiedzenia...*, p. 12. It seems, however, that the Alliance's definite approval for the project as early as April 2008 could have weakened Poland's position in bilateral negotiations under way with the USA (allowing the Americans to argue that Poland's dragging out of the negotiations by raising additional demands is contrary to the interests of the Alliance).

defense projects, was seen in Poland as beneficial.²³ In addition, in 2008 Poland maintained its participation in the Strategic Airlift Capability (SAC) initiative.²⁴ At the same time, in December 2008, given budgetary limitations, the Polish Ministry of National Defense announced that it was giving up plans to purchase, by 2011, two tanker planes for in-flight refueling—a purchase that was part of the implementation of NATO transformation programs.²⁵ Poland also has a contribution in the NATO rapid reaction force, albeit a limited one (220 soldiers and the *Gen. K. Pułaski* frigate).²⁶ Poland's attempts to strengthen its position within NATO by locating Alliance infrastructure on Polish territory and by ensuring Polish representation at high positions in the Alliance's administration brought only limited results. The chances for building a NATO Alliance Ground Surveillance (AGS) base in Powidz near Poznań dwindled considerably and approval of all the allies was not secured for the deployment of an allied communications battalion in Bydgoszcz (Turkey was against).²⁷ On 1 July 2008, Polish diplomat Jacek Bylica took over as the director of the Weapons of Mass Destruction Centre (WMDC).

In the final months of 2008 discussions on a new strategic concept gained momentum within the Alliance, mainly as a reaction to the Russian-Georgian conflict and with a view to the upcoming NATO jubilee summit in April 2009. For Poland, which had for a long time been reiterating the need for such a debate, this was a favourable development, especially that following the above conflict growing understanding was noted within the Alliance for the arguments of countries calling for greater emphasis on the Alliance's traditional function of collective security.²⁸ In addition, the renewed debate on the strategic concept

²³ See www.nato.int/docu/pr/2008/p08-153e.html.

²⁴ At an informal meeting of NATO defense ministers in Budapest on 9 October, the Polish defense minister and representatives of 11 other countries (nine NATO members and two partners—Sweden and Finland) signed documents confirming the purchase of three C-17 strategic transport aircraft to be deployed in the town of Papa in Hungary in 2009. See “Wspólne skrzydła NATO,” *Polska Zbrojna*, no. 47, 2008, www.wp.mil.pl/pl/artykul/5851.

²⁵ See www.mon.gov.pl/pliki/Media/PRASA_RADIO_TV/15_12_2008onet.doc; “Wojskowy koncert życzeń,” *Polska Zbrojna*, no. 2, 2009, p. 10.

²⁶ See www.nato.int/issues/commitment/docs/080325-poland.pdf.

²⁷ See *Rzeczpospolita*, 12 December 2008. In the case of the AGS system, this was the result of a change of the concept itself (because of financial difficulties, NATO decided against including manned aircraft in the program, limiting it to unmanned vehicles and airfields where such equipment was already stationed).

²⁸ See the statement of Minister Sikorski at the 44th Munich Conference on Security Policy (8–10 February 2008), www.msz.gov.pl/editor/files/WYSTAPIENIA/monachiumPL.pdf.

was accompanied by reflections on the need for updated contingency planning—something that was also in keeping with Polish expectations. Poland actively joined the discussions about the tasks of the Alliance, with Minister Sikorski suggesting on several occasions—for the first time in September 2008—that the whole Atlantic community should recognize that any attempt to alter boundaries in Europe by force would be treated as a threat to its members, a threat requiring an appropriate response.²⁹ This proposal, which meant that NATO (as an expression of the Atlantic community) would assume the role of guarantor of Europe's boundaries, was approached by the remaining allies with reserve.

On a second level of trans-Atlantic relations in Poland's foreign policy as part of Poland's strategic partnership with the USA—most important in 2008 were undoubtedly the negotiations concerning the deployment in Poland of the elements of the American missile shield and the close military cooperation between the two countries that this entailed, especially in the modernization of Poland's armed forces,³⁰ as well as cooperation within the international stabilization forces' mission in Iraq. In keeping with the Polish government's decision, approved by the president on 21 December 2007, albeit not without opposition, that in 2008 the participation of Polish troops in this operation was to come to an end. For this reason, it was decided that the 10th PMC rotation in Iraq (900 soldiers under the command of General Andrzej Malinowski), deployed in January 2008, would be final, staying in Iraq for ten months, until October 2008—six-month longer than earlier rotations. Its principal task was the successful termination of the Polish military presence in Iraq, including the finalization of several investment projects underway within the framework of Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) and training programs for the Iraqi army. This process unfolded without any serious obstacles, albeit the transfer of responsibility for security in the province of Al-Qadisiyah—the last one under Polish supervision—to Iraqi forces took place on 16 July and not in June as originally planned. After that, Polish troops stationed in Iraq conducted no operations (unless asked for support by the Iraqi authorities), focusing on shipping their equipment back to Poland. The first units of the PMC's 10th rotation left Iraq in the final days of September and on 4 October the Multinational Division Center-South (by then less than 1,000 strong)

²⁹ See www.msz.gov.pl/Wystapienie,Ministra,Radoslaw,Sikorskiego,na,Columbia,University,25.10.2008,22679.html. See also www.msz.gov.pl/Wystapienie,ministra,Sikorskiego,w,Atlantic,Council,23140.html.

³⁰ For more on this subject, see B. Górka-Winter, "A Long Way to Missile Defense Shield," below, p. ...

commanded by the Poles was officially disbanded, ending the mission of Polish forces in Iraq.³¹ On 27 October the last Polish units left Iraq, leaving behind only 20 Polish military instructors as part of NATO's training mission, and not the coalition's stabilization forces.³²

The United States showed understanding with regard to the withdrawal of Polish troops from Iraq and provided support through safeguarding the necessary strategic transport. There were no fatalities during the last year of Poland's military presence in Iraq.³³

Polish authorities, a significant portion of the political establishment, as experts and the media generally viewed Poland's five-year involvement in Iraq positively, indicating the political advantages arising from Poland's decision to be a part of the international stabilization forces in Iraq, including such advantages as closer military and political relations with the USA and a manifestation of Poland's readiness and ability to participate in resolving global security problems. Direct benefits for Poland's armed forces, such as the training in combat conditions of about 15,000 soldiers or accelerating the process of the Polish army's professionalization, were also mentioned. At the same time, Poland's unsuccessful attempts to obtain perceptible economic benefits and establish lasting economic ties between Polish and Iraqi or other Middle Eastern enterprises were seen as setbacks.³⁴ It is symptomatic, however, that assessments of Poland's mission in Iraq, especially those made by the government, parliament or other state institutions, only rarely took into account the broader context of the Iraqi operation, i.e., its negative impact on the global international legal order and the international security situation; for Poland as a medium-sized member of the international community, this was an important issue as well.

European Union and Other Mechanisms of International Cooperation

Poland pursued its security policy in the EU within the framework of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) in three main forms:

³¹ See *Rzeczpospolita*, 6 October 2008.

³² For more on this subject, see www.pkwirak.wp.mil.pl/pl/3.html.

³³ In all, 22 soldiers lost their lives during the Iraq mission. See www.mndcs.pamiecipoleglych.mon.gov.pl/?a=true.

³⁴ Inappropriate preparation of Polish state structures and private firms to seek out economic contracts was indicated as the cause of such setbacks more often than any disinclination on the part of the American authorities to open up the Iraqi investment market to non-U.S. entities (a common view in the United States itself in 2008). See J. Cwieliuch, W. Smoczyński, "Nareszcie wracamy," *Polityka*, 25 October 2008.

participation in EU operations, participation in the building of EU military capability, and involvement in the European Defence Agency's (EDA) research, development and planning work.

For Poland, the most important EU-related operation was the military mission in Chad and the Central African Republic (EUFOR TCHAD/RCA), both in terms of the scale and the character of Poland's involvement. The decision to launch the mission was taken by the EU Council at the end of January 2008.³⁵ Also in January, Poland decided to contribute to the mission by dispatching a contingent of 400 men and two transport helicopters (for one year).³⁶ The scale of Poland's involvement (the third largest national contingent and, more importantly, one equipped with helicopters and armored personnel carriers) allowed the Poles to assume several high-ranking posts in the EUFOR command, including the position of second in command (General Bogusław Pacek). The mission reached initial operational capability (IOC) on 15 March, but the first Polish units that were supposed to build a base for the contingent proper (the North Star base near the locality of Iriba) did not set out for Chad until April, mainly due to escalation of the armed conflict there. Successive delays were brought about by logistic difficulties, and the Polish contingent did not reach IOC until the end of June and FOC (full operation capability) till 15 September. In December, following the completion of the first rotation of the contingent, Poland announced that in 2009 its forces would be significantly reduced or withdrawn from Chad due to the new Polish strategy of involvement in military missions and the planned takeover of the EUFOR operation by the UN in March 2009.³⁷

The second most important EU operation for Poland was the civilian European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia (EUMM Georgia). The importance attributed to Georgia in Poland's eastern policy resulted in intensive efforts by

³⁵ The mission's mandate included the protection of refugee camps, ensuring the free distribution of humanitarian assistance and access of humanitarian personnel to refugees, and also defending UN personnel and property from possible attacks. See Council Decision no. 2008/101/CFSP of 28 January 2008.

³⁶ "Informacja MON na temat założeń i przygotowań do misji Polskiego Kontyngentu Wojskowego w Czadzie," *Biuletyn z posiedzenia Komisji Obrony Narodowej Sejmu*, no. 151/VI, 10 January 2008; "Postanowienie Prezydenta Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z dnia 30 stycznia 2008 r. o użyciu Polskiego Kontyngentu Wojskowego w operacji wojskowej Unii Europejskiej w Republice Czadu i Republice Środkowoafrykańskiej," *Monitor Polski*, no. 10, 2008, item 106.

³⁷ "Klich: zaangażowanie polskich żołnierzy w Czadzie uzależnione od udziału w innych misjach," PAP press release of 18 December 2008; "Możliwa zmiana flagi," *Polska Zbrojna* no. 41, 2008, p 54.

For the EU, the civilian European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) was an important operation. It began on 16 February, a day before Kosovo declared independence. Even though Poland did not take active part in the preparation of this mission, it made available to the EULEX a special unit of Polish police (120 men) so far operating in Kosovo as part of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). This was a result of an earlier agreement for the EU to take over some of the personnel and resources of this UN operation.⁴¹ Poland also continued to take part in ESDP operations begun in the preceding years, such as the European Union Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUFOR Althea—a Polish contingent of over 170 persons), and in smaller civilian training and advisory missions, including the European Union

³⁹ The mandate of the mission is to monitor the parties' fulfillment of the peace plan of 12 August 2008, their respect for law and maintenance of public order, the situation of refugees, condition of infrastructure and confidence-building. See EU Council Decision no. 2008/736/CFSP of 15 September 2008.

⁴¹ See the Police High Command communiqués: “Kolejny kontyngent policyjny wyrusza na Bałkany” of 27 November 2008, www.policja.pl/portal/pol/1/32756/Kolejny_kontyngent_policyjny_wyrusza_na_Balkany.html; “Z wizytą u polskich policjantów w Kosowie 23 grudnia 2008 r.” www.policja.pl/portal/pol/1/34140/Z_wizyta_u_polskich_policjantow_w_Kosowie.html.

Police Mission (EUPM) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the European Union Police Mission (EUPOL) in Afghanistan (several Polish policemen) and the EU Border Assistance Mission (EUBAM) on the Moldova-Ukraine border (a dozen customs officers and border guards).

In fulfillment of its earlier obligations concerning participation in initiatives aimed at increasing the EU's military capability, Poland conducted work on the creation of three EU Battlegroups. Most advanced was the formation of a group with German, Lithuanian, Latvian and Slovak participation as final work continued to attain operational readiness and enter standby by 2010, as planned. The so-called Weimar Group (Poland, Germany and France) was the subject of in-depth consultations at the political and military level, while the distant date for achieving full operational readiness by the Visegrád Group (Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and, most probably, Ukraine) led to a decision not to take up any significant measures.

Poland's activeness in the EDA was also relatively high. In May, Poland and 11 other EU member countries signed an agreement on the guidelines of the Agency's second joint investment program in the use of innovative battlefield technologies (JIP ICET).⁴² This program, along with two others (concerning maritime reconnaissance) in which Poland took part, was set in motion in November.⁴³ Polish representatives at the Agency actively participated in the establishment of a Capability Development Plan—a document adopted in July and “defining the future military needs and priorities” of the ESDP. The representatives of Poland also participated in work on the European European Defence Research and Technology Strategy and the European Armaments Cooperation Strategy—documents concerning the integration of the European defense industry.⁴⁴ In line with decisions taken a year earlier, on 1 January the

⁴² The document is headlined “Joint Investment Programme—Innovative Concepts and Emerging Technologies.” See “Minister Bogdan Klich na posiedzeniu Rady UE,” a communiqué of the Ministry of National Defense of 26 May 2008, www.wp.mil.pl/pl/artukul/4954. Poland earmarked about €700,000 of the overall total of €15 million. *Politechnika Łódzka. Biuletyn Informacyjny Międzynarodowych Programów Naukowych*, 12 September 2008, www.p.lodz.pl/zalacznik.htm?idzal=4370&tb=0&iddok=3230.

⁴³ The first program concerns anti-mine measures (Poland is one of 11 participants), and the second a sea-based unmanned surveillance craft (seven participants, including Poland). See *European Air Transport Launched*, European Defense Agency communiqué of 10 November 2008, <http://eda.europa.eu/newsitem.aspx?id=422>.

⁴⁴ Both documents were adopted in the fall of 2008. For more on the subject, see European Defense Agency communiqués: *EU Governments Agree on an Armaments Cooperation Strategy*, 16 October 2008, <http://eda.europa.eu/newsitem.aspx?id=417>; *European Defense Research and Technology Strategy*, 10 November 2008, <http://eda.europa.eu/newsitem.aspx?id=422>.

position of the EDA deputy chief executive for operations went to Polish General Adam Sowa.

Poland actively joined the debate on the proposals of the French presidency for a comprehensive strengthening of the EU's ability to take on stabilization and peace missions. Although Poland did not support the postulate of setting up a central military command responsible for conducting ESDP missions (the EU HQ), it approved plans to reinforce cooperation between NATO and the EU.⁴⁵ It also signaled its interest in some initiatives to build up the EU's military capabilities: an exchange of young military personnel between member countries (the so-called Military ERASMUS), a system for obtaining satellite images for ESDP operations and also, under some conditions, a project increasing availability and interoperability of military support helicopters.⁴⁶

An important step, but one only indirectly related to Poland's participation in the ESDP, was an increase in Poland's involvement in the **Eurocorps**. In May, Minister Klich announced that in 2009 Poland would obtain the full-fledged status of "framework nation" in this international military structure, alongside Germany, France, Spain, Belgium and Luxembourg.⁴⁷

Poland's activity in the domain of security at the United Nations kept its traditional form. Poland continued to be involved in peace missions: in Lebanon a Polish contingent of almost 500 men with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL); and in Syria, on the Golan Heights a contingent of almost 350 men with the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF).⁴⁸ A 120-man Polish police unit active in Kosovo within the UNMIK mission was transferred to the European Union's EULEX mission in December. In February and March, Polish policemen on several occasions suppressed riots that broke out in connection with Kosovo's declaration of independence on 17 February, and 28 Poles were wounded during the most serious clashes with the local population on 16 March in Kosovska Mitrovica.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ "Bojowe oblicze Unii," *Polska Zbrojna*, no. 23, 2008, p. 8.

⁴⁶ *Polska popiera Erasmusa wojskowego i inicjatywę satelitarną*, PAP press release of 2 October 2008.

⁴⁷ Earlier, Poland cooperated with the Eurocorps to a limited extent, as a so-called "associated nation" *Rzeczpospolita*, 15 May 2008.

⁴⁸ For more on the subject, see www.do.wp.mil.pl.

⁴⁹ *Kosowo: 28 polskich policjantów rannych*, PAP press release of 17 March 2008, <http://fakty.interia.pl/raport/kosowo/news/kosowo-28-polskich-policjantow-rannych,1076954,5115>.

Other UN missions included one or more Polish military and civilian observers.⁵⁰

Polish activity as part of the political and military dimension of the **Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)** was marginal, mainly due to a lack of effective instruments that would have allowed Poland to influence Russia's inflexible stance, which was behind an impasse on two issues key for the OSCE, i.e., the implementation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and the resolution of the Russian-Georgian conflict.⁵¹ The postulates raised by certain OSCE members to call a special summit in 2009 to address Russia's proposals for a comprehensive reconstruction of the European security system met with Poland's unequivocal criticism.⁵²

Poland continued its involvement in the **Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI)**. From 12 to 14 May, military units from Poland, the USA, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Slovenia and Italy participated in the "Adriatic Shield" sea exercises. In other international arms control and disarmament regimes, Poland's involvement was insignificant. Although Poland participated in the process that led to the signing of the **Convention on Cluster Munitions** (3 December), already at the preliminary stage it became clear that Poland would not support the provisions proposed by the convention's initiators. Pointing to the need to protect national territory, use of such munitions by other countries and the fact that such munitions manufactured in Poland and used by the Polish armed forces were equipped with security mechanisms (significantly reducing the number of unexploded ordnances hazardous to civilians), Poland ultimately did not sign the convention and does not intend to in the near future.⁵³ However

⁵⁰ These were the missions in: Chad and the Central African Republic (United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad, MINURCAT), Western Sahara (United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara, MINURSO), Democratic Republic of the Congo (United Nations Organization Mission in DR Congo, MONUC), Liberia (United Nations Mission in Liberia, UNMIL), Sudan (United Nations Mission in Sudan, UNMIS), the Côte d'Ivoire (United Nations Mission in Côte d'Ivoire, UNOCI) and Georgia (United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia, UNOMIG). See www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/contributors/2008/dec08_3.pdf.

⁵¹ In December, Russia refused to agree to the extension of the OSCE mission's mandate in Georgia. See *Rzeczpospolita*, 23 December 2008.

⁵² See the address by Przemysław Grudziński, under-secretary of state at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, at the opening session of the OSCE Ministerial Council, Helsinki, 5 December 2008, www.osce.org/item/35480.html.

⁵³ "Polska znów mówi 'nie,'" *Polska Zbrojna*, no. 50, 2008, pp. 18–21; *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 4 December 2008. At the same time, Poland stressed its interest in negotiations on a protocol to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons that would pertain to cluster weapons. See *Polska. The Times*, 4 September 2008.

as in the preceding years, Poland was a leading sponsor of a resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 2 December on the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction.⁵⁴

Assessment

Poland's security policy in 2008 was conducted in a more cohesive and decisive manner than a year earlier—a fact that reflected its importance in foreign policy. Its aims and priorities were presented more clearly, while emphasis on the key significance of trans-Atlantic cooperation (in NATO and as part of the partnership with the USA) defined the hierarchy of the instruments for its implementation. Differences between the two centers of power affecting the government's security policy were—especially in comparison with other foreign policy issues (such as relations with the EU)—limited and focused on operational questions (use of negotiation methods and strategies, decisions on how Polish postulates should be presented, and so forth) rather than on the targets and tasks as such. It also seems that the government's information policy on security issues has improved, as indicated by the public's greater understanding of and acceptance for the government's line, motives and targets in foreign relations.⁵⁵

Negotiations on the deployment in Poland of elements of the American missile defense system and a reinforcement of ties with the United States were a high priority issue in Poland's security policy in 2008. This affected the importance of other aims and Poland's involvement in their pursuit—a factor that should be taken into account in any assessment of Poland's security policy in 2008, especially considering the results obtained so far in negotiations with the USA and the present state of cooperation with that country.

⁵⁴ This was the GA Resolution 63/48.

⁵⁵ *Szczegółowe oceny działalności rządu Donalda Tuska na tle poprzedników. Komunikat z badań* (CBOS), June 2008, BS/86/2008, p. 2. The drop in responses such as “hard to say” or “I don't know” indirectly reflects greater familiarity with foreign policy issues described by the government as the most important (for example, such answers were given by 17%, 16% and 19% of respondents asked about the anti-missile shield in July, August and September 2007, against only 13% and 14% in October and December 2008). The same can be said of a relatively high proportion of unequivocal declarations (“I approve”/“I don't approve”) in polls related to specific foreign policy issues (NATO enlargement, Polish-Russian relations, Polish policy with regard to the conflict in Georgia). See www.cbos.pl/PL/publikacje/raporty_2008.php.

Poland's activeness in NATO, seen as Poland's largest multilateral security instrument, brought moderately positive results. To some degree, this was no doubt due to the extraordinary importance of NATO's eastern policy issues (relations with Russia, Ukraine and Georgia), but in 2008, Poland's stance on individual issues (including the new strategic and contingency planning concept—an important matter for Poland) at the NATO forum was clearer and attracted more attention, albeit not necessarily approval. On the integration of Georgia and Ukraine with the Alliance—an issue seen as vital from the Polish perspective—Poland succeeded in persuading NATO (along with other allies, mainly the USA) to promise those countries membership in the future. At the same time, Poland did not succeed in having the MAP program extended to those countries in 2008, although it has to be said that this was due primarily to objective factors unaffected by Poland's diplomatic efforts (first of all the Russian-Georgian conflict). Given those two countries' domestic and international situations, the fact that they have not been granted the MAP program does not prevent them from *de facto* making progress in an integration with the Alliance in the long run, although the attitudes prevailing within NATO indicate that the fulfillment of the promise of membership for Georgia and Ukraine is a distant prospect, a factor that no doubt reduces the value of the promise itself.

The 2008 evolution of the Alliance's stance on the American missile defense project (including the deployment of some of its elements in Poland) was satisfactory from Poland's point of view, although it is difficult to define to what extent this change resulted from Polish diplomatic efforts. Nonetheless, NATO's informal support for the project is beneficial for Poland in light of the bilateral agreement concluded with the USA, as it undermines the arguments of allies skeptical about the project and reinforces Poland's position in discussions about the system's future. One should bear in mind, however, that the real value of the NATO declaration on anti-missile defense depends primarily on the determination of the new American administration to continue the program.

As in earlier years, one of the main methods for building Poland's position in the Alliance was its involvement in expeditionary activities and, to a lesser degree, in modernization programs. The increase and reorganization of the Polish military contingent in the ISAF and maintenance of Poland's involvement in other operations (KFOR, Air Policing, Active Endeavour) and initiatives (SAC) underscored Poland's credibility as an ally and pointed to its significant—compared to other NATO members—contribution to Alliance missions, confirming its will and ability to participate in the development of NATO's potential. The effectiveness of expeditionary missions as a means to strengthen

Poland's position in the Alliance was undermined, however, by Poland's persistent organizational problems (logistics, equipment), financial limitations felt even in high-priority missions (for example, Poland's inability to set up its own Provincial Reconstruction Team in Afghanistan), the dependence of Polish troops abroad on support from the allies, mainly the USA, and the slow pace at which decisions taken are implemented. All this confirmed the persisting serious limitations on the Polish armed forces' expeditionary capabilities and on their ability to operate abroad on their own.⁵⁶ This in turn reduces Poland's weight somewhat as a NATO member, especially as its efforts to strengthen its position by hosting allied infrastructure on Polish territory remain unsuccessful.

Poland's activeness on the EU plane brought similarly differentiated results. The factor reinforcing Poland's position in the ESDP was its above average involvement in the development of the EU's military and stabilization capabilities, especially Poland's relative activeness at the European Defense Agency, its steadfast pursuit of processes leading to the formation of battlegroups and, indirectly, its decision to increase its involvement in the Eurocorps. Another factor that strengthened Poland's position was Warsaw's involvement in EU stabilization missions, especially its efforts to establish a mission in Georgia and its serious—in comparison with other EU members—contribution to the operation in Chad, although the PR effects of Poland's involvement in Chad were undermined by the Polish army's organizational and logistic difficulties, similar to those in the case of the NATO mission.⁵⁷ These resulted in a lengthy period of deployment compared to other participants in the operation, which might have sent an unfavorable signal to other EU countries that Poland's ambitions and intentions within the ESDP were not backed by adequate operational capabilities. Nonetheless, the fact that Poland's stance with respect to France's 2008 attempts to revive the debate on strengthening EU capabilities in the sphere of security was treated with attention within the EU is a measure of Poland's sound position within the ESDP. Some countries, including Germany,

⁵⁶ Greater effectiveness and optimization of Poland's expeditionary engagement is to be served by the new strategy drawn up by the Ministry of National Defense in 2008 and adopted by the Council of Ministers on 13 January 2009. See "Strategia udziału Sił Zbrojnych RP w misjach międzynarodowych. Misje strategiczne," *Polska Zbrojna*, no. 4, 2009, p. 7.

⁵⁷ In its engagement in the Chad mission, Poland referred to the principle of European solidarity, something that was beneficial for its image. See interview with S. J. Komorowski, under-secretary of state at the Ministry of National Defense, "Zasada solidarności," *Polska Zbrojna*, no. 24, 2008, pp. 16–17. An important factor that reduced the positive effects of Poland's involvement in this mission was the EU's gradual loss of interest in the operation due to its greater involvement in Kosovo and Georgia.

expected Poland to take a stand on other issues important for the ESDP's future, for instance on the proposal to set up a European army. At the same time, Poland's mounting emphasis on the EU's complementariness with regard to NATO structures may have suggested to other countries that Poland would not be amongst states striving for a swift and significant reinforcement of the ESDP, especially in strictly military terms.

One of the successes of Poland's foreign policy in 2008 was the completion—in an efficient, responsible and timely manner—of its participation in the international military operation in Iraq. The significance of this fact, however, was mainly domestic (given the expectations of Polish citizens), while having a limited effect on Poland's relations with other countries (including the USA, other allies and Middle Eastern states) and on its international standing. The termination of this operation made it possible for Poland to reduce the burden on its expeditionary armed forces and to reinforce Poland's presence in other more pressing regions (Afghanistan).

Poland's involvement in security cooperation within multilateral structures other than NATO and the EU (the UN, arms control and disarmament institutions, OSCE) reflected the role of these institutions in Polish policy and the country's real capabilities. All its efforts notwithstanding, Poland was not able to overcome the impasse at the OSCE, especially with respect to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and the Russian-Georgian conflict. It seems, however, that success in this area was unlikely (given Russia's inflexible stance, which Poland had no influence upon). At the same time, Poland took steps to persuade its EU partners to treat with skepticism Russia's proposals to build a new security system in Europe, depicting these proposals as a threat to Polish interests and the future of the OSCE.

A positive assessment of Poland's security policy in 2008 was mitigated by the absence of significant initiatives (at the EU, NATO or elsewhere) as well as a lack of intensive and effective efforts to enhance the country's energy security, even if these issues only to some extent relate to the political and military level. A certain setback, especially in PR terms, will result from Poland's failure to sign the convention banning cluster munitions. This decision is detrimental to Poland's image as a country supporting the arms control and disarmament process and human rights, undermining Poland's effectiveness in other initiatives, for instance the Proliferation Security Initiative.

Summing up, Poland's security policy in 2008 was relatively effective and moderately successful, especially in reinforcing the country's position in the most important multilateral instruments of that policy—NATO and the EU. But

given that these results were obtained in large measure thanks to considerable financial outlays and greater Polish involvement in expeditionary missions, the government's declarations in early 2009 on the need to reduce expenses for such activities due to the financial crisis, could make it difficult for Poland to consolidate its limited achievements in the nearest future.⁵⁸ Consequently, the final assessment of Poland's security policy in 2008 will depend more than ever on its continuation in the coming years.

⁵⁸ See the statement by Defense Minister Bogdan Klich on Polish radio on 4 February 2009, www.polskieradio.pl:80/jedynka/sygnalednia/?id=17893.

II.

Poland's Policy Regarding Selected Countries and Regions

Poland's Policy Regarding the United States

Background

Relations with the United States are among the most important elements of Poland's foreign policy. Issues that affected Poland's policy towards the United States in 2008 included long-term questions and processes as well as factors that have a short-term, although not necessarily less intense, impact on this policy.

The context of Polish policy towards the United States is invariably marked by the states' diverse potentials and international standings. Although bilateral relations are described by both sides as a strategic partnership, there is a visible difference in the importance the two countries attach to this partnership. Poland sees collaboration with the U.S., which is its most powerful ally within NATO, as one of the most important instruments of its security. Poland's policy towards the United States is thus traditionally dominated by political and military security issues, as reflected in Poland's involvement in the most important American expeditionary missions in Afghanistan and in Iraq. Poland's support for America's "global war on terrorism" stemmed from its recognition of America's role as a guarantor of the international order and leader of the Atlantic community. Poland also sees a convergence of views on key issues concerning the functioning of NATO, such as the advisability of maintaining the Alliance's open door policy with regard to countries of the post-Soviet area or the desirability of developing NATO's expeditionary abilities (in doing so, Poland places stronger emphasis on the Alliance's traditional functions pertaining to the defense of member states' territories). In this sense, strategic partnership with the U.S. is one of the "points of reference" of Poland's activeness on the international stage.

Despite the intensification of relations between the United States and Poland in 2004 through the so-called Strategic Dialogue, which the U.S. maintains with a relatively small group of allies, relations with Poland do not have the same status in the eyes of Washington, although Poland is a valuable political partner for the Americans as a member of the European Union with a strong

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pro-Atlantic identity. It shares America's perception of international security threats and is ready to support U.S. initiatives in this respect. The political capital Warsaw earned among American decision-makers as an example of successful democratic political transformations has been enhanced by its reputation of a tried ally. In addition, the context of Poland's policy is also marked by America's stressing of the historical community uniting the two countries, although this is a factor whose significance is difficult to measure, the more so as it is at times treated by American diplomacy as a convenient way of expressing "appreciation" for the allies with a view to strengthening their loyalty through solely symbolic gestures. This means both preserving the memory of Poles' participation in the struggle to establish and sustain American statehood in the 18th century and emphasizing American efforts on behalf of Poland's independence in the 20th century.¹

A long-term aspect of Poland's policy towards the United States is Polish society's declining fondness for the USA, if only in comparison to the end of the last decade. This trend, which has been observed for many years, has not undergone any significant change in 2008. As studies of Poles' attitudes toward other nations indicate, the level of fondness for America has diminished over the past 15 years in the most spectacular manner (although America continue to be one of the 10 nations most liked by Poles).² This can be explained by the growing dissatisfaction of Polish public opinion with the manner in which the Polish-American alliance is functioning (the conviction that the USA treats the alliance with Poland instrumentally and does not take Polish interests into consideration in an adequate manner),³ and partly from a general drop in U.S. popularity throughout the world during George W. Bush's presidency, particularly following the American invasion of Iraq.⁴

¹ For example, in March 2007, the United States' Senate supported the motion of granting honorary U.S. citizenship to General Kazimierz Pułaski (the final decision in this matter belongs to the U.S. president). Until now, only six persons have thus been honored.

² See the results of the study *Stosunek Polaków do innych narodów, Komunikat z badań*, CBOS, Warsaw, December 2008.

³ According to the CBOS polling center, 74% of Poles stated that "the United States misuses its power to subordinate Polish policy to its own ends." See *Polacy o wpływie United States na świat, Komunikat z badań*, CBOS, Warsaw, September 2008.

⁴ See the minutes from the meeting of the Sejm Foreign Affairs Committee with the Polish Ambassador in Washington, Robert Kupiecki, 23rd Committee session, 28 March 2008, www.sejm.gov.pl. See also B. Górka-Winter, "Poland's Policy Regarding the United States," *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy 2008*, pp. 82–83.

Negotiations over Poland's participation in the American missile defense (MD) project played a vital role among factors influencing Poland's policy towards the United States in the short-term. The importance of these negotiations was due on one hand to the significance that President G. W. Bush's Republican administration accorded to the realization of this project and, on the other, to the benefits that the Polish authorities expected. The MD system was one of the flagship undertakings of the American defense and security policy in 2001–2009. The U.S. regarded sealing the deal to build one of the system's crucial elements in Poland before the end of Bush's term as a way to increase the achievements of his tenure. According to some observers, this fact caused the Americans to display haste during the talks. Poland announced that during the negotiations it would be guided primarily by the need to reinforce Polish security and not by the principle of allied solidarity with the U.S., as had been the case with the decisions to participate in the Afghanistan and Iraq operations.

The dissonance between the major Polish political groupings on the policy toward the U.S., especially regarding Poland's participation in the MD project, should also be seen as a short-term factor. However, the desirability of granting special status to relations with the U.S. was not questioned by any of the political parties represented in the Polish Parliament following the October 2007 elections. Still, the debate preceding the elections had shown that they did not agree on all aspects of cooperation with the U.S. These differing views reflected the Polish political elites' diverse reactions to the evolution of public opinion, at the same time manifesting dissatisfaction with the attainments of Polish-American cooperation. Some parties, including the victorious Civic Platform (PO), went into the election with the promise to withdraw Polish troops from Iraq. The favorable attitude to missile defense displayed by Law and Justice (PiS), the largest opposition party, contrasted with the more nuanced approach of PO and the generally critical views of center-left coalition. However, a far more important factor influencing Poland's policy towards the United States—in terms of its already mentioned importance for Poland's security, the singling out of relations with the U.S. in public debate, as well as the gravity of the issues shaping those relations in 2008—was the so-called cohabitation in the Polish political system. This situation emerged after the parliamentary elections and consisted in the concentration of executive power in foreign policy—divided under the Polish Constitution between the Council of Ministers and the

President in a way allowing for considerable interpretative leeway⁵—in two rival political camps (the PO-Polish Peasant Party coalition and PiS respectively).

The presidential and congressional elections in the United States were the third short-term factor. In this context, it is important to note the uncertainty about the future course of American policy inherent in such moments, coupled with the increased awareness of the country's foreign relations problems among the American public. During the nearly three-month post-electoral period preceding the formal inauguration of the new president (in January 2009, the Democratic Party's Barack Obama became the 44th president of the United States), an opportunity—necessity even—emerged to shape Poland's image and present Poland's arguments in Washington.

Finally, it should be pointed out that economic issues affect Polish-American relations only to a slight degree. The United States government undoubtedly played a part in Poland's economic transformation, and the value of overall American investments in Poland makes the United States one of the largest foreign investors in Poland after 1990.⁶ Nonetheless, the U.S. is far down on the list of Poland's economic partners. Poland is neither an important market for America's exports nor a significant source of its imports.

Objectives and Guidelines

Poland's policy toward the United States in 2008 focused on three basic objectives. First, Warsaw expected increased American involvement in strengthening Poland's defense capabilities. Warsaw saw a more "active" U.S. role in the modernization of Polish armed forces as a priority.⁷ It resulted from Warsaw's aspirations for U.S. recognition of threats to Poland's security as a NATO "border" state, interested in preserving guarantees under Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty and engaged in expeditionary operations important for the United States and NATO as a whole. At the same time, Poland openly

⁵ It should be pointed out that the nature of the dispute in question is primarily political. Legally speaking, the interpretation of the relevant provisions of the Polish Constitution leads to conclusions presented, for example, by S. Dębski in: *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy 2008*, p. 6.

⁶ Poland became one of the "experimental grounds" for new American initiatives directed at former Eastern Bloc countries. For example, in the years 1989–1999, as part of the market reforms support program ensuing from the law on supporting East European democracies, Poland obtained non-refundable financial aid in the amount of about US\$1 billion.

⁷ Informacja ministra spraw zagranicznych na temat polityki zagranicznej RP w 2008—see above, p. XX.

recognized the existence of an *iunctim* between the fulfillment of these postulates and agreement for its participation in the missile defense project.

Second, Poland was striving for an enhanced “American presence” on its territory, especially permanent deployment of American military units, in order to reinforce additional security guarantees that were expected to be formulated—as in the case of the “modernization” objective—during the talks about missile defense.⁸ The deployment in Poland of an essential element of the American defense system was meant to entrench America’s interest in this part of Europe, and in Poland’s security in particular. This objective was attributable to the Polish authorities’ traditional position holding that the American political and military presence on the European continent was one of the guarantees of its stability and security. Less emphasis was placed on the postulate of stimulating bilateral trade, investment activity of American firms and American interest in cultural and scientific research in Poland.⁹

Third, Poland faced the need to prepare the ground for cooperation with the new U.S. administration. Initially this required the establishment of contacts with the staffs of the principal candidates and then the conduct of a policy toward the United States under the conditions of a peculiar *interregnum*—a period between the presidential election, when the outgoing administration is entering a phase of actual political drift, and the formal assumption of power by the president-elect.

It should be stated that the cohabitation effect mentioned above was not reflected at the policy’s conceptual level. President Lech Kaczyński fully appreciated the importance of strategic relations with the “world’s most powerful country” and called for a further deepening of bilateral cooperation, first of all through Poland’s participation in the missile defense system.¹⁰ Rather, the differences between the government and the president had to do with the approach to be taken in order to realize this objective.

⁸ In practice, Polish authorities expected the U.S. side to provide a Patriot missile battery and to conclude an additional agreement on political and military cooperation. See the interview with National Defense Minister Bogdan Klich in *Dziennik* of 12 January 2008. Subsequent pronouncements by Klich indicated that Poland also wanted additional security guarantees which could “reinforce the Article 5 of the Washington Treaty.” See *Rzeczpospolita* of 14 August 2008.

⁹ See the statement made by Witold Waszczykowski, then under-secretary of state at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, during the 23rd session of the Sejm Foreign Affairs Committee, www.sejm.gov.pl.

¹⁰ See the speech made by President Lech Kaczyński during a New Year’s meeting with the diplomatic corps, 16 January 2008, www.prezydent.pl.

Political Relations

High-level meetings and contacts. The calendar and subject matter of meetings between representatives of the two countries in 2008 were dominated by, on one hand, the ongoing discussions about Poland's participation in the missile defense system and, on the other hand by political events in Poland (Prime Minister Tusk's government had to take over the extensive agenda of cooperation with the Americans) and in the United States (presidential and congressional elections). On March 9–11, Prime Minister Tusk and Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski traveled to the United States. During his meeting with President Bush, the Polish prime minister presented the position regarding the building of the anti-missile shield and the modernization of Poland's armed forces. It was decided then that Polish-American negotiations would be conducted simultaneously in two areas—the package of agreements concerning the anti-missile base and the scope and principles of modernization assistance. Poland's participation in the Iraqi and Afghan missions was also discussed, as was the problem of American visa requirement for Polish citizens.

Minister Sikorski was very active in his contacts with American politicians. He made a total of five working trips to the United States in 2008.¹¹ It should be noted that the Minister also presented Poland's position in direct contacts with the American public, most notably during lectures and discussions organized by renowned American analytical and research institutions.¹² As late as December 2008, i.e. after the American presidential elections, Sikorski met with representatives of the State Department and the U.S. Congress to discuss the details of the agreement to install missile defense facilities in Poland and the Declaration on Strategic Cooperation.

Toward the end of June, the head of President Lech Kaczyński's Chancellery, Anna Fotyga, traveled to Washington. The official reason for her visit was to sum up the achievements of President Kaczyński's tenure and to discuss the state of Polish-U.S. relations. However, the timing of the visit (the culminating phase of missile defense negotiations), as well as Minister

¹¹ Minister Sikorski was in the USA from 30 January to 3 February, 9–10 March, 7–9 July, 8–9 September and 18–21 November.

¹² Minister Sikorski took part in conferences and seminars organized by the American Enterprise Institute, the Atlantic Council, the Brookings Institution, the Chicago Council on Global Affairs and the Hudson Institute. Broadly commented on in particular was Sikorski's speech at Columbia University in New York on 25 October, when he summed up Poland's achievements resulting from its membership in NATO and the European Union, and also when he presented Poland's interpretation of the effects of the Russia-Georgia war in August 2008.

Sikorski's distancing himself from the visit and the declarations of presidential officials that Fotyga's visit was connected with President Kaczyński's "concern" over the state of the negotiations, resulted in public questioning of the cohesion of the Polish position in talks with the Americans.¹³ Some tensions also arose between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Presidential Chancellery over Poland's relations with the United States in connection with the public pronouncements of Chancellery representatives on the courtesy conversation between President Kaczyński and Senator Obama immediately following the presidential elections in the United States.¹⁴

The end of the anti-missile shield negotiations and the implementation of the agreement. The signing of the Polish-American agreement on missile defense was one of Poland's most far-reaching foreign policy and security decisions made in 2008.¹⁵ From Poland's viewpoint, the significance of the more than years-long negotiations for Warsaw's relations with the U.S. consisted first of all in tying the building of the missile defense base to increased American participation in the modernization of the Polish armed forces and in raising the rank of Poland's relations with the U.S. through an additional political and military agreement. The Polish authorities thus saw the deepening of bilateral relations with the U.S. in the sphere of security as a condition for Poland's participation in the missile defense project. For this reason, the adoption of the Declaration on Strategic Cooperation became an issue of key significance in the context of the negotiations, which were completed in August.¹⁶ As Polish government representatives observed, the basic substance of the agreement about the base was worked out in late June and early July. The changes introduced into the text of the agreement during the last round of negotiations

¹³ Responding to a question if Minister Fotyga's visit had turned out to be helpful in the context of missile shield talks, Sikorski stated that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had not advocated this visit, while he himself had "advised against it," and that the visit had not contributed to "clarifying Poland's message to the U.S. side." In turn, the then head of the presidential National Security Bureau, Władysław Stasiak, observed that Fotyga's visit "had not thwarted the government's efforts" during the negotiations. See PAP dispatch of 27 June 2008.

¹⁴ Despite the assurances of the then head of the Presidential Chancellery, Piotr Kownacki, U.S. President-Elect Obama did not make any declaration concerning the future of the Central European elements of the missile defense system, but only spoke of the will to continue allied cooperation with Poland. Minister Kownacki later admitted that "our interpretation of Obama's words had been a step too far on our part." See PAP dispatch of 10 November 2008.

¹⁵ For more on this subject, see the text by B. Górka-Winter below, p. XX.

¹⁶ For a discussion of the contents of the declaration, see B. Górka-Winter, "Porozumienia Polski i Stanów Zjednoczonych w sprawie obrony przeciwrakietowej—zakres współpracy i perspektywy realizacji," *Biuletyn*, PISM, 2008, no. 38, www.pism.pl/biuletyn_content/id/542.

(13–14 August) only partly concerned the fulfillment of the Polish high-priority postulate of a “tangible enhancement” of Poland’s security;¹⁷ this postulate was the reason why success had not been achieved in July. On the other hand, a number of important stipulations were added to the text of the declaration, including a paragraph on the deployment of a Patriot missile battery on Polish soil, the statement that Poland and the U.S. would work together to counteract military and non-military threats created by third parties, the American declaration of intent to provide Poland with significant assistance in the modernization of its armed forces, or a more precise formulation announcing additional cooperation agreements in science, research and industry.¹⁸

The agreement on the missile defense base and the declaration constituted only a part of the package of agreements in the sphere of missile defense.¹⁹ Given the strict inter-relation between the individual documents, it was the Polish government’s intention to negotiate all elements of the package with the Americans in order to submit them afterwards to President Kaczyński for ratification.²⁰ Moreover, the missile base agreement itself mentions the necessity of concluding eight additional executive agreements,²¹ while the declaration calls for the signing of an additional agreement on cooperation in air and missile defense that was to form the basis for the deployment in Poland of an American battery of Patriot missiles. Prime Minister Tusk’s government believed that in practice deeper cooperation with the U.S. administration on security matters, made possible by the agreement on the missile defense base and the declaration,

¹⁷ Changes in the wording of the declaration concerned plans to use the system for defending Polish territory, covering the claims of third countries in connection with the functioning of the base, the layout of responsibility areas for the security of the base and the division of the costs involved.

¹⁸ See *Informacja rządu na temat umieszczenia w Redzikowie elementów amerykańskiego systemu obrony przeciwrakietowej*, communicated to Parliament by Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski during the 28th session of the Sejm on 7 November 2008, and also the statement of the under-secretary of state at the Ministry of National Defense, Stanisław Komorowski, during the 21st session of the Sejm on 5 September 2008, www.sejm.gov.pl.

¹⁹ In addition, the package included the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) for U.S. forces stationed on Polish territory and a framework agreement on scientific, technological and economic cooperation.

²⁰ These agreements were to be ratified in keeping with the procedure under Article 89.1 of the Polish Constitution, i.e. following the Sejm’s statutory expression of consent.

²¹ These agreements were to concern individual technical matters, such as the principles and limitations on the use of grounds surrounding the base, cooperation in intelligence and anti-terrorist protection of the base, creating a no-fly zone in the vicinity of the base, creating posts for liaison officers at appropriate levels of the command structure.

depended precisely on the content of the agreements accompanying these documents. Discussions on this matter began in September, but were not finalized by the end of 2008.

President Kaczyński favored the acceleration of the ratification procedure so as to present the new U.S. administration with a confirmed agreement in January 2009. Presidential officials argued that Barack Obama's team would continue to build the European missile defense site.²² These predictions contrasted with those of Minister Sikorski, who predicted that the new administration would show greater skepticism toward the project.²³

Military Cooperation

Discussions about the modernization of the Polish armed forces. Under the above-mentioned agreements, the modernization issue was to be dealt with at the working level by four bilateral groups responsible for: analyzing military threats to Poland; assessing the scope of modernization undertakings necessary to ensure an effective neutralization of these threats; identifying and removing obstacles to the sale of military equipment and transfer of sensitive technology; examining the possibilities for financing the modernization of Poland's armed forces by linking military assistance with other financing mechanisms. It should be added that the Americans—in contrast to the Polish authorities—did not recognize the modernization issue as being formally tied to Poland's consent for the interceptor missile base on its territory, arguing that the strengthening of Poland's armed forces was in itself in America's interest.²⁴

The start of work of the first group at the beginning of May 2008 was accompanied by a decision of the U.S. administration to increase the level of military aid to Poland as part of the Foreign Military Financing (FMF) program from US\$27 million to US\$47 million.²⁵ Then, in early July, a report

²² The abovementioned ambiguities of the Kaczyński-Obama talk were most probably a function of this type of forecasts. As late as August, President Kaczyński viewed the August agreement with the United States as worked out by the government as "not bad." He criticized the government's delay in accepting the U.S. offer, however. See PAP dispatch of 20 August 2008.

²³ PAP dispatch of 21 November 2008.

²⁴ See the statement made by Stephen Mull, director for political and military affairs at the U.S. State Department, during a press conference in Warsaw on 7 May 2008, www.polish.poland.usembassy.gov.

²⁵ All in all, in the years 1995–2008, the U.S. government transferred the sum of about US\$350 million as part of this program. In 2005, Poland also obtained one-time military assistance in the amount of about US\$60 million as part of the so-called Solidarity Initiative.

commissioned by the Americans was drawn up for the work groups about the modernization needs of the Polish army, first of all with respect to air defenses.²⁶ The first two groups completed their work at the end of July, while the work of the two remaining groups was not concluded by the end of 2008, mainly on account of the diminishing activeness of the departing U.S. administration and the *de facto* ceding of this matter to the incoming Obama administration. The negotiations concerning the above-mentioned package of agreements on missile defense were not completed either.

Cooperation in Iraq and Afghanistan. The year 2008 was the last year of Poland's military presence in Iraq and Polish-American military collaboration in that country. Most importantly the Polish authorities' decision to withdraw from the Iraqi mission was well coordinated with American planning for continued presence in Iraq. Polish Defense Minister Bogdan Klich discussed the particulars of the Polish military contingent's withdrawal from Iraq in Washington towards the end of January. In April, the U.S. high command, following its change of strategy in combating the rebellion and an increase in the number of American troops in Iraq, began consolidating the successes it had achieved in assuring security in Iraq. This process entailed a gradual transfer of responsibility for security matters in individual provinces to the Iraqi army and police.²⁷

Iraq's increasing stability, the expected change in the legal basis for the presence of American forces in that country (with the expiry of the relevant UN Security Council resolution, in December 2008 it became necessary to work out a new agreement regulating the status and tasks of American forces), growing difficulties in assuring security in Afghanistan (in May, for the first time, American casualties in that country were higher than those in Iraq), and an analysis of pronouncements made by the Democratic presidential contenders

²⁶ See P. Gillert, "Polska armia pod lupą," *Rzeczpospolita* of 14 May 2008. The report (prepared by RAND Corporation) proposed, as part of one scenario for the modernization of Poland's capabilities in this area, to deploy in Poland an infrastructure of modest size: one Patriot missile battery along with a service battalion of about 110 men. This proposal ultimately found itself in the Polish-American declaration with a view to creating foundations for the extension of Poland's aerial defense system. See PAP dispatch of 9 July 2008.

²⁷ The commander-in-chief of U.S. forces in Iraq, General Raymond Odierno, described Poland's decision as "well coordinated" with the general evolution of the situation in Iraq. See "Poland Leaves Iraq but Doesn't Give up Helping U.S.," 10 April 2008, www.usatoday.com. See also the pronouncements of General David Petraeus, then commander-in-chief of the U.S. forces in Iraq, and those of Ryan Crocker, U.S. ambassador in Iraq, during the meeting of the Senate Armed Forces Committee on 8 April 2008, www.senate.gov. For more on the subject of the presence of Polish troops in Iraq and in Afghanistan, see the text by M. Madej and M. Terlikowski above, p. XX.

during the U.S. electoral campaign gave reasons to expect that the U.S. involvement in Iraq would give way to the Afghan mission on the agenda of the new American administration. These expectations were then confirmed by Barack Obama's electoral victory. Polish-U.S. cooperation as part of the Afghan mission thus became much more important. Toward the end of October, Poland took over responsibility for security in the Ghazni province from the U.S. troops. Americans continued to provide logistic support to the Polish contingent, for example by replacing High Mobility Multi-Purpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWV) with newer ones with higher grade armor, and by lending Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles with reinforced resistance to explosive charges (the first of these went into service in December 2009).²⁸ They also offered help in expanding the military infrastructure in Ghazni. A group of 30 Polish military and civilian employees joined the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT), and support was traditionally offered to the special forces of both countries (reconnaissance, coordination and security measures).²⁹

Supplies of military equipment and training of Polish personnel. In December 2008, Poland took delivery of the last of the 48 F-16 multi-task fighter jets (in keeping with the schedule).³⁰ In the coming years, cooperation in training pilots and ground personnel for these aircraft will be continued. The delivery of C-130 Hercules transport planes was delayed, however.³¹ The Polish government hoped that a new fleet of five aircraft of this type (they were to be outfitted and modernized at America's expense as part of the FMF program) would significantly improve its capability to deliver supplies to Polish troops participating in foreign missions and its ability to provide humanitarian aid during natural disasters. The first Polish air and ground crews completed pilot and service training towards the end of the year (cooperation with the U.S. in this sphere will also be continued).

²⁸ With the Afghan mission in mind, Poland is also considering the purchase of American sapper vehicles. See PAP dispatch of 16 December 2008.

²⁹ Deepening cooperation between Polish and American special forces was also reflected in consultations between commanders of those forces from both countries (PAP dispatch of 1 April 2008) and in common exercises at the training grounds in Powidz (December 2008).

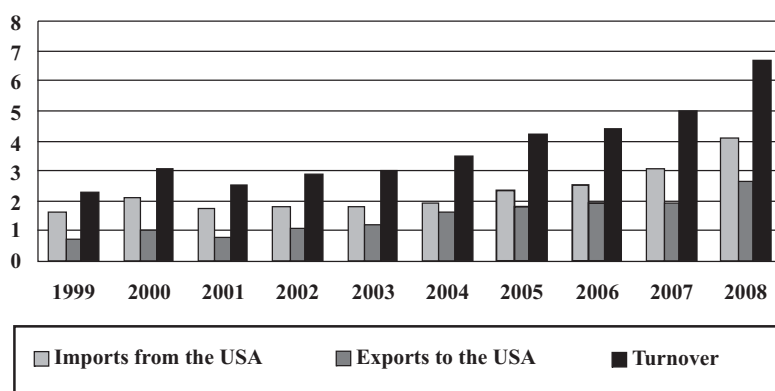
³⁰ One problem was the efficient handling of breakdowns and defects in the functioning of the F-16. See E. Żemła, "Polskie jastrzębie uziemione," *Rzeczpospolita* of 1 December 2008.

³¹ Their arrival was postponed several times, also at the beginning of 2009. See E. Żemła, Ł. Zalesiński, "Amerykanie opóźniają dostawę Herkulesów," *Rzeczpospolita* of 5 November 2008; B. Leśniewski, "Odłot Herculesów. Nie przylecą na czas," *www.dziennik.pl*.

Economic cooperation

Trade flows and U.S. investments in Poland. The United States is not one of Poland's major trade partners, ranking 19th place in exports and 11th place in imports in 2008 on the list of Poland's leading trade partners. Poland also found itself rather low on the American exports and imports lists (43rd and 62nd place, respectively). While it is true that over the past few years bilateral trade has been growing systematically (see graph below), this is primarily due to rising Polish imports from the U.S. (about US\$4.1 billion in 2008 vs. US\$3 billion in 2007). Poland's exports to the U.S. in turn amounted to US\$2.6 billion in 2008 (an increase by 16%). As a result, Poland's deficit in trade with the USA reached US\$1.5 billion, up by some 70% in comparison with 2007, which places the United States in 7th place among Poland's trading partners with the largest trade deficit.

Polish trade with the USA in 1999–2008



Sources: Central Statistical Office (GUS), www.stat.gov.pl.

Polish imports from the United States were dominated in 2008 by aircraft equipment (nearly 25% of the total value of imports, although this percentage is expected to drop with the completion of F-16 fighter deliveries), automobiles, coal (the most spectacular manifestation of a strong zloty—an almost five-fold increase in coal imports in comparison to 2007), pharmaceuticals and data processing equipment. Merchandise exported to the USA was dominated by furniture, jet engines, cables conductors, petroleum and bituminous products, spirits, automotive parts and accessories. Polish exporters no doubt felt the effects of a deteriorating economic situation in the United States (Polish exports to the United States were dropping systematically in 2008), which wiped out

some of the benefits ensuing from the strengthening of the U.S. dollar against the zloty in the final months of the year.

A new significant investment was announced by State Street Corporation. Its financial services centre to be built in Cracow will employ about 1,000 specialists. Dell in turn decided to build a computer equipment manufacturing plant in Poland, with its production destined for the European, Middle East and African markets.

Several events favored the process of building Poland's image as an attractive trade partner. Intensive efforts to increase investments made by American companies in Poland were made by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Economy Waldemar Pawlak during his visit to the United States on 28 April–2 May. In April, the U.S. Department of Commerce singled out Poland as the "Market of the Month." In addition, a series of programs entitled *Eye on Poland* prepared by the CNN television network and aired in the first half of October 2008 had considerable promotional value.³²

Offset obligations connected with the purchase of F-16s. Available information indicates a certain improvement in the performance of the offset agreement with the Lockheed Martin Corporation (LMC).³³ Compared to the agreement's first settlement period (2003–2006, with the next period to end in 2009), a more dynamic increase was noted in the value of direct offset projects, seen as more profitable for the Polish economy than indirect offset. The disproportion between the two is still seen as a weakness in Poland's package of potential benefits from the agreement, however, even though the F-16 multi-task aircraft purchase agreement itself called for a 67% share of direct offset projects. Overall, however, the value of offset obligations confirmed by the Ministry of

³² The cumulated value of American investments in Poland amounted to about US\$8.3 billion in December 2007, which represented 6% of total direct foreign investments in Poland and made the United States the fifth largest foreign investor. Data for 2008 is not available yet. According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis of the U.S. Department of Commerce, American investments in Poland were lower in 2008 in comparison with 2007, totaling US\$1 billion against US\$1.54 billion a year earlier, perhaps as a result of the general economic slowdown in the United States, www.bea.gov.

³³ The agreement with LMC, providing for a record value of offsetter's commitments among all offset contracts signed by Poland after 2001 (the full list of contracts is available on www.mg.gov.pl), naturally attracts public attention. This is not, however, the sole agreement between the Polish government and a U.S. company. In 2006, an offset agreement was signed with Harris Corporation (for the supply of digital radio units), while in December 2008 an agreement was signed with Rockwell Collins corporation (for the supply of avionics for M28 Bryza aircraft).

the Economy exceeded 50% of all obligations under the agreement in mid-2008, and some 30 Polish firms are engaged in projects ensuing from the agreement.³⁴

The enhanced role of technological cooperation within the offset agreement was reflected in a decision to set up a Joint F-16 Service Planning Office for Poland at the Military Aviation Depot no. 2 in Bydgoszcz. The agreement foresees technology and know-how transfer enabling overhauls and servicing of this aircraft with a view to, eventually, setting up in Bydgoszcz a servicing and repair base for F-16 aircraft. This would make it possible to eliminate some problems connected with the operation of the Polish F-16s and could provide servicing for such machines in service with the armed forces of other European countries.

Social Relations

Visa free travel to the USA. The lifting of the visa requirement for Poles traveling to the United States has traditionally been one of the major aims in Poland's policy towards the United States, including the involvement of the highest Polish authorities. This matter was raised during the conversation between Prime Minister Tusk and President G. W. Bush in March 2008. At the same time, Minister Sikorski declared that Poland does not see the visa question as a vital issue in terms of Polish-American relations, and it sees the lifting of the visa requirement rather as a "symbolic and practical" complement to the already model political and military relations between the two countries.³⁵

The principal obstacle for Poland's inclusion in the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) is the unchanged and higher-than-allowed rate of visa refusals for Polish citizens. Available data, however, seems to indicate a promising trend, i.e. a drop in the rate of visa refusals to under 10%. In the first half of 2008, this rate amounted to 14–15% in comparison with 25% towards the end of 2007. It was also expected that another criterion for participation in the program, one based

³⁴ As of 31 July 2008, the value of obligations amounted to US\$4.88 billion (with a total value of all projects under the agreement reaching US\$9 billion), including US\$1.88 billion in direct offset (for US\$3 billion in indirect offset). In 2003–2006, with the overall value of offset obligations amounting to US\$3.9 billion, around US\$1.1 billion was earmarked for direct offset (with indirect offset at US\$2.8 billion). The value of direct offset thus grew by about 70%.

³⁵ See Informacja ministra spraw zagranicznych na temat polityki zagranicznej RP w 2008 r. above, p. XX.

on tracking departures from the United States, would be introduced in 2009, thus bringing Poland even closer to participation in the Visa Waiver Program.³⁶

The treatment of Polish citizens by U.S. immigration services. The visa problem returned in December 2008 along with press reports about the brutal treatment of Polish citizens by U.S. immigration services at American airports.³⁷ The Polish authorities saw these reports (in both the Polish expatriate and domestic press) and complaints addressed to Polish consular offices in the United States as warranting an official intervention. Its effect was the introduction by the U.S. authorities of changes in procedures towards foreigners refused entry to the United States (most notably a departure from the appalling practice of keeping “suspects” in handcuffs) and also measures facilitating contact between Polish citizens waiting to return to Poland and Polish consular offices.³⁸

Property claims toward Poland. In June 2008, the United States' House of Representatives heard a draft resolution calling on Polish authorities to make an immediate and just compensation for property illegally confiscated by the German occupation authorities and the communist authorities after World War II. This was the first time in history that the U.S. Congress undertook work on a resolution directly calling on the authorities of a third country to settle the

³⁶ *Informacja ambasadora nadzwyczajnego i pełnomocnego RP w Stanach Zjednoczonych Ameryki na temat sposobu realizacji misji dyplomatycznej*, 12th session of the Polish Senate Foreign Affairs Committee, on 2 April 2008, www.senat.gov.pl.

³⁷ See, for example, A. Wickers, “Ameryka wita kajdankami,” *Rzeczpospolita* of 14 December 2008, www.rp.pl. While the cases described (complaints about treatment at airports in Chicago and Newark) concerned situations in which travelers held valid U.S. visa promises, during previous stays in the U.S. they had infringed on U.S. immigration regulations. Even though in all cases the U.S. authorities had acted in keeping with their competencies, reports on how they treated Polish citizens caused outrage.

³⁸ In January 2009, Minister Sikorski turned to the United States' Embassy in Warsaw for an explanation of the reasons behind the treatment of Polish citizens by the U.S. immigration services. The issue also drew the attention of Ombudsman Janusz Kochanowski. In a letter addressed to the U.S. Ambassador in Warsaw, Victor Ashe, the Ombudsman stated that “the behavior of the U.S. immigration authorities casts a shadow on good mutual relations between the Republic of Poland and the United States.” The clarifications obtained from the U.S. consular officials suggested that all the procedures put into place to reduce the number of refusals of entry to the United States were essentially devoid of any practical meaning. Irrespective of these procedures, whose introduction had been decided at the highest level as early as 2004, and despite successive agreements intended to loosen American visa procedures with regard to Poles (see A. Michalski, “Poland's Relations with the United States,” *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy* 2005, Warsaw, 2005; *idem*, “Poland's Relations with the United States,” *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy* 2006, Warsaw, 2006), the final decision about entry was still made immediately prior to entering the United States .

problem of restitution. The resolution named Poland as one of the last countries of Central and Eastern Europe (Lithuania was also mentioned) that had yet to work out and introduce regulations ensuring the restitution of property or financial compensation for lost property. The resolution called on Polish authorities to adopt relevant legislation immediately. The U.S. government in turn was called upon to continue an open dialogue with Polish authorities and to demand the quickest possible introduction of appropriate legal regulations. In the end, the text of the resolution was endorsed by the House on 23 September, but work on the document was interrupted in connection with the ending of the congressional session.

The resolution was sponsored by representatives from electoral districts with a considerable Jewish-American population and inspired by representatives of Jewish milieus, including the World Jewish Congress, which reiterated in this context Prime Minister Tusk's meeting on 11 March in New York with members of Jewish organizations in the United States striving for the restoration of the property of Holocaust victims (Claims Conference, World Jewish Restitution Organization). At the time, the prime minister announced a swift introduction of an appropriate law for consideration in the Sejm. According to Jewish lobbyists, however, the steps taken by the Polish authorities were not sufficient. In this context, it should be noted that the adoption of this resolution by Congress would have been an act of no more than symbolic significance, given its expected status of a concurrent resolution. A document of this kind is only an expression of the position of Congress on a given matter, with its recommendations merely suggestions for the American administration, not binding law.

Prime Minister Tusk described the steps launched by Congress as "pressure," calling them "inappropriate." At the same time, he stated that work on the so-called compensation act was progressing according to plan.

Relations in Education and Culture

In 2008, work was completed on the expansion of what is perhaps the largest Polish-American instrument of cooperation in the sphere of education, i.e., the Fulbright Program. Thanks to the cooperation agreement within the framework of the Fulbright Commission signed on March 10, it will be possible to triple the

number of persons from Poland participating in the exchange.³⁹ Towards the end of 2008, efforts to inaugurate a chair of Polish studies at Columbia University in New York were close to success.

In the area of culture, some undertakings of the Polish authorities will be supported by Polish expatriate organizations in the United States. The Józef Piłsudski Institute in America will participate in a project aimed at inaugurating by 2012 the Józef Piłsudski Museum in Sulejów, near Warsaw, by making a part of its collections available.

Numerous events in America were connected with the popularization of Polish filmmaking. At the end of October and beginning of November 2008, the audience in New York was shown Andrzej Wajda's entire life's work, and several months earlier, Wajda's film *Katyń* had been nominated for an Oscar in the best foreign language film category. In December, a screening of Agnieszka Holland's films was organized as part of the fourth Polish Film Festival in New York, hosted this time by the prestigious Museum of Modern Art (MoMA). The Polish Film Festival in Los Angeles, during which over 30 feature and documentary films were shown, was held for the ninth time.

Symbolic ties between Poland and the United States were stressed in connection with the anniversaries of events concerning the history of both countries' relations. In January 2008, the 90th anniversary was observed of President Wilson's Fourteen Points, with point 13 calling for the restoration of an independent Polish state as one of the prerequisites for a peaceful order in Europe. In October, official ceremonies commemorating the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the first colonists from Polish territories were held in Chicago.⁴⁰

Noteworthy in particular is President Kaczyński's award of the Officer's Cross of the Order of Merit to Congressman Rahm Emanuel (D-Illinois), in recognition of his efforts to strengthen Polish-American cooperation and reinforce his country's ties with Poland. In November 2008, Emanuel was nominated White House chief of staff by President-elect Barack Obama and became one of his closest collaborators. In December, the same Polish state

³⁹ The agreement envisages a significant increase in Poland's financial participation in the program, ultimately safeguarding both countries' equal contributions. Until now, about 35 Polish and 25 American stipendists have participated in the academic exchanges conducted under the auspices of the Fulbright Commission. For the text of the agreement, see *Dziennik Ustaw* (Journal of Laws) 2009, no. 26, item 158.

⁴⁰ The Polish authorities were represented by Senate Speaker Bogdan Borusewicz and Bogdan Zdrojewski, minister of culture and national heritage. For a description of the celebrations, see www.polska-polska.pl.

distinction was awarded to William R. Rhodes, co-author of Poland's economic reforms in the 1990's.

Assessment

Poland's aims in its policy towards the United States in 2008 were greatly assisted by negotiations on Polish participation in the American missile defense system. The conclusion of the anti-missile base agreement, the adoption of the Declaration on Strategic Cooperation calling for the stationing of U.S. military units (whose number is to be symbolic) in Poland, and the initiation of talks about greater American engagement in the modernization of Polish armed forces can all be seen as steps favoring the realization of Polish aims. Given the electoral campaign in the United States and the change of administration at the turn of 2008, it was not possible to complete work on documents accompanying the already-mentioned agreements, documents that were to give practical shape to the Polish-American political *rapprochement*. The lasting nature of the effects of the agreement with the Americans remained an open question, however, the more so as signals began to emerge about the new administration's possible redefinition of the U.S. position on the European component of the anti-missile shield. After all, Poland's principal motive in its commitment to this project had not been—as was the case for the United States—the desire to create mechanisms to neutralize a possible ballistic threat from Iran, but rather a wish to “tie” U.S. interests closely, even physically, with Polish territory.⁴¹ Even should the implementation of the anti-missile base agreement—the “flywheel” of this *rapprochement*—be called into question, enhanced cooperation based on the Declaration on Strategic Cooperation seemed feasible, especially in high-priority areas of the modernization of Polish armed forces, science and technology, the economy and industry. The statements of American politicians that the deployment of the Patriot battery in Poland would take place independently of the new administration's decision on the missile defense system, suggested that the United States might also be inclined to honor other provisions of the declaration, and that the binding force of this document would not rest solely on the agreement about the base. This thesis will be put to the test and, most probably during the first year of the new U.S. administration, the real value of the agreement of August 2008 as an instrument of Polish policy toward

⁴¹ Incidentally, it should be noted that the position of presidential circles during the above ratification debate seemed paradoxical, suggesting that Poland was more interested in the expansion of the U.S. defense system than the United States' authorities themselves.

the United States will become clear. Particularly important would be the Americans' continued readiness to support the modernization of the Polish armed forces, as this would indicate a greater and lasting respect for Poland's security needs. The attitude of President Bush's administration cannot be viewed as representative in this context as its openness to Polish postulates was in large measure dictated by image considerations, i.e., by the need to achieve an agreement in an area that was important in terms of U.S. security policy.

Moreover, there is no certainty at present that the Polish authorities' assumption that the benefits for Poland arising from the agreement would be greater than the losses ensuing from consent to participate in the system, was well founded. On the basis of an examination of the circumstances accompanying the negotiations with the Americans (the Bush administration's determination to bring the talks to a close), and of the possible missile defense scenarios following presidential elections in the United States (probable delay in the system's expansion in case of a Democratic victory and, as a consequence, the removal of the anti-missile shield from the agenda of Polish-American relations), it seems that the Tusk government decided that the best agreement terms were to be obtained from the outgoing administration. Fears for Poland's image on account of its supposed "unyielding attitude" in talks with the United States and its unwillingness to accept the American offer were also a factor. In the end, risks connected with the signing of a controversial agreement were accepted with no certainty whatsoever as to the policy of the new team. These risks were to be offset by the adoption of the Declaration on Strategic Cooperation, which, although beneficial for Poland, remains a political document. The correctness of this move will only be verified by the essence of cooperation with the new American administration and by the resulting benefits, which will have to be set against all the negative effects that Poland's consent to the anti-missile base might produce for Polish foreign and security policy.⁴² On the other hand, nothing seems to indicate that concluding agreements with the unpopular G. W. Bush administration could in any way impede cooperation with President Obama's team.

Polish interests in relations with the United States did not suffer with Poland's ending of its participation in the Iraqi mission (regardless of the correctness of this decision in terms of Poland's security policy). Both in the final year of President Bush's term and in a longer perspective, the presence of Polish armed

⁴² These consequences are mentioned below by B. Górka-Winter, "A Long Way to Missile Defense Shield," p. XX.

forces in Iraq would not have been a significant instrument for building up Poland's position *vis-à-vis* the United States, because the importance of the Iraqi mission for the U.S. foreign and security policy was declining. The Bush administration decided to alter significantly the legal status of U.S. troops in Iraq and embarked on a *de facto* process of reducing their number. Moreover, according to plans of the new administration, American combat units would be withdrawn in the summer of 2010. Poland should make use of its involvement in Afghanistan to consolidate its image as an effective American ally (in this context, it would be worthwhile to inform members of the new administration about the scope and nature of the Polish military presence and the volume of Polish developmental aid to Afghanistan), especially as from the Obama administration's point of view, this operation is to be a test of effective mobilization of allied collaboration. Hence caution is recommended in looking at Poland's contribution to the Afghan mission (and plans to increase this involvement) as an argument that might encourage the Americans to meet Polish postulates, such as armed forces modernization, because the Americans are not likely to be willing to reward actions that they see simply as allied commitments.

A question should also be asked about the role—other than military—that government contacts could play in enlivening the American presence in Poland at this stage of bilateral relations. Official relations, for a long time seen as model, seem to have exhausted their potential for building a favorable investment climate and stimulating bilateral trade. The U.S. government faces limited options for boosting American business community's interest in the Polish market or for encouraging it to participate in projects that are in Poland's interest, as exemplified by attempts to stimulate the interest of U.S. petroleum corporations in the Caspian Sea Basin (American officials referred Polish representatives directly to the largest corporations as the addressees of such projects). In the United States, a leading role on the economic and political scene is played by professional and systematic lobbying and promotional campaigns, embracing simultaneous emphasis on commercial benefits and the potential of cooperation with Poland. In addition, postulates concerning an increased U.S. cultural presence in Poland also need to be defined more precisely, especially as both states are not bound by an international agreement in this area.

Available information indicates that the prospect of an evolutionary resolution of the problem of the visa requirement for Polish citizens—a sensitive issue for the Polish public—is feasible. In comparison with the preceding years, the *de facto* dwindling importance of Poland's participation in the Visa Waiver Program for bilateral relations should be seen an expression of much desired realism in this matter. The undeniably positive effects of including Poland in the

Visa Waiver Program could be nullified by restitution claims raised by various American interest groups against the Polish authorities. In 2008, the raising of restitution claims was dictated by the U.S. election campaign, so it was primarily an outcome of internal political processes in the United States, and thus unlikely to significantly affect bilateral cooperation. This issue might, however, become more visible in the public debate on Polish-American relations, especially as a relevant bill prepared by the Polish government is inconsistent with the interests of influential ethnic groups in the USA.⁴³

⁴³ The bill on compensation stipulates that such compensation could not be sought by persons who had been entitled to press claims against other states on the basis of compensation (indemnity) agreements signed by Poland. Such an agreement between Poland and the USA was concluded in 1960. For more on the subject, see the answer given by Jan Borkowski, secretary of state at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on 29 August 2008, to parliamentary question no. 4550 on property claims against Poland in the context of a motion submitted by four U.S. congressmen to the U.S. Congress, www.sejm.gov.pl.

Poland's Policy Regarding Germany

Determinants

Poland's transition and Germany's unification process brought in their wake deep changes in Polish-German relations. "The Polish-German community of interests" heralded in 1990 by then Minister of Foreign Affairs Krzysztof Skubiszewski was to become a new form of shaping mutual relations on a dialogue basis. Anxious to maintain a tension-free climate in bilateral relations, the two countries' ruling elites came to sidestep controversial subjects, such as damages for Polish wartime slave laborers or claims of expelled Germans—with the result that by the late 1990s these unvoiced issues became a heavy burden on relations between Poland and Germany. Opinions that there was a "void" between Poland and Germany were not uncommon. The mounting of tensions was reflected in disagreement over the institutional reform of the European Union, the Iraq war and the Center against Expulsions. German expellees' claims for restoration of property became yet another sensitive issue with a potential for souring mutual relations. Poland's confidence in Germany was running low, largely due to the Germany-Russia *rapprochement* symbolized by the September 2005 Nord Stream agreement between Chancellor Gerhard Schröder and President Vladimir Putin.

As the range of differing positions and obstacles to dialogue was growing wider, experts in Polish-German relations took to hinting that the "community of interests" was drawing to an end, to be replaced by a "community of dispute."² Some journalists and writers—Polish, but also German—attributed this in part to the attitude of German political elites. The Germans, who for many years had played the role of "a champion of Poland's European aspirations," were finding

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¹ M. Prawda, "Odłóżmy mity dyżurne," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 17 May 2000.

² K.O. Lang, "Pragmatische Kooperation statt strategischer Partnerschaft. Zu Stand und Perspektiven der deutsch-polnischen Beziehungen," *SWP-Aktuell*, 2004, no. 10, p. 4. See also R. Freudenstein, "Konstytucja europejska, Centrum przeciwko Wypędzeniom, polityka bezpieczeństwa. Polsko-niemiecka wspólnota sporu," *Dialog*, 2003, no. 65, pp. 38–42.

it hard to accept that the process of Poland's integration into Western structures had been completed with its accession to the European Union in 2004, and that their attitude—"seasoned with a pinch of protectionism"³—towards their eastern neighbor had failed to produce the expected results, notably better synchronization of Poland's stance with that of Germany. This souring of relations caught both sides unprepared, coming as it did after many years when it had been expected that the practical realization of the Polish-German "strategic partnership" would benefit by Poland's accession to the EU. Yet, contrary to these expectations, after the 2005 parliamentary elections in both states chilled even further mutual relations. In Germany the "great coalition" of the Christian Democrats and the Social Democrats came to power and the office of minister of foreign affairs went to SDP's Frank-Walter Steinmeier, one of the closest associates of Gerhard Schröder.⁴ In Poland, the Law and Justice Party (PiS) won the election to subsequently form in 2006 a coalition government with the League of Polish Families (LPR) and the Self-Defense (Samoobrona) party—which were all perceived in the Federal Republic of Germany as anti-German and populist. The German media accused Polish rulers of having no understanding of basic European values and of carrying on their foreign policy on the basis of historical prejudices. Poland, for its part, took a position that the previous policy of dialogue and compromise had been ineffective and that it should be replaced with one of upholding Polish interests, even at the risk of confrontation or conflict.

An opportunity to refocus Polish-German relations came in the wake of the formation in Poland, after early elections in the autumn of 2007, of a new Civic Platform (PO)—Polish Peasants' Party (PSL) coalition government. With German politicians and German public opinion giving this government a credit of confidence, 2008 was pronounced a year of chance for the resumption of the policy of dialogue.⁵ Yet Prime Minister Donald Tusk more than once threw cold water on excessive enthusiasm and avoided promises regarding the reconstruction of the "Polish-German community of interests." Instead, he spoke of patience in solving controversial issues relating to the commemoration of expulsions,

³ Quoted after D. Brössler, "Daleko od Berlina," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 8 January 2002.

⁴ The policy of Chancellor Schroeder's government tended to highlight German interests and to emphasize the importance of Germany on the international scene. This more active and self-assured policy was viewed in Poland with much distrust.

⁵ See, for instance, M. E. Rotter, R. Freudenstein, "Powrót do przyszłości? Stosunki polsko-niemieckie po zmianie rządu w Polsce," *Dialog*, 2008, no. 82, p. 13.

explosion damages or the Nord Stream gas pipeline.⁶ He stressed, however, that his government's policy towards the western neighbor would be different from that pursued over the two preceding years. As a clear confirmation of the will for change, the position of secretary of state for international dialogue (in particular for relations with Germany and Israel) in the Prime Minister's Chancellery was filled by Władysław Bartoszewski, a politician who had worked for years for Polish-German reconciliation and who had criticized the previous Polish government for the deterioration of relations with Germany. After several months of the Tusk government's rule, Bartoszewski declared that there were grounds for speaking of normalization in Polish-German relations—even though he admitted at the same time that it was still too early to elevate them to the rank of friendship.

Many issues, from the “policy of remembrance” to the Nord Stream gas pipeline, continue to breed controversies. Even so, both states' desire for cooperation—for instance on the European Union's Eastern policy—offers hope of arriving at the “community of interests.” One of the reasons for the push for improvement in relations was the fact that both partners were tired with years of quarrels and, outstanding problems notwithstanding, they resolved to seek compromise solutions in areas where compromise was feasible. This is best illustrated by pragmatic cooperation and the development of similar positions in the climate package negotiations.

Objectives

The fundamental targets of the PO-PSL coalition government's policy towards the FRG were presented to the Sejm in Prime Minister Donald Tusk's exposé on 23 November 2007. Efforts to “intensify cooperation” with the Germans were to feature importantly in foreign policy, on the assumption that good relations with Berlin helped further Poland's interests in the European Union. The FRG was referred to as Poland's “key partner,” with whom Poland should develop strategic relations while not evading difficult issues. Tusk argued that Polish-German relations were “in need of particular attention, treatment without complexes, firm, when necessary, and a friendly approach to mutual issues, mutual expectations.”⁷

Minister Radosław Sikorski described in more detail Poland's attitude towards Germany in a report on Poland's foreign policy in 2008 presented at a

⁶ Interview with Prime Minister Donald Tusk, *Newsweek Polska*, 7 January 2008.

⁷ Prime Minister Tusk's opening address, www.kprm.gov.pl/en/prime_minister/speeches/id:2434.

meeting of the Sejm on 7 May 2008. The Minister emphasized that “today the Germans are our allies”—a fact not universally understood, he observed. While Poland “must not forget” the historical experiences, it was going to work towards the continued realization of the Polish bishops’ message of 1965, hoping for “a dialogue and as close as possible cooperation with the Germans that will allow to overcome historical entanglements.” This “strategic dialogue” should be patterned after relations between Germany and France. The minister expressed hope that the existing treaties and agreements would be fulfilled. He noted that Poland was counting primarily “on cooperation on matters of importance to both countries and to the European Union” and he pronounced the Eastern dimension of EU policy the best area for such cooperation.⁸

That address by Radosław Sikorski echoed in its rhetoric the speeches of two ministers who had headed the Foreign Ministry before Anna Fotyga. In 2005, Adam Daniel Rotfeld called the FRG “a strategic partner” of Poland, and in 2006, Stefan Meller noted that Poland was a friend of Germany. However Minister Sikorski’s declarations, with their assumption of dialogue and the closest possible cooperation with the FRG, were far removed from the policy guidelines presented by Anna Fotyga, whose 2007 speeches had highlighted chiefly the problems and impediments blocking Polish-German understanding.⁹

President Lech Kaczyński, whose foreign policy vision differs on many matters from that of the government, also opted for “the best possible relations” with the western neighbor, as emphasized in his speech to the diplomatic corps in January 2008. He noted on that occasion that Poland acknowledged the importance of the European Union’s largest state and that it would be working to overcome the differences arising from a difficult history.¹⁰

Political Relations

In 2008 contacts between the authorities of Germany and Poland remained dynamic, with Chancellor Angela Merkel visiting Poland four times. On 16 June she met in Gdańsk with Prime Minister Donald Tusk as part of her working visit. On 24 September she received an honorary doctorate from Wrocław

⁸ “Government report on Polish Foreign Policy in 2008,” see above, p. XX.

⁹ See Ł. Adamski, “Poland’s Policy Regarding Germany,” *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy 2008*, p. 107.

¹⁰ See President Lech Kaczyński’s address to the diplomatic corps at the 16 January 2008 meeting, www.prezydent.pl.

Polytechnic.¹¹ On 11 November she attended the Warsaw celebrations marking the anniversary of Poland's independence, while on 9 December she and Prime Minister Tusk attended the 9th Polish-German intergovernmental consultations held in Warsaw for the first time following a four-year break. The Polish prime minister in turn paid three visits to Germany. On 5 September he travelled to Osnabrück at the invitation of European Parliament President Hans-Georg Pöttering. On 9 October he met with Chancellor Merkel while in Berlin on a working visit, and on 12 November he was in Frankfurt am Main for talks with European Central Bank President Jean-Claude Trichet. In addition, Donald Tusk and Angela Merkel met several times in Brussels at European Council debates. President Kaczyński talked with the German chancellor in April 2008 at a NATO summit in Bucharest and he met with President Horst Köhler during April consultations on the Treaty of Lisbon held in Graz with the participation of eight presidents of European states.

Ministerial-level contacts gained momentum. Of the many meetings of foreign ministers, two-day visits by Frank-Walter Steinmeier in Poland (6–7 April) and Radosław Sikorski in Germany (5–6 December) were of particular significance. The media, both in Poland and in Germany, noted the friendly nature of these meetings. In April Minister Steinmeier was Minister Sikorski's guest in the latter's country residence at Chobielin near Bydgoszcz and in December Radosław Sikorski returned the visit at Minister Steinmeier's Berlin home. On the occasion of these visits both politicians took part in a debate "The Foreign Policies of Poland and Germany in Europe" organized at Warsaw University and in the 13th Polish-German Forum "To Renew Dialogue: A View over Europe" attended by about a hundred representatives of the political, business, scientific and cultural communities from Poland and the FRG.

Both ministers and French diplomacy chief Bernard Kouchner resolved to resume, after a three-year break, the tradition of Weimar Triangle tripartite meetings.¹² On 17 June in Paris they discussed such issues as the crisis caused by Ireland's rejection of the Treaty of Lisbon or the need to provide more financial aid to the people of Afghanistan.

In 2008 cooperation of the two parliaments became closer. In October Warsaw hosted a joint meeting of the foreign affairs committees of the Polish

¹¹ Prime Minister Tusk did not attend the Wrocław festivities; the Polish media interpreted this as forfeiting an opportunity to manifest improvement in Polish-German relations or—in an entirely different vein—as a symptom of normalization.

¹² The next meeting was scheduled for the spring of 2009 in Germany.

Sejm and the German Bundestag as the first gathering on such a scale of Polish and German parliamentarians dealing with foreign affairs. Also, 2008 brought an agreement on regular cooperation of the Sejm and Bundestag presidia. The first joint meeting of the presidia was held in November in Wrocław. On that occasion a conference on Polish-German relations, organized under the patronage of Senate Speaker Bronisław Komorowski and Bundestag President Norbert Lammert, was held at Krzyżowa.¹³ In addition to meetings of the Sejm and Bundestag presidia, plans were laid down for Weimar Triangle debates conducted jointly with representatives of the French National Assembly (the first trilateral meeting was scheduled for 2010).

In 2008, the energy-climate package featured prominently in bilateral relations, with the package targeted at: reforming the European Union Emissions Trading System (EU ETS); cutting down carbon dioxide emissions by 20% from the 1990 level by 2020, including emissions by non-EU ETS sectors; increasing the share of renewable energy sources; and implementing projects in carbon capture and storage.¹⁴ Poland and Germany both had reservations about the draft unveiled by the European Commission in 2008. The FRG expressed fears over the impact of the package on its energy-intensive industries (steel, chemicals), and Poland, where more than 90% of electricity is produced from coal, was also concerned; should the emissions allowances auctioning system be introduced in the power and electricity sector in the Commission-proposed version, the resulting rise in energy price would hurt both Polish industry and individual users. Hence Poland and the FRG were claiming concessions in connection with mandatory purchases of emissions allowances. Poland also expressed concern that concessions granted to the FRG would reduce contributions to the "solidarity fund" from which to finance the modernization of power stations in the new EU member states. In 2008 intensive consultations were underway among the EU states on a final version of the package. Poland's consultations with Germany were conducted at the level of Ministries of the Environment and Ministries of the Economy; additionally, a Polish-German working group for the climate/energy package was established in July 2008 with the participation of a

¹³ Writing in *Die Welt*, Adam Krzemiński expressed an opinion that despite the intensity of bilateral contacts, the two parliaments had forfeited a chance to organize joint debates as part of celebrations marking two special dates: 1918 and 1989. See "Nun endlich gute Nachbarn," *Die Welt*, 10 November 2008, and a response by Bundestag Chairman N. Lammert, "Ganz normale Nachbarn," *Die Welt*, 18 November 2008.

¹⁴ More in: E. Wyciszkievicz, "Najważniejsze elementy kompromisu energetyczno-klimatycznego," *PISM Biuletyn*, no. 64 (532), 19 December 2008.

representative of the Prime Minister's Chancellery and a representative of the Chancellor's Office. The object of these consultations was to develop a position that would prevent the adoption of solutions disadvantageous to both parties. Prior to the 11–12 December European Council meeting in Brussels, Poland and Germany declared in Warsaw that they would not veto the package and, with their requests taken into account, a compromise was reached at the Brussels summit. Both states acknowledged this as a success. Transition periods for phasing in the auctioning of emissions allowances for the Polish power stations were introduced.

The Eastern Partnership project, an initiative proposed jointly by Poland and Sweden in the spring of 2008, was also discussed on a number of occasions, also during intergovernmental consultations. The project concerns the deepening of cooperation with the EU's eastern neighbors under the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP). Germany is one of the states actively involved in strengthening the eastern dimension of the ENP. This was one of the priorities of the German presidency of the European Union in 2007. The Eastern Partnership initiated by Poland and Sweden was received in Germany as a continuation and a step in the right direction originally set by Germany. Chancellor Merkel supported the Eastern Partnership concept during her Gdańsk visit on 17 June 2008. The implementation of this project will provide opportunities to coordinate Polish and German actions towards Ukraine. Also, the government of the FRG declared it would support the Czech presidency (2009) in promoting the Eastern Partnership project in the European Union.

The obstacles to the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty loomed large in the FRG and in Poland alike. After the citizens of Ireland had rejected the Treaty in the June referendum, President Lech Kaczyński put Poland's ratification on hold. In the FRG the ratification process was also suspended pending the Federal Constitutional Court's examination of complaints lodged by CSU and Left Party MPs. The Treaty problem was discussed by Prime Minister Tusk and Chancellor Merkel, who both emphasized the need for ratification. Efforts to develop the two government's common position on matters pertaining to the institutional reform of the Union met with positive response on both sides of the border. Among other things, it was noted that regular intergovernmental consultations could result in permanent cooperation between Poland and the FRG on EU matters.

Given the controversies over the Nord Stream project, it could not be put on the agenda of intergovernmental consultations. The Angela Merkel government supports the Schröder-negotiated plans to build a trans-Baltic pipeline from

Russia to Germany, but Poland sees this as a threat to its energy interests. In September 2008, Prime Minister Tusk suggested that in view of Russia's aggressive actions towards Georgia, the Germans should reconsider the construction of a gas pipeline that would result in direct dependence on supplies from Russia.¹⁵ The FRG government evaded discussions on the Nord Stream pipeline, but the Russia-Ukraine gas conflict early in 2009 triggered a debate in Germany on the consequences of gas dependence on Russia. This debate boosted awareness of the need for full EU cooperation on energy security and for stepping up efforts to diversify the routes and sources of gas supplies to the European Union.

Besides strengthening cooperation in the European Union, Poland and Germany intensified their cooperation in the NATO, although Poland did not conceal its disappointment with the FRG's negative stance at the North Atlantic Council summit in Bucharest on offering Ukraine and Georgia a Membership Action Plan (MAP). In May 2008, German Defense Minister Franz Josef Jung discussed in Warsaw with Radosław Sikorski and Polish Defense Minister Bogdan Klich the takeover by Poland of a NATO communications battalion. Another battalion and the headquarters would remain on German territory.

Compared with preceding years, the "policy of remembrance" played a less prominent role in mutual relations. The manner in which the Center against Expulsions issue was resolved can be seen as a breakthrough. Poland had long expressed concern that this initiative by the leader of the Federation of Expellees, Erika Steinbach, was a manipulation of history, a manipulation that might lead to a distorted picture of the displacement of the German population, presenting it in isolation from the question of Germany's responsibility for World War II and the enormity of German crimes. Since in the FRG the project had enjoyed strong support from the Christian Democrats, however, the 2005 CDU/CSU coalition agreement included a commitment to establish a museum commemorating expulsions—tentatively named "Visible Sign." Of late the German authorities have consistently proceeded with this project while courting Poland's support. Unlike the Jarosław Kaczyński government, which had firmly opposed it, the Donald Tusk government elected to give up protests and thereby secured the right to assess the functioning of that center at a later date. At a meeting of Polish and German delegations held in Warsaw on 5 February 2008 under the chairmanship of Minister Bartoszewski and German Minister of State for Culture Bernd Neumannit the sides agreed that Poland would not formally take

¹⁵ *Neue Osnabrücker Zeitung*, 6 September 2008.

part in the “Visible Sign against Flight and Expulsion” permanent exhibition, but would treat it with “amiable neutrality.”¹⁶ Both delegations declared that “Polish-German dialogue should become an important element in shaping European historical awareness”¹⁷ and plans were accordingly made for actions to be taken to invigorate the European Network for Remembrance and Solidarity as an important forum of European historical dialogue.¹⁸

Those German politicians who had worked for years for the improvement of Polish-German relations, such as former President Richard von Weizsäcker, or Gesine Schwan, presidential candidate and coordinator for cooperation with Poland in the German Foreign Ministry, emphasized that there was a need for the museum and that the German state would be responsible for the standards of the exhibitions there.¹⁹ On the other hand, many critical voices were raised in Poland by journalists and writers, pointing out that distortions of the truth in the museum’s program were unavoidable and that exhibitions shown there would blur a clear picture of who was responsible for the outbreak of World War II in the eyes of the audiences.²⁰

In the context of history-related issues casting a shadow on Polish-German relations, the dismissal by the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg of complaints for restitution of property or compensation filed against Poland by the Prussian Trust (*Preußische Treuhand*) was a landmark event in 2008.²¹ In 2006, the Prussian Trust brought legal action against the Polish state on behalf of its 23 members—German citizens expelled from former Third Reich lands that are now within Poland’s borders. The complainants claimed that the 1945 expulsions of Germans and seizure of their property constituted instances of ethnic cleansing—or even genocide—and violated Article 1 of Protocol 1 to the

¹⁶ See *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 6 February 2008.

¹⁷ Quoted after information published on www2.rp.pl, 5 February 2008.

¹⁸ See “Das Europäische Netzwerk Erinnerung und Solidarität,” *Polen-Analysen*, 2008, no.3.

¹⁹ See B. Wieliński’s interview with R. von Weizsäckerem, “Patrzę na Polskę przez pryzmat wojny,” *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 22 February 2008; and P. Jendroszczyk’s interview with G. Schwan, “Problem Polski to Niemcy i Rosja,” *Rzeczpospolita*, 23 October 2008. In December 2008 the Bundestag passed, by CDU/CSU, SPD and FDP votes, a law governing matters relating to the establishment and operation of “Visible Sign.” That institution is to be financed from the central budget; it will be established as a foundation under the name Flight, Expulsion, Reconciliation and will report to the German Historical Museum in Berlin.

²⁰ See M. A. Cichocki, “‘Widoczny Znak,’ Rząd polski nie zgłasza sprzeciwu,” *Rzeczpospolita*, 26 March 2008.

²¹ “Decision as to the Admissibility of Application no. 47550/06 by Preussische Treuhand GmbH & CO. KG A. A. Against Poland,” cmiskp.echr.coe.int.

European Convention on Human Rights. The Court found the complaint inadmissible, ruling that Poland could not be held accountable for the acts described by the complainants, because between January and March 1945 it had no legal control over these territories. Furthermore, the Court cited a number of international agreements governing the demarcation of Poland's post-World War II western border, including the Potsdam Agreement of 2 August 1945. The Court held that Article 1 of Protocol 1 to the European Convention on Human Rights invoked by the Prussian Trust could not be interpreted as a general obligation of the contracting states to return property they had acquired before they ratified the Convention.

Chancellor Merkel welcomed the Court's decision, saying that it "confirmed ... the federal government's position that the complaint of the Trust was groundless."²² Prime Minister Tusk observed that "now that the case was resolved conclusively and in accordance with both governments' expectations,"²³ there was no need, for the first time, for Polish-German talks to address the Prussian Trust's claims. Yet the Prussian Trust does not mean to give up: it has pledged to support individual civil-law actions brought before Polish, German and U.S. courts and it has announced that it would challenge the provisions of the Polish reprivatization act now being drafted. As this law is to lay down procedures for compensating claimants who were Polish citizens in 1946 for private property taken over by the People's Republic of Poland (PRL), it will not apply to the expelled Germans. Other controversial issues concern the recognition in the act of the expellees' property as war reparations or the restitution of property to "late resettlers."²⁴

²² See www.spiegel.de, 9 October 2008. In 2007 Chancellor Merkel officially re-affirmed Chancellor Schröder's declaration that the government of the FRG would not support the claims of expellees.

²³ See www.prawo.gazetaprawna.pl, 9 October 2008.

²⁴ Historians and lawyers differ on these issues. Włodzimierz Borodziej argued that the decrees under which the property of ethnic Germans had been expropriated after WWII had long been without legal effect. Jochen A. Frowein observed, however, that Germans could be excluded from a reprivatization law on the grounds of legal differences among the different groups wronged by the PRL authorities. See *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 15 April 2008; *Dziennik*, 18 April 2008.

Economic Relations

The FRG is Poland's most important economic partner. In 2008, Poland's exports to Germany totaled €29.1bn and imports €32.8bn (respectively, 25% of total Polish exports and 23% of imports). This represented an over 11% increase in trade on 2007, when exports and imports stood, respectively, at €26.3bn (25.9%) and €28.9bn (24%). Yet, with imports rising ahead of exports, the deficit in goods trade with the German market swelled from €2.5bn to slightly over €3.7bn.²⁵ The increase in Poland's trade with Germany was due for the greater part to the first three quarters' performance. In the fourth quarter, as the increasingly manifest symptoms of economic recession in Germany depressed domestic demand, bilateral trade dropped. The slump was deeper in imports from Germany (down by over 16%) than in Polish exports to the German market (5.6%)—a trend which, if sustained in 2009, could benefit the balance of trade and reduce Poland's trade deficit.²⁶

For several years now the structure of Polish trade with the FRG has been improving. Poland exports mainly engineering products, mechanical equipment, motor vehicles, metal products, as well as produce and food. Imports from Germany consist motly of machinery and equipment, metal products (iron, cast iron, steel and copper), vehicle parts and accessories, plastics and plastic goods, rubber products and chemicals.²⁷

Polish investment in the FRG has also been the rise. PKN Orlen, the oil group which in 2003 bought nearly 500 filling stations in Germany for over €150m, remains the largest investor. Other companies investing in the FRG include Ciech S.A. (€75m),²⁸ Sanplast S.A. (€20m), Kopex (€27m),²⁹ Unimil (€17.5m), ComArch (€9.5m). Tens of thousands of Polish firms are doing business in Germany (44,000 in 2006), of which some 4,500 are in Berlin. The bulk of Polish investment has flown into western states: Bavaria, North Rhine-Westphalia and Hamburg.

²⁵ *Obroty handlu zagranicznego ogółem i według krajów, (I–XII 2008 r. wyniki ostateczne)*, Central Statistical Office, 24 July 2009, www.stat.gov.pl.

²⁶ *Ocena sytuacji w HZ po 4 miesiącach 2009*, Ministry of Economy, Warsaw, 10 July 2009.

²⁷ Figures quoted after: K. Kalicki (ed.), *Polsko-Niemiecka Izba Przemysłowo-Handlowa jako partner niemieckich inwestorów w Polsce*, www.paiz.gov.pl/nawosci/?id_news=1978&lang_id=.

²⁸ In December 2007, Ciech S.A. acquired for €75m a German producer of calcined and baking soda.

²⁹ At the turn of 2007, the Katowice-based Kopex acquired for €27m Hansen Sicherheitstechnik of München, a producer of specialist mining equipment.

Germany has long been one of Poland's major foreign investors, as evidenced by the more than €1bn worth of investment by 275 German companies.³⁰ Metro AG, HypoVereinsbank, Volkswagen, Commerzbank AG and RWE are the largest investors, but investment below the €1m bracket by small and medium-sized businesses active mainly in the border region is also important. The work of the intergovernmental commission and of local government-level committees and boards involved, among other things, in the planning of transport routes, traffic and commercial transport and in matters relating to inland waterway navigation (including increasing the Oder's significance as a transport route) are also important for the development of bilateral cooperation.

On 26 February 2008, German Minister of Transport, Construction and Urban Development Wolfgang Tiefensee and Polish Infrastructure Minister Cezary Grabarczyk signed in Frankfurt on the Oder an agreement to develop trans-border rail and road connection routes starting with the construction and modernization of 13 rail bridges. The FRG took charge of the construction of a new 442-meter-long bridge near Frankfurt on the Oder. The project cost €25m. The dual-track bridge plays an important role in the system of rail connections between Poland and Germany (the Moscow-Warsaw-Berlin-Paris trunk line handles a traffic flow of about 100 goods and passenger trains per day). Poland is responsible for the reconstruction of the Węgliniec-Horka rail bridge across the Neisse. Also, the upgrading of the Dresden-Wrocław, Berlin-Szczecin and Berlin-Wrocław rail connections is planned as part of Polish-German cooperation.

Polish citizens' access to the German labor market figures prominently in bilateral relations. In 2008, the Polish government avoided this subject in talks with the Germans, believing that it no longer played as important a role as before. The economic downturn provided the German government with a convenient justification for its negative position on the opening of the market already in 2009. This is due only in 2011—but in January 2009 barriers were lowered for people with higher education: with respect to this category, labor authorities will no longer require employers to give priority to German citizens. This approach is due to the economic migration of Germans with higher education to Anglo-Saxon countries. As another important move, the minimum-earnings requirement on which a permanent residence permit depends was reduced from €86,400 to €63,300 a year. Unlike German entrepreneurs, who argue that

³⁰ See P. Wojciechowski (ed.), *Klimat inwestycyjny w Polsce*, www.paiz.gov.pl/nawosci/?id_news=1978&lang_id=.

extending the transition period to 2011 now that many German industries are suffering from a shortage of specialists is an ill-advised step,³¹ a majority of Germans, who fear a rise in unemployment in the wake of the opening of the labor market, support the government's decision.³² In the Polish media Germany's decision was viewed as overt discrimination against Poles in access to the German labor market, contrary to the ideas of the Treaty of Lisbon and the Charter of Fundamental Rights, which the government of the FRG had supported and promoted.³³

The context of Polish-German economic cooperation must include the financial crisis, which has been deepening since the autumn of 2008 and which has hit the German economy hard. The government in Berlin responded quickly, launching the first anti-crisis package of €32bn as early as in November 2008. In view of the recession reflected mainly in an exports slump (Germany is the world's largest exporter), contracting GDP, output and employment cuts in major sectors of the economy and plummeting demand for imports (the latter directly affects the prospects of Polish exports to the German market), the FRG government unveiled on 12 January 2009 the second economic aid package of €50bn. This two-year aid program is meant to boost recovery through measures which include infrastructure projects, tax cuts and reduced health insurance contributions. The coordination of the German concept with measures taken by other states and by the European Union will be highly relevant. The success of the German government's economy-boosting efforts would, besides having an impact on the continued development of trade between Poland and Germany, influence importantly the pace of growth of the Polish economy.

Social-cultural Relations

Poland and Germany have enjoyed vibrant social and cultural relations for many years. Government and local-government projects and programs run by NGOs and cultural organizations cover a broad spectrum of themes. The cooperation—not confined to the trans-border dimension alone—of different professional groups, research centers, scientific institutes and cultural centers, as well as the numerous youth exchange programs are noteworthy examples of this.

³¹ Reported by *Gazeta Prawna*, 17 July 2008, www.praca.gazetaprawna.pl.

³² According to a TNS OBOP survey of May 2008, this view was endorsed by 64% of German respondents.

³³ See M. Magierowski, "Obywatel Niemiec równiejszy od Polaka," *Rzeczpospolita*, 27 April 2008.

Owing to frequent government-level contacts between the two states, 2008 saw a surge of activity of local authorities, higher education institutions and artistic communities.

Following Poland's accession to the Schengen zone in 2007, Polish-German contacts, in particular in the border regions, have become easier. The first anniversary of that landmark event was officially celebrated on 14 December 2008 in Görlitz and Zgorzelec with the participation of Polish Vice-premier Grzegorz Schetyna and German Minister of Internal Affairs Wolfgang Schäuble. Reviewing that period, Polish local government officials made reference to the meticulous checks to which German border security officers had been subjecting Polish travelers, in particular in the early months after Schengen accession. The FRG justified this by the exigencies of combating crime in the border region,³⁴ but pessimistic scenarios were not reflected in statistics, which actually showed a 5% drop in crime in German border territories in 2008.³⁵

The facilitated cross-border movement spurred the settlement by Poles on the German side of the border, mainly in Mecklenburg Pomerania and Brandenburg. This migration was driven mainly by more advantageous property prices in the border regions there,³⁶ but Poles can also count on support from German local authorities in this process as a chance for the depopulated border districts. Poles have been setting up their own businesses and they have actively engaged in the life of their local communities. In February 2008 a branch of Szczecin University was opened in Eggesin, a town situated 20 km from the border, to be followed by a branch in Schwedt. Yet the inflow of Poles has also triggered negative reactions. Dislike, particularly by followers of NPD, the nationalist party, has frequently evolved into open aggression. In January 2008 several cars with Polish registration plates were vandalized and in July the NDP mounted an Internet campaign against the "Polonization" of the town of Löcknitz, where some 200 Poles resided. Despite these incidents, the ministers of foreign affairs of the two states noted at an official meeting at Löcknitz that examples of such Polish-German towns showed that the reconciliation of Poland

³⁴ After Poland's accession to the Schengen zone, many instances of repressive treatment of travelers from Poland by German border guards were reported. The arrest by German border guards of three Turkish females, Erasmus-Socrates students of Wrocław University, stirred up public opinion. See: *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 31 January 2008, www.sueddeutsche.de.

³⁵ See http://miasta.gazeta.pl/wroclaw/1,75495,6061464,Schetyna_podsumowal_rok_Polski_w_Schengen.html.

³⁶ Cf. A. Stach, "Drang nach Westen. Polskie rodziny przenoszą się do Meklemburgii Pomorza-Przedniego," *Dialog*, 2008, no. 82, pp. 21–23.

and the FRG, far from being just an empty phrase, had a chance to succeed owing to trans-border initiatives.

Yet the growing interest in cooperation with Poland has had only a limited impact on the change in the German public's stereotypes of Poles. Ignorance about Poland, its history and its political and economic system is the main source of this phenomenon. Poland has mostly negative associations for the Germans regardless of the changes underway since its accession to the European Union in 2004.³⁷

The negative image of Poland has been perpetuated by the German media, which often exploit the existing prejudices for commercial reasons, to increase their audience or reader appeal. The Axel Springer Verlag tabloids published in parallel in Poland and in Germany (*Fakt* in Polish and *Bild-Zeitung* in German) provided a good example of how Polish-German stereotypes were capitalized upon in media campaigns. In that case, the Poland-Germany game during the June 2008 European Football Championship provided the pretext.³⁸

Polish diplomacy has attempted to stem the use of the "Polish concentration camps" phrase, which has been for years been appearing in German media. When this phrase was used again in November 2008 by a *Die Welt* journalist, the Polish Embassy in Berlin reacted promptly.

The discriminatory policy of German youth welfare authorities (*Jugendamt*)—indirectly connected with the media-perpetuated anti-Polish prejudice—against the Polish parent in mixed marriages was a major problem. In many cases a Pole (or a citizen of another state) was deprived of parental rights, or his or her right to communicate with the child in their native language was restricted.³⁹ Such practices came under fire on the forums of the United Nations and the European Union, and the work of youth welfare authorities was on the agenda of Polish-German intergovernmental consultations in December 2008.

One way to break down the existing prejudice is to promote knowledge about Poland, for instance within the framework of the increasingly numerous Polish-German cultural initiatives. Many projects launched in 2008 will be

³⁷ According to 2006 surveys, Poland had negative associations for 41% of German respondents and positive for 30%. More in: M. Fałkowski, "Polacy i Niemcy: wzajemny wizerunek po rozszerzeniu Unii Europejskiej," in: L. Kolarska-Bobińska, M. Fałkowski (eds.), *Polska–Niemcy– Francja. Wzajemne postrzeganie po rozszerzeniu UE*, Warsaw, 2008, pp. 37–50.

³⁸ The campaign started with a front-page publication in *Fakt* taunting the coach of the Polish team to "give a replay of Grunwald." The Association of Polish Journalists awarded Axel Springer the "Hyena of the Year 2008" title for "setting the Germans and the Poles against each other."

³⁹ See *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 8 December 2008.

presented during 2009 festivities marking the 70th anniversary of the outbreak of World War II. One prominent project is to reconstruct historical structures on the Westerplatte peninsula, where the central commemorations attended by representatives of European states will take place. As the Westerplatte site project proceeds, a debate is to commence in 2009 on the shape and objectives of a World War II museum to be established in Gdańsk.

In Germany numerous exhibitions commemorating the outbreak of the war are planned too. One of these, devoted to the German invasion of Poland in September 1939, will be part of a larger project called "The Topography of Terror"—an outdoor museum documenting Nazi crimes, located in Berlin on the one-time site of the SS and Gestapo headquarters.⁴⁰ There are plans to expand the exhibition devoted to Polish officers, inmates of the prisoners-of-war camp (*Oflag*) in Colditz, Saxony. The authorities of that city want to establish cooperation with the town of Żagań, a one-time site of another POW camp, and to make the Colditz castle a place for meetings of Polish and German youths. An exposition devoted to the Polish footprint in Berlin, a joint effort of the Municipal Museum Foundation in Berlin and the National Museum in Poznań, is scheduled to be opened in 2009 in Berlin's Ephraim-Palais. As part of "We, the Berliners! Poles in the History of Berlin (17th–19th century)," a program pursued by the Polish Academy of Sciences' Historical Research Center, an anthology of texts by Polish authors was published in 2008.⁴¹ This project seeks to increase the awareness of the broader public of the Polish contribution to the history and culture of that multi-culture city.

It is worth noting in the context of the commemoration of events connected with Polish-German history that in February 2008 the Warsaw Rising Museum bought a collection of mail from the 1944 Rising. Thanks to the cooperation of a Düsseldorf-based auction company, a collection of insurgency-mail postage stamps and letters of Warsaw Rising fighters was sold for the starting price of €190,000 rather than being auctioned. Commenting on that transaction, the Polish minister of culture noted that while the transaction went through thanks to Polish sponsors, an offer of financial support for the acquisition received from the German government should be appreciated.⁴²

⁴⁰ The museum probably will be opened in 2010.

⁴¹ D. Danielewicz-Kerski, M. Górny (ed.), *Berlin. Polnische Perspektiven 19.–21. Jahrhundert*, Berlin, 2008. The book includes texts by Józef Ignacy Kraszewski, Bolesław Prus, Witold Gombrowicz, Marian Brandys, Wojciech Kossak and others.

⁴² "Polacy kupili listy. Niemcy oferowali pomoc," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 2 September 2008, www.gazeta.pl.

Youth education programs are meant to serve the building of the Polish-German “community of remembrance.” One of the most important projects concerns the preparation of a Polish-German history textbook. This idea has had both governments’ clear support since 2007. In May 2008 at a scientific conference held in Berlin, Polish and German historians unveiled the guidelines of this project. The Polish-German Textbooks Commission headed by Professors Robert Traba and Michael G. Müller is the project’s patron, and work is coordinated by government officials from the two countries. Poland is represented by Krzysztof Stanowski, undersecretary of state at the Ministry of National Education, and Germany—by Holger Rupprecht, minister for education, youths and sports in the state of Brandenburg. The publication is to reach Polish and German schools in the school year 2010/2011. It is modeled after a textbook by German and French historians which has been helpful in rejecting stereotypes,⁴³ and the authors of the Polish-German publication are counting on similar effects.⁴⁴ This, however, will not be easy given an asymmetry and large gaps in German curricula on Polish-German relations. As Jörg-Dieter Gauger, Bonn University researcher, has observed, “in terms of knowledge on East European countries German school leavers are as often as not illiterate.”⁴⁵

The establishment of the Polish-German Foundation for Science is another noteworthy development. After several years of negotiations, the ministers of higher education, Barbara Kurdycka and Annette Schavan, signed the founding deed in Warsaw in July 2008. In November the Foundation launched a program of financial aid to projects in the humanities, culture, law, sociology and economics. The target group comprises higher education institutions, non-university research establishments and other academic institutions in Poland and Germany. The relevance of projects to Polish-German understanding is one of the criteria for granting aid. Poland will contribute €5m to the Foundation’s budget.⁴⁶

⁴³ The textbook received negative reviews from some Polish historians. See W. Roszkowski’s expert report in *Rzeczpospolita*, 30 January 2009.

⁴⁴ Cf. O. Hinz, “Zagrożenie dla tożsamości narodowych czy szansa na lepsze porozumienie?,” *Dialog*, 2008, no. 83, p. 63.

⁴⁵ Basically, German school syllabuses make no mention of the Teutonic Knights Order or the German eastward colonization thrust, while the partitions of Poland, the inter-war period and German occupation of Polish territories during World War II appear only sporadically and in a much-abridged version. J. D. Gauger, *Deutsche und Polen im Unterricht. Eine Untersuchung aktueller Lehrpläne/Richtlinien und Schulbücher für Geschichte*, Bonn, 2008.

⁴⁶ The FRG contributed €50m. There were critical opinions in Polish press pointing out that the Foundation’s Charter gave Poland no influence on the decisions taken by the Foundation. See *Polska firmuje, Niemcy decydują*, www.rp.pl.

In 2008, Poland and Germany took efforts to commend the work of institutions and individuals furthering Polish-German understanding and promoting knowledge on the neighbor country. The granting of the Polish-German Award was resumed. The award, established in 1991, is granted for especially valuable contributions to relations between the two countries. Ministers Sikorski and Steinmeier handed the 2008 award to two organizations that had been promoting Polish-German dialogue for years: the “Krzyżowa” Foundation for European Understanding and Action Sign of Repentance—Service to the Cause of Peace.

Assessment

In 2008 Poland's policy towards Germany underwent a refocusing, yet it is difficult to assess whether the changes made were such as would lead to long-term stabilization of mutual relations. Doubtless, there are many successes that can be validly claimed, such as the approximation of positions on the climate package or Germany's support for Eastern Partnership, a Polish-Swedish initiative. Both sides' readiness to engage in dialogue on the Center against Expulsions, an issue that had marred Polish-German contacts for years, could count as an achievement as well. The rejection by the Court in Strasbourg of the Prussian Trust's claims against Poland marked another step towards the warming of relations between the two countries. The revival of Weimar Triangle structures was on track and cooperation within the European Union and NATO became closer.

Yet a recurring question is whether the improvement in relations between Poland and Germany will involve their reshaping and the development of a lasting Warsaw-Berlin understanding. The concessions Poland made to the FRG on the centre to commemorate expulsions have failed to produce the expected results. There has been no shift in German energy policy. The FRG government stopped short of opening the labor market to Polish workers, pleading the pressures of the financial crisis. According to a view voiced in 2008 in Polish and German press alike, a “smiling policy” and the bypassing of sensitive issues were not leading towards the expected understanding between Poland and Germany. Controversial issues, such as those involved in the years-long “war for remembrance,” have not been resolved, as pointedly illustrated by the dispute over Erica Steinbach's candidacy for the board of governors of the “Visible Sign.”

The decision by the FRG government to establish in Berlin a museum to commemorate expulsions is one of the manifestations of the process of

redefining the German identity that has been underway in Germany for more than a decade. Besides the shaping of historical policy, this process involves a new construction of Germany's international role. Poland has repeatedly emphasized that the increasingly frequent references to the losses Germany suffered during and as a result of World War II should not be taken out of the context of history and the Third Reich's responsibility. The Polish government chose the right course when it renounced a confrontational attitude towards its German partner. Yet, it is important to ensure that the improvement in mutual relations involves readiness to demand and obtain from the FRG an equally open stance, including an objective presentation of historical events. This is relevant in particular in the context of the huge deficit of reliable information about Poland in German society and a lack of will to change this state of things.

It seems that there is no returning to the "community of interests" promoted in the 1990s. Yet, it is important that both parties be ready to conduct a dialogue and seek compromise on various forums, chiefly in the European Union. Blocking or obstructing contacts with a neighboring country seldom leads to a desirable revision of the latter's stance. Despite the improved climate between Warsaw and Berlin, the "search for new, courageous formulas for sustaining Polish-German partnership" which Polish Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski referred to in Berlin in December 2008 has yet to be completed. How mutual relations—which the German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier described as "new normalcy"⁴⁷—turn out in a longer term will depend on both partners. It follows that in relations between Poland and Germany both the "community of interests" and the "community of conflict" catchphrases had better be abandoned in favor of normalization that is marked by support, cooperation—but also acceptance of different points of view.

⁴⁷ Quoted after *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 10–11 January 2009.

Poland's Policy Regarding Russia

Due to an accumulation of eventful domestic and international developments, the year 2008 deserves special attention among students of Poland-Russia relations. It was the first full year of Poland's coalition government formed by the Civic Platform (PO) and the Polish Peasant Party (PSL), a government whose strategy towards Russia differs from the one followed by its predecessor—thus offering much food for thought about differences in strategic approaches to the country's largest neighbor and the consequences of these choices. There was a string of spectacular international events that were influencing Poland's Russia policy as well.

Determinants

Formed after the parliamentary election of 2007, the PO-PSL cabinet declared readiness to normalize relations with Russia and base them on the principles of pragmatism and priority of economic interests. But the Russian invasion of Georgia in August 2008 put in question the advisability of, and prospects for, such normalization. It also made it easier for Poland to push through the European Union its Eastern policy initiatives, most notably the Eastern Partnership.

As far as social contacts are concerned, bilateral relations were impacted by Poland's accession to the Schengen area in December 2007.

The global financial crisis, which hit Russia too entailed a collapse of two-way trade in Q4, after record growth figures were registered in the first three quarters of the year.

Barack Obama's victory in the U.S. presidential election in November stoked fears in Poland and other Central European countries that Washington might abandon strategic projects involving the region (NATO's enlargement to the east and the deployment of missile defence (MD) elements in Poland and the Czech Republic) in exchange for Russia's assistance in stabilizing Afghanistan

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or countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It also gave a boost to advocates of cooperation with Russia in Europe, including in Poland, while weakening the proponents of isolating that country. The harbingers of a U.S. policy, later to be termed a “reset”, have encouraged the Kremlin to tighten the screw in its opposition to MD deployments in Poland and the Czech Republic, and against NATO’s admission of Georgia and Ukraine.

Premises

The issues that dominated relations with Russia under the 2005–2007 government of Law and Justice (PiS), the League of Polish Families (LPR) and Self-Defense (Samoobrona) party, included geopolitics (sensitivity to Russian expansionism), energy security (sensitivity to Russia’s use of natural gas as a means to reach political goals), democratic values (sensitivity to civil rights violations in Russia and to efforts towards implementing an authoritarian model of governance) and historical policy (sensitivity to instances where Russian authorities negated or relativized responsibility for Soviet crimes perpetrated against Polish citizens during World War II and for the Soviet leadership’s contribution to the unleashing of the war). The government was neither prepared to enter into tactical compromises on these issues, nor did it depend on support for its decisions in the forum of the European Union.¹

Polish-Russian relations at the time were in deep crisis indeed, as symbolized by the Russian embargo on Polish meat and plant products, attacks on Polish diplomats and journalists in Moscow, and—on the other side—by the Polish move to block the adoption of the European Commission’s negotiating brief for talks with Russia on a new legal framework for bilateral relations.

Improvement in relations with Russia, as part of an overall foreign policy revision, was among the promises made by the PO and PSL, which after the autumn 2007 election formed the ruling coalition and whose foreign policy concept invokes the notion of realism.² “We want dialogue with Russia such as it is,” Prime Minister Donald Tusk said in his inaugural address to the Sejm.³

¹ See M. A. Cichocki, “Polska nie chce blokować unijnej konstytucji,” *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 14 March 2007; *idem*, *Polskie strategie w Europie*, www.teologiapolityczna.pl, [no publication date given]; A. Eberhardt, “Poland’s Policy Regarding Russia,” *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy 2008*, pp. 139–161.

² “Government Report on Poland’s Foreign Policy in 2008,” see above pp. XX.

³ *Przedstawienie przez prezesa Rady Ministrów programu działania Rady Ministrów z wnioskiem o udzielenie jej wotum zaufania, Sprawozdanie stenograficzne z 2 posiedzenia Sejmu RP*, 23 October 2007, p. 24, www.sejm.gov.pl.

The new government worked on the assumption that only Poland deeply anchored in the European Union and enjoying a strong position within the bloc can develop a dialogue with Moscow in the desired direction. The government avoided provoking tensions in Polish-Russian relations.

Poland sought in 2008 to keep energy out of the bounds of political dispute with Russia, which was helped by the coalition's strategy for energy security, seeking to increase coal output, develop cutting-edge technologies and diversify sources of oil and gas.

Another premise behind the government's Russia policy was to depoliticize sensitive historical issues, largely connected with the circumstances surrounding the outbreak of World War II.⁴

The Tusk government reasoned that it was in Poland's interest to have transatlantic relations improved, first of all in the security sphere. In the longer run, the PO-PSL coalition believed, Poland would stand to lose from U.S.–Russia and NATO–Russia conflicts.⁵

For the most part of the year, the policy towards Russia was the subject of dispute between the cabinet, on the one hand, and the Polish president and the Law and Justice party on the other. Paradoxically, that dispute also had its bright spots strengthening Poland's position towards Russia and in the EU forum. In order to squash chances for Jarosław Kaczyński's party making a comeback, both Moscow and Brussels were interested in seeing the Tusk cabinet grow stronger, which translated into concessions on matters of interest to the government. It is in this context that one should view the Russian decision to lift the embargo on Polish meat and plants a decision the PO-PSL government quickly succeeded in bringing about.

It should also be noted, however, that the Russia-Georgia war prodded a turn in the government's policy towards Russia. Initially, it stayed within rhetorical bounds,⁶ but in reaction to Russia's successive aggressive moves on the territory of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Poland began to take concrete decisions.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 25.

⁵ Cf. Minister Radosław Sikorski's address at the 44th Munich Conference on Security Policy (8–10 February 2008), [www.msz.gov.pl/44th,Munich,Conference,on,Security,Policy,\(8-10,February,2008\),,Panel:,The,Atlantic,Alliance:,Bucharest,and,Beyond,15952.html](http://www.msz.gov.pl/44th,Munich,Conference,on,Security,Policy,(8-10,February,2008),,Panel:,The,Atlantic,Alliance:,Bucharest,and,Beyond,15952.html).

⁶ The so-called Sikorski doctrine was presented on 25 October 2008 in the minister's lecture at Columbia University in New York (*Poland 2009. Ten Years in NATO, Five Years in the EU. Plus the Lesson from Georgia*) and on 19 November 2008 at an Atlantic Council conference in Washington (*The Barack Obama Promise: A European View*), www.msz.gov.pl.

Political Relations

Providing institutional forms for political dialogue became a priority for the Tusk government, although the need for normalization was in fact perceived on both sides. For the Polish government, poor relations with Russia meant a weaker position within the European Union and NATO; for Russia, tensions in relations with the EU's new member states rendered dialogue with Brussels and the United States more difficult.

Restoration of an institutional framework for Polish-Russian political dialogue. Just days after the cabinet's formation, on 27 November 2007, Prime Minister Tusk said Poland would no longer block Russia's accession negotiations with the Organization for Economic Development and Cooperation (OECD). The gesture was noticed by the Russians. The previous Polish government had made its consent contingent on Russia's joining the World Trade Organization.

On 7 December 2007, for the first time after the parliamentary election, the chief Polish and Russian diplomats held a meeting in Brussels, discussing the revival of a Committee for Polish-Russian Cooperation Strategy, an Inter-governmental Commission for Economic Cooperation and a Taskforce for Contentious Issues (in a new make-up), plus plans for top-level visits. The Russian invitation for Prime Minister Tusk to visit Moscow in February 2008 was confirmed.

On 21 January 2008, Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski went on a working visit to Moscow for talks with his Russian counterpart, Sergei Lavrov, on preparations for the prime minister's visit. He held a meeting with Sergei Yastrzemski, an advisor to the Russian president for relations with the European Union, and with representatives of the opposition. Minister Sikorski also laid flowers at the Solovetsky Stone commemorating victims of political repressions in the USSR. He thus emphasized the importance of development of Russia's democracy in the foreign policy of the Polish government. Previously, the declaration of cooperation with Russia "as it is" was seen by some as a sign of Warsaw's readiness to keep silent on the question of human rights violations in Russia under President Putin.

It should be noted that the process of restoring Polish-Russian dialogue took off despite an unfavorable climate in international relations. Russia had suspended its participation in the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in

Europe (CFE), tensions were on the rise over regulating Kosovo's status,⁷ and talks on the EU's new agreement with Russia were frozen.

Minister Sikorski's visit to Moscow gave testimony to improvement in bilateral relations, with Minister Lavrov declaring that Russia did not arrogate to itself the right to veto Polish decisions on the missile defense shield, and did not intend to press Poland on the issue. Those words stood in stark contrast with the threats made by Russian generals against Poland just weeks prior to the ministerial talks. At the same time, the Polish foreign minister, who had been very critical of the Russian-German Nord Stream project in his previous capacity as defense minister in the Jarosław Kaczyński government, skipped the subject during his stay in Moscow.

Prime Minister Donald Tusk paid an official visit to Russia on 8 February 2008, meeting with Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov, Deputy Prime Minister Dmitri Medvedev (tapped, right then, to win the presidential election scheduled for March 2008) and President Vladimir Putin. The most important outcome of the visit included the confirmation that the Intergovernmental Commission for Economic Cooperation and the Committee for Polish-Russian Cooperation Strategy would resume their proceedings and also the setting of a timetable for bilateral meetings in 2008 and 2009.

In their public statements for the press, the parties to the Moscow talks laid emphasis on the development of economic and cultural cooperation, i.e. the least controversial questions. They pointed to the progress achieved in freeing Polish meat and plant-product exports to Russia, and the withdrawal of the Polish veto on Russia's negotiations with the OECD. Prime Minister Tusk announced a new edition of the Zielona Góra festival of Russian songs. Other points on the visit's schedule included laying flowers at the Solovetsky Stone in memory of the victims of Stalinist terror, and at the Russian Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

On contentious issues, both sides confined themselves to perfunctory comments and avoided trading charges. Yet those efforts to play up an improvement in Polish-Russian relations do no change the fact that the only concrete result of the visit was the signing of an intergovernmental agreement on the protection of confidential data, which came into force in August 2008,

⁷ Towards the end of January 2008, a declaration of Kosovo independence was expected, with Russia rejecting the province's right to break away from Serbia. Poland recognized Kosovo's independence on 26 February 2008—with a week's delay to the Kosovo Parliament's announcement—but did not establish diplomatic relations.

facilitating both countries' collaboration in combating crime and drug trafficking.⁸

On 24 June 2008, bilateral political consultations were held in Warsaw, led by deputy foreign ministers Andrzej Kremer and Vladimir Titov. The 2008 calendar for two-way meetings was confirmed, including Minister Lavrov's visit to Warsaw on 11 September and the related session of the Committee for Polish-Russian Cooperation Strategy. Yet the Russian diplomat firmly rejected Poland's proposals for new agreements and settlement of longstanding disputes, including the disparity in diplomatic real property assets held by Russia in Poland and by Poland in Russia.⁹ He also presented Russia's critical position on a possible deployment of missile defense elements in Poland.

Based on these failed consultations, a conclusion can be drawn about the price Russia set for raising its relations with Poland above the normalization level, that price being Poland's withdrawal from negotiations with the U.S. over the missile defense shield. The course of the consultations could also have been influenced by the European Council's decision of 19–20 June 2008, approving the Polish-Swedish initiative on the Eastern Partnership and sending it to the European Commission. Russia found that initiative to be aimed at its position in the Eastern European area.¹⁰

A challenge to the process of Polish-Russian normalization came from the outbreak of the Russia-Georgia conflict on 8 August 2008. Although not causing a total breakdown of the process, it nevertheless made plain its limitations. It also highlighted the differences between strategies towards Russia as embraced by the Tusk government and President Lech Kaczyński.

The government emphasized the role of the European Union and NATO in resolving the conflict,¹¹ which reflected the essence of the PO-PSL coalition's strategy towards Russia and Eastern Europe in general: to act via multilateral structures, even if that necessitated concessions. That approach, according to Tusk, offers greater chances of success than going it alone. The president, however hand, came up with an initiative to demonstrate support for Georgia

⁸ *Podsumowanie roku rządu premiera Donalda Tuska i koalicji PO-PSL*, [no publication date given], pp. 81–82, www.premier.gov.pl.

⁹ With no compromise reached on this issue, the Tusk government chose to revoke the agreements signed with the USSR in 1974 and 1978. See *Podsumowanie roku rządu...*, pp. 81–82.

¹⁰ *Statya Ministra inostrannykh diel Rossii S. V. Lavrova „Vneshnaya politika Rossii i novoye kachestvo geopoliticheskoy situatsyi” dlya „Diplomaticheskogo yezhegodnika 2008 g.”*, 15 December 2008, www.mid.ru.

¹¹ *Premier o kryzysie gruzińskim*, 11 August 2008, www.premier.gov.pl.

without looking to West European partners. On 12 August, together with heads of state from Estonia, Lithuania and Ukraine, and with the Latvian prime minister, the president arrived in Tbilisi. The Polish prime minister publicly distanced himself from the mission and delegated Minister Sikorski thereto to make sure that the president would not overstep the bounds of the government-adopted position.¹² Donald Tusk also suggested that the trip to Tbilisi by leaders from Poland, Baltic states and Ukraine would add to tensions in the region, instead of defusing them.

At a rally in the Georgian capital, President Kaczyński condemned Russia's aggression in strong terms, as a manifestation of traditional imperialism. During his stay in Georgia, he also unsuccessfully sought to press Nicolas Sarkozy—then mediating between Moscow and Tbilisi on behalf of the EU—to include a mention of Georgia's territorial integrity into the ceasefire agreement.¹³ Meanwhile, the Tusk government did not raise any objections to the six-point Sarkozy-Medvedev plan of 12 August 2008.

On 14 August 2008, Deputy Foreign Minister Andrzej Kremer and U.S. Undersecretary of State John Rood initialed the missile defense shield agreement, which was formally signed in Warsaw on 20 August by Minister Sikorski and U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. Minister Sikorski refuted the opinions about a linkage between the South Ossetia conflict and the Polish-U.S. agreement, seeking not to give credence to the Kremlin's accusation that the missile shield in Central Europe was targeting Russia. That, however, failed to convince the Russians.

Despite several rounds of bilateral consultations, Russia stuck to its negative position on the deployment of interceptor missiles in Poland, while its authorities and generals pelted Poland with threats of a military nature.

The government was more moderate than the president¹⁴ in its position on the Russian decision to recognize the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. On 26 August 2008, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed the conviction that the Kremlin's decision would not be conducive to the implementation of the ceasefire plan of 12 August 2008, and it made a plea for respect of Georgia's territorial integrity.¹⁵

¹² Premier: *trzeba dążyć do zachowania integralności terytorialnej Gruzji*, 12 August 2008, www.premier.gov.pl.

¹³ "Nieudana gruzińska misja Kaczyńskiego," *Dziennik*, 8–9 August 2009.

¹⁴ *Oświadczenie Prezydenta RP*, 26 August 2008, www.prezydent.pl.

¹⁵ *Oświadczenie MSZ w związku z uznaniem przez Federację Rosyjską niepodległości Osetii Południowej i Abchazji*, 26 August 2008, www.msz.gov.pl.

On 1 September, the European Council decided to suspend talks with Russia on a new deal replacing the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement. While at the summit, the Polish delegation managed to push through its demand to speed up the European Commission's work on the Eastern Partnership; and the text of the Presidency Conclusions contained something unattainable in the past: a passage on energy security.

In the forums of the European Union and NATO, Poland was among countries demanding the farthest reaching sanctions against Russia. But in direct relations with Moscow, the government demonstrated openness to cooperation, as evidenced by the course of Sergei Lavrov's visit to Warsaw on 11 September 2008, which not only stayed in the calendar but whose schedule also remained unchanged. The ministers discussed bilateral issues, confirmed that sessions of the Strategy Committee, Intergovernmental Commission for Economic Cooperation and the Taskforce for Contentious Issues would be convened in 2009, and met with members of the Poland-Russia Forum for Civic Dialogue. The most telling, however, was the ministers' announcement of winners of diplomas for contributions to Polish-Russian cooperation. A Russian winner was Nikita Mikhalkov, known as much for being a film director as he was known for promoting Vladimir Putin's policies. The visiting Minister Lavrov was also received by Prime Minister Tusk to discuss the missile defense shield, Nord Stream pipeline and the unblocking of Vistula Lagoon navigation.

The government's approach can be understood if we take a look at the line taken after the August conflict by the French presidency. In the EU's contacts with Russia, Paris quickly gave up raising the question of respect for Georgia's territorial integrity, and it used the outbreak of a global economic crisis as a pretext to have the relations resumed (the final decision was taken by the General Affairs and External Relations Council on 10 November 2008). The Polish government unwaveringly backed France in its conciliatory attitude towards Moscow, proceeding from the assumption that the reaction to the Russia-Georgia conflict should be not so much penalizing Russia as supporting the victims of its aggressive policy. Consequently, the government intensified efforts aimed at bringing East European countries closer to the Union. In addition to the previously mentioned acceleration of Eastern Partnership preparations, this line of action included the unfreezing of the EU's relations with Belarus, on Warsaw's initiative.

President Lech Kaczyński pronounced that he was against resuming dialogue with Russia in a joint declaration signed with Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus on 3 November 2008. The two pointed out that Russia had failed to

meet the terms of the six-point ceasefire agreement of 12 August 2008, e.g. by not pulling its troops to pre-conflict positions.¹⁶

In the aftermath of Russia's invasion of Georgia, the principle of cooperating with Russia "such as it is" ceased to apply. In an address to the Atlantic Council in Washington, on 19 November 2008, Minister Sikorski called on the West to react symmetrically if Russia were to make other attempts to change borders in Europe. The Polish government openly began expressing opposition to Russia's assertive policies pursued on the territory of the Commonwealth of Independent States.¹⁷

Embargo. On 12 December 2007, the Polish and Russian agriculture ministers, Marek Sawicki and Alexei Gordeyev, respectively held a meeting in Moscow, during which Russia announced that the meat import restrictions would be removed after both countries' veterinary services signed an appropriate memorandum. But Minister Gordeyev upheld reservations against Polish fruit and vegetables,¹⁸ an issue whose solution required a Russia-European Commission agreement (restrictions on plant product shipments to Russia applied to other EU member states as well). It may be noted that Polish companies' losses from the plant embargo were much higher than in the case of the meat ban.

The required memorandum was signed on 19 December 2007 in Svetlogorsk, Kaliningrad region,¹⁹ and so Polish meat exports could be resumed. In practice, though, the provisions of the memorandum made it impossible for Polish meat sales to Russia to recover to the pre-embargo level. Partial agreement on the removal of fruit and vegetable restrictions was reached by Polish and Russian agriculture ministers on 18 January 2008 in Berlin, at the

¹⁶ "Kaczyński i Adamkus o Rosji i UE (PK, PAP)," *Rzeczpospolita*," 4 November 2008, www.rp.pl.

¹⁷ "Wypowiedź wiceminister spraw zagranicznych Grażyny Bernatowicz na połączonym posiedzeniu Komisji ds. Unii Europejskiej i Komisji Spraw Zagranicznych Sejmu w dniu 19 lutego 2009 r.," *Biuletyn Komisji Spraw Zagranicznych Sejmu*, no. 1905/VI, 19 February 2009, www.sejm.gov.pl.

¹⁸ *Informacja ze spotkania Ministra Rolnictwa i Rozwoju Wsi Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej pana M. Sawickiego i Ministra Rolnictwa Federacji Rosyjskiej pana A. Gordiejewa – Moskwa, 12 grudnia 2007 r.*, 12 December 2007, www.msz.gov.pl.

¹⁹ *Memorandum między Inspekcją Weterynaryjną Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej a Federalną Służbą Nadzoru Weterynaryjnego i Fitosanitarnego o warunkach dostaw produktów pochodzenia zwierzęcego do Federacji Rosyjskiej*, Svetlogorsk, 19 December 2007, www.wetgiw.gov.pl.

Grüne Woche international fair.²⁰ The embargo's final removal was possible after a Russia-European Union agreement signed in Brussels on 26 March 2008²¹ and coming into force only on 1 July 2008.²²

Taskforce for Contentious Issues. One factor behind the crisis in Polish-Russian relations in 2005–2007 was a different assessment of historical events.²³ The Tusk government proposed to Russia that the Taskforce for Contentious Issues, established in January 2002 during President Vladimir Putin's visit to Poland, resume its activities. The motive was to strike history off the political agenda. Consequently, no efforts were taken in the course of 2008 to obtain access to the archives of the Russian public prosecution service or post-Soviet records for National Remembrance Institute prosecutors.²⁴

The first informal consultations between Taskforce co-leaders, Professors Adam Daniel Rotfeld and Anatoli Torkunov, were held in early February 2008 in Brussels and on 19 May in Moscow. The two reached agreement on using the existing scientific literature in Taskforce proceedings (in addition to its output so far) and on symmetry in the makeup of both national groups. They said they would seek to draw representatives of the Catholic Church in Poland and the Orthodox Church in Russia into Polish-Russian dialogue, and also to present the Taskforce's findings to the general public through publications and conferences.

²⁰ *Memorandum między Ministerstwem Rolnictwa i Rozwoju Wsi Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej i Ministerstwem Rolnictwa Federacji Rosyjskiej w zakresie kwarantanny roślin przy eksporcie roślin i produktów roślinnych z Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej do Federacji Rosyjskiej*, Berlin, 18 January 2008, www.piorin.gov.pl.

²¹ *Memorandum dotyczące bezpieczeństwa produktów roślinnych, przeznaczonych do spożycia przez ludzi i wywożonych ze Wspólnoty Europejskiej (WE) do Federacji Rosyjskiej, w odniesieniu do pozostałości pestycydów, azotanów i azotynów*, Brussels, 26 March 2008, www.piorin.gov.pl; "Porozumienie między Unią Europejską a Rosją," *Biuletyn Informacyjny Ministerstwa Rolnictwa i Rozwoju Wsi*, no. 4/2008 (120), p. 5, www.minrol.gov.pl.

²² "Zasady eksportu towarów pochodzenia roślinnego do Federacji Rosyjskiej," *Biuletyn Informacyjny Ministerstwa Rolnictwa i Rozwoju Wsi*, no. 9/2008 (124), p. 13, www.minrol.gov.pl. For a detailed analysis of the economic consequences of the Russian embargo and the outcome of the 2008 agreements, see: *Zmiany w eksporcie z Polski produktów rolno-spożywczych w kontekście ograniczeń importu z Polski do Rosji*, Department for Analyses and Forecasts, Ministry of the Economy, Warsaw, January 2008, www.mg.gov.pl.

²³ *O rossiysko-polskikh otnosheniyakh*, 15 May 2008, www.mid.ru.

²⁴ "Informacja Ministra Sprawiedliwości – Prokuratora Generalnego oraz Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych na temat działań w sprawie ostatnich decyzji wymiaru sprawiedliwości Federacji Rosyjskiej w odniesieniu do ofiar zbrodni w Katyniu i ich rodzin oraz przykładów publicznego powtarzania kłamstw dotyczących zbrodni katyńskiej," *Biuletyn z posiedzenia Komisji Sprawiedliwości i Praw Człowieka (nr 49) i Komisji Spraw Zagranicznych (nr 48)*, no. 904/VI, 8 July 2008, www.sejm.gov.pl.

The Polish section of the Taskforce for Contentious Issues held its inaugural meeting on 27 March 2008.²⁵

The full membership met on 12–14 June 2008, agreeing on an idea to bring out a joint Polish-Russian scientific publication devoted to key issues of bilateral relations in the 20th century. The two joint heads of the Taskforce were received by President Lech Kaczyński, Prime Minister Donald Tusk and Minister Radosław Sikorski. The Polish prime minister came up with an initiative for an academic conference on the outbreak of World War II to be held in Poland in 2009, with the participation of historians from both countries.

The Taskforce had its second meeting in Moscow on 27–28 September. Its members were received by Minister Sergei Lavrov, who delivered a speech in which he instructed his guests on how not to interpret the circumstances of the outbreak of World War II (as an alliance of two totalitarian regimes).²⁶ He thus demonstrated that the proceedings of the group stood little chance to influence the Kremlin's history policy, which invoked Stalinist historiography on many points. Russia's instrumental approach was revealed towards the Taskforce and towards the idea of depoliticizing history—seen not as a platform for discussion, but as a means to prevent Poland from officially taking up questions such as the circumstances of the Katyń massacre, or participation of Russian state representatives in smearing Poland and its role in the fight against the Nazis.

Towards the end of the Moscow session, Taskforce members issued a joint statement, announcing that they had agreed on a list of subjects and authors of a joint publication, to be brought out during celebrations to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the outbreak of World War II. The decision about each subject being covered by separate articles, one Polish and one Russian, actually undermined the Taskforce's rationale. Its members no longer sought to reach a common assessment of individual events, but rather assumed that viewpoints would differ in accordance with researchers' countries of origin. Still, Taskforce proceedings in 2008 provided testimony to the Polish authorities' ability to take a constructive and unemotional position on controversial questions related to the history of Polish-Russian relations.

²⁵ *Komunikat dot. posiedzenia inauguracyjnego Polsko-Rosyjskiej Grupy ds. Trudnych*, 27 March 2008 r., www.msz.gov.pl.

²⁶ *Vstupitel'noye slovo Ministra inostrannykh del Rossii S.V. Lavrova na vstreche s uchastnikami zasedaniya Gruppy po slozhnym voprosam, vvytekayushchym iz istorii rossiysko-polskikh otnosheniy*, 27 October 2008, www.mid.ru.

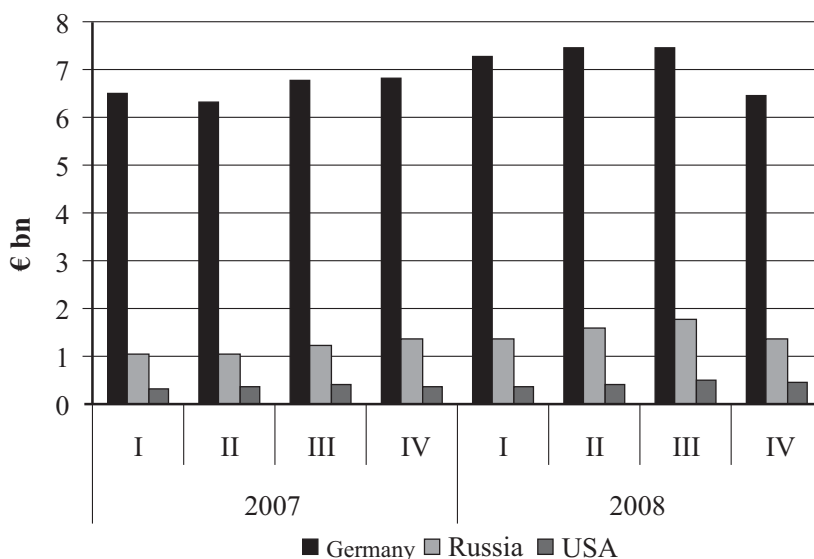
Economic Relations

Trade. The volume of Polish-Russian trade exchanges increased considerably during 2008. Polish exports went up 38.9% on a year earlier, to reach close to US\$9 billion, with Russia's share in total Polish foreign sales rising to 5.3% (from 4.6% in 2007). Polish imports from Russia grew 43.1%, to more than US\$20.5 billion, largely due to increased oil and gas prices, pushing up Russia's share of total Polish purchases abroad to 9.9%, from 8.7% a year earlier. Poland's trade deficit with Russia widened in 2008 by a whopping 45.6%, to reach US\$11.6 billion.

This means that Russia accounts for as much as 31.8% of Poland's overall trade deficit.²⁷

Figure 1

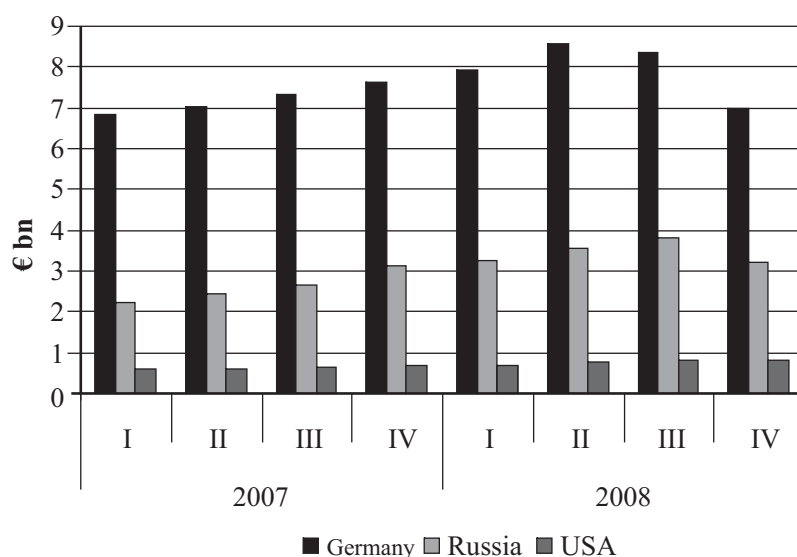
Polish exports to Russia, Germany and USA in 2007 and 2008



Source: Central bank (NBP) data, www.nbp.pl.

²⁷ *Informator ekonomiczny o krajach świata. Rosja*, 7 July 2009, p. 2, www.msz.gov.pl.

Figure 2

Polish imports from Russia, Germany and USA in 2007 and 2008

Source: As in Figure 1.

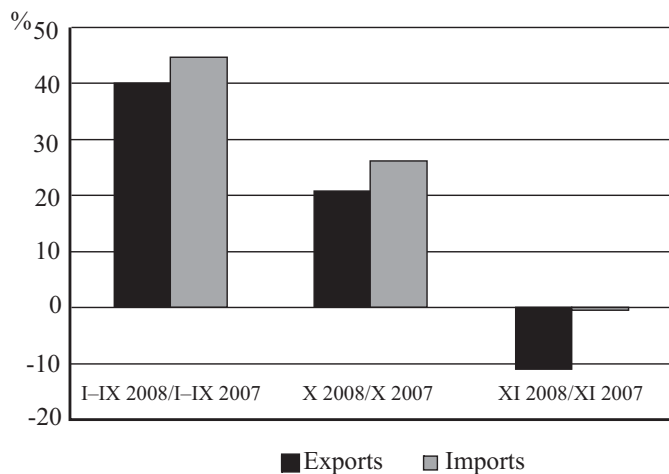
The dominant groups in Polish sales to Russia in 2008 included products of the following industries: engineering (45%), chemicals (19%), metal manufacture (9%) and wood and paper (8.5%). Food and produce represented just 7.9% of the overall export figure, the lowest proportion since 1997 (when it stood at 42%). As for imports from Russia, their structure has for years resisted changes of such magnitude and durability as those on the export side. The dominant group is mineral products, including crude oil and natural gas (86–90%), with metal manufacture accounting for 4% and chemicals for 3.6%.²⁸

It is interesting to look at the dynamics of Polish-Russian trade exchanges in 2008 through the prism of the mid-September outbreak of a financial crisis in Russia—instead of the usual breakdown into successive quarters. The period to September saw robust overall growth, by 40% on the same time a year earlier, no doubt reflecting a trend in appreciation of the ruble in place until summer. Polish imports rose then by as much as 45%. Still in October 2008, the value of Polish-Russian trade exceeded the October 2007 level by more than 20%.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 1.

Figure 3

**Impact of Russia's financial breakdown in September 2008
on Polish-Russian trade**



Source: Ministry of the Economy data, www.mg.gov.pl.

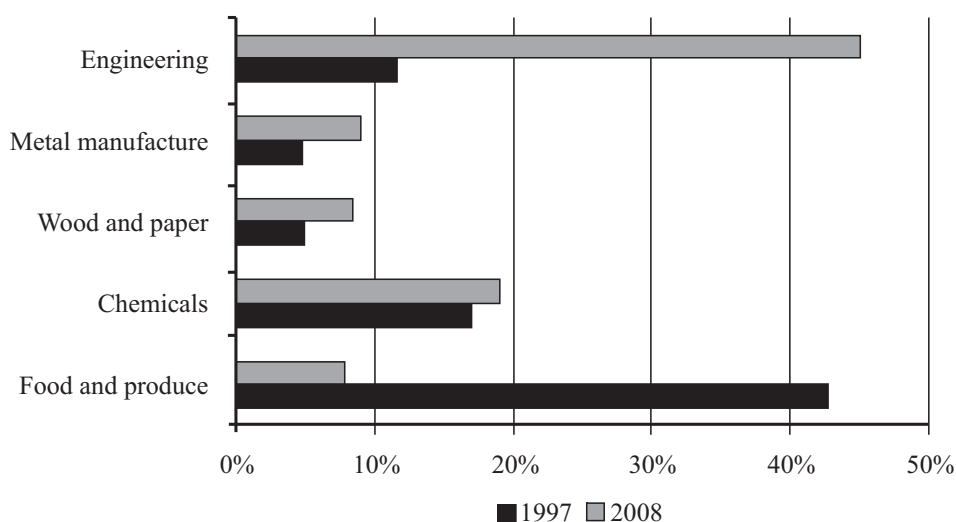
It was only starting from November 2008 that volumes began to shrink compared to the same period of the preceding year—but while exports to Russia fell by more than 10%, imports from that country were only 0.5% lower. Experts from the Department for Foreign Economic Policy at the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs have identified two major causes of these trends, both related to the international economic crisis, which brought down trade throughout the globe. First, between November 2008 and January 2009 alone, the ruble shed some 30% of its value, and, second, the Russian government, as part of its response to the downturn, imposed tariffs to protect the domestic car industry. That was particularly damaging to Polish exports, where, as previously noted, machinery and machine parts had accounted for close to half of the 2008 total. The problem could only have been solved by Russia's entry into the World Trade Organization, which would have prevented Moscow from tariff increases.

Unlike after the August 1998 collapse of the ruble, no long-term slump should be expected for Polish exports this time, although a decline by a third from the 2008 level is likely, with engineering sales worst hit. However, the fall in Russia's engineering industry output is likely to spell trouble for that country's farm producers in 2009, leading to higher food imports—which would benefit Polish producers. But in the longer run, the structure of Polish exports will be similar to that seen in 2008. This is because the Russian economy is

highly outdated in terms of infrastructure and technology, with domestic industry incapable of providing high-tech solutions on a satisfactory scale.

Figure 4

Structure of Polish exports to Russia in 1997 and 2008



Source: As in Figure 3.

Prospects for a recovery of Polish sales to Russia look better than back in 1998. Two-way trade is now much more transparent, and the Russian federal authorities are much better prepared to cushion the effects of the crisis. Engineering industry sales are very likely to regain their pre-crisis weight quickly, especially since this category includes companies with foreign shareholders, which can afford waiting out the downturn.

Investments. Polish investments in Russia totaled US\$596 million at the end of 2008,²⁹ close to the figure for Ukraine, which traditionally had led the rankings of Polish investments in the Commonwealth of Independent States. Even though rising every year after 2003 (from US\$20.1 million to US\$324 million in 2008), Polish investments in Russia remain low.

More than half of them are concentrated in manufacturing (wood products, chemicals, textiles).³⁰ Two developments are worth noting in the context of

²⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 2.

³⁰ *Ibidem*.

Polish investments in Russia. First, it is no coincidence that they accelerated after Poland's accession to the European Union. Actually, a case can be made that the funds received from the EU are eagerly invested by Polish business in the East, including Russia, which means that Polish membership in the EU has brought tangible benefits to Russia. Second, the bulk of Polish investments in Russia are direct investments (representing as much as 89% in 2008), which means that Polish capital creates jobs in Russia, transfers technology, and is conducive to an improvement in the quality of local production.

There are no credible data on Russian investments in Poland in 2008. The National Bank of Poland puts the end-2006 figure at US\$660.7 million, but the following year saw a 50% capital outflow.³¹ And according to numbers from the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the cumulative value of Russian investments in Poland reached US\$ 1.85 billion.³² Even those higher Russian statistics reveal low-profile presence, equaling 2% of total foreign investment in Poland.

One should not lose sight of the organizational structure: Russian investors in Poland are composed of just several companies, with the bulk of invested capital accounted for by Gazprom (according to Russian data, as much as US\$1.8 billion, out of a total of US\$1.85 billion). Gazprom has interests in EuRoPol GAZ and PolGaz Telekom, i.e. companies linked to the Yamal pipeline. The next major investor is Lukoil, which in 2007 bought several dozen Jet petrol stations around Poland from ConocoPhillips.

Energy security. In 2005–2007, the commitment to projects lessening Polish dependence on oil and gas shipments from Russia—as demonstrated by the PiS-Samoobrona-LPR coalition government, and by President Lech Kaczyński—no doubt influenced a deterioration of relations with Russia. The priority treatment given to the diversification of energy sources and transport routes reflected the conviction that Russia was using its commodities for the purpose of winning a dominant position in the area of the Commonwealth of Independent States and co-deciding about the security of Central European countries.

³¹ Informacja nt. współpracy gospodarczej Państw Regionu Morza Bałtyckiego (PRMB), Warsaw, 16 September 2008, www.mg.gov.pl.

³² *Rossiysko-polskiye torgovo-ekonomicheskkiye otnosheniya*, Embassy of the Russian Federation in Poland, www.poland.mid.ru.

The Tusk government avoided hurling such charges at Russia. Ministers from the PSL party actually argued in public that Russian energy policy posed no threat to Poland.³³ And the concept pushed in 2008 by the new government, especially by Waldemar Pawlak, deputy prime minister and minister of the economy in charge of energy security, gave priority treatment to the price- and environment-related aspects of Poland's energy security,³⁴ with key roles to be played by domestic resources (coal, gas),³⁵ development of alternative fuel-production technologies (biofuels, coal gasification), and nuclear energy.³⁶ Formally, this approach does not rule out projects aimed at energy source diversification, but in practice it leads to just that—by limiting investment resources and domestic demand for energy.

The Tusk government upheld Poland's opposition to the Nord Stream pipeline,³⁷ but criticism of the project was at a minimum. Minister Pawlak has staunchly backed the Amber project which would link Russia with Western Europe via Baltic countries and Poland, and which would undermine Nord Stream's rationale, while at the same time boosting Russia-EU cooperation in the field of natural gas. Prime Minister Tusk also put a question mark over the proposal to prolong the Odessa-Brody oil pipeline to Płock and Gdańsk—one of the priorities of the previous cabinet and President Lech Kaczyński, and a source of controversy in Polish-Russian relations. Whether purposely or not, that helped the government in normalizing relations with Russia in 2008.

Responding to queries by PiS MPs, Deputy Prime Minister Pawlak confirmed in writing several times the government's will to continue its predecessor's policy on energy source diversification, including such projects as

³³ *Bezpieczeństwo energetyczne Polski – debata*, 12 December 2007, www.mg.gov.pl.

³⁴ *Program działania Rady Ministrów w wnioskiem o udzielenie jej wotum zaufania, Sprawozdanie stenograficzne z 2. posiedzenia Sejmu w dniu 23 listopada 2007 r.*, p. 10, www.sejm.gov.pl.

³⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 126.

³⁶ "Informacja ministra gospodarki Waldemara Pawlaka w sprawie dywersyfikacji dostaw gazu," *Stenogram z 8. posiedzenia Sejmu w dniu 7 lutego 2008 r.*, pp. 158–160, 172–174, www.sejm.gov.pl; *W energii stawiamy na węgiel*, 22 April 2008, www.mg.gov.pl; *Polityka energetyczna Polski do 2030 r.*, 3 September 2008, www.mg.gov.pl; *Projekt Polityki energetycznej Polski do 2030 r.* (March 2009), www.mg.gov.pl.

³⁷ *Pismo wiceprezesa Rady Ministrów, ministra gospodarki Waldemara Pawlaka do marszałka Sejmu Bronisława Komorowskiego z odpowiedzią na interpelację posłów Czesława Hoca i Joachima Brudzińskiego, dotyczącą planowanego gazociągu Nord Stream*, www.mg.gov.pl.

Skanled, Baltic Pipe and the LNG terminal in Świnoujście.³⁸ Each time, though, he made the reservation that economic considerations would be of key importance for the implementation of any of these projects.

Social and Cultural Relations

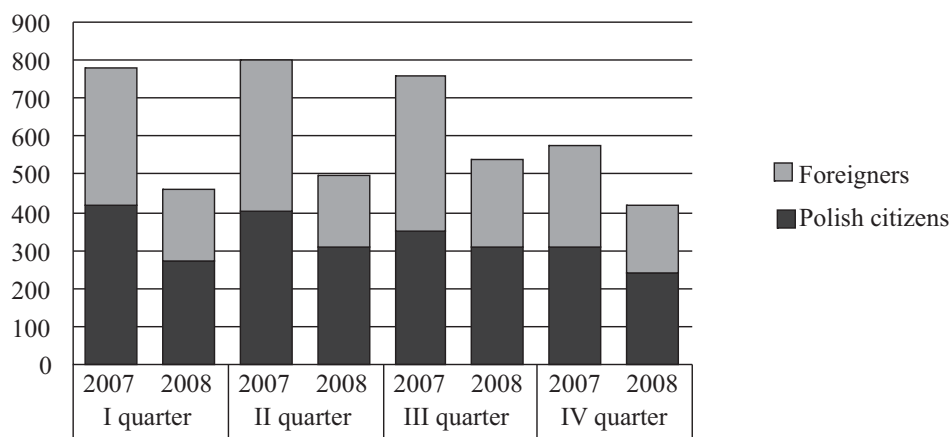
Poland's accession to Schengen area. Following the Schengen zone's enlargement of 21 December 2007, tourist traffic on Poland's eastern border (including with Russia) collapsed. In the first two quarters of 2008, border crossing statistics for the Kaliningrad district fell by nearly 50% from the same period 2007, and in the third and fourth quarters the corresponding numbers were down 30% and 25%, respectively. The decline was generated primarily by foreign nationals (i.e. mainly Russian Federation citizens). While in the period to 2007 the border with the Kaliningrad district was crossed by similar numbers of Poles and Russians, in 2008 border crossers were Poles.

With border traffic previously blighted by a series of pathological developments (smuggling of excisable goods), the launch of the new regime offered a chance for normalization. But fearing accusations of new travel restrictions, Poland, prior to its Schengen entry, backed the efforts taken within the EU to liberalize the Schengen *acquis*. As a result of these efforts, the EU let member states conclude bilateral agreements with third countries on traffic in border regions, with locals allowed to move visa-free on both sides of the border. Negotiations with Russia, though, did not produce any perceptible progress in 2008, whereas that country—in response to Poland's Schengen accession—rescinded visa-free transit traffic for Polish citizens on the territory of the Russian Federation.

³⁸ See e.g. *Pismo wiceprezesa Rady Ministrów, ministra gospodarki Waldemara Pawlaka do marszałka Sejmu Bronisława Komorowskiego z 28 maja 2008 r. z odpowiedzią na interpelację posłów Joachima Brudzińskiego i Czesława Hoca w sprawie kontynuowania prac w celu dywersyfikacji dostaw nośników energii w Polsce, zapoczątkowanych przez rząd Jarosława Kaczyńskiego*, www.mg.gov.pl. The Polskie Górnictwo Naftowe i Gazownictwo oil and gas company in turn on several occasions denied reports of its work on a connection with the OPAL gas pipeline, but the company confirmed its interest in the Skanled and Baltic Pipe projects. Cf. e.g. the statement *PGNiG SA liczy na terminową realizację SKANLEDU i BALTIC PIPE*, 29 September 2008, www.pgnig.pl.

Figure 5

**Border crossing traffic on Polish-Russia border in 2007 and 2008
(in thousands)**



Source: Polish Border Guard data, www.strazgraniczna.pl.

Andrzej Wajda's *Katyń* movie. The biggest cultural event in Polish-Russia relations in 2008 was the presentation in Russia of the film *Katyń* directed by Andrzej Wajda—initially viewed at the Polish Embassy in Moscow in October 2007, and then officially premiered in March 2008. But the film did not make it to Russian cinema theatres, nor was it made available in DVD format—and that, despite numerous favorable reviews in the Russian press, which found the work to be devoid of any Russophobic undertones. The causes of the situation are unclear. The director himself put it down to the ineptitude of Polish public television (TVP), holding the distribution rights abroad.³⁹

No matter why *Katyń* turned out inaccessible to the wider Russian public, this should be seen as a lost opportunity for strengthening Polish-Russian dialogue—at a civic, Kremlin-bypassing level—on questions of key importance for Warsaw, such as attitudes towards Soviet totalitarianism or Russians' historical identity in general.

³⁹ A. Wajda, *TVP blokuje "Katyń"*, 2 January 2009, www.gazeta.pl. The director's charges were denied by the management of public television. See D. Jabłoński, *TVP odpowiada Andrzejowi Wajdzie*, 29 January 2009, www.gazeta.pl.

Promotion of Polish culture and science in Russia. In January 2008, the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage and the Russian Federal Agency for Culture and Cinematography signed a letter of intent to organize a Season of Polish Culture in Russia. As part of the project, close to a hundred concerts of classical, pop and jazz music, performances by ballet and theatrical companies, film screenings (with emphasis on young directors) and visual art shows were held in Moscow, Saint Petersburg, Kaliningrad, Rostov on Don, Krasnoyarsk, Omsk and other Russian cities.⁴⁰

On 13–17 October 2008, marking the 50th anniversary of cooperation between the two countries' Academies of Sciences, the Days of Polish Sciences in Russia were held, involving seminars, symposiums and conferences in Moscow, Saint Petersburg, Yekaterinburg, Warsaw and Zakopane. At a ceremony in Moscow on 13 October, protocols on cooperation in 2008–2010 were signed by the Polish Academy of Sciences, the Russian Academy of Sciences, the Russian Academy of Agricultural Sciences and the Russian Academy of Medical Sciences.⁴¹

Pole's Card. On 29 March 2008, the 7 September 2007 act on the Card of a Pole came into force.⁴² Russia proved to be the only Polish neighbor in the East where the document did not stir controversy. That was because of the absence of larger concentrations of ethnic Poles in Russia, and their relatively small numbers, compared to other ethnic groups. And in addition, Russia regarded the Card as providing a model to be potentially applied to the Russian minority in Ukraine.⁴³

Assessment

Soon after the swearing-in ceremony, the PO-PSL coalition government arranged a resumption of Polish-Russian political dialogue at the government and parliamentary levels. That dialogue died out after Moscow's decision in November 2005 to impose an embargo on meat and plant products from Poland. Improvement in mutual relations subsequently led to a lifting of these trade

⁴⁰ For more see *Sezon kultury polskiej w Rosji*, www.poland-russia.com.

⁴¹ For more see www.aktualnosci.pan.pl.

⁴² *Dziennik Ustaw*, 2007, no. 180, item 1280.

⁴³ *Stenogramma vystupleniya i otvetov na voprosy Ministra inostrannykh del Rossii S. V. Lavrova na press-konferentsyi, posvyashchonnoy vneshnepoliticheskim itogam 2008 goda*, 16 January 2009, www.mid.ru.

restrictions, Poland's consent to the start of negotiations on an EU-Russia agreement, and the establishment of an institutional framework for dialogue.

In the EU forum, the Polish government was steadfastly building the image of Poland as a country causing no tensions in the Community's relations with Russia. On this front, it seems, Warsaw scored its biggest success, i.e. the launch and then acceleration of EU proceedings on the Eastern Partnership initiative.

As the year 2008 was passing, the limitations of the policy of normalization were becoming increasingly visible. Restored at a cost of numerous compromises, political dialogue did not bring Poland any perceptible results. And that was accompanied by Russian activities targeting European security—something that no Polish government can accept, even the most pragmatic one.

Poland's Policy Regarding Belarus

Background

Poland's relations with Belarus have been cool since the mid-1990s, largely on account of that country's authoritarian system of government, which was instituted by Belarus President Alaksandr Lukashenka in the years 1994–1996. This politician is responsible for electoral fraud, persecution of the opposition, repressions against independent organizations, dissemination of anti-Western and anti-Polish propaganda, the promotion of a Soviet view of Belarusian history and perhaps for the murder of several opposition representatives. Poland's relations with its eastern neighbor worsened even more in 2004–2006, when the authorities in Belarus illegally seized the property of the Association of Poles in Belarus, an independent organization representing the interests of the 400,000-strong Polish minority, and started to persecute its activists. They also practically paralyzed the publication of independent papers, strengthened ideological pressure in the media and in education, increased the persecution of opposition activists and sympathizers, and sought to curb young people and Belarusian intelligentsia's contacts with foreigners and foreign organizations. All this aroused a considerable interest on the part of the Polish public, which expressed solidarity with the Belarusian opposition.

At the beginning of 2008, it seemed that this standstill in the two countries' relations would continue. There were even fears that these relations might worsen additionally with Poland's entry into the Schengen area in December 2007, when its liberal principles governing granting visas to the citizens of Belarus had to be abandoned. This generated a response from the authorities in Minsk, which also made procedures for issuing Belarusian visas to Polish citizens more stringent. Unfavorable tendencies in mutual relations were curbed in 2008, however, and even some improvements were noted. This was partly due to a slight political thaw in Belarus symbolized by the release of all political prisoners, including Alaksandr Kazulin, Lukashenka's rival in the 2006 presidential elections. At the same time, the authorities began to express publicly

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their desire to improve relations with the EU and took steps to improve the investment climate in Belarus and the country's overall image. The Minsk authorities liberalized the rules of doing business. In November 2008, they allowed two well-known opposition papers, *Nasha Niva* and *Narodnaya Vola*, to circulate freely. In December they allowed the registration of the *For Liberty* movement of Alaksandr Milinkevich, presidential candidate of the majority of Belarusian opposition in the 2006 elections and a politician enjoying great favor in Poland.

It is obviously difficult not to associate these developments with changes in the international environment. The Belarusian regime's poor relations with the EU and the U.S. and an absence of significant economic reforms have made it impossible for an independent Belarus to reduce its enormous dependence on Russia. This dependence is rooted in Soviet times, of course, but Lukashenka has even reinforced it by his pro-Russian policies of the 1990s. However, Belarus' growing economic difficulties and Lukashenka's cool relations with Vladimir Putin's team, which is calling for both countries' increased political and economic integration in exchange for supplying energy at preferential prices, has led the regime in Minsk to try to repair its relations with the EU. It is interested in particular in finding investors from EU countries to provide funds to modernize its economy. These steps were additionally intensified after the Russian invasion of Georgia in 2008, Russia's proclamation of its "zone of privileged interests" encompassing all post-Soviet states, and the Kremlin's open aspirations to co-decide in matters of their foreign and internal policy. The use by Russia of its armed forces against a sovereign state in the post-Soviet area must have been particularly worrisome for Belarus, which, along with Russia, formally makes up a confederation known as the "Union State."

Poland also began to change its attitude toward Belarus. Earlier Warsaw insisted that the Minsk authorities should allow the leadership of the Association of Poles in Belarus, elected in March 2005 and headed by Andżelika Borys, to function legally as a precondition for any political dialogue with Belarus. In addition, Poland earmarked large sums for the development of civic society in Belarus, for aid to the opposition and for the promotion of democratic values, including stipends for students expelled for their political convictions so that they can complete their studies in Poland, as well as, after 2007, for an independent Belsat television station broadcasting in Belarusian. The Polish authorities supported the EU policy of diplomatic sanctions against the most important representatives of the regime and persons responsible for electoral fraud or suspected of having participated in the assassination of opposition representatives in 1999 and 2000.

Several years of this policy strengthened a conviction in Poland that these sometimes were in fact ineffective, with the Belarusian society too weak to force the authorities into democratization (and a change in this respect is unlikely in the coming years), and Belarus' diplomatic isolation only increases its dependence on Russia. There were fears that as a result of Minsk's poor relations with Poland and the rest of the EU, Russian firms subservient to the Kremlin would become the main beneficiaries of Belarusian privatization processes, gaining control over strategic sectors of the economy. These fears became more acute following the 2008 war in Georgia: Minsk's diplomatic isolation increased chances that Belarus would become so dependent on authoritarian Russia that even the potential democratic Belarusian government might find it hard to reduce this dependence in the future.

The war in Georgia also led many Western European countries to treat more seriously the warnings against Russia's aggressive actions. This made it possible for Poland to push for a change of strategy with regard to Belarus. Warsaw's lobbying in Brussels was facilitated by Poland's change of image following its parliamentary elections held in October 2007. As a result of these elections, Donald Tusk, the leader of the conservative-liberal Civic Platform (PO) became prime minister and formed a government seen in Western Europe as more favorably disposed towards European integration and collaboration with other EU countries, including Germany, than the government of Jarosław Kaczyński.

Although the world financial crisis which broke out in the fall of 2008 had no influence on the initiation by Poland and the EU of a policy of dialogue with Belarus and the Lukashenka regime's civil rights concessions, the prospect of a worsening economic situation may have additionally encouraged the authorities in Minsk at the end of 2008 to improve relations with the EU, including with Poland as one of its influential members.

Aims

The unchanging aim of Poland's policy toward Belarus is to strengthen the independence of that country, its democratization and the emergence of a functioning market economy. The realization of those aims should lead to a significant *rapprochement* between Belarus and Central and Western European countries and, in the longer term, allow Belarus to hope for the prospect of EU membership. Poland is also interested in rebuilding the historical, cultural and social ties with Belarus that were systematically destroyed by the Soviet authorities.

These general principles, though not articulated *explicite*, formed the basis for the aims of Polish policy toward Belarus in 2008. Prime Minister Tusk

sketched them in his *exposé* presented to the Sejm on 23 November 2007. He said then that Poland wished to participate in shaping the EU's Eastern Dimension and to extend the EU sphere of security, cooperation and democracy to countries of the post-Soviet area. With regard to Belarus, Tusk declared the will to convince "all political circles in that country that it was worthwhile to opt for democracy"¹—something that could be interpreted as a strategy of prudent dialogue with the Lukashenka regime. President Lech Kaczyński, who often competes with the Tusk government in foreign policy matters, stated in his address to the diplomatic corps on 16 January 2008 that Poland was interested in "the best possible relations with the Republic of Belarus and the Russian Federation," adding that "the differences between Poland and Belarus will be diminishing as far as the approach to many internal matters is concerned."² It would seem that with this short pronouncement the president expressed a wish to improve relations with the Minsk authorities, making it conditional, however, on at least some measure of improvement in the human rights and civil liberties situation in Belarus.

The aims of Polish foreign policy toward Belarus were presented in detail by Polish Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski in his *exposé* to the Sejm on 7 May 2008.³ "Belarus can count on Polish support in all areas where it will opt for respect for human rights and the political rights of the opposition, dialogue, compromise and an open stance toward the EU," Sikorski declared then, calling for increased travel between Poland and the post-Soviet countries, including Belarus, despite the visa requirement. He emphasized that Polish foreign policy should make use more extensively of the instruments of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy, while the Eastern Dimension of the EU Neighborhood Policy should be intensified. He also stated that Poland's geographical situation and historical experience, its cultural ties with the East as well as its potential and competence meant that the EU Eastern policy should remain a Polish specialty. Sikorski's words made clear that he saw Belarus' democratization and the *rapprochement* between its model of development and the Polish one as

¹ *Exposé premiera Donalda Tuska z 23 listopada 2007 r.*, www.kprm.gov.pl/s.php?id=1389&path=10325.

² *Przemówienie prezydenta RP Lecha Kaczyńskiego do korpusu dyplomatycznego*, www.prezydent.pl/x.node?id=14043282.

³ See *Informacja ministra spraw zagranicznych na temat polityki zagranicznej RP w 2008 r.*, above, p. 9.

normalizing the situation in that country and at the same time completing the process of Poland's normalization.⁴

These guidelines are similar to those included in the *exposés* of Poland's previous foreign ministers: Anna Fotyga, Stefan Meller and Adam D. Rotfeld.⁵ Sikorski's *exposé* is notable in that, contrary to that of his predecessor, it makes no mention of the Association of Poles in Belarus or defend its legal leadership persecuted by the Lukashenka regime. This can be explained by a different structure of this speech, which does not focus on outlining Polish policy aims with regard to selected countries or international organizations, but presents Sikorski's vision of the priorities of Polish diplomacy. It also seems to have signaled a new approach to the Polish minority in Belarus, an approach the Polish Foreign Ministry took up in the months that followed.

Polish foreign policy aims with regard to Belarus were laid out in detail in the answers to parliamentary questions asked by Law and Justice (PiS) deputies Paweł Kowal and Jan Ōldakowski. On 28 July 2008, Deputy Foreign Minister Grażyna Bernatowicz declared on behalf of Minister Sikorski that Poland's short and medium-term aim was "to strengthen the political and economic independence of Belarus; to increase the number of channels of communication and Belarus' ties with the rest of Europe and with institutions of the global economy; to promote the development of civic society, including independent media; to guarantee the rights of the Polish minority in Belarus and the unrestricted functioning of companies with Polish capital."⁶ She added that, for the realization of these aims, a dialogue with the Belarusian government was essential, although its level would depend on the internal situation in Belarus and on the attitude of the Minsk authorities to Polish minority activists. "Arguments favouring the maintenance of bilateral contacts include the conviction that the isolation of the Belarusian state does not serve Polish interests or the growth of civic society in Belarus, but reinforces the authoritarian regime of Alaksandr Lukashenka and Belarus' drifting in the direction of Moscow."⁷

⁴ "Poland will be a normal European country when it will have normal European neighbors on both sides of its borders," *ibidem*.

⁵ Address by A. D. Rotfeld, *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy 2006*; by S. Meller, *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy 2007*; and by A. Fotyga – *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy 2008*.

⁶ *Sejm VI kadencji: Odpowiedź podsekretarza stanu w Ministerstwie Spraw Zagranicznych – z upoważnienia ministra – na interpelację nr 3393 w sprawie polskiej polityki wobec Belarus*, <http://orka2.sejm.gov.pl/IZ6.nsf/main/503BCEC7>.

⁷ *Ibidem*.

Political Relations

The most important element of Poland's policy with regard to Belarus in 2008 was the promotion at the EU level of a new strategy of dialogue towards that country's regime. Starting in the spring 2008, Poland began unofficially promoting the idea of greater EU openness towards Belarus and the intensification of contacts with the authorities in Minsk, arguing that all EU sanctions against a far more oppressive regime in Cuba had been lifted in 2008. In May, the Polish-Swedish Eastern Partnership project was presented and preliminarily accepted by the European Council. This partnership presupposes an intensification of cooperation between the EU and its eastern neighbors: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, but in the case of Belarus this cooperation is to focus on the technical and expert level, making the growth of political dialogue contingent upon internal development in that country.⁸ Belarus itself has shown great interest in this project⁹ approved at a special EU summit in May 2009, with the interested countries in attendance. In their official pronouncements, that Belarusian authorities are looking forward to the lifting of diplomatic sanctions and enhancing economic cooperation, especially in energy, transit, transport, environmental protection and combating crime, and also to facilitating inter-personal contacts through the liberalization of visa policies.¹⁰

At the beginning of September in Avignon, during an informal meeting of EU foreign ministers devoted mainly to the Russian-Georgian war, Minister Sikorski called on the EU to lift the diplomatic sanctions against Belarus and intensify relations with that country.¹¹ A similar policy was proposed by Lithuania. On 16 September, the ministers of foreign affairs declared that the degree of the EU's openness with regard to Belarus will depend on the 28 September elections there.¹² Throughout the EU, these elections gave rise to great expectations that at least a few opposition representatives would gain seats in the Belarusian parliament. This did not happen, however, as no opposition

⁸ This concerns Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan; more at www.pism.pl/zalaczniki/Report_EP_2009_eng.pdf.

⁹ See PAP press release of 29 December 2008, interview with the Belarusian ambassador in Poland, P. Latushka, for *Rynki Zagraniczne* web portal on 25 September 2008, www.rynkizagraniczne.pl/?ppid=42&pid=news&docid=69861 (4.2.2009).

¹⁰ *Ibidem*.

¹¹ See PAP press release of 5 September 2008.

¹² See 2889th External Relations Council Meeting (13030/08), www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/gena/102804.pdf.

candidate won a mandate and the results of the vote were traditionally falsified. On 13 October, the EU Council decided that the elections did not meet OSCE norms. As the Council did see some progress, it suspended for six months, in spite of the opposition of some countries (mainly the Netherlands),¹³ the diplomatic sanctions against most Belarusian officials prohibited entry into the EU, including Lukashenka.¹⁴ A resolution in the same vein had earlier been endorsed by the European Parliament.¹⁵

Political dialogue between Poland and Belarus had been frozen for many years, so Minister Sikorski's visit to Minsk on 12 September 2008, two weeks prior to the parliamentary elections in Belarus, was the most spectacular event in bilateral relations in 2008. The last official political visit paid by a Polish politician to Belarus had been in 1996, when the President Aleksander Kwaśniewski met with Lukashenka. Bronisław Geremek visited Minsk in 1998, but he did so in his capacity as the chairman of the OSCE, not as Polish foreign minister. Polish Prime Minister Leszek Miller in turn went to Belarus in 2003, but only to attend celebrations marking an anniversary of the battle of Lenino. Western European countries had also been pursuing a policy of diplomatic isolation of Belarus, so the visit of the Polish foreign minister was in a way a breakthrough in Belarus' relations with the entire EU.

Minister Sikorski talked with his Belarusian colleague Syarhei Martynau in Viskuli, in Białowieża Forest, discussing legalizing the activities of the leadership of the Association of Poles in Belarus, including Andżelika Borys, the participation of Polish firms in privatization processes in Belarus, cooperation in energy projects and the transit of energy to Poland.¹⁶ Minister Sikorski did not meet on that occasion with Belarusian opposition representatives or human rights activists, who frequently criticized Sikorski's visit as well as the entire

¹³ See PAP press release of 13 December 2008, *Rzeczpospolita on-line* of 14 December 2008, www.rp.pl/artykul/39,204207_Lukaszenko_moze_wjechac_do_UE.html.

¹⁴ See 2897th External Relations Council Meeting (14137/08), 13 October 2008; www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/gena/103371.pdf.

¹⁵ See "European Parliament Resolution of 9 October 2008 on the Situation in Belarus after the Parliamentary Elections of 28 September 2008," www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P6-TA-2008-0470+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN.

¹⁶ See the communiqué of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 12 September 2008, www.msz.gov.pl/Wizyta,Ministra,Spraw,Zagranicznych,Pana,Radoslaw,Sikorskiego,w,Republice,Bialorus,21576.html.

strategy of dialogue with the Belarusian regime.¹⁷ Discussions embracing the opposition took place in Warsaw a month later, with the most important anti-Lukashenka politicians from Belarus in attendance, including Milinkevich and Kazulin.¹⁸ Other important visits included a visit to Poland of the Belarusian Deputy Prime Minister Andrei Kabyakau, who met with Polish Deputy Prime Minister Waldemar Pawlak and Prime Minister Donald Tusk, and was also a guest at the Economic Forum in Krynica.

In addition to enlivening relations with the authorities in Minsk and economic cooperation, Polish diplomacy was also striving to normalize the functioning of the Association of Poles in Belarus. In 2005, the regime ceased to recognize the Association's executive headed by Andzelika Borys as the legal leadership of this organization. A group of activists, either inspired or intimidated by the KGB, elected new leadership obedient to the authorities and not recognized by Poland. Poland continued to maintain relations with the Borys leadership persecuted by the regime in Minsk. The overwhelming majority of Association activists did not recognize the KGB-inspired leadership. Unfortunately, the "schism" meant that the assistance provided by Poland to the local Polish community began to face considerable obstacles. The pro-Lukashenka leadership of the Association took over control of its infrastructure, including many "Polish Houses" built for Polish taxpayers' money, where the life of the Polish community had been focusing.

When the Belarusian authorities began showing interest in improving relations with Poland and the EU, the Polish Foreign Ministry decided to abandon its principled position reiterating that respect for the rights of the Polish minority in Belarus was a *conditio sine qua non* for normalizing relations between the two countries. Describing the Polish position in force since 2005, Deputy Minister Andrzej Kremer noted: "Poland will not conduct any dialogue with the Belarusian authorities until Belarus settles the situation of the Association of Poles in Belarus. This position has now been changed to one

¹⁷ The position of the EU was strongly supported by Alaksandr Milinkevitch, see *Gazeta Wyborcza* of 20 October 2008. A critical stance was adopted by the BNF (Belarusian National Front), see *Sukhvaly Sojmy Partyi BNF 'Ab vybarakh u Palatu pradshtanikou Nacyjanal'naha Shkhodu Respubliki Belarus'* www.pbnf.org/2008/10/20/ukhvala-sojimu-partyi-bnf-ab-vybarakh-u-palatu.html, and the defender of human rights, Andrei Sannikau, see *Narodnaya Vola*, internet edition of 16 October 2008, www.nv-online.info/index.php?c=ar&i=11353. In turn, the United Civic Party saw the lifting of sanctions against Lukashenka as premature, *ibidem*.

¹⁸ See the communiqué of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 28 October 2008, www.msz.gov.pl/Spotkanie_Ministra_Spraw_Zagranicznych_Pana_Radoslawy_Sikorskiego_z_przedstawicielami_bialoruskiej_opozycji_demokratycznej,22457.html.

which presumes that dialogue with the Belarusian authorities should be pursued for the very purpose of settling the situation of the Association of Poles in Belarus, among other issues. The point is to restore the Association's status of a legally functioning organization."¹⁹

Preliminary talks in this matter had begun at the end of 2007, but public opinion did not learn about them until September 2008, when the *Rzeczpospolita* daily disclosed that the Belarusians had proposed that both governments delegate their representatives to a "social group," but not Borys or Józef Łuczniak, chairman of the pro-Lukashenka leadership. The "social group" would then prepare a congress attended by activists from both factions, and a new leadership would be elected and recognized by the Belarusian authorities. According to the daily, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs agreed to such a plan in spite of its initial reluctance and intended to ask Borys to resign "in the name of geopolitical interests."²⁰

Following the publication, Minister Sikorski denied that any pressure had been exerted on Borys to resign,²¹ and Deputy Minister Kremer insisted that there never had been any merger plan,²² with the leader of an independent association simply asked for her opinion on measures to restore the legal functioning of the association.²³ However, Mariusz Maszkiewicz, deputy director of the Ministry's Eastern Policy Department, admitted in an interview for a government paper in Hrodna that the Polish Foreign Ministry and Belarus were trying to create an atmosphere favoring a merger of the two organizations, and each association had been asked to delegate four persons to prepare a joint congress.²⁴

The entire matter gave rise to numerous comments in the media. The Association of Poles in Belarus (led by Borys) declared its readiness to engage in discussions with the Lukashenka regime, but not with Łuczniak's activists, and, through its own channels, began to intervene in Warsaw against plans of the

¹⁹ *Biuletyn z posiedzenia Komisji Łączności z Polakami za Granicą*, no. 1339/VI, [http://orka.sejm.gov.pl/Biuletyn.nsf/0/8805C3AE3F1BBF5EC12574F2003677F9/\\$file/0133906.pdf](http://orka.sejm.gov.pl/Biuletyn.nsf/0/8805C3AE3F1BBF5EC12574F2003677F9/$file/0133906.pdf).

²⁰ See *Rzeczpospolita* of 19, 20 and 22 September 2008 and of 4 October 2008.

²¹ See IAR press release of 20 September 2008.

²² See PAP press release of 7 October 2008, in which Deputy Foreign Minister Andrzej Kremer calls media reports "somewhat removed from reality" and denies the existence of a unification plan.

²³ *Biuletyn z posiedzenia Komisji Łączności z Polakami za Granicą* 2008..., *op. cit.*

²⁴ Interview given by Milinkevich to the weekly *Vechny Grodno* on 1 October 2008 is quoted at http://kresy24.pl/showNews/news_id/5095. See also *Rzeczpospolita* of 4 October 2008.

Polish Foreign Ministry.²⁵ During a meeting in Poland, both the prime minister and the president publicly assured Andželika Borys of their support.²⁶ The idea of unifying the two organizations fell through. In December, the Supreme Council of the Association of Poles in Belarus (led by Borys) set the date for the organization's 7th congress for March 2009 to hold new elections.²⁷

Some degree of tension in relations between the two countries was brought about by the entry into force on 29 March 2008 of the bill on the "Card of a Pole." This document confirms the Polish descent of some citizens of post-Soviet countries and makes it easier for them to obtain Polish visas or legalize their stay in Poland, entitling them treatment by the Polish authorities similar to that granted to Polish citizens. The Belarusian authorities adopted a critical position to this initiative. The first to protest was the presidential paper *Belarus segodnya – Sovyetskaya Belorussiya*, which in an editorial accused Poland of imperialism and an intention to annex the Hrodna region.²⁸ The Belarusian Foreign Ministry also expressed discontent, accusing Poland of international law infringements by not having consulted the initiative with Belarus.²⁹ Lastly, Alaksandr Zimouski, head of Belarusian state television and the regime's chief propagandist, compared the recipients of the Card to *Volksdeutsche*.³⁰ Interestingly, Lukashenka himself treated the matter of the Card quite gently. Initially, in February, he declared that although the Card of a Pole originated with Belarus' enemies and represents interference in Belarus' internal affairs, it would not cause any significant damage.³¹ Two and a half months later, however, he publicly admitted that he had been wrong, that he had been misled by the Foreign Ministry, and personally he had nothing against this document. At the same time, he expressed doubt as to whether or not Belarusian Poles

²⁵ See *Dziennik* of 6 October 2008.

²⁶ See PAP press release of 23 September 2008 and *Rzeczpospolita* of 9 October 2008.

²⁷ See *Rzeczpospolita* of 9 December 2008 and *Gazeta Wyborcza* of 9 December 2008.

²⁸ See *Belarus segodnya – Sovyetskaya Belorussiya* of 1 February 2008 r., www.sb.by/post/63681.

²⁹ See *Belarus segodnya – Sovyetskaya Belorussiya*, internet edition, 2 April 2008, www.sb.by/post/65464.

³⁰ See *Gazeta Wyborcza* of 3 March 2008.

³¹ Press communiqué of the Chancellery of the President of Belarus of 12 February 2008, *Glava gosudarstva posetil fakuliet dzurnalisyki BGU*, www.president.gov.by/press49435.html#doc.

would even wish to obtain it, as they were *de facto* a different community than Poles from Poland.³²

Lukashenka's skepticism about the potential popularity of the Card has been borne out to some extent. During the entire year, only a few thousand applications for the Card were submitted by Belarusian citizens³³—not many, considering that, according to the last population census, Belarus is home to about 400,000 ethnic Poles. The Card was most popular in the area of their greatest concentration—the region of Hrodna.

In 2008, Poland maintained the measures it had initiated earlier aimed at the democratization of Belarus. The Konstanty Kalinowski Programme, making it possible for Belarusian students expelled from schools in their own country for political reasons to complete their studies in Poland, remained in force. The Polish Foreign Ministry supported financially independent Belarusian language media intended as an alternative to Minsk's official propaganda: radio Ratsiya, broadcasting from Białystok, and the Belsat television station. The latter debuted in December 2007 and, according to research conducted after a year of broadcasting, had an audience of about 200,000 Belarusians.³⁴ This is not a very impressive result, but this is partly due to the passive stance of Belarusian society and also to the fact that its broadcasts can only be received in Belarus via individual satellite dishes, not cable television. It should be noted that the thaw in political relations between Poland and Belarus has not been reflected in the conditions in which media financed from the Polish state budget operate. Journalists with no official Belarusian accreditation work in *quasi*-conspiratorial conditions and are threatened with persecution.

Economic Relations

Commercial ties between Poland and Belarus are not very strong. According to Belarusian data,³⁵ the country's exports to Poland from January to November 2008 amounted to \$1.8 billion, making Poland the fifth destination for

³² These words were spoken in the annual address by the President of Belarus to the Belarusian nation and the National Assembly delivered on 28 April 2008. See www.president.gov.by/data/press57286.doc. See also *Gazeta Wyborcza* of 30 April 2008.

³³ See PAP press release of 21 January 2009.

³⁴ See PAP press release of 15 December 2008.

³⁵ The data quoted after *Statistika Belarusi*, 2009, no. 1, section "Vneshnetorgovi oborot Respubliki Belarus' po stranam – osnovnim partnerom," pp. 96–100, <http://belstat.gov.by/homep/ru/indicators/doclad/Jurnal.pdf>, or are a result of the author's own calculations based on information in the above publication.

Belarusian exports, after Russia (32%), the Netherlands (17%), Ukraine (8%) and Latvia (7%). During the same period, Polish exports to Belarus totaled \$1.15 billion, with Poland ranking in fifth place on the list of importers to Belarus, after Russia, Germany, Ukraine and China. It is worth noting that, according to this data, Poland has a considerable deficit in trade with Belarus. The huge gap between Russia (the source of 60% of Belarusian imports) and Poland (3%) also jumps to the eye. This difference is due to Belarus' almost total economic dependence on Russia, especially as far as energy resources are concerned. In comparison, the equivalent figures for Ukraine's imports from Russia in the same period were 23%, and from Poland 5%.³⁶ Belarusian data indicates that Polish exports to Belarus went up by 47% in 2008 and imports by 41%, although the real growth of bilateral trade was most probably lower, with these high figures due to the drastic fall in the value of the American dollar, the currency used by the Belarusian statistical office.

Polish data differs considerably from Belarusian ones due to the use of differing methodologies. Polish data also shows a growth in trade: during 11 months of 2008, Polish exports to Belarus exceeded €1 billion (an increase of 35.5% in comparison to the previous year), while imports from Belarus amounted to €845 million (an increase of 14.3%). This data shows that Poland had a surplus in trade with Belarus, with that country in 21st place on the list of destinations for Polish exports and in 25th place on the list of importers to Poland.³⁷

In 2001–2007 mutual trade between the two countries grew almost fourfold.³⁸ Poland exports to Belarus mainly machinery, electrical, electronic and transport equipment and other industrial articles, importing from Belarus mineral products (petroleum oils, natural gas), timber and wood products, non-precious metals and articles made of them, chemical products, and also transport equipment, such as tractors.³⁹

³⁶ Communiqué of the State Statistical Committee of Ukraine of 21 January 2009, *Heohrafichna struktura zovnishnoy torhivli tovarami za sichen-listopad 2008 roku*, www.ukrstat.gov.ua/operativ/operativ2008/zd/ztt/ztt_u/ztt1108.htm.

³⁷ Data from the Department of Analyses and Prognoses of the Ministry of the Economy, *Syntetyczna informacja o eksporcie i imporcie Polski za 11 miesięcy 2008 r. w mln euro*, Warszawa 2009, www.mg.gov.pl/NR/rdonlyres/BE7F17AE-EE68-4306-9B26-B948DFE300A4/51064/infhz112008.pdf.

³⁸ Information of the Department of Trade and Investments Promotion of the Polish Embassy in Minsk, www.eksporter.gov.pl/ppe/informacje/podglad?akcja=wyswietl&idWersjiJezykowej=39402.

³⁹ *Rocznik Statystyczny Handlu Zagranicznego*, 2008, p. 135.

For several years, a growth in Polish investments in Belarus has been observed: from US\$7.3 million in 2005 they rose to US\$19.3 million in 2006, US\$17.9 million in 2007 and to US\$21.6 million in 2008, although this only represented 0.38% of the entire foreign investment flow to Belarus. In 2007, there were over 450 Polish-Belarusian enterprises,⁴⁰ with Polish direct investments in Belarus estimated by Minsk at US\$150 million—just a fraction of the overall total and quite small—of foreign direct investment.⁴¹ Although the bulk of these investments was made by small and medium-sized enterprises, large Polish companies are increasingly interested in doing business in Belarus. The largest Polish investment projects in Belarus include: Inco-Food, Black Red White, Conte, Jarocin-Styl, Top-Komfort and Terrazyt-Plus. In January 2008, Getin International, a subsidiary of the Polish capital group Getin Holding, acquired a majority stake (75%) in Belarusian bank Sombelbank, which services about 26,000 individual clients and several hundred enterprises.⁴² According to rumors that emerged in December 2008 and were confirmed in early 2009, the OLPP Polish state-owned liquid fuels logistics operator (Operator Logistyczny Paliw Płynnych)—together with the Belneftekhim concern—is planning to connect the liquid fuels base in Małaszewicze with the Belarusian pipeline grid. The 10-kilometer long pipeline would have a capacity of two million tons per year. The OLPP wants to use it to carry diesel fuel from Belarus.⁴³ The two largest corporations active on the Polish fuels market have not welcomed this idea, treating it as competition, with Lotos additionally pointing to potential threats to Poland's energy security.⁴⁴

As far as significant events in 2008 are concerned, one should mention the Minsk authorities' lifting of the embargo on Polish meat and meat products in March. The regime introduced the embargo at the beginning of 2007, following the example of Russia, which had done so at the end of 2005. When

⁴⁰ Information of the Ministry of the Economy of Belarus on the website of the Polish Embassy in Minsk, *Polsko-bieloruskoje ekonomicheskoye sotrudnichestvo – novye vozmozhnosti*, http://minsk.trade.gov.pl/ru/aktualnosci/article/a,389,Polskobielorusskoie_ekonomichieskoie_sotrudnichestvo__novyie_vozmozhnosti.html.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*.

⁴² See PAP press release of 24 January 2008 and the communiqué of the Embassy of Belarus of 13 February 2008.

⁴³ See OLPP communiqué of 7 January 2009, *Plany OLPP na 2009 r.*, www.naftobazy.pl/index.php?page_id=7&subpage_id=90&news_id=285.

⁴⁴ See PAP press release of 11 December 2008 and information in *Gazeta Prawna* (internet edition) of 10 December 2008 r., http://biznes.gazetaprawna.pl/artykuly/99903,belneftechim_juz_sprzedaje_on_w_polsce.html.

Polish-Russian relations warmed and the Russian embargo was lifted in December 2007, Belarus followed suit shortly thereafter. This was beneficial for Polish producers. From January to November 2008, Polish meat exports to Belarus increased by 178.3% and accounted for almost 2.4% of all Polish exports to that country at the end of this period.⁴⁵

The April 2008 meeting of the Joint Polish-Belarusian Commission for Economic Cooperation should be seen as a clear sign of warmer relations. It was the first meeting of the commission established pursuant to the economic cooperation agreement the two countries had signed in 2004. This was also an opportunity for a meeting between the two countries' deputy prime ministers, Waldemar Pawlak (who is also minister of the economy) and Andrei Kabyakau. At the meeting the parties addressed cooperation in the area of electrical energy, including the renovation and re-starting of the trans-border power transmission line and new power plants in Belarus that could be built with the participation of Polish enterprises. Discussions also covered Polish involvement in privatization processes in Belarus.⁴⁶ These matters were also discussed on 1 July 2008 in Warsaw on the occasion of a Polish-Belarusian cooperation seminar attended by deputy ministers of the economy: from Poland—Marcin Korolec, and from and Belarus—Andrei Tur.

The first effects of these talks were perceptible in November 2008, when Deputy Prime Minister Pawlak was to visit Minsk for a Polish-Belarusian economic forum. This was to be the first visit at such a level in four years, although the meeting had to be called off, as Pawlak's plane was unable to land in Minsk on account of fog. Deputy Minister Korolec was also in Minsk for the forum, however, and his discussions with the Belarusian authorities were most satisfactory. Polish entrepreneurs were officially encouraged to take part in privatization processes in Belarus, which announced in 2008 that large-scale privatization would be initiated. The Polish minister reiterated that the Belarusians had agreed to investments made by large Polish enterprises, frequently those controlled by the state, such as the PKO BP bank, the Stock Exchange (GPW) or the PZU insurance firm.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Data provided by the Department of Analyses and Prognoses of the Ministry of the Economy.

⁴⁶ See the communiqué of the Ministry of the Economy of 15 April 2008, *Współpraca gospodarcza Polski i Białorusi*, www.mg.gov.pl/Waldemar+Pawlak/Wspolpraca+gospodarcza+Polski+i+Bialorusi.htm.

⁴⁷ See IAR press release of 4 November 2008.

Shortly afterwards Deputy Prime Minister Pawlak revealed that Poland might build a coal-fired power plant in Ukraine or Belarus and import the energy if the EU were to reject Poland's reservations with respect to the climate and energy package.⁴⁸ It is telling that Belarus was considered alongside Ukraine as a country that would allow Poland to avoid the unfavourable effects of the climate and energy package.

Social and Cultural Relations

A considerable drop in border traffic between the two countries was noted in 2008 after Poland's entry into the Schengen zone in December 2007 and the introduction of a more rigorous visa regime for Belarusians, which led to similar steps on the part of Belarus. Minsk also introduced a transit visa requirement for persons traveling to Russia. According to border guards' statistics, the number of foreigners crossing the Polish-Belarusian border dropped by 47% in 2008 (an overwhelming majority of them were citizens of Belarus). The number of Poles visiting Belarus also dropped by 29%. It is worth pointing out that overall traffic on the Polish-Belarusian border decreased by 44% during the period under examination, which means a sharper drop than on the Polish-Russian border (34%) and considerably sharper than on the border with Ukraine (16%), where the number of foreigners dropped by over 48%, but was accompanied by a higher number of Poles crossing the border (19%).⁴⁹

The drop in the number of Belarusian traveling to Poland was felt by the residents of regions bordering on Belarus. For many, trade with Belarus and contraband, mainly of cigarettes, was a chief source of income.⁵⁰ Given the reduced number of persons crossing the border, and also for symbolic reasons, in October 2008 Poland cut the price of Polish visas for Belarusians to €20. This was the second such reduction from the standard fee of €60, with the first (to €35) introduced in December 2007.⁵¹

⁴⁸ See IAR press release of 17 November 2008.

⁴⁹ Border guards' data, *Osobowy ruch graniczny – paszportowy i mały ruch graniczny w 2008 r.*, www.strazgraniczna.pl/wps/wcm/connect/d66733004ce36d2da78ea74a09df0446/0_2008.xls?MOD=AJPERES&CACHEID=d66733004ce36d2da78ea74a09df0446&CACHEID=d66733004ce36d2da78ea74a09df0446&CACHEID=d66733004ce36d2da78ea74a09df0446.

⁵⁰ See *Słowo Podlasia* of 9 May 2008, quoted in www.bialorus.pl/index.php?pokaz=archiwum&&Rozdzial=archiwum&&strona=17&&wybrane=14872.

⁵¹ See communiqué of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 30 October 2008.

Some problems encountered by people living in border areas might be solved with the signing of an agreement on small border traffic between Poland and Belarus; it would enable people living within 30 km of the border to cross it without a visa. This would be particularly beneficial for Belarusians, as on their side of the border two cities with around 300,000 inhabitants (Hrodna and Brest) would be located within this 30km strip. Negotiations on this agreement began in February 2008. In the following months, there were three rounds of negotiations, during which—as Deputy Foreign Minister Jan Borkowski said in November —“the substance of provisions was essentially accepted,”⁵² Nonetheless, this matter, which is so important for the inhabitants of both countries, was not closed before the end of the year.

A Soviet view of history also casts a shadow on Poland's relations with Belarus. For many years official Belarusian media and textbooks have been disseminating a version of history that is often directed against Poland, generating fierce criticism of the Polish public and the Polish minority in Belarus. Unpleasant incidents of this kind took place in 2008 as well. At the beginning of the year, Belarus introduced a new university textbook on World War II depicting the Home Army (AK), the Polish underground resistance movement, as having collaborated with the Nazis.⁵³ In June 2008, Belarusian state television ONT broadcast a film titled *Unification 1939*, claiming that “Polish occupation” (the book refers to interwar Poland) was the harshest historical period for the Belarusian nation and repeating the Soviet thesis about the “will of the people” to unite Western Belarus with the USSR; the broadcast also accused Polish soldiers of a murder of civilians in the locality of Skidel in September 1939.⁵⁴ In the May issue of the weekly *Vo slavu rodiny*—the official organ of the Ministry of Defense—a vulgar and primitive article attacked Polish film director Andrzej Wajda and his film *Katyń*, and reiterated Soviet propaganda claims that the Nazis had been responsible for the Katyń massacres.⁵⁵ Interestingly, in December 2008 the film was shown at a cinema in Minsk, and the paper *Belarus segodnya – Sovyetskaya Belorussiya*—the official daily of the

⁵² 6th Sejm. *Odpowiedź sekretarza stanu w Ministerstwie Spraw Zagranicznych – z upoważnienia ministra – na interpelację nr 5682 w sprawie umowy o małym ruchu granicznym z Belgią*, <http://orka2.sejm.gov.pl/LZ6.nsf/main/3B4640C6>.

⁵³ See *Gazeta Wyborcza* of 26 February 2008.

⁵⁴ See IAR press release of 6 June 2008.

⁵⁵ V. Kozhebnikov, “Po lekalam Goebbelsa ili sol na rany,” *Vo slavu rodiny* 2008, no. 101, www.vsr.mil.by/index/jktyukgy76m.html?publication=101. Zob. także “Gazeta Wyborcza” z 4 czerwca 2008 r.

presidential administration and a paper with the largest circulation in the country—published a careful, if positive, review of the movie, calling the Katyń events “a common tragedy of Slavic peoples.”⁵⁶

This moderate tone is most probably due to the climate of thaw that became visible in Polish-Belarusian relations, especially in the second half of the year. There is another small positive sign. In Kobryn, the Polish Council for the Protection of Struggle and Martyrdom Sites has uncovered the graves of several dozen Polish soldiers from the September 1939 campaign. A military cemetery is to be built there in 2009 and will be the largest cemetery of soldiers from the September 1939 campaign east of the Polish border. Using carefully chosen words, Andrzej Przewoźnik, the Council’s secretary, has been known to praise the Council’s cooperation with the Belarusian authorities.⁵⁷

Another side-effect of warmer relations is the Hrodna court’s November 2008 decision to drop proceedings against the *Głos znad Niemna na Uchodźstwie* periodical, which is printed in Poland and published by an independent Union of Poles. In the summer of 2008, the Belarusian KGB petitioned the court to recognize the publication as extremist. Had the court shared this view as expected, this would have constituted grounds for repressive measures against the authors of texts published in the monthly and its editors.

Another problem is the Minsk regime’s unfavorable approach to priests with Polish citizenship who account for almost half of all Catholic priests working in Belarus. In December 2008, three of them had their residency permits withdrawn, officially because of their insufficient knowledge of the two official languages, i.e. Russian and Belarusian (the latter virtually unknown among Lukashenka’s functionaries), but in practice presumably for the priests’ independence and for celebrating mass in Polish. Similar incidents had taken place in the preceding years. In September 2008, Deputy Prime Minister Alaksandr Kasinets declared outright that he would have foreign priests removed from Belarus.⁵⁸ The Minsk authorities are seeking to subordinate the church to the regime to a greater extent, and the Belarusian KGB would have greater leverage on Belarusian priests, the more so as it suspects those from Poland of openly or covertly disseminating ideals of liberty among the faithful and encouraging opposition to the regime. This is true in many cases, but not because the priests are Polish, but because it is their duty to promote and defend

⁵⁶ *Belarus segodnya – Sovyetskaya Belorussiya* of 16 December 2008, <http://sb.by/post/78438>.

⁵⁷ See IAR press release of 21 September 2008, *Nasz Dziennik* of 7 September 2008.

⁵⁸ *Gazeta Wyborcza* of 21 September 2008.

Christian values. Nevertheless, Lukashenka's efforts to achieve a thaw in relations with the West and plans to invite Pope Benedict XVI to Belarus give at least some grounds for hope that the conditions in which Polish priests are working in Belarus will at least not be deteriorating.

Assessment

The Tusk government's decision to adopt a strategy of dialogue with the regime in Minsk and greater openness toward Belarus seems controversial, albeit justified. First of all, such a policy reduces the risk of that country's increased political and economic dependence on Russia. Of course, if the Belarusian authorities are interested in Western investments and more intensive political contacts with the EU, it is in large measure in order to strengthen Belarus' position *vis-à-vis* Russia. Deeper integration of the two countries or the privileging of Russian enterprises in the Belarusian privatization process is not desired either by Lukashenka, who fears that this would weaken his hold on power, or by Poland, which is acting on a fairly realistic assumption that Belarus' chances for democratization are inversely proportional to the degree of its dependence on Russia. Thus promoting Belarus' openness towards Europe is a way to pursue some of the fundamental aims of Polish diplomacy, such as strengthening Belarus' independence and increasing its long-term chances for democratization.

This dialogue strategy has resulted in Poland's stronger influence on the Belarusian authorities, contributing to a slight liberalization of the regime and improving the climate for doing business in Belarus. Moreover, enhanced contacts between the Belarusian *nomenklatura* and society on the one hand and EU countries on the other, as envisaged under the EU Eastern Partnership program, will be changing gradually the mentality of Belarusian citizens, boosting their support for the civilizational model in force in EU countries and chances for Belarus' democratization in the long term.

The policy of dialogue with Lukashenka's regime is obviously controversial. It is criticized by the majority of the Belarusian opposition, which feels ignored by Poland and the EU, pointing out that contacts with Lukashenka without preliminary conditions only consolidate his power. But the opposition does not present any realistic alternative to the policy of controlled dialogue with Lukashenka, so it is safe to note—given the signs of interest in dialogue coming from the regime, the chronic weakness of the Belarusian opposition, the passivity and post-Soviet mentality of Belarusian society and the threat from Russia—that forgoing the opportunity to intensify contacts with the Belarusian

regime and maintaining the policy of isolation would be at least as controversial as the dialogue itself.

It is a good thing that Polish diplomacy reacted quickly to the regime's signals and to Belarus' worsening geopolitical situation following the Russian-Georgian war. A visit to Belarus by Poland's minister of foreign affairs was quickly organized and the EU Council voted to suspend the diplomatic sanctions with regard to most Belarusian officials on the *personae non gratae* list. While the ability to react quickly is valuable in itself in diplomacy, it demonstrated to the authorities in Minsk, and indirectly to those in Moscow, that Poland is capable of exerting a real impact on the policy of the entire EU.

In truth, at the end of 2008 it was still difficult to talk of the benefits that Poland had obtained from its change of policy, but some small measure of success should be noted: Belarusian civic society gained somewhat easier access to two valuable periodicals presenting views other than official propaganda; Alaksandr Milinkevich, a politician enjoying considerable favor in Poland, gained more room to maneuver in Belarus; and persecution of the Belarusian opposition and activists of the Association of Poles in Belarus became less severe. This is important, because if transformations are ever to take place there, every opportunity should be seized to undermine the regime's hold on society, making it easier for the opposition to operate. Prospects for enhanced economic cooperation also improved, while the policy of openness means better chances for normalization in other areas of cooperation—an issue of crucial significance for two neighboring countries. In this context, it would be difficult not to quote Minister Sikorski, who, in defending his strategy, said: “The fact that representatives of border guards, customs offices, flight security services, consular services or Ministries of the Economy are talking to one another—something they have not done for years—is a certain *minimum minimorum* in relations with a neighbour, whatever we might think of its system of government.”⁵⁹

Polish diplomacy committed one grave error, however, while conducting the negotiations on the Association of Poles in Belarus. The Foreign Ministry's declarations denying that a merger of both organizations had been considered did not sound credible, especially in view of conflicting statements made by the deputy foreign minister and the deputy head of the Ministry's Eastern Department. Media reports on the resignation of Andzelika Borys allegedly suggested by Polish diplomats are hard to verify, but even if this proposal had not in fact been made, the very initiative to hold talks and merge the independent

⁵⁹ *Gazeta Wyborcza* of 12 November 2008.

Association of Poles in Belarus with regime-sponsored officials could not but arouse the indignation of the Association's leadership. It was only to be expected that the leaders, through their personal contacts with Polish politicians and in view of strong support of the Polish public, would publicize the proposal advanced by the Polish Foreign Ministry.⁶⁰

Had the Polish Foreign Ministry really wanted its new strategy—giving up pressure on the Belarusian authorities to recognize the existence of two associations of expatriate Poles in favour of a merger with Łucznik's organization—to win the support of the Polish public and leaders, in other words, had it wanted this strategy to be politically feasible, it should have carried it out much more subtly, explaining in particular the advantages to be gained from such a change of the political stance to the Polish public. Moreover, and this seems even more important, the adoption of the “merger” variant of an independent association with an organization controlled by the KGB could have meant that the entire organization would fall under the regime's control. This would guarantee neither freedom of action for the Polish minority nor better prospects for Polish culture in Belarus which, given its freedom-oriented nature, is seen by the regime as a threat. *Last but not least*, basic decency also argues against giving legitimization to the Łucznik leadership.

Another mistake—similar to the one committed in relations with Ukraine—was a much delayed launch of talks with Belarus on small border traffic—a move clearly detrimental also to the population of Poland's eastern regions. Jarosław Kaczyński's government is no doubt to blame here, although the decision to reduce fees for Polish visas paid by Belarusians should no doubt be welcome.

Despite the above reservations, Poland's policy towards Belarus in 2008 was generally correct, bringing Poland closer to the realization of its aims, such as consolidation of Belarus' independence and its enhanced ties to Europe, broader communication channels, better business conditions for enterprises with Polish capital, and also support to Belarusian opposition, its society and independent media.⁶¹

⁶⁰ See *Dziennik* of 6 October 2008.

⁶¹ 6th Sejm, *Odpowiedź podsekretarza stanu w Ministerstwie Spraw Zagranicznych – z upoważnienia ministra – na interpelację nr 3393 w sprawie polskiej polityki wobec Belarus*, <http://orka2.sejm.gov.pl/IZ6.nsf/main/503BCEC7>.

Poland's Policy Regarding Ukraine

Background

Poland views Ukraine as its most important partner in Eastern Europe. This is due to the fact that the two countries are neighbors, to their importance in Europe, to the historical ties they share, to Ukraine's position in the post-Soviet area and, lastly, to the growing importance of economic ties and the presence of Ukrainian workers in Poland. One challenge for relations between the two countries is due to the fact that they are both progressing along different paths of development: Poland has built a stable democratic political system with a free-market economy and is a NATO and EU member. Ukraine, which is still grappling with its Soviet heritage, corruption and an unstable political system, did not start a policy of economic and social reforms which would allow it to join Western structures.

The Orange Revolution was an event of primary significance for relations between the two countries. Poland was actively involved in the resolution of the crisis in Ukraine and this strengthened its position there. The transformations in Ukraine gave rise to hope that the Ukrainian revolution would lead to development of bilateral relations and to Ukraine's *rapprochement* with the EU and NATO.¹

The main Polish political forces were in agreement about relations with Ukraine. Despite this, Polish policy towards Ukraine had to overcome two major weaknesses. First, it was often declarative in nature. Second, it did not fully reflect the wider, European context, for example the necessity to adapt Polish law to the *acquis* of the Schengen area.

Although Ukraine appreciated Poland's engagement at the time of its Orange Revolution, it placed relatively less importance on relations with Poland and treated it merely as one of several important EU and NATO partners. Ukrainian politicians were aware of Poland's limited leverage on the European stage,

¹ See in particular "Government Information on Polish Foreign Policy in 2005 (presented by the minister of foreign affairs, Prof. Adam Daniel Rotfeld, at the session of the Sejm on 21 January 2005)," in: *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy 2006*, pp. 9–26.

especially at the time of the Law and Justice (PiS) government (2005–2007). Two other facts were of greater importance, however. First, after the 2004 revolution, Ukraine found itself in a *quasi*-permanent political crisis, a fact that made it significantly difficult for Ukraine to embark on a policy of reform. Second, Ukraine failed to make an unequivocal choice between a policy of *rapprochement* with Euro-Atlantic structures and special relations with Russia.

Officially, Polish-Ukrainian relations in the years 2005–2007 were very good; the presidents of both countries met about 20 times during that period. The drop in Viktor Yushchenko's popularity and—to a lesser degree—in Lech Kaczyński's, as well as their limited influence on the activities of their governments (beginning with the 2006 elections in Ukraine and the 2007 elections in Poland) more and more often meant that declarations about the importance of relations between the two countries were not followed by specific actions.

Poland supported Ukraine's efforts to join NATO and the EU and became one of the principal champions of Ukraine's aspirations. These actions brought only limited effect: in the case of NATO—mostly on account of opposition from a part of Ukraine's political elite and the majority of society; in the case of the EU—due to the reluctance of some EU member states and Ukraine's failure to launch reforms.

Economic cooperation grew dynamically, although it was hampered, especially in Ukraine, by a legal climate that often discouraged foreign investment and by the situation on the Polish-Ukrainian border. Poland became an important destination for Ukrainian investments. Steps taken to promote cooperation in energy brought only limited results. From the Ukrainian viewpoint, Poland is also an important labor market. It is estimated that about 300,000 Ukrainian citizens are working in Poland, most of them illegally.

In the past, history was an important source of divisions between Poles and Ukrainians. A policy of historical reconciliation became a significant element of cooperation between the two countries as early as the presidencies of Aleksander Kwaśniewski and Leonid Kuchma, although certain problems remain unresolved, e.g., the attitude of Poles and Ukrainians to the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA).

In April 2007, the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) awarded to Poland and Ukraine the right to host the European football championships, Euro 2012. The prospect of organizing the championships gave rise to high hopes as well as concerns about whether the two countries (especially Ukraine) would manage to meet the challenges involved.

In September 2007, early parliamentary elections were held in Ukraine, and brought back to power the so-called “Orange Coalition,” made up of Our Ukraine—the People’s Self-Defense Bloc associated with President Yushchenko and the Bloc of Yulia Tymoshenko, who was appointed prime minister. In Poland, there was hope that political change in Ukraine would speed up the policy of reforms and reinforce Ukraine’s relations with Western institutions, but the weakness of the parliamentary majority and the rivalry between the president and the prime minister resulted in political turmoil in Ukraine. This sapped the effectiveness of steps taken by the Ukrainian authorities and discredited their country in Western European states, which Poland was trying to persuade to strengthen cooperation with Ukraine. It also had a negative impact on Ukraine’s image in Poland.

The political situation in Poland also affected Warsaw’s policy toward Ukraine. In October 2007, early parliamentary elections were held in Poland and led to the formation of the PO-PSL coalition government headed by Donald Tusk. The change of government in Poland had a positive impact on Poland’s position in the EU and enabled a more effective promotion of Polish interests with regard to Ukraine on the EU stage. Poland’s foreign policy, especially toward its eastern neighbors, became an object of disputes between the government and Presidential Palace. President Kaczyński and his aides were striving, especially in the first months of 2008, to present him as the principal advocate of Polish-Ukrainian cooperation, accusing the Tusk government of neglecting relations with Ukraine. In the months that followed, the new government took decisive steps on behalf of Ukraine, but Polish-Ukrainian relations remained clouded due to political disputes in Poland.

In December 2007, Poland joined the Schengen area, although this process had not been adequately prepared. The most important oversight was an absence of an agreement on small border traffic that would have limited the consequences of the Schengen area’s enlargement for the inhabitants of Ukraine’s border regions. Moreover, at the beginning of 2008, Polish customs officers staged a protest action, making it practically impossible to cross the border in some places. The tightening of the visa regime as a result of Poland’s entry into the Schengen area and difficulties on the border became an important problem in relations between the two countries, exerting a negative influence on their economic cooperation and undermining Poland’s image in Ukraine.

In addition, bilateral relations were affected by two important events in 2008: the war in Georgia and the international financial crisis. In a way, the conflict in the South Caucasus brought the two countries closer together. This

does not change the fact that the war in Georgia contributed to reducing the chances for NATO extending its Membership Action Plan (MAP) to Georgia and Ukraine, something that is the aim of both Poland and Ukraine (at least that of President Yushchenko). It is hard to assess in a comprehensive manner the effect of the international financial crisis on relations between the two countries, but it is clear that it has forced some Polish companies to reign in their investment plans in Ukraine and has made preparations for Euro 2012 more difficult.

Premises

As Donald Tusk presented the general premises of his government's foreign policy to the Sejm in December 2007, he mentioned Ukraine twice: in the context of the preparations for the Euro 2012 championships and of Poland's European policy. He assured deputies that the Euro 2012 European football championships would take place as planned, in both Poland and Ukraine, although he added that he was not in a position to assume any responsibility of the latter. Talking of European policy, Tusk stressed that Poland wished to co-shape the EU's eastern dimension, adding that the Polish government would also support the pro-Western aspirations of Ukraine, whose future should be a key element of the EU's neighborhood policy.²

The premises of Poland's policy toward Ukraine were presented in detail by Polish Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski in May 2008. He expressed a conviction that Poland's success in the last decade and a half could be a model "for the kindred Ukrainian nation." The vision of the Union of Lublin, he said, "would only be realized when our Eastern European brothers, who aspire to membership in the EU, will find themselves within its compass." Sikorski emphasized that Ukraine is "an increasingly credible candidate for membership in Western institutions." For this reason, the new Ukraine–EU agreement should mark out a "European prospect" for that country. Minister Sikorski greeted with satisfaction the North Atlantic Council's declaration adopted during the Bucharest NATO summit in April about Ukraine's prospects for NATO membership. He considered the liberalization of the EU visa regime for Ukrainian citizens and other Eastern neighbors as well as the efficient application of Schengen procedures by Polish consular institutions as important problems. Wrapping up, Minister Sikorski recalled that both countries were organizing the Euro 2012 championships together.³

² *Exposé première Donalda Tuska*, 23 November 2007, www.kprm.gov.pl.

³ See "Report on Polish Foreign Policy in 2008," see above, p. XX.

President Kaczyński presented his vision of foreign relations in detail on the occasion of two official meetings with Polish and foreign diplomats. During the meeting with the diplomatic corps in January 2008, he expressed unequivocal support for Ukraine's membership in the EU and NATO,⁴ and during a September 2008 meeting with Polish ambassadors, he named Ukraine in first place among Poland's non-EU and non-NATO partners. He recognized the development of Poland's foreign policy in the "south-easterly direction" (Ukraine, Georgia, Azerbaijan) as an important achievement at the time of his presidency, adding that regional cooperation—with the Baltic states, the Czech Republic and to some degree with Ukraine—was the key to strengthening Poland's position.⁵

The general premises of Poland's policy with regard to Ukraine that are accepted by the main political groups in Poland can be characterized as follows:

1. Ukraine, given its potential, its position in the post-Soviet area, its ties with Poland and a lack of any fundamental contentious issues in bilateral relations, is Poland's closest and most important partner in Eastern Europe.

2. The virtually permanent political crisis in Ukraine, the absence of a consistent policy of reforms as well as economic difficulties in 2008 make it difficult for Poland to realize its aims with regard to Ukraine and prompt a more realistic view of bilateral relations.

3. Poland continues to support Ukraine's *rapprochement* with NATO and the EU, although it is increasingly aware that this process will be a long-term one with no specified deadline.

4. Poland is striving to expand economic cooperation with Ukraine. Mutual investments, Ukrainian workers in Poland and efforts to strengthen energy cooperation play an important role in this sphere.

5. In Poland's view, the difficulties encountered by Ukrainian citizens in obtaining Polish visas and the situation on the border represent significant challenges for bilateral relations, particularly following Poland's entry into the Schengen area.

6. Poland believes that the European football championships will serve to bring both countries closer together, favoring their modernization and promotion in Europe.

⁴ See www.prezydent.pl.

⁵ *Prezydent RP spotkał się z ambasadorami RP*, 4 September 2008, www.prezydent.pl.

Political Relations

The intensity of official contacts between Poland and Ukraine has remained unchanged. The presidents of the two countries met six times in 2008 and the prime ministers four times. In March, President Victor Yushchenko talked with Prime Minister Donald Tusk on the occasion of the European Council summit in Brussels, and later with President Kaczyński in Warsaw. That same month Prime Minister Tusk traveled to Ukraine for the first time. In April, President Yushchenko visited Poland. In May, the presidents of Ukraine and Poland took part in an energy summit held in Kyiv. In July, Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko visited Poland for the first time since her return to power. In August, following the outbreak of the Russian-Georgian conflict, the presidents of Poland and Ukraine, accompanied by the presidents of Lithuania and Estonia and the prime minister of Latvia, traveled to Tbilisi to express their solidarity with Georgia. In September, Prime Minister Tusk traveled to Kyiv for the second time. In October, presidents Kaczyński and Yushchenko took part in the 9th Polish-Ukrainian Economic Summit in Donetsk, and Prime Ministers Tusk and Tymoshenko met in Brussels. In November, President Yushchenko was present during ceremonies marking the 90th anniversary of Poland's independence, while the Polish president took part in the Kyiv commemoration of the 75th anniversary of Ukraine's Great Famine.

Polish-Ukrainian relations deteriorated in the first months of 2008. This was due to significant difficulties in the flow of people and merchandise between the two countries as a result of Poland's entry into the Schengen area, absence of a small border traffic agreement between Poland and Ukraine that would have helped to alleviate the situation, the protest of Polish customs officers, as well as the new Polish government's apparent lack of interest in cooperation with Ukraine. Tusk became prime minister in November 2007. It is only toward the end of January 2008 that the new Polish foreign minister, Radosław Sikorski, first visited Ukraine. The Polish prime minister's visit to Ukraine was postponed more than once (although in the first days of February 2008, the head of the Polish government visited Russia). According to unofficial information, Poland had invited Prime Minister Tymoshenko in a belief that she should be the first to pay a visit, as she had become prime minister later than Tusk, but she did not act upon the invitation.⁶ As a consequence, the first meeting between President Yushchenko and Prime Minister Tusk took place in Brussels in March—a fact

⁶ T. Serwetnyk, "Premier Tusk ma odwiedzić Ukrainę w marcu," *Rzeczpospolita*, 23 February 2008.

that caused some disappointment for Ukraine. The Polish prime minister's first visit to Ukraine was at the end of March.

The steps taken by the Polish government were criticized by the opposition as well as Polish and Ukrainian commentators.⁷ Polish publicists pointed to three possible causes for the Tusk government's alleged prejudice against Ukraine: a desire to keep a distance from the policies pursued by its predecessors, failure to understand the importance of cooperation with Ukraine, and priority treatment given to relations with Russia due to the importance of economic ties with Moscow.⁸ In reality, the new Polish government did not seem to have given up on the traditional Polish policy toward Ukraine. This is reflected in Prime Minister Tusk's exposé and in his subsequent actions. In its first months in office, however, the new government wanted to distance itself from its predecessors' declarative policy of Polish-Ukrainian friendship and send a signal to Ukraine that it should attach greater importance to its partnership with Poland.

Relations between Poland and Ukraine improved in the spring of 2008. This was due to a better situation on the border (the end of the Polish customs officers' protest) and Poland's engagement in Ukraine's *rapprochement* with NATO. After the 2007 parliamentary elections in Ukraine, the new coalition declared its interest in being granted the NATO Membership Action Plan (MAP). The Polish authorities—the president and the government—supported these efforts, but made no secret of the fact that this goal would be difficult to attain. At the April North Atlantic Council summit in Bucharest, President Kaczyński and Minister Sikorski, as well as the leaders of other Eastern and Central European countries, pressed their more skeptical allies (France, Germany, and Southern European countries) to extend the MAP to Ukraine and Georgia. This goal was not reached, officially on account of the majority of Ukrainian society's unfavorable attitude toward NATO and of the political situation there, but in practice on account of Russia's negative stance. Although Ukraine and Georgia did not obtain the MAP, the North Atlantic Council decided that both countries would become members of the Alliance, but did not set a date. In December 2008, Ukraine's progress was to be assessed and a decision taken whether to grant it the MAP. The Polish authorities expressed satisfaction with the Bucharest summit's results in the hope that by the end of the year Ukraine and Georgia would make progress that would convince the

⁷ See, for example, B. Osadczuk, "Jak Donald Tusk przegrał Ukrainę," *Rzeczpospolita*, 29 January 2008.

⁸ J. Haszczyński, "Dlaczego premier lekceważy Ukrainę," *Rzeczpospolita*, 21 February 2008.

skeptics. Ukraine appreciated Poland's stance in the matter of the MAP and the role it had played during the summit in Bucharest.

The two countries took common steps aimed at extending the Membership Action Plan to Ukraine. Following the summit in Bucharest, Poland hosted Ukraine's defense minister Yuriy Yekhanurov. The visit resulted in an agreement on the development of military cooperation until 2010. It entailed, among other things, Polish support for the adaptation of Ukraine's armed forces to NATO standards and the definition of common principles for the participation of Polish and Ukrainian troops in NATO and EU operations. It was also declared that a common Polish-Ukrainian-Lithuanian battalion would be established by 2011.⁹

The hopes resulting from decisions taken at the Bucharest summit in the context of granting the MAP to Ukraine turned out to be futile. Ukraine became engulfed in political disputes leading to the breakup of the "Orange Coalition." In August, the Russian-Georgian conflict broke out, with a negative impact on Ukraine's efforts to become a NATO member, as Ukraine and Georgia were viewed together as one bloc of candidates. In addition, the approaching change of the presidential administration in the United States limited that country's influence on NATO and its possibilities for an effective promotion of Ukraine's interests. In effect, during their December deliberations, NATO foreign ministers did not grant the MAP to Ukraine, but only confirmed the decisions taken in Bucharest and adopted a package supporting reform programs bringing Ukraine and Georgia closer to NATO standards. These initiatives did not bring any fundamental progress in the already existing instruments of NATO-Ukraine cooperation.

Poland was also striving to bring Ukraine closer to the EU. In May, Poland and Sweden presented the project of the Eastern Partnership (EaP), which entails a strengthening of bilateral and multilateral cooperation with the EU's eastern neighbors going beyond the framework of the European Neighborhood Policy.¹⁰ This was an answer to the French proposal of a Union for the Mediterranean. This partnership was to bring eastern countries—Ukraine above all—closer to the EU, adapting them to EU standards and promoting their gradual sectoral integration. In the minds of its architects, the EaP was not meant as an alternative to membership; its institutional structure was to be flexible and aimed at the

⁹ In November, Polish defense minister Bogdan Klich proposed to make it a brigade. In his words, the proposal was well received in Lithuania and Ukraine.

¹⁰ For more, see B. Wojna, M. Gniazdowski (eds.), *Eastern Partnership: The Opening Report*, www.pism.pl/zalaczniki/Report_EP_2009_eng.pdf.

pursuit of specific projects. The Polish-Swedish project was accepted by the European Council in June 2008. Initially, Ukraine viewed the Eastern Partnership with some reservations due to its traditional dislike of the European Neighborhood Policy and its fears that the Partnership could turn out to be an alternative to Ukraine's membership in the EU. Polish diplomats succeeded in dispelling those fears to some extent and persuading Ukraine that the Partnership could make its *rapprochement* with the EU easier. In June, the project was praised by President Yushchenko. In December, the European Commission proposed more concrete steps within the Eastern Partnership, including the future extension of a zone of free trade, visa-free travel, and energy cooperation to the EU's six eastern neighbors. These proposals were a success for Poland, which is interested in closer cooperation between the EU and its eastern neighbors, but in the case of Ukraine, these were less important, as the EU had already proposed similar solutions to Ukraine in the past.

In June, Irish citizens rejected the Lisbon Treaty in a referendum. Under the circumstances, President Kaczyński declared that he would refrain from signing the ratification document. This decision met with the disapproval of France, holding the EU presidency in the second half of 2008, and also by Ukraine if in a more tempered fashion. French President Nicolas Sarkozy announced that without the new treaty, no new members could be admitted to the EU. Even though Ukraine's EU membership prospects were distant and uncertain, this announcement was a clear warning addressed to Poland with its EU-enlargement efforts. The Ukrainian authorities were aware of this. Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Hryhoriy Nemyria, responsible for European integration, emphasized that without the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, EU enlargement would be impossible. He also recalled that Poland had always been a proponent of Ukraine's accession to the EU.¹¹

In August, Polish-Ukrainian relations were dominated by the Russian-Georgian conflict. The presidents of Poland and Ukraine expressed their solidarity with Georgia on 12 August in Tbilisi during a demonstration of national unity, although their steps did not meet with the unequivocal support of their respective governments. For a long time, Prime Minister Tymoshenko avoided taking an unequivocal stand with regard to that conflict, while representatives of the Polish government coalition criticized President Kaczyński's emotional—in their view—pronouncements. In the weeks that

¹¹ "Bruksela-Ukraina-Polska-Traktat Lizboński," *IAR Newswire*, 3 July 2008, www.securities.com.

followed, the conflict in Georgia was the subject of telephone consultations between Yushchenko and Kaczyński and between Tymoshenko and Tusk. In September, both countries' prime ministers expressed their concordant support for Georgia's territorial integrity. In November, speaking at the Atlantic Council in Washington, Minister Sikorski warned against a repetition of the Georgian scenario in Ukraine. He had in mind above all the Crimea, with its Ukrainian status repeatedly questioned by Russian politicians. According to Sikorski, such a situation could lead to a serious crisis in Europe and, for this reason, Sikorski argued, any attempt to change borders in Europe should be seen as a threat to security on the continent and be met with an appropriate response on the part of NATO member states.¹² In practice, Sikorski made a far-reaching proposal for NATO to become a guarantor of Ukraine's territorial integrity in the face of threats from Russia.

At the beginning of September, the "Orange Coalition" fell apart. A month later, President Yushchenko decided to dissolve parliament. Given the opposition of the majority in the house and lack of funds, however, this decision was not carried out. All this created some anxiety with the Polish authorities. During a visit in Kyiv in September, Tusk called on Ukrainian politicians to maintain stability in their country, stating his conviction that this stability was particularly needed in connection with the recent conflict in the South Caucasus, plans for hosting the Euro 2012 championships, Eastern Partnership and EU enlargement. In December, a new coalition emerged in Ukraine, made up of the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc, the presidential Nasha Ukrayina-Narodna Samooborona Bloc, and the Lytvyn Bloc. Yulia Tymoshenko remained prime minister.

Economic Relations

In 2008, as in previous years, economic cooperation flourished in spite of certain problems at the border and deteriorating economic conditions in Ukraine.

Bilateral trade reached \$8.79 billion in 2008, with Polish exports to Ukraine rising to \$6.44 billion (up by 16.9% from 2007), and imports from Ukraine to \$2.35 billion (an increase by 38.6%).¹³ Poland was Ukraine's third largest trading partner,¹⁴ whereas Ukraine did not make the list of Poland's 10 largest

¹² *Address by His Excellency Mr. Radosław Sikorski Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland "The Barack Obama Promise: A European View,"* the Atlantic Council, Washington, 19 November 2008, www.msz.gov.pl/index.php?document=23143.

¹³ *Trade between Poland and Ukraine*, 2008 data (preliminary), www.kiev.trade.gov.pl.

¹⁴ *Geograficzna struktura zownishnoy torgivlitovarami za 008 rik*, www.ukrstat.gov.pl.

trade partners. Poland had an important surplus in trade with Ukraine (\$4.09 billion), but bilateral trade was growing less dynamically in 2008, to some extent as a result of the international economic and financial crisis.

At the end of 2008, the cumulated value of Polish direct investments in Ukraine amounted to \$694.7 million according to Ukrainian data; this represented 1.9% of all foreign direct investments there. Throughout the year Polish investments grew by \$24.2 million. Ukrainian investments in Poland amounted to \$46.9 million (0.8% of all Ukrainian investments abroad) and grew by \$16.8 million in 2008.¹⁵ The rise in Polish investments in Ukraine was slower in 2008 on account of the worsening economic situation.

The most important Polish investment projects in Ukraine in 2008 included the purchase by the Sobieski Group of a vodka and liqueur plant in the Cherkasy *oblast*, the establishment by Impel (outsourcing services such as cleaning or catering) of a subsidiary in Ukraine and by Getin Holding of the Grant Plus Financial Company Ltd., and the setup by Agora of two Ukrainian internet services. The Warsaw Stock Exchange (WSE) attempted to consolidate its position in Ukraine, hoping to attract Ukrainian companies now listed primarily on the London Stock Exchange. In June, a representative office of the WSE was opened in Kyiv, and in July it became a co-owner of the Innex Kyiv exchange. Ukrainian investments in Poland in turn included the activities of the Industrial Union of Donbass (ISD), whose Ukrainian Mining & Metallurgical Company increased its controlling stake in GCB Centrostal Bydgoszcz. The development of auto production at Warsaw's FSO car factory was announced by its Ukrainian owner UkrAvto. Two large Ukrainian companies—officially unnamed—took up negotiations with NFI Magna Polonia about a possible merger and listing on the Warsaw Stock Exchange.

The international financial crisis and Ukraine's worsening economic situation led to a reconsideration of many plans, e.g. Multikino and MediaTel gave up plans of expansion to Ukraine. This was not the only problem in bilateral relations. Anxiety among Polish entrepreneurs was aroused by the activities of the Ukrainian fiscal militia, whose armed unit raided the Kyiv branch of Kredobank, a PKO BP subsidiary, in April. This raid was most probably related to allegations raised against some of the bank's clients and perhaps also employees, and not its Polish owner.

The future of Poland's shipyards and the role of the Industrial Union of Donbass, which had acquired a majority stake in the Gdańsk shipyard at the end

¹⁵ Data from www.ukrstat.gov.ua.

of 2007, remained an unresolved problem. At the beginning of 2008 the European Commission demanded that the shipyard limit production or the return of public assistance received in violation of EU regulations. This assistance was estimated at PLN700 million, several times the amount the buyers had initially thought. In addition, ISD was interested in the privatization of the Gdynia shipyard, which also had to face the necessity of coming to terms with the public assistance it had received. ISD proposed that the two shipyards be merged and the restructuring required by the European Commission be carried out. This plan was rejected by the Commission. In December, the Polish Ministry of the Treasury granted the Gdańsk shipyard a repayable public assistance package (a loan) in the amount of PLN160 million. In exchange, ISD was to refrain from declaring bankruptcy, which it had been considering, and to maintain production and employment at a specified level. At the beginning of 2009, this plan had yet to gain the acceptance of the European Commission.

Poland and Ukraine, both dependent on fuel deliveries from Russia, are striving to strengthen their cooperation in the energy sphere, thus increasing their security in this respect. In 2008, new initiatives were undertaken, although they did not go beyond the preliminary stage, and attempts were made to revive the Odessa–Brody–Płock pipeline project. In April in Warsaw, an agreement was signed about conducting a feasibility study for a Euro-Asian oil transport corridor, of which the Odessa–Brody–Płock pipeline is to form a part. In May, Ukraine allegedly proposed that PKN Orlen, in conjunction with the Azerbaijani State Oil Company SOCAR, build a new refinery in western Ukraine—possibly in Brody itself—that could be used to process oil sent from Odessa. At the end of May, an energy summit with the participation of the presidents of Ukraine, Poland, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia took place in Kyiv. The concept of a Black Sea-Caspian-Baltic energy transit area was adopted at this meeting with the aim of connecting Caspian Sea producers with the European clients through the South Caucasus and Ukraine, by-passing Russia. The Eurasian oil transport corridor is to be an important element of this area. The first step to bring it about could be to use the Odessa-Brody pipeline (before it is extended to Płock and, eventually, to Gdańsk) to supply oil through Slovakia to the Czech Republic, where the refineries are interested in Caspian oil. Ukraine made efforts to establish a new organization that would be responsible for the transport of Caspian oil to Europe. According to unofficial information, this proposal won the support of President Kaczyński's collaborators, but was negatively assessed by the European Commission on

account of the threat that the emergence of such an organization could pose for the cohesion of the EU.¹⁶

Energy cooperation projects were not limited to the oil and gas sectors. During his March visit to Kyiv, Prime Minister Tusk declared that Poland and Ukraine could consider future cooperation in the sphere of nuclear energy. This initiative was supported especially by Enea and Polska Grupa Energetyczna (PGE). Poland's stance was due primarily to the necessity to meet the EU's carbon dioxide emission quotas. In June, Polish Deputy Prime Minister Waldemar Pawlak announced that unless the EU agreed to increase these quotas, Poland would build a coal-fired power plant in Ukraine and would draw electricity from there. This declaration was no doubt an element of the negotiations on the energy and climate package within the EU. It should be borne in mind, however, that Poland used to import electricity from Ukraine in the past and that this arrangement still has proponents in both countries.

In 2008, changes were introduced in the regulations concerning the employment of Ukrainian citizens in Poland. Already in October 2007, fees for obtaining permits to employ foreigners were significantly reduced. In February 2008, the citizens of Ukraine, Belarus and Russia were granted the right to take up work without a permit for six months each year. This was convenient for workers from Ukraine, but it should not be overestimated, as earlier this period was three months in six.

Facilitations introduced at the turn of 2007 and the new visa requirements connected with Poland's entry into the Schengen zone led to a relative drop in the number of Ukrainian citizens working illegally in Poland. It is now better for employers to hire Ukrainian citizens legally, the more so as a promise of employment in Poland makes it easier for Ukrainians to obtain a long-term visa. In the second half of 2007, an average of 3,500 declarations of intent to hire a Ukrainian citizen were submitted each month. This figure rose to 7,200 in January 2008, and to about 13,000 in February. In addition, in the first half of 2008, 2,500 Ukrainian citizens applied for Polish work permits, which means a 44% rise against the same period a year earlier, although this figure remains low when compared to the overall number of Ukrainian citizens working in Poland.

¹⁶ D. Pszczółkowska, "Ukraiński pomysł skłóci nas z Unią?" *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 21 May 2008.

Social and Cultural Relations

In 2008, the most important problems in the social—and partly also economic and political—spheres included changes in the visa regime for Ukrainian citizens and the situation on the border. On 21 December 2007, Poland joined the Schengen area. Ukrainian citizens (except those covered by the 2007 agreement on the liberalization of the visa regime) now had to pay €35 for either a Polish or Schengen visa. The criteria for issuing visas were also tightened. As a result, the number of Ukrainian citizens traveling to Poland decreased significantly, while illegal immigration from that country increased. The volume of Polish border trade also declined along with the number of customers at Polish tourist centers catering to citizens of Ukraine and other Eastern European countries.

The new visa regime affected, in particular, the residents of border areas in western Ukraine. Prior to Schengen enlargement, Poland and Ukraine failed to conclude an agreement on local border traffic that would have limited the negative impact of visa regime changes. This was criticized by representatives of the Ukrainian authorities, who blamed Poland for failure to conclude the agreement on time, as well as by the residents of border areas.

In the second half of January, the situation on the border deteriorated due to a Polish customs officers' protest. In some cases the wait for customs clearance took several days. These problems had a negative impact on economic cooperation between Poland and Ukraine, and on Poland's image in the eyes of Ukrainians. The problems were also highlighted in the Ukrainian media, which blamed Poland for the difficulties.

The problems associated with the protest of Polish customs officers were resolved at the beginning of February. In response to Ukrainian demands, in January Poland reduced the number of documents required from Ukrainian visa applicants. The conclusion of an agreement on local border traffic remained a priority, however, and this was done in late March. In keeping with Ukrainian demands, the border zone was defined as comprising a strip up to around 50km in width. Contrary to Ukrainian expectations, two large cities—Lviv and Drohobych—were excluded from the zone. Residents of the zone may apply, on the basis of their residency registration, for a permit for multiple border crossings with no need for a visa to travel within the Polish border zone. Hence the principal beneficiaries of the agreement are the persons living off border trade. In practice, given the absence of border controls within the Schengen area, the inhabitants of the Ukrainian border zone have been given an opportunity to travel illegally within the entire Schengen area.

The provisions of the Polish-Ukrainian agreement were inconsistent with the European law. In keeping with a regulation adopted in 2006, the border zone can extend no further than 30 km from the border. Only when a portion of an administrative unit recognized as being a part of the border zone is located between 30 and 50 km from the border can this area be included in the border zone. In December, a protocol to the agreement on local border traffic and a declaration concerning this agreement were signed. The border zone was narrowed to 30km in keeping with EU requirements, but the agreement on local border traffic did not come into force in 2008.

Other initiatives intended to make it easier for Ukrainians to obtain visas and cross the border include the enlargement of the Polish Consulate in Lviv, Poland's decision to open three new consular offices in Ukraine—in Ivano-Frankivsk, Vinnytsia and Sevastopol, as well as the steps taken to increase the number of border crossings. Poland and Ukraine decided to build eight new border crossings within the next few years. In addition, in December Ukraine began to enforce the provisions of the 2003 agreement on the movement of persons under which Polish citizens can stay on Ukrainian territory without a visa for no longer than 90 days during a six-month period. This was officially explained by the introduction of an ICT system. In practice, it was probably a reaction to the narrowing of the border zone.

In 2008, the ability of Poland and Ukraine to organize the European football championships in 2012 was put to the test. Both countries met with difficulties, although Ukraine had to face more serious problems. In March, the president of the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA), Michel Platini, intimated that Poland and Ukraine could lose the right to host the championships. In September, UEFA's Executive Committee confirmed that Poland and Ukraine would host the Euro 2012 championships, but emphasized that work had to be speeded up. In December Platini declared in turn that if Ukraine proved unable to make it on time, Poland could host the championships alone. In 2008, steps were taken to tighten Polish-Ukrainian cooperation with regard to the Euro 2012 championships. In March, an international agreement on cooperation in the organization of the championships was signed.

History no longer plays a leading role in bilateral relations, although some problems remain to be resolved. Prime Minister Tusk began his first visit to Kyiv in March with a visit to Bykivnia—a site of mass murders during Stalinist terror. In 2007, the collective graves of Poles murdered in 1940 by the NKVD were uncovered there. This discovery gave rise to fears among Ukrainians that Poland would wish to appropriate their national sanctuary. It is perhaps for this

reason that no representative of the Ukrainian authorities except for Ukraine's ambassador to Poland turned up during Prime Minister Tusk's visit in Bykivnia. The greatest historical debate, mainly in Poland, took place on the occasion of the 65th anniversary of the events in Volhynia. These were the subject of discussions between Prime Ministers Tusk and Tymoshenko in July 2008. The Polish prime minister expressed his belief that "the Volhynian tragedy would be remembered as the Poles expected," while the prime minister of Ukraine declared that "memory of the victims should be commemorated with dignity."¹⁷ These declarations did not produce any tangible effects. PSL deputies presented a draft resolution "commemorating the 65th anniversary of the genocide perpetrated on the Polish population of the eastern borderlands of the Second Republic of Poland,"¹⁸ but it was never voted in the Sejm. President Kaczyński in turn refused to participate in ceremonies commemorating the tragedy organized in Warsaw in July by associations of former borderland residents. His position was criticized by some right-wing media, especially after the Polish president traveled in November to Kyiv to take part in official celebrations marking Ukraine's Great Famine. The media suggested then that the president avoided equal treatment of Ukrainian and Polish victims, ignoring the latter.

On 29 March, regulations on the Card of a Pole came into force.¹⁹ Persons who can demonstrate that at least one of their parents or grand-parents or two great grand-parents were Polish or had Polish citizenship can apply for the Card, whose bearers have specific rights: they are issued a Polish visa free of charge or the fee is reimbursed, they can work in Poland, they have access to the Polish health service and free education, etc. Provisions governing the Card gave rise to some doubts in Poland. In an interview with *Dziennik*, the Polish consul general in Lviv, Wiesław Osuchowski, observed that up to several hundred thousand persons from western Ukraine might apply for the Card, with most of them having little to do with Poland except that their forefathers had once been citizens of the Second Republic of Poland. In its commentary on this statement, the paper wrote that Ukrainians were searching the archives *en masse* in order to find evidence of their Polish roots, and that the Card's beneficiaries could even include descendents of Ukrainian Insurgent Army soldiers.²⁰ Even though this publication was an isolated incident, it met with sharp reaction from the Lviv

¹⁷ "Trzeba o tym rozmawiać," *Dziennik Polski*, 15 July 2008.

¹⁸ The draft of the declaration can be found at <http://piechocinski.blog.onet.pl>.

¹⁹ *Journal of Laws*, 2007, No. 1280, Item 1280.

²⁰ J. Bielecki, "Milion Ukraińców dostanie polskie zasiłki," *Dziennik*, 17 March 2008.

municipal authorities, who saw it as insulting and asked the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Polish Embassy in Kyiv for an explanation, announcing a ban on of Polish journalists.

In the sphere of cultural cooperation, worth mentioning is the exhibition “From Ukraine to the World: Ukrainian Treasures from the Platar Collection” shown in the spring of 2008 at the Warsaw National Museum. The exhibition displayed works of art from Ukrainian territory from the period between the 6th–7th century B.C. to the 12th century A.D. belonging to Serhiy Taruta, co-owner of the Industrial Union of Donbass, and other collectors. Presidents Kaczyński and Yushchenko participated in the inauguration of this exhibition,²¹ which was an attempt to promote Ukraine in a new way based not on folklore, but on the rich and long history of Ukrainian lands. It was also designed to bring the two countries closer, but reactions to the exhibition were mixed. Some Polish archaeologists criticized the fact that most of the artifacts had been gathered illegally (plunder of graves, etc.), thus reducing their scholarly value and putting the very sense of their presentation in Warsaw in question.

Assessment

The balance sheet of Poland’s policy toward Ukraine in 2008 is mixed. Not all the intended aims were met, although some achievements should be noted.

Poland placed great hopes in the renewal of the “Orange coalition” in Ukraine after the September 2007 parliamentary elections. Most of these hopes proved futile, however, on account of the political situation in Ukraine, the Georgian conflict and, finally, the international financial crisis. In addition, for the first time in years Poland’s policy toward Ukraine became the subject of disputes between the most important centers of power in Poland. This was due not only to the rivalry between them, but also to their somewhat different perception of relations with Ukraine. For President Kaczyński, good relations with Ukraine seemed to be desirable in their own right, especially for geopolitical reasons and due to the historical ties between the two countries. The government of Donald Tusk sees Polish-Ukrainian cooperation somewhat differently. It understands the importance of Ukraine—the best illustration of this is Minister Sikorski’s November address in Washington—but stresses that Polish-Ukrainian cooperation should have feasible aims harmonized with the overall guidelines of Polish foreign policy and should produce tangible results.

²¹ For more, see *Ukraina świata. Skarby Ukrainy z kolekcji Platar*, 15 April–29 June 2008, www.mnw.art.pl.

Disputes about Polish policy toward Ukraine sparked a debate on Poland's eastern policy in the *Gazeta Wyborcza* daily and the *Tygodnik Powszechny* weekly. Marcin Wojciechowski, a *Gazeta Wyborcza* journalist writing on Ukrainian issues, depicted the dispute between the government on the one hand and the presidential camp and the opposition on the other as a continuation of the dispute conducted at the beginning of the decade between the romantics (PiS) guided by the vision of Jerzy Giedroyc,²² and the pragmatists calling for concrete steps in the East, especially in the economic sphere (PO). According to Wojciechowski, the pragmatists, having come to power, continued to support Ukraine, but wanted to obtain tangible economic concessions in exchange—an approach that could have led to Poland's loss of Ukraine's trust.²³ Sławomir Dębski, the director of the Polish Institute of International Affairs, responded to Wojciechowski's observations, reiterating that thinking in terms of a dispute between romantics and pragmatists was off the mark given the contemporary challenges. In Dębski's opinion, Poland should first of all conduct a more methodical policy "without sentiments." The new government continued to support Ukraine, while the Ukrainian authorities were increasingly by-passing Poland in their search for allies in the EU, Dębski wrote.²⁴ Grzegorz Gromadzki (Stefan Batory Foundation) commented in turn that under the circumstances Ukraine's *rapprochement* with the EU should be a priority for both countries. Ukrainian society is opposed to NATO membership, while the EU is offering Ukraine many opportunities (a free trade zone, participation in the Energy Community) that should be seized.²⁵

Andrzej Brzeziecki, a journalist with *Tygodnik Powszechny*, wrote in turn that the world of the romantics had ended; that the vision of Jerzy Giedroyc—the ULB (Ukraine–Lithuania–Belarus) concept—was obsolete given the differences between the former Soviet republics; while Polish-Ukrainian relations were strategic only in the declarative sphere. Tusk should not be criticized for visiting Moscow, but his failure to visit Kyiv in time was a mistake.²⁶ Paweł Kowal, vice-minister of foreign affairs in the Kaczyński government, took up the polemic. He recalled the importance of the "Orange Revolution" in

²² Jerzy Giedroyc (1906–2000), Polish émigré political thinker, author and publicist based in Paris. In his journal *Kultura*, he championed a new spirit of understanding and cooperation with Poland's eastern neighbors.

²³ M. Wojciechowski, "Twarda polityka wschodnia," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 28 March 2008.

²⁴ S. Dębski, "Bronię pragmatyzmu," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 1 April 2008.

²⁵ G. Gromadzki, "Ukraina najpierw do Unii," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 16 April 2008.

²⁶ A. Brzeziecki, "Koniec świata romantyków," *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 19 February 2008.

Ukraine and reiterated that Polish support for Ukraine had not arisen out of “Ukrainophilia,” but was an expression of the Polish *raison d'état*.²⁷ In the columns of the same weekly, Bartosz Cichocki, an analyst at the National Security Bureau, commented that the debate on the currency of *Kultura*'s ideas was not all that important. The principal weakness of Poland's policy toward its eastern neighbors is its lack of appropriate institutional backing.²⁸

In the face of the above-mentioned external difficulties and, to a lesser extent, internal disputes, Poland succeeded only partly in achieving the aims of its policy toward Ukraine in 2008.

1. Ukraine no doubt remains Poland's most important partner in Eastern Europe, although the strategic partnership between the two countries is to some extent declarative only. In 2008, efforts to realize some old projects (the extension of the Odessa–Brody pipeline) were continued and new initiatives (Eastern Partnership) were hammered out, but it is too early to evaluate them. Poland accepts this situation because it is interested in developing cooperation with Ukraine not only given its objective advantages, but also in the absence of an alternative partner in Eastern Europe, because of the Romanticism that still animates a part of the Polish political elite inspired by the Paris-based *Kultura* and, finally, because of a belief that Poland would stand to lose too much by giving up cooperation with Ukraine.

2. Four years after the “Orange Revolution,” some weariness with Ukraine can be observed among the Polish political elite. The present situation in that country gives no grounds for satisfaction, and there are no simple prescriptions to change it. What is needed is painstaking organic work aimed at improving the standards of political life, strengthening civic society, and adapting Ukrainian law to EU standards, but such efforts will not produce any short-term political benefits.

3. The balance of Poland's efforts to strengthen Ukraine's relations with Western institutions is mixed. The success seen in the decisions of the NATO Bucharest summit turned out to be illusory, at least in the short term. The Alliance confirmed Ukraine's NATO membership prospects, but failed to provide any specific time frame, and the Membership Action Plan was not extended to Ukraine. The Eastern Partnership initiative brings tangible advantages: it strengthens Poland's position in the EU, constitutes a departure from Poland's policy of insisting on the recognition of Ukraine's EU

²⁷ P. Kowal, “Świat romantyków ma się dobrze,” *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 11 March 2008.

²⁸ B. Cichocki, “Mniej Giedroycia, więcej Karpia,” *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 1 April 2008.

membership prospects, and facilitates that country's *rapprochement* with the Union. There is a risk, however, that it will bring Ukraine down to the level of other, less developed, eastern neighbors of the EU.

4. The balance sheet of economic cooperation is mixed too. Developing cooperation might be slowed by Ukraine's difficult economic situation and the international financial crisis. Ukrainian investors can also be deterred by disputes with the European Commission over Polish shipyards. The rise in the number of Ukrainians legally employed in Poland should be viewed positively. It is still too early to sum up the joint initiatives in the energy sphere.

5. The situation in Polish consulates in Ukraine and at the Polish-Ukrainian border still leaves much to be desired, with both states responsible for the latter. In preparing to join the Schengen area, Poland failed to resolve the problem of visas for Ukrainian citizens. Appropriate steps should have been taken in 2007. Absence of an agreement on local border traffic and the January protest of Polish customs officers evolved into an important problem in relations between the two countries and had a negative impact on their economic cooperation and on Poland's image in Ukraine. In the future, the visa regime and the situation on the border could exert a vital impact on the course of the Euro 2012 championships.

6. The year 2008 revealed the weakness of Poland and, to a greater extent, Ukraine, as the organizers of Euro 2012. Comments about the possibility of organizing the championships without Ukraine should be seen as detrimental to Polish-Ukrainian relations in general and to both countries' cooperation in organizing the championships in particular. The loss by Poland and Ukraine of the right to host the championships or Ukraine's exclusion from the preparations would beyond a doubt exert a negative impact on bilateral relations.

Poland's Policy Regarding the Czech Republic

The admission of Poland and the Czech Republic into the European Union enlivened relations between the two countries. Their political cooperation in the EU, the rapid expansion of their economic ties, (including capital and investment ties of a strategic nature), the increase of trans-border contacts and the gradual rapprochement between the societies of the two countries turned the Czech Republic into one of Poland's most important partners within the European Union. The intensification of Polish-Czech relations was also influenced by plans to install elements of America's Missile Defence (MD) system in both countries. Thanks to both countries' similar political constellation, they were able to find a common denominator in their policy toward the United States, even though considerable differences in this sphere became visible in 2008. EU matters are a more important point of reference in Polish-Czech relations, however. The Czech Republic has become an important member of EU coalitions co-organized by Poland and was a close ally in the sphere of EU institutional reform.

Poland's policy toward the Czech Republic is also a significant aspect of the Polish foreign policy's regional dimension. Polish-Czech relations play an important role in the Visegrad Group (V4), whose chairmanship both countries held in 2008. Political cooperation within the Group is becoming an increasingly important European policy instrument for the four Visegrad countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia), and, to some degree, constitutes that policy's emanation. Within the V4, its members also pursue regional goals arising from the neighborly character of their relations. On this plane, too, cooperation in the Visegrad context complements bilateral Polish-Czech relations.

Background

For several years now, the growth of political cooperation between Poland and the Czech Republic has been favored by a similar profile of the political forces in power in both countries. In 2006, parliamentary elections in the Czech

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Republic were won by the rightist Civic Democratic Party (Občanská demokratická strana ODS), an outcome that signaled a turn from the country's affirmative policy with regard to EU integration toward a more skeptical stance that was closer to that represented by the right-wing Polish government at the time. The Czech Republic abandoned the equal-distance policy it had pursued until then with regard to Washington and Brussels and stressed stronger Atlantic ties and alliance with the U.S. An expression of this shift was an acceleration of talks with the Americans on the installation on Czech territory of elements of the anti-missile shield. The Czech right-wing declared that it was open to pursuing close cooperation with Poland and multilateral cooperation within the Visegrad framework. The concordance of both countries' position was increasingly evident during discussions about the European Neighborhood Policy in which the Czech Republic showed itself to be a staunch proponent of the "open door" policy and differentiated the EU's eastern from its southern neighbors. President Václav Klaus even singled out Poland as a high-priority country in Czech foreign policy, while emphasizing that he did not mean recognizing Poland's role as a leader in the region, but that "similar and publicly voiced views on a number of European and security issues strengthened the position of our two countries."¹

The Czech desire to work with Poland in large measure met the expectations of the Polish coalition government led by the Law and Justice (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość PiS) party. According to then-Polish Prime Minister Jarosław Kaczyński, closer cooperation with the Czech Republic was to be a factor contributing to the stability of the V4. Increased political cooperation was influenced by similar views on basic issues related to European integration and transatlantic relations. The Czech Republic became Poland's principal ally in work on EU institutional reform, something that was resisted vehemently by the Czech opposition, which was also against the Czech Republic's inclusion in the American missile defence system. Attitudes to this project in Prague highlighted the growing differences in views on foreign and security policy, also within the governing coalition. The radar and different approaches to EU institutional reform showed that there had been no consensus in the Czech Republic about basic foreign and European policy challenges for a long time.

Therefore, the rapprochement with Poland was to a certain degree due to the political situation, and that is why the Czechs were interested in seizing the opportunity to enhance bilateral relations with Poland, something that could also

¹ *Teze pro vystoupení prezidenta republiky na setkání s velvyslanci ČR, 30.5.2008, www.hrad.cz.*

be helpful during the Czech presidency of the EU during the first half of 2009. An expression of the desire to institutionalize the strategic partnership between the two countries was the Czech Republic's initiative of December 2007 to establish a Polish-Czech Forum as a dialogue platform for experts, academic circles, NGOs and individuals interested in both countries' cooperation.

In mid-2007, the Czech Republic assumed the year-long presidency of the V4, aiming to deepen cooperation and consolidate its mechanisms, especially in the EU framework.² These targets were also consistent with Polish declarations. Polish expectations were also met by Czech efforts to stimulate cooperation within the wider Visegrad Group formula (V4+), for instance with the Baltic states or Ukraine. The nature of the Group's work was clearly influenced by preparations for the Czech presidency of the EU Council. In January 2008, Prime Minister Topolánek stated that the Czech Republic would take into account "the agenda consulted within the framework of the Visegrad Group" in the projects of their presidency.³ In keeping with Poland's expectations are in preparing itself for the EU Council, the Czech Republic defined Eastern Europe as one of its three high-priority areas (in addition to transatlantic relations and the Western Balkans). It also announced efforts to give a clearer profile and to allocate adequate funds to the Eastern dimension of the European Neighborhood Policy, while emphasizing the importance of democratization and other transformations in eastern neighborhood countries.⁴

Targets

Having come to power after the parliamentary elections of November 2007, the government of Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk declared its willingness to continue Central European cooperation.⁵ During the December meeting of V4 prime ministers in the Czech Republic, Tusk gave assurances that Visegrad cooperation was a permanent aspect of Poland's foreign policy regardless of the political changes. While presenting the guidelines of Polish foreign policy in 2008, Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski mentioned Poland's traditional ties with the Czechs (in addition to those with the Hungarians and the Germans) and

² *Czech Republic Presidency of the Visegrad Group (June 2007–June 2008)*, www.visegradgroup.eu.

³ *Stenoprotokol 27. schůze, čtvrtek 31. ledna 2008*, www.psp.cz.

⁴ *Prioritní oblasti předsednictví České republiky v Radě EU v prvním pololetí roku 2009, říjen 2007*, www.vlada.cz.

⁵ *Przedstawienie przez prezesa Rady Ministrów programu działania Rady Ministrów z wnioskiem o udzielenie jej wotum zaufania, 23.11.2007 r.*, www.sejm.gov.pl.

referred to "Poland's civilizational leap" under the Piast dynasty which rooted Poland firmly in the West a thousand years ago. Pointing to regional "anchoring" in the EU, he also stated that "Poland's specialty" should remain "activeness in connection with the Eastern direction of EU foreign policy." In this context, he stressed the need to cooperate in this area with Poland's "nearest partners, with whom Poland has a shared past" Czechs, Slovaks, Hungarians, Estonians, Lithuanians, Latvians, and also the Romanians, Bulgarians and Swedes.

Thus the Czech Republic was still perceived as a significant Polish partner in the EU, even if Poland did not formulate any policy concept singling that country out from others in the region besides the partnership arising from potential participation in the American missile defence system. In practice, the Polish government was striving, both in its foreign and EU policy, to demonstrate a "new opening," so an enhanced alliance with a country perceived as Euroskeptical and one that (just like Poland) had not completed the process of ratifying the Lisbon Treaty did not mesh with the strategy of shaping the image of a helpful partner to one of the largest EU countries. The formulation of Poland's policy with regard to the Czech Republic was no doubt influenced by awareness that cooperation with the Czech Republic alone, even within the V4 framework, and with the Baltic states would not provide Poland with sufficient leverage to influence EU processes.

Poland placed a greater emphasis on developing the V4+ formula, which made possible the expansion of cooperation in specific areas to other partners and to arrange for regional cooperation, also with Romania and Bulgaria. Inevitably, relations with the Czech Republic and Lithuania, whose development was touted by the right-wing opposition as a great success of the previous government and the president, were no longer stressed to the same degree. President Kaczyński, who remained on very good terms with President Klaus, was a proponent of greatest "flexibility" in relations with the Czech Republic. The opposition, at times, called attention to Polish policy towards the Czech Republic, something that possibly had a positive effect on the growth of cooperation between the two states, as the Polish government, at least initially, showed no desire to give special importance to relations with the Czech Republic.

Political Relations

A number of highest-level bilateral meetings took place in 2008 and, along with a number of discussions held during various Visegrad meetings and other multilateral events, revealed the intensity of Polish-Czech political relations.

President Kaczyński was a guest in Prague in July, while President Klaus visited Poland in March and in October. In January, Prime Minister Tusk paid an official visit to Prague, whereas in October Minister Sikorski made an official trip there.

The subjects raised in January in Prague by the Polish prime minister included plans to establish a Center against Expulsions in Berlin (Prime Minister Topolánek supported Poland's opposition to this project).⁶ Discussions also included the Czech Republic's approaching EU presidency and energy security. The main topic discussed was the installation of the elements of the American missile defence system—the construction of an anti-rocket base in Poland and a radar station in the Czech Republic. Simultaneous discussions with the Americans about the installation of the shield's elements influenced the intensification of Polish-Czech relations. Both countries provided information about the negotiations underway, although they did not coordinate their activities —despite a declared striving for closer cooperation. While still in opposition, Civic Platform (Platforma Obywatelska—PO) criticized PiS for haste and submissiveness in negotiations with the Americans and accused the authorities of “following” the Czech path.⁷

The Czech Republic adopted a different negotiation tactic—it presented a more modest package of postulates and, during discussions with the USA, refrained from voicing differences in views and declared their willingness to come to an agreement. Initially, Poland noted that the negotiations “could not but succeed,” but abandoned such rhetoric after the elections. Although the two countries' negotiation strategies grew further apart, Prime Minister Tusk declared in December 2007 that Poland wished to coordinate discussions with the Czech Republic concerning the installation of the American anti-missile shield.⁸ During Prime Minister Tusk's visit to Prague on 10 January 2008, the two prime ministers announced that their countries would consult on “the greatest number of issues concerning the installation,” and their acceptance of the shield's elements would be dependent on the fulfillment of both countries' expectations.

⁶ Even though Poland and the Czech Republic conducted an intensive dialogue on the subject of historical issues with regard to relations with Germany, representatives of the Czech authorities tended to avoid commenting on the Center against Expulsions project. After the “Visible Sign” compromise concept, against which Poland did not protest, was made public in February 2008, historical questions in relations with Germany did not appear during high-level Polish-Czech governmental contacts. M. Kořan, “Visegrádská spolupráce, Rakousko, Polsko a Slovensko v české zahraniční politice,” in: M. Kořan *et al.*, *Česká zahraniční politika v roce 2008. Analýza ÚMV*, Prague, 2009, p. 123.

⁷ See, for example, “Po co nam tarcza antyrakietowa?” *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 3 March 2007.

⁸ *Premier: Grupa Wyszehradzka powinna budować relacje ze wschodnimi sąsiadami UE, 10 grudnia 2007 r.*, www.kprm.gov.pl.

Prime Minister Tusk “met with the complete understanding” of the Czech prime minister and president of the conditions advanced by Poland for the installation of the shield’s elements.⁹ With progress made in Czech-American talks and an impasse in negotiations with Poland, the positions of the Polish and Czech governments visibly began to diverge. Poland attempted to obtain extensive technological and financial support from the USA for the modernization of its armed forces and strove to be granted a Patriot missile battery. For Poland, it was also much more important than for the Czechs to settle the matter of claims from third parties in connection with potential damages arising from the functioning of the shield.¹⁰ The Czech Republic concentrated on the inclusion of Czech industry and scientific research institutions in the development of the anti-missile system. An important, albeit not entirely intentional, result of the brittle coalition agreement in Prague was the Czech postulate of including certain elements of the American shield in discussions on NATO’s anti-missile system, so the Czechs stressed—much stronger than the Poles did—the allied dimension of the negotiations in addition to their bilateral dimension.

Initially, Czech politicians made the reservation that the agreement with the USA would be submitted to parliament once Poland’s agreement with the USA on the anti-missile base was a foregone conclusion. In the spring of 2008, the Czechs declared that they were ready to host the radar irrespective of the results of Poland’s negotiations with the USA. At the beginning of March, Prime Minister Topolánek criticized Poland’s position and questioned the sense of Poland’s postulates, while the Czech Defense Minister Vlasta Parkanová declared that Polish-American negotiations would most probably end in failure.¹¹ Cooperation with the Czech Republic was additionally complicated by American pronouncements about the possibility of operating the radar without the base in Poland. The former Polish prime minister, Jarosław Kaczyński, demanded concessions from the government and indicated that Poland was losing an important ally in the Czech Republic, while Czech opposition took advantage of Poland’s restraint in negotiations with the USA to criticize the Czech government.

Representatives of the Polish authorities viewed the conditions obtained by the Czechs negatively, and rejected the opposition’s demands to speed up talks

⁹ *Polska i Czechy chcą koordynować działania podczas negocjacji w sprawie tarczy antyrakietowej*, 10.01.2008, www.kprm.gov.pl; PAP, 10 January 2008.

¹⁰ *Informacja rządu na temat umieszczenia w Redzikowie elementów amerykańskiego systemu obrony przeciwrakietowej*, circular no. 1297, 6 November 2008, www.sejm.gov.pl.

¹¹ ČTK, 9 March 2008; ČTK, 10 March 2008.

with the Americans. Following the signing of the agreement with the USA, the Polish authorities indicated that construction of the system depended on the agreement's ratification by the Czech Republic. In the fall, Polish-Czech consultations were held at the level of deputy foreign ministers.¹² In November, the prime ministers of Poland and the Czech Republic also discussed Prime Minister Topolánek's political plan that was to lead to the ratification of the agreements in the Czech Republic. It entailed securing a parliamentary majority in favor of the radar in exchange for the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty. Minister Sikorski emphasized that "if there is no radar, there will also be no interceptor base in Poland."¹³ Ultimately, the Czech parliament failed to come to an understanding and the vote on the ratification of shield-related agreements was postponed until after the inauguration of President Barack Obama. All in all, the whole issue of missile defense contributed to a better understanding of the Polish-Czech community of interests in the Atlantic sphere.

Poland and the Czech Republic were also brought together by Moscow's threats in connection with the two countries' expected participation in the American missile defense system. Both governments viewed Russia's policy similarly. During the war in Georgia, they both condemned Russia's actions and, after military operations in the Caucasus had ceased, they found themselves in the group of EU countries that held the view that the EU should show no haste in resuming talks with Russia. Both governments strongly supported Georgia's aspirations to join NATO.¹⁴ Another expression of the two countries' collaboration during the Russian-Georgian war was the fact that Czech citizens were evacuated from Georgia on board a special Polish plane. Prior to its presidency of the EU Council, the Czech Republic warned against an excessively conciliatory stance with regard to Russia and criticized that country for its delimitation of a zone of privileged interests.¹⁵ After it had assumed the EU presidency, the Czech Republic toned down its criticism of Russian policy, however, seeing unanimity within the EU as a factor of key importance in the Union's relations with Russia.¹⁶

¹² *Česko-polské konzultace nejen k protiraketové obraně*, 24.09.2008, www.mzv.cz.

¹³ Debate on the government report on the installation in Redzikowo of elements of the American anti-missile defense system, 7 November 2008, www.sejm.gov.pl; "Radosław Sikorski: Amerykańskie podstawy tamy budują," *Hospodářské noviny*, 18 November 2008.

¹⁴ *Mladá fronta Dnes*, 14 August 2008.

¹⁵ *Schwarzenberg: Rusko musí dodržovat pravidla*, ČTK, 27 December 2008.

¹⁶ *Prioritní oblasti předsednictví České republiky v Radě EU v prvním pololetí roku 2009*,

The Czech Republic and Poland held a similar view on the energy and climate package. Negotiations concerning this package were of fundamental importance for Poland. In May, Polish Deputy Prime Minister Waldemar Pawlak discussed energy policy and the energy and climate package with Czech politicians in Prague during the European Nuclear Energy Forum and the joint V4 and Baltic states summit.¹⁷ In September, Minister Cyril Svoboda came to Warsaw to discuss the energy and climate package, which was also taken up in talks between representatives of the Office of the Committee for European Integration and their Czech counterparts; in October, Czech Deputy Prime Minister for European Affairs Alexandr Vondra was in Poland on a working visit. The Czech Republic supported the Polish position and also supported the Polish motion for the European Commission to examine whether the package proposals would not have an unfavorable impact on the competitiveness of the European economy. Poland and the Czech Republic together stressed that the climate package was an opportunity for the EU's new members to collaborate.¹⁸ Although the Czechs agreed with the Poles and participated in the meetings of the coalition Warsaw had co-organized, in the end they did not join the position adopted by the other V4 members and by Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Romania and Bulgaria, a position that called for a balanced approach to combating climate change and efforts to ensure energy security. The absence of the Czechs' signature was a demonstration of their "neutrality" and readiness to assume the role as a moderator in the EU debate in connection with the approaching Czech presidency of the Union.¹⁹

The prospect of the Czech presidency gave rise in Poland to certain hopes that the debate about energy security within the EU would be enlivened. The Czech Republic was seen as a country that understood Poland's point of view on gas supplies better than other V4 members, although the scope of political cooperation in this sphere was nonetheless limited. The Czechs did not share all Polish fears, such as the one related to the North Stream pipeline, and saw benefits to be obtained from the transit of gas originating with this pipeline from Saxony to Bavaria through Czech territory. Poland placed great hope in the Czech support for the Nabucco gas pipeline and the Southern energy corridor. In 2008, conceptual work was undertaken on a pipeline link through Moravia that would in the future give Poland access to Central Asian gas supplied by the

¹⁷ *O polityce energetycznej w Pradze*, 29.05.2008, www.mg.gov.pl.

¹⁸ *Spotkanie wicepremiera Pawlaka z delegacją czeską*, 29.09.2008, <http://praha.trade.gov.pl>.

¹⁹ *Východ EU se bojí, že klimatický plán je vydá napospas Rusku*, ČTK, 26 September 2008.

Nabucco pipeline. The presence of PKN Orlen in the Czech Republic also led to greater Polish interest in southern routes of oil supply. Talks were held with the Iraqis in August on the possibility of supplying Iraqi oil to the refinery in Kralupy nad Vltavou through the port in Trieste.²⁰

One of the more important Polish foreign policy aims for 2008 was the creation of an institutional basis for the strengthening of the Eastern dimension of the European Neighborhood Policy. The Czechs were a natural partner for the Poles in this area. As the country heading the V4, the Czech Republic pointed out that there was a need build “such a European neighborhood policy as would divide its funds and abilities justly between the Southern and Eastern dimensions.”²¹

Both countries took advantage of the V4+ framework to develop cooperation on behalf of the Eastern dimension of the European Neighborhood Policy. Efforts to work out a common project in the V4+Sweden format proved unsuccessful, however, although the group, along with Sweden, had declared during a meeting in Prague that “further strengthening and deepening of cooperation with Eastern partners of the European Neighborhood Policy would bring additional benefits to the EU as a whole.”²² In April 2008, the Czechs presented proposals to strengthen the Eastern dimension of the European Neighborhood Policy during a meeting of the Group for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (COEST). These proposals were in large measure concordant with the Polish-Swedish concept, although they placed greater emphasis on multilateral cooperation and on a project-by-project approach. The Czechs did not signal the need to build distinct institutions within the framework of the European Neighborhood Policy and did not single out Ukraine in any special manner.²³ When, however, Poland and Sweden presented their Eastern Partnership proposal in May, the Czechs gave it their clear support, which they confirmed at the June summit of the V4 in Prague.²⁴ The Czechs then participated in elaborating the Eastern Partnership project, which was submitted to the European Commission in October 2008.

²⁰ Waldemar Pawlak i Hussein Al-Shahristani o współpracy w sektorze naftowym, 22.08.2008, www.mg.gov.pl.

²¹ Summit předsedů vlád zemí Visegrádské skupiny v Praze 16. června 200, www.vlada.cz.

²² Joint Statement of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Visegrad Group Countries, Sweden and Ukraine, 23 April 2008, Czech Republic, www.visegradgroup.eu.

²³ E. Nulmets, “Cheskiy memorandum po vostokhnomu sosvustvu,” *Evropa*, 2008, no. 2(27), pp. 63–74.

²⁴ Press Release: Official Summit of the Prime Ministers of Visegrad Group Countries, Prague, June 15–16, 2008, www.visegradgroup.eu.

Representatives of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirmed that their work with the Swedes on Eastern Partnership took into consideration earlier Czech views, as well as Prague's support during the approaching Czech presidency of the EU.²⁵ The Czechs were satisfied with this position and raised no official complaints for being left off the project by Poland. They participated in the implementation of the Eastern Partnership, treating this initiative as crowning their own efforts to strengthen the Eastern dimension of the European Neighborhood Policy. Minister Sikorski stated that he was "particularly grateful to his Czech colleagues" that the Czech presidency accepted the Polish-Swedish program and that specific decisions about its realization were to be taken during the March European Council. Representatives of the Polish government, in rejecting opposition accusations of having "neglected the Czech Republic" during the first phase of preparations of the Eastern Partnership project, pointed to the fact that the success of the Polish-Czech initiative would allow the Czechs to organize the Eastern Partnership's inauguration summit.²⁶

Work on Eastern Partnership in the first months of 2008 showed that neither the Czech Republic nor other V4 countries were high priority partners for Poland in strengthening the Eastern dimension of the European Neighborhood Policy, despite long lasting cooperation in this area, although Polish-Czech working contacts were intensified in 2008 in connection with both countries' chairmanship of the V4 and Czech preparations to assume the presidency of the EU. Bilateral working and expert consultations as well as consultations within the framework of the V4 became more dynamic. Intensive four-party contacts were developed by the permanent representations in Brussels. A wide range of issues were discussed as part of the Visegrad framework—the agenda of the COEST, COTRA (transatlantic relations), COASI (Asia and Oceania) work groups, the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy, economic and cohesion policies, problems of the internal market, coordination of various positions within the European Defense Agency and customs matters.

In the first months of 2008, interest in Czech preparations for EU presidency grew in Poland. In April, a delegation from the Office of the Committee for European Integration declared in Prague that Poland was prepared to intensify cooperation in EU matters. Poland supported the Czech presidency's aims expressed in the motto "Europe without barriers," including overcoming divisions

²⁵ *Biuletyn z posiedzenia: Komisji do spraw Unii Europejskiej (nr 97), Komisji Spraw Zagranicznych (nr 96), Nr 1905/VI kad. z 19 lutego 2009 r., p. 4, www.sejm.gov.pl.*

²⁶ See the debate on the foreign minister's report about the tasks of Polish foreign policy for 2009, *6 kadencja, 35 posiedzenie, 3 dzień (13-02-2009), 8 punkt porządku dziennego, www.sejm.gov.pl.*

between new and old EU members and striving to eliminate transition periods in the free movement of labor. During meetings in the V4, Poland took steps to “integrate the political programs” of the Czech presidency in the first half of 2009 with those of the Hungarian presidency in the first half of 2011 and the Polish presidency in the second half of 2011, especially in connection with the development of Eastern Partnership.²⁷ Poland was also interested in measures aimed at diversifying energy sources imported by the EU and lifting restrictions for workers from Poland and other new member states in their access to the EU labor market.

Poland was critical, however, of Czech views on excessive financing of the Common Agricultural Policy. The evolution of the Czech presidency’s program made these views recede into the background. The final form of the Czech presidency’s priorities suited Poland: the launch of Eastern Partnership was to be the yardstick by which the Czech presidency’s success would be measured, along with progress in the building of energy solidarity within the EU. Poland announced its strong support for the Czech Republic in eliminating red tape in European legislation and supporting small and medium-sized enterprises. Voices questioning the competence of the Czech Republic to assume the responsibilities of the EU presidency, especially those originating from France, found no understanding in Poland.

Preparations for the Czech presidency and Polish support were also the subject of discussions held by Foreign Minister Sikorski during his November visit in Prague.²⁸ The Czech and Polish foreign ministers signed a memorandum about the calling of a Polish-Czech Forum, whose aim would be to stimulate the expansion and deepening of Polish-Czech relations.²⁹

A very good personal relationship between Polish President Kaczyński and Czech President Klaus was a significant element of Polish-Czech cooperation. In many areas, the two presidents held concordant views on EU matters, but their positions on the Lisbon Treaty differed. Insofar as President Klaus remains a staunch critic of the treaty, President Kaczyński, following his meeting with French President Sarkozy, promised that he would not block the adoption of the treaty. The war in Georgia revealed a clear difference between the two

²⁷ *Sekretarz Stanu w UKIE Mikołaj Dowgilewicz, 6 kadencja, 28 posiedzenie, 2 dzień (06-11-2008), 15 punkt porządku dziennego, Informacja bieżąca, www.sejm.gov.pl.*

²⁸ *Wizyta Ministra Spraw Zagranicznych w Pradze, 14.11.2008, www.msz.gov.pl; Ministr Schwarzenberg přijal polského ministra zahraničí, 14.11.2008, www.mzv.cz.*

²⁹ *Memorandum of understanding, 14.11.2008, www.mzv.cz.*

presidents' views of Russia. Lech Kaczyński decidedly supported Georgia, warning Poland's EU partners against Russia's aggressive actions, whereas Klaus laid the responsibility for the conflict at Georgia's feet and stated that he saw no danger emanating from Russia. Despite this difference in views, the two presidents stressed the importance of deeper Polish-Czech cooperation, also on the international stage.

The October meeting between Presidents Kaczyński and Klaus was connected with the approaching 90th anniversary of both countries' independence. The visit of the two presidents to Cieszyn and to Český Těšín on the 79th anniversary of Poland's seizure of the Czechoslovakian part of the Cieszyn Silesia was to point symbolically to overcoming the historical burdens in relations between the two countries. "Together we are stronger and we can strengthen our position in Europe," Kaczyński observed, while Klaus emphasized that during his tenure he had not met with any other president as often as he had with President Kaczyński.³⁰

Controversies and disputes in Polish-Czech relations did not seriously threaten cooperation between the two countries and did not meet with any wider echo among the public. No progress was noted, however, in the resolution of the question of the so-called territorial debt, i.e. the necessity for the Czech Republic to return 368.44 ha to Poland.³¹ Initially, the Czech Republic proposed to settle the debt through financial compensation, but in 2007 agreed to hand over land. The Czech authorities undertook to prepare a list of land by the end of June 2008,³² but halted work in the face of fears had by local communities in border areas, explaining the move as a desire to avoid politicizing the problem before the elections.³³ Despite Polish pressure no progress was made in the matter, although the two largest Czech political parties: ODS (with the exception of a few deputies) and the Social Democratic Party, supported the settlement of debt by transferring land, in a belief that good relations with Poland should take priority over the objections of local authorities.³⁴

³⁰ *Wizyta Prezydenta Vaclava Klause w Warszawie, 13.10.2008*, www.prezydent.pl; *Polsko a ČR by měly stát v EU bok po boku, 12.10.2008*, www.euroskop.cz.

³¹ Pursuant to the provisions of the agreement between Poland and Czechoslovakia on the final delimitation of the state boundary of 13 June 1958, the border was "straightened" (shortened by 80 km): Poland handed over about 1,206 ha to the Czechs and received only 837 ha in return.

³² *Vláda chystá smlouvu o změně společných hranic s Polskem, 12. 9. 2007*, www.vlada.cz.

³³ "Czesi zwlekają z przesunięciem swojej granicy," *Dziennik Zachodni*, 13 October 2008.

³⁴ *České území Polsku? Velké strany problémy nemají, 31. 5. 2008*, www.aktualne.cz; M. Kořan, "Visegrádská spolupráce...", p. 124.

Economic Relations

The year 2008 was yet another consecutive year marking a visible increase in Polish-Czech trade, which has grown almost threefold since both countries joined the EU. In 2008, the Czech Republic moved from fifth to fourth place on the list of Poland's most important trade partners in the EU.³⁵ The Czech Republic is Poland's sixth largest trade partner worldwide (with a share of about 4.52% of Poland's total trade) and the largest in Visegrad Group. Poland is the Czech Republic's third largest trading partner (6.2% of total Czech trade) after Germany (28.7%) and Slovakia (7.4%).³⁶

In 2008 Polish-Czech trade amounted to €11.7 billion (an increase of over 18% from 2007). The Czech Republic responsible for 5.7% of Poland's exports (€6.63 billion) ranked in fifth place, while Czech imports to Poland reached 3.56% (€5.07 billion). According to the Central Statistical Office (GUS), Poland's balance of trade with the Czech Republic (positive in 2005) improved slightly in 2008 (from €1.47 to €1.5 billion).³⁷ According to Czech data, Poland's share in Czech exports increased from 5.9 to 6.5%, placing Poland in third place, after Germany (with 30.7%) and Slovakia (with 9.2%). Poland also held third place, after Germany and China, in Czech imports, where its share increased from 5.7% to 5.8%. The growth in trade slowed down in the second half of the year as a result of the international crisis and economic slowdown. Consequently, even though Czech foreign trade in 2008 (as expressed in Czech crowns at current prices) was almost unchanged from 2007, trade with Poland increased by 5.4%.³⁸ Polish-Czech trade produced good results in comparison to the two countries' trade with the majority of other EU partners.

Poland exports to the Czech Republic mainly copper, piston engines, parts and equipment for motor vehicles, coke, coal, energy, petroleum base oils, steel and metal products, tobacco products, furniture and aluminum. Highly processed products, especially electrical engineering, are increasingly important to Poland's exports to the Czech Republic.³⁹ Also important are clothing, footwear, furniture, household appliances, food processing and construction sector products.

³⁵ *Obroty handlu zagranicznego ogółem i według krajów (I – XII 2008 r. wyniki ostateczne)*, www.stat.gov.pl.

³⁶ *Zahraniční obchod 1–12/2008 – revidované údaje k 1.6.2009*, www.mpo.cz.

³⁷ *Obroty handlu zagranicznego ogółem...; cf. Zahraniční obchod s vybranými zeměmi v roce 2008 v mil. EUR (1.4.2009)*, www.czso.cz.

³⁸ *Zahraniční obchod 1–12/2008...; Zahraniční obchod s vybranými...*

³⁹ *Polsko-czeska współpraca gospodarcza*, <http://praha.trade.gov.pl>.

Poland's imports from the Czech Republic are dominated by passenger cars (Škoda), parts and equipment for motor vehicles, bituminous coal, chemical products, parts for television sets, flat rolled products, bars, shapes, iron and steel profiles, petroleum based oils, tires, electrical products, sanitary products and electronic equipment.

For several years Polish-Czech cooperation in the sphere of capital and finance has been growing dynamically. Cumulated investments made by Polish entities in the Czech Republic have exceeded €1 billion. The largest Polish investment in the Czech Republic was the take-over in 2005 of the Czech petroleum concern Unipetrol by PKN Orlen. Unipetrol is strategically important for the Czech economy and for this reason, the steps taken by the Polish investor are significant in terms of Polish-Czech economic and political cooperation. In the first half of 2008, a project to enlarge the refinery in Litvinov was confirmed and the main part of the restructuring of Unipetrol completed, with PKN Orlen depicting Unipetrol as "one of the most valuable parts of the group."⁴⁰ In the following months doubts emerged, however, as to PKN Orlen's intentions with regard to Unipetrol. The Czech authorities were seriously worried that PKN Orlen might sell its Czech assets, with the Russian Lukoil showing increasing interest.

According to Czech National Bank statistics, the value of Polish investments in the Czech Republic increased by €98 million in 2008.⁴¹ There were about 915 commercial entities in the Czech Republic with a 25% or higher share of Polish capital.⁴² Before 2008, the most important, besides PKN Orlen, were investments made by Asseco, which took over the PVT company and became a potentate of the Czech computer industry, and the purchase by Dwory Oświęcim of the Kaučuk Kralupy chemicals firm, resulting in the emergence of Europe's second largest maker of synthetic rubber (presently Synthos Group). Polish investments were also made in the automotive sector, retail sales and the food industry (such as the takeover by Maspex of Wolmark—the greatest producer of juices and beverages on the Czech market).⁴³ In 2008, Organika from Malbork took over the Gumotex-Břeclav company (production of polyurethane foam). Polish investors were also seriously interested in internet services. In May 2008, the financial group MCI Management purchased the largest Czech internet

⁴⁰ *Miliony złotych dla PKN Orlen*, IAR, 27 June 2008.

⁴¹ *Přímé zahraniční investice do ČR za rok 2008 v teritoriální struktuře*, www.cnb.cz.

⁴² *Czech Republic: przewodnik po rynku*, www.praha.trade.gov.pl.

⁴³ For more on the subject, see *Współpraca gospodarcza: Czechy*, 01.04.2009, www.mg.gov.pl.

travel agency Invia, and in November the Czech subsidiary of the Polish electronic bank mBank (part of BRE Bank SA) celebrated its first anniversary after having attracted 170,000 clients. In the fall, the Warsaw Stock Exchange made an offer to purchase the Prague exchange for €200 million, but the Vienna exchange was chosen instead.

The value of Czech investments in Poland amounts to about €600 million. The larger part of this sum was invested by the ČEZ concern, which took a majority stake in the Elcho (89%) and Skawina (75%) power plants in 2006 for about €390 million. In September 2008, ČEZ purchased the remaining 25% of Skawina from the State Treasury for PLN92.6 million (about €27 million). ČEZ announced plans to build two power plants (400 and 800 MW) and to take over heat and power plants in Zabrze and Bytom, as well as heating distribution networks in Upper Silesia.⁴⁴

The largest Czech investments in Poland include the Ostrava-based Tchas company's participation in the modernization of a section of the rail network between Siedlce and Terespol (€49.8 million) and in the modernization of the sewage network in Rybnik (€33 million). In 2008, a merger between the Czech company Kofola (which had built a beverage plant in Kutno for €20 million) and the Polish beverage producer Hoop was finalized, with 57% of shares remaining in Czech hands. In June, the CS Cargo Group took over TSL Unitrans—one of the leading logistical firms active in the south of Poland. The Slovak-Czech investment fund Penta—registered in Cyprus and the owner of the Žabka neighborhood stores chain (which has also been expanding in the Czech Republic since 2008), the Dr Max pharmacies and the virtual mobile phone operator Mobilking—continued its expansion on the Polish market. In October Penta purchased the company Okna Rąbień, an important supplier of windows and doors in Europe, and announced that it would invest a total of €1 billion. The Czech aircraft works Aero Vodochody (which belong to Penta) have made an offer to take over PZL Świdnik aviation company.

In 2008, decisions were taken that will allow for the development of Polish-Czech cooperation in mining and large-scale Czech investments in Poland. Following four years of preparations and negotiations, on 19 August a cooperation agreement was signed in Prague for the carrying out of geological work in border areas. According to the Czechs, the agreement is an expression of

⁴⁴ *ČEZ koupí za 657 mil. Kč zbytek v polské firmě Elektrownia Skawina*, ČTK, 16 September 2008; *ČEZ plánuje v Polsku stavbu dvou nových elektráren*, ČTK, 10 September 2008.

“strategic partnership in the energy and resources sector.”⁴⁵ The agreement will make it possible to protect the Czech mine from waters originating in the flooded Morcinek mine, and also will facilitate the preparation of a common exploitation of deposits by the Jastrzębska Spółka Węglowa and the NWR Group, which is controlled by Zdeněk Bakala, one of the richest Czechs. In June, the NWR subsidiary Karbonia PL was granted a 50-year license for mining coal from the deposits of the unused Dębieńsko mine in Czerwionka-Leszczyny. NWR announced that it will invest from €0.8 to €1.5 billion in the development of a new mine in this area.⁴⁶

Trans-border Cooperation

Trans-border cooperation grew dynamically in 2008, an important impulse here being the elimination of border controls pursuant to the Schengen accord. In the first weeks after the borders had been opened no significant problems were noted. Czech migration authorities became concerned when Austrian organs pointed to cases of refugees from Chechnya crossing the Czech Republic on their way from Poland to Austria. The problem was resolved diplomatically.⁴⁷ Measures were taken in the form of common border patrols by police, border guards and municipal guards to counter a slight rise in crime in the border areas. Several voivodeships (Opolskie Voivodeship with Moravian-Silesian Region; Śląskie Voivodeship with Moravian-Silesian Region, and Opolskie voivodeship with Olomouc Region) concluded agreements on mutual assistance, counteracting catastrophes, accidents, natural disasters and combating their effects.

In January 2008, Czech-Polish 2007–2013 Operational Trans-Border Cooperation Program was put into effect. Its aim is to support social and economic development of Polish and Czech border areas, to strengthen their competitiveness and cohesion and to promote cooperation among its inhabitants. The program involves six Polish sub-regions (those of Bielsko-Biała, Jelenia Góra, Nysa, Opole, Rybnik and Wałbrzych), two counties (Pszczyna and Strzelin) and five regions (kraj) of the Czech Republic. The possibility of obtaining EU funds has clearly stimulated cooperation of border area districts. For example, thanks to EU funds, which represent up to 85% of costs, the highway linking Hat

⁴⁵ *Umowa między Republiką Czeską a Rzeczpospolitą Polską*, 18.08.2008, www.mzv.cz/warsaw.

⁴⁶ *Odpowiedź podsekretarza stanu w Ministerstwie Gospodarki na interpelację nr 4505*, www.sejm.gov.pl; T. Głowacki, “Zdenek Bakala pokaże nam, jak zarabiać na kopalniach,” *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 11 May 2008.

⁴⁷ M. Kořan, *op. cit.*, pp. 122–123.

with Rudyszwałd was renovated and a project to protect the cleanliness of the border river Opawica was financed.⁴⁸ The “Transkarkonosze” Karkonosze Mountains Tourism Corridor is also planned thanks to EU subsidies.

The flow of workers is an increasingly important aspect of Polish-Czech relations, especially in trans-border areas. While the number of Poles employed in the Czech Republic has fallen by 3,000 as a result of the financial crisis, Poles still represent the third largest group of foreigners working there, after the Slovaks and Ukrainians. At the end of 2008, 20,680 Polish citizens were employed in the Czech Republic.⁴⁹ The first trans-border partnership within the framework of the European Employment Services (EURES) to arise on the territory of the new EU member states (and the 22nd in the EU as a whole) was established on the Polish-Czech border. In December 2007, Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia signed the framework agreement, and on 12 March 2008, the European Commission gave its consent to the emergence of EURES-T Beskydy partnership which, on the Polish side of the border, includes border counties from Nysa to Żywiec.⁵⁰ The Work Group for Labor Migration and Social Insurance of the International Trans-Border Cooperation Commission also deals with trans-border issues.

In 2008, rail infrastructure linking the two countries was improved. After 63 years, the passenger rail connection between Jelenia Góra and Trutnov was restored. In November, the electrification of the Letohrad–Lichkov–Międzylesie rail line was completed, so fast trains will once again be able to run between Wrocław and Prague.

Poland has failed to live up to the 2004 Polish-Czech-German agreement on the construction of a trans-border road to link the German town of Zittau with the Czech Hrádek nad Nisou through the Polish district of Bogatynia. This investment project gave rise to controversy in Poland in the middle of the decade. It was argued that linking the Czech and German road networks through the so-called Zittau pouch would weaken the position of Polish seaports. Although the government did not negate the agreement and supported the strengthening of trans-border infrastructure, Poland did not begin work on the four-kilometer link. Given the transit role of that road, Poland obtained from Germany and the Czech Republic the sum of almost €15 million. As the call for

⁴⁸ M. Zator, *Efekty PO EWT na Dolnym Śląsku*, 02.12.2008, www.nowe-dotacje.pl.

⁴⁹ *Biuletyn Informacyjny, Wydział Promocji Handlu i Inwestycji Ambasady Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w Pradze*, styczeń 2009, <http://praha.trade.gov.pl>.

⁵⁰ See www.eures-tbeskydy.eu.

tenders was delayed, the rise in prices and exchange fluctuations ate away at some of the funds and it turned out that there was a shortage of about €10 million. Neither the local authorities nor the Ministry of Infrastructure have found additional funds to finance the construction of the link.⁵¹

The collaboration of Polish and Czech local governments in favor of the Central European Transport Corridor (CETC), running through Western Poland, went beyond the scope of trans-border cooperation. The Polish Ministry of Infrastructure opted for raising the rank of this undertaking from the local to the central government level and proposed a schedule of measures leading to a meeting of transport ministers of CETC countries in 2009.

Social and Cultural Relations

Although some unfavorable aspects for Poland have been noted, overall trends in Polish-Czech social and cultural relations are positive.⁵² In Poland, Czech culture enjoys considerable popularity, while the presence of Polish culture in the Czech Republic is limited to connoisseurs. Czech media are interested in Polish political events more than cultural ones, although that is slowly changing. In 2008, there was less coverage of Polish internal politics, which had often been criticized fiercely under the previous government. In the commercial media, the presence of Polish culture was insignificant, but in public ones there were a growing number of reports from Poland and programs devoted to Polish culture and society. Books and films with subjects related to recent Polish history (such as Andrzej Wajda's film *Katyń*, books by Jan T. Gross, Father Tadeusz Isakowicz-Zaleski and The Institute of National Remembrance historians) attracted considerable interest.

The Polish Institute in Prague plays an important role in the promotion of Polish culture. The commemoration of the 40th anniversary of the death of Ryszard Siwiec (self-immolation protest against the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968), organized by the Polish Institute, and the publication of Dorota Masłowska's book *Paw Królowej* (The Queen's Spew) attracted considerable attention. Great interest was also attracted by Krzysztof Penderecki (the premiere of *Paradise Lost* in Wrocław, and the Prague concert with the Sinfonia Varsovia orchestra) and Aga Zaryan (the principal guest of the prestigious "Jazz in Rudolfinum" concert), and also the events organized as part

⁵¹ *Odpowiedź podsekretarza stanu w Ministerstwie Infrastruktury na interpelację nr 6490, 17.12.2008, www.sejm.gov.pl.*

⁵² Fragment prepared with the help of a note by Maciej Ruczaj of the Polish Institute in Prague.

of the Warsaw Days in Prague. The involvement of Polish local governments in the promotion of Polish culture in the Czech Republic seems to be bringing positive effects. A traditionally important role in furthering cultural cooperation is played by Cieszyn and Český Těšín, where the Cinema on the Border film review and Without Borders theater festival are traditionally held. The 19th Polish-Czech Christian Culture Days were also held on the border. In Poland the organizer of cultural cooperation and promotion of Czech culture is the Czech Center in Warsaw. Such a role is also played by numerous partner cities and cultural institutions. In the view of the Czech Foreign Ministry, the most important cultural events in Poland in 2008 included the Czech Day in Warsaw, *Czeski Parnik*, a series of weekend concerts devoted to the Czech folk scene, the exhibition of stage sets from plays by Václav Havel and the November premiere of his play *Leaving* at the Ateneum Theater.⁵³

Polish art is often a source of inspiration for the Czech cultural scene. Almost all areas of Polish culture are present in the branch media (in this context, classical, jazz and electronic music should be singled out). Polish artists of both “high” culture (Polish contemporary classical music is particularly renowned), and “alternative” culture (new directions in music, performance and fine arts) have earned high praise. Polish artists, perceived as part of the European avant-garde, are increasingly often invited to the Czech Republic. The sphere of culture has become an important instrument of change for certain unfavorable aspects of Poland’s image in the Czech Republic. For this reason, the signing on 29 September 2008 by the two countries’ culture ministers of a program of intensified cultural cooperation for the years 2008–2010 should be seen as a positive prognosis.⁵⁴

An important role in the development of Polish-Czech cultural contacts is played by the Polish community concentrated in the Czech part of the Cieszyn Silesia Region. The role of this community as a player in Polish-Czech rapprochement is particularly significant at a time of dynamically expanding trans-border cooperation. The implementation of the provisions of the European charter of regional and minority languages has been significant for the national identity of Poles in the Czech Republic. In several dozen localities the possibility of using Polish at the local official level has been taken advantage of by, among other things, placing bilingual place name signs.

⁵³ *Česká zahraniční politika v roce 2008*, www.mzv.cz, p. 162.

⁵⁴ *Dziennik Ustaw*, 2009, no. 46, item 380.

Summary

The Czech Republic is playing an increasingly important role in Polish Central European policy. This is due not only to both countries' participation in the American missile defence system, but to their activeness in the EU and regional forums. Thanks to the rapprochement with the Czech Republic, the role of cooperation within the Visegrad Group has increased in Polish foreign policy. Initially, this had an impact on the Czech V4 presidency and, following Poland's assumption of that chairmanship in the middle of the year, on the prospect of the upcoming Czech presidency in the EU Council. The creation of the Polish-Czech Forum was a symbolic and practical step confirming the two countries' desire to reinforce their cooperation.

The Czech Republic has shown greater initiative in stimulating cooperation and expanding its mechanisms. Both countries are committed to political partnership and to dynamically growing economic relations in which, despite the crisis, positive trends can be observed. The two countries are very attractive to one other and there is great potential for cooperation, especially in the energy sector. Dynamically growing trans-border cooperation, particularly given the potential of Silesia, is increasingly important for both countries.

The Czech Republic is a close Polish ally within the EU, and also an important Atlantic partner. In terms of Poland's expectations formulated in connection with the Czech presidency of the EU, Poland's political relations with the Czech Republic can definitely be described as heading toward a higher plane: Poland showed solidarity with the aims of the Czech EU presidency, recognizing them as in large measure consistent with its expectations; most probably, during its own EU presidency, Poland will have to concentrate on similar priorities, such as energy, the EU's Eastern policy, single market issues, or countering crises. The two countries' cooperation during the period of the Czech presidency, the use of its experience, and collaboration with the Czech Republic (and other V4 partners) in preparing for and assuming the EU presidency in 2011, should further strengthen relations between the two countries.

Poland's Policy Regarding the United Kingdom

Determinants

The prime factors determining Poland's policy regarding the UK include both countries' membership in the EU and NATO and Polish citizens' economic migration to the UK. Bilateral relations are also influenced by major differences in both partners' potentials—economic (the UK is among the world's top industrialized countries) as well as political (the UK holds a permanent seat on the UN Security Council). In the context of efforts to strengthen Poland's international position, the UK was viewed by the Polish authorities as a key partner in NATO and the EU, as reflected in the conviction about maintaining privileged bilateral relations based on a "community of interests" and "significant concurrence of views."¹ The foundations on which to build a "special partnership" were seen in, for instance, both countries' engagement in Iraq in 2003 or the UK's support for EU enlargement and country's opening of its labour market to citizens of new EU member states in 2004. Opinions were even formulated about a possible broadening of the Weimar Triangle formula to include the UK, too.² Separate mention is due to World War II cooperation, commemorated in the establishment in 2000 of a Polish-British Historical Commission and the presentation of a 2005 report documenting collaboration in the field of intelligence.

The UK's importance for Polish diplomacy increased after the Law and Justice (PiS) party had taken over in 2005. Prime Minister Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz regarded that country as Poland's chief ally in Europe,³ and that

* The author is an analyst at the Polish Institute of International Affairs.

¹ See statement by Zbigniew Matuszewski, candidate for Poland's ambassador to London, *Biuletyn z posiedzenia Komisji Spraw Zagranicznych Sejmu RP (nr 175)*, 3158/IV, 12 May 2004. Also see *Noworoczne spotkanie prezydenta z Korpusem Dyplomatycznym*, 10 January 2005, www.bbn.gov.pl/portal/pl/2/647.

² See interview with President Aleksander Kwaśniewski, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 30 April 2004.

³ See interview with Prime Minister Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 21 December 2005; cf. interview with Foreign Minister Stefan Meller, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 5 December 2005.

was not out of step with the sentiments of the general public, which in the early period of EU membership saw the UK as one of this country's greatest allies.⁴ How tenuous these grounds turned out to be could be seen during negotiations on the EU's financial perspective for 2007–2013, conducted under the British presidency, which had proven unfavourable to Polish demands.⁵ That special partnership turned out to be one-sided, largely as a result of the divergent interests of the UK and Poland. Points of concurrence can be found in both countries' policies, making it possible to adopt common positions on a number of issues, but these have not provided a sufficient platform for lasting cooperation based on equal treatment. Poland and the UK agree on the EU's further enlargement and a tightening of cooperation with the bloc's eastern neighbours, but the two have a different vision of the EU budget. The British government wants member states' contributions reduced and is calling into question the rationale of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Poland, on the other hand, opts for that policy's continuation, while regarding the correction mechanisms, such as the British rebate,⁶ an unjust burden on the least affluent member states.

Both states have concurrent views on international security, as reflected in their decisions to participate in military missions in Iraq and Afghanistan. And these decisions, it should be noted, were not part of bilateral arrangements, but primarily reflected both parties' support for transatlantic cooperation and special relations with the United States. Security dialogue is conducted mostly on the ministerial and military levels. Since 2006, collaboration in logistics has been growing, involving an exchange of experiences and development of logistic arrangements to service international military missions.⁷ Cooperation in fighting terrorism and organized crime is based on an agreement concerning the mutual protection of classified information of 18 August 2006, which took effect on 3 August 2007.

The EU's enlargement in 2004 and the opening of the British labour market to citizens of new member states have triggered mass outflows of Polish economic migrants. The twelfth largest minority in the UK in 2004, Poles went

⁴ CBOS, *Sprzymierzeńcy Polski w Unii Europejskiej*, Survey release BS/120/2007, July 2007, p. 4.

⁵ Interview with Prime Minister Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz..., *op. cit.*

⁶ The British rebate is the amount by which the UK contributions to the EU budget are reduced, negotiated in 1984 by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

⁷ T. Chołuj, "Polsko-brytyjska współpraca logistyczna," *Przegląd Logistyczny* 2008(3), pp. 17–22.

up to third place in 2007,⁸ when, according to Central Statistical Office (GUS) estimates, there were close to 700,000 Polish citizens residing in the UK for over three months.⁹ The figures available are not accurate, as they are based on legal employment registers and ignore departures from the UK.¹⁰ Nevertheless, they offer a glimpse of trends in new registrations, which rose sharply from 71,500 in 2004 to 162,500 in 2006, only to fall in successive years: to 150,300 in 2007 and 102,000 in 2008. The change reflected the saturation of the British labour market and the economic downturn. Between 1 May 2004 and 31 December 2008, Poles accounted for some 66% of registration applications from the eight member states whose citizens were required to register. In 2008, the figure stood at 59%.¹¹ The scope of migration transcends the context of bilateral political cooperation, affecting many domestic policy aspects related to economic and social matters. The main influence Polish migrants to the UK exerted on bilateral relations was in the social and cultural sphere.

Internal change in both countries was an important factor shaping Polish policy. Under the PiS government, an active policy towards the UK (independent of the government) was pursued by President Lech Kaczyński and his Chancellery, whose officials maintained frequent contacts with representatives of the UK Cabinet Office.¹² After the Civic Platform's (PO) victory in the snap elections of October 2007, the government, and in particular the prime minister and the foreign minister, took over the main role in conducting Polish policy regarding the UK. In the UK, the Labour Party has been interruptedly in office since 1997 with the charismatic Tony Blair as the Prime Minister until his resignation in June 2007. He was replaced by Gordon Brown, who had served as the Chancellor of Exchequer since 1997. Brown was believed to be less enthusiastic about the EU than Tony Blair.

Polish-British political cooperation was developing intensively at lower levels, involving expert and working groups, in contrast to the disproportionate

⁸ Office of National Statistics, *Population Trends*, spring 2009, no. 135, p. 22, www.statistics.gov.uk.

⁹ *Informacja o rozmiarach i kierunkach emigracji z Polski w latach 2004–2007*, GUS, 25 July 2008.

¹⁰ The Work Registration Scheme covered citizens of eight member states that joined the EU in 2004 (excluding Cyprus and Malta).

¹¹ *Accession Monitoring Report. May 2004–December 2008*, Home Office 2009, www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk.

¹² *Konsultacje Szefa Gabinetu Prezydenta RP w Londynie*, 26 February 2007, www.prezydent.pl; *Jeden z najważniejszych partnerów i sojuszników Polski*, 26 October 2006, www.prezydent.pl.

picture observed at the highest level. Since taking over as prime minister, Gordon Brown has not held any top level meeting in Poland. The last such visits to this country were paid by Prime Minister Tony Blair in April 2007 and Foreign Secretary Jack Straw in January 2005. Nor has there been any fleshing out of the European Dialogue formula, presented in March 2007 in a joint communiqué by Foreign Minister Anna Fotyga and her British counterpart Margaret Beckett. The formula was first agreed in November 2006, during a conversation between Prime Minister Tony Blair and President Lech Kaczyński; it provided for regular Polish-British meetings, to be held twice a year, with the delegations' makeup depending on the subjects discussed.¹³

Poland's entry into the EU provided an evident boost to economic cooperation, and trade in particular.¹⁴ Poland's trade surplus has been steadily rising since 2004, largely reflecting foreign investors' moves to shift production to lower-cost locations in Poland with the intention to export to other EU member states. But the increased value of shipments has not been accompanied by a rise in the UK's share in overall Polish trade; with this proportion oscillating around 4.5% in the past decade (6% in terms of intra-EU trade). Poland is for the UK the largest trade partner among member states admitted to the EU in 2004, but when set against total British trade, its position is marginal. On the list of foreign investors in Poland, the UK remains within the top ten (4th in 2006, 8th in 2007), but Poland is not a significant investor in that country (the UK ranked in sixth place on the list of countries where Polish investments were made in 2007).¹⁵

Premises and Objectives

In the Donald Tusk government's foreign policy declarations, the UK did not hold any special position. The country was listed, along with Italy and Spain, among "traditional friends" in the inaugural statement which Prime Minister Tusk delivered in October 2007.¹⁶ And in the official information regarding Polish foreign policy in 2008, Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski placed the UK within a broad group of countries where the government saw "vast

¹³ *Odpowiedź sekretarza stanu w MSZ – z upoważnienia ministra – na interpelację 1235 w sprawie stosunków polsko-brytyjskich*, 7 March 2008, <http://orka2.sejm.gov.pl/IZ6.nsf/main/253C60FE>.

¹⁴ Data based on Eurostat, www.epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu.

¹⁵ Data based on Ministry of Economy, *Współpraca gospodarcza: Wielka Brytania*, www.mg.gov.pl.

¹⁶ Polish Prime Minister's Chancellery, *Exposé premiera Donalda Tuska*, 23 October 2007, www.premier.gov.pl.

opportunities for cooperation.” He also mentioned the idea of a Polish Season, during which Polish cultural achievements were to be presented.¹⁷ Unlike under the preceding government, the UK was not presented as a key ally, but rather as an important partner in the EU and NATO with whom dialogue should be maintained on all major issues arising from membership in those two blocs.¹⁸ From the Polish perspective, the weightiest problem in bilateral relations was the large economic migration to the UK. The government sought to broaden measures to serve the Polish community in the UK in line with the constitutional obligation to take care of Polish citizens abroad, pursued under an inter-ministerial programme “Bliżej pracy, bliżej Polski” (“Closer to work, closer to Poland”).¹⁹ The scope of Polish emigration to the UK is among the most important factors behind the government’s activities to strengthen the image of Poland and its citizens in that country, with the main vehicle to be provided by the promotion of Polish culture. In view of the disproportion in visits at the highest level, the government declared to undertake measures seeking more frequent visits to Poland by leading representatives of the British authorities.²⁰

Political Relations

In the course of 2008, official visits to the UK were paid by Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski (27–28 April) and Prime Minister Donald Tusk (23 November). The focus of discussions was on current affairs related to EU membership and security cooperation. During a meeting between the prime ministers, other important subjects included the growing economic crisis and the

¹⁷ The Minister of Foreign Affairs’ information on Polish foreign policy for 2008, see above, p.

¹⁸ *Odpowiedź sekretarza stanu w MSZ...*, *op. cit.*; comments by Under-secretary of State at MFA Grażyna Bernatowicz, *Zapis stenograficzny* (264), *Komisja Spraw Zagranicznych Senatu RP* (posiedzenie 18), p. 4, www.senat.gov.pl/k7/kom/kszc/2008/018sz.pdf.

¹⁹ For more on the programme, see www.mszy.gov.pl/files/docs/DKiP/Material_nr2-tekst_programu.pdf.

²⁰ This was confirmed by the Secretary of State at MFA, Jan Borkowski, answering an MP written question, “On the political level, there is a perceptible deficit of visits to Poland by top-level representatives of the government—and balancing this remains a priority for Poland.” See *Odpowiedź sekretarza stanu w MSZ...*, *op. cit.* As Under-secretary of State at MFA Grażyna Bernatowicz explained, “Great Britain. Well, here I do not feel entirely satisfied as far as the exchange of visits is concerned. As it happens, we have problems organizing top-level visits, while cooperation at lower rungs and among experts has been developing well.... There is a certain force of inertia when it comes to organizing top-level visits.” See *Zapis stenograficzny* (264) ..., *op. cit.*, p. 4.

climate and energy package.²¹ A previously announced visit to Poland by Foreign Secretary David Miliband did not materialize in 2008, but mention should be made of Minister for Europe Jim Murphy's arrival in Warsaw in September, with a lecture on the British vision of the EU delivered in the Polish and Hungarian capitals. On October 2008, Jim Murphy was succeeded by Caroline Flint, who on 20 October delivered a lecture at the Polish Embassy in London on migration questions in the context of a strong Polish presence in the UK.

Within the context of EU membership, the most important subjects for both countries were energy and climate change. The UK, which regards the matter as its priority, supported the climate and energy package proposal presented by the European Commission in January 2008. Poland was pressing for major concessions during the negotiations, citing the package's adverse consequences for lower-income member states, due to the structure of their energy supplies. Minister Mikołaj Dowgielewicz, head of the Office of the Committee for European Integration, said the position taken by the UK had posed a major obstacle to an agreement that would be advantageous to lower-income members of the EU.²² In the end, the Polish demands were taken into account in the package adopted by the European Council in December 2008.²³ In the course of 2008, consultations on the EU budget were also held, confirming the existence of differences between the two countries with respect to budget financing, correction mechanisms and spending on CAP.²⁴ In the context of CAP discussions, one should note the resumption in early 2008 of the Polish-British Working Group for Agriculture (first operating in 1994–2004), testifying to a search for common ground at the expert level to discuss the future of the EU agricultural policy.²⁵ Worthy of mention are also concurrent views on the development of relations with the EU's eastern neighbours, including the UK's firm support for the

²¹ Polish Embassy in London, *Minister spraw zagranicznych R. Sikorski z wizytą w Wielkiej Brytanii*, www.london.polemb.net/index.php?document=268; Polish Prime Minister's Chancellery, *Premierzy Polski i Wielkiej Brytanii o kryzysie finansowym*, 24 October 2008, www.premier.gov.pl/s.php?id=2770.

²² *Wielka Brytania przeciwnikiem Polski w negocjacjach pakietu klimatycznego*, 18 November 2008, www.gospodarka.gazeta.pl/gospodarka/1,33203,5962581,Wielka_Brytania_przeciwnikiem_Polski_w_negocjacjach.html.

²³ E. Wyciszkievicz, "Najważniejsze elementy kompromisu energetyczno-klimatycznego," *PISM Biuletyn*, no. 64, 19 December 2008.

²⁴ UKIE, *Odpowiedź Polski na "Consultation Paper" Komisji Europejskiej w sprawie przeglądu budżetu UE*, www.ukie.gov.pl; also see *Global Europe: Vision for 21st Century Budget*, HM Treasury, June 2008, www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/global_europe190608.pdf.

²⁵ *Odpowiedź sekretarza stanu w MSZ...*, *op. cit.*

Polish-Swedish Eastern Partnership initiative. The UK government shares the opinion that the Eastern Partnership may be an important instrument of political and economic stabilization in the countries covered by the programme.²⁶

An important point on the agenda of the official visits to UK by Donald Tusk and Radosław Sikorski included meetings with expatriate Poles. In London, the prime minister inaugurated a programme “Masz PŁan na powrót?” (“Do you have a return plan?”) offering assistance to Polish citizens working abroad and planning to return to Poland. The programme’s website²⁷ provides a wealth of information on subjects such as looking for work in Poland, moving a small private business to Poland or settling tax liabilities. The latter issue has since 1 January 2007 been governed by a bilateral agreement on avoiding double taxation which introduces a computation method more convenient for taxpayers (the so-called exclusion-with-progression method). In July 2008, a Polish law on so-called tax abolition was passed and took effect on 6 August, making it possible to write off overdue tax debts and avoid tax liability or payment of accrued interest. The possibility of a refund on taxes overpaid in 2002–2007 was also introduced.²⁸ Worth mentioning here is an initiative by the Poland Street association organizing young Poles in the UK. Their project “Wracać? Ale dokąd?” (“Going back? But where to?”) aimed at encouraging Poland’s largest cities to present their offers to persuade Poles living in the UK to return home. The programme was inaugurated in November, with 12 cities signing up to make their presentations in the UK in 2009.²⁹

As part of efforts to improve consular services for Polish citizens in the UK, a consulate general was opened in Manchester in May 2008 (with the relevant decision made in January 2007). In this context, it is worth mentioning an initiative by the Polish ombudsman, Janusz Kochanowski, who suggested the appointment of liaison officers for contacts with labour ministries in the EU member states with the largest Polish immigrant communities to monitor the situation and observance of Poles’ rights on the labour markets. While taking a positive approach to the idea, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs proposed that

²⁶ Statement by Under-secretary at MFA Grażyna Bernatowicz, *Zapis stenograficzny (281), Komisja do Spraw Unii Europejskiej Senatu RP (posiedzenie 25)*, 18 June 2008, p. 12, www.senat.gov.pl/k7/kom/ksue/2008/025sue.pdf.

²⁷ See www.powroty.gov.pl.

²⁸ The law targeted taxpayers who over at least one year during 2002–2007 derived income in countries, including the UK, where bilateral treaties provided for a less favourable (proportional) method of tax computation.

²⁹ *Projekt 12 miast: Wracać? Ale dokąd?*, www.polandstreet.org.uk.

special consuls for labour affairs be appointed as this arrangement would be less costly and easier to implement. By the end of 2008, none of these concepts had been introduced.³⁰ On 29 December, Janusz Kochanowski sent a letter to the Minister of Labour and Social Policy, Jolanta Fedak, asking her about the feasibility of the presented proposal.³¹ Also worthy of mention is the first Polish-British seminar organized in November in the British House of Commons by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Poland and by the British-Polish Chamber of Commerce. The attendees discussed the situation of Poles in the UK and their involvement in public life there.³²

Interest has been aroused by the question of cooperation in judicial matters connected with the European Arrest Warrant (EAW) and a major increase in the number of cases where it has been applied by the Polish authorities.³³ Special cases included ineffective extradition requests for Polish citizens living in the UK and wanted in Poland for Nazi or communist crimes. The refusal was attributed by British authorities to old age and poor health of the persons in question.³⁴ Nor did judicial cooperation bear fruit in the case of two Poles sentenced by British courts, reflecting the protractedness of UK extradition procedures³⁵ and problems with adjusting UK sentencing to Polish criminal law.³⁶ The question of the EAW has a broader context in the UK, being perceived there as an instrument that affects the British authorities' sovereignty and right to refuse extradition of a British subject, and which also forces them to treat as crimes some acts that British law does not see as such, e.g. communist crimes. Improving cooperation in this respect was the subject of a bilateral expert-level seminar hosted by the British ambassador in October 2008 and attended by

³⁰ Ombudsman's letter no. RPO-536046-III/06/MRP, 24 October 2008, www.rpo.gov.pl/pliki/12248519770.pdf; "Konsul pomoże pracującym za granicą," *Rzeczpospolita*, 8 January 2009.

³¹ Ombudsman's letter no. RPO-536046-III/06/MRP, 29 December 2008, www.rpo.gov.pl/pliki/12305531290.pdf.

³² "Historic Anglo-Polish Summit Success," *Opinia – Polish Cultural Magazine*, November 2008, www.opinia.co.uk.

³³ A. Przybyll, "Anglia poluje na Polaków," *Polska*, 5 November 2008.

³⁴ "IPN chce ekstradycji 'Krwawej Julki,'" *Polska*, 15 September 2008. The request for Helena Wolińska's extradition was dropped following her death in November 2008; see "Zmarła stalinowska prokurator Helena Wolińska," *Rzeczpospolita*, 8 November 2008.

³⁵ Ł. Cieśla, M. Jałoszewski, "Anglicy oddają Polsce skazanych za gwałt," *Polska*, 22 July 2008; see Ministry of Justice, 9 and 11 July 2008 news, www.ms.gov.pl.

³⁶ Ł. Sobiech, "Angielski wyrok wiąże sądy," *Gazeta Prawna*, 25 July 2008.

representatives of both countries' interior and justice ministries, investigative agencies and the judiciary.³⁷

A historical dispute about the circumstances of General Władysław Sikorski's death in an air crash in Gibraltar in 1943 resurfaced in 2008 in connection with an inquiry opened by the Katowice branch of the National Remembrance Institute (IPN). Previously, similar attempts were made by the Institute's branch in Szczecin (in 2005 and 2007), but were dropped in the absence of sufficient grounds to open an inquiry.³⁸ The discussion was provoked by the claim that the general had been assassinated by Poles cooperating with British intelligence and that the crash had served as a cover-up. The claim is strengthened by the fact that some British intelligence documents remain classified. But findings of an autopsy following General Sikorski's exhumation on 25 November 2008 ruled out the assassination version. Opponents of the conspiracy theory point out that the British had no motive to kill the general, and that the documents available from British archives suffice to dismiss such suggestions.³⁹ The Polish government's position was that there were no grounds to doubt the British arguments. In a response to a July 2008 motion by PiS MP Zbigniew Girzyński for a resolution calling on the British government to declassify its archives, Under-secretary of State Grażyna Bernatowicz argued that during his London meeting with the British prime minister, Donald Tusk had proposed to set up a joint historical commission to examine the archive material about the general's death. Prime Minister Brown, however, was unenthusiastic, repeating the British position that all crash-related archives had already been opened.⁴⁰ Mention should be made of the activities of Ambassador Ric Todd, who not only joined in the discussion about General Sikorski's death,⁴¹ but was also taking issue with pronouncements on a broader context of Polish-British relations. In December 2007, he responded to Władysław Bartoszewski's interview for

³⁷ British Embassy in Poland, *UK and Polish Experts Discussed European Arrest Warrant Co-operation between the UK and Poland*, 7 November 2008, www.ukinpoland.fco.gov.uk/en/newsroom/?view=News&id=8797101.

³⁸ T. Semik, "Katowicki IPN zbada, jak zginął gen. Sikorski," *Polska*, 13 July 2008.

³⁹ Two opposing views: Interview with Dariusz Baliszewski, "Ostatni dzień generała," *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 1 July 2008; and interview with Professor Jan Ciechanowski, "Batalia o wojnę," *Polityka*, 13 September 2008.

⁴⁰ Statement by Under-secretary of State at MFA Grażyna Bernatowicz, *Biuletyn z posiedzenia Komisji Spraw Zagranicznych Sejmu RP (nr 77)*, no. 1605/VI, 4 December 2008.

⁴¹ Letter from the British ambassador, *Rzeczpospolita*, 1 August 2008; cf. radio TOK FM, Dariusz Baliszewski's broadcast about General Sikorski's death with the participation of the British ambassador, 12 September 2008.

Poland Monthly magazine, in which the latter argued that the UK (along with the United States) bore responsibility for Poland's having been brought under Stalinist Russia's control after World War II.⁴² And in August 2008, Ambassador Todd disputed an opinion about Poland having been used by the UK at various moments of their common history as presented by Andrzej Krajewski in an article for the *Polska* daily.⁴³

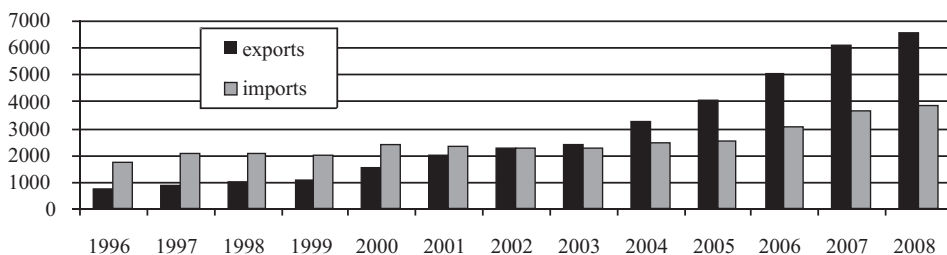
Economic Relations

Two-way trade continued to grow in 2008, as did the Polish trade surplus, but due to the mounting economic crisis, the growth rates—especially in the last two quarters of 2008—were lower than in the preceding years.

Trade.⁴⁴ Bilateral trade exceeded €10 billion in 2008, representing an increase of 7% on a year earlier. This compares with an average annual growth in 2004–2007 by more than 20%. The UK kept its fourth place on the list of Poland's export markets, with the Polish trade surplus rising to €2.7 billion (Figure 1). In imports to Poland, the UK ranked in 9th place (or a 7th in terms of intra-EU trade).

Figure .

Poland's trade with the UK in 1996–2008 (€ million)



Source: Author's presentation based on Eurostat data.

⁴² British Embassy in Poland, *History Matters – British Ambassador's Response to a Comment Given by Professor Władysław Bartoszewski in an Interview for Poland Monthly Magazine*, 20 December 2007, www.ukinpoland.fco.gov.uk; cf. "Face to Face: Władysław Bartoszewski," *Poland Monthly*, December 2007.

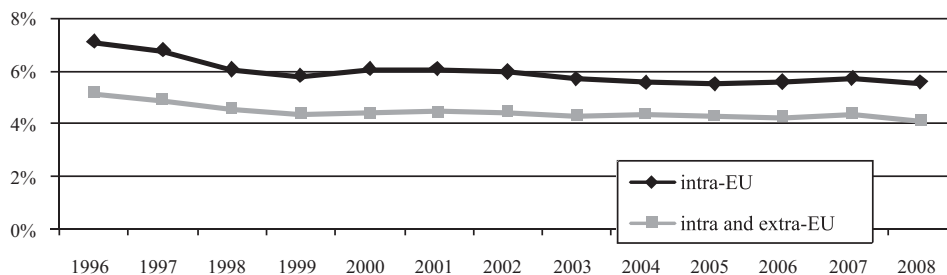
⁴³ R. Todd, "Anglia was nie wykorzystuje," *Polska*, 19 August 2008; cf. A. Krajewski, "Małżeństwa z rozsądku brytyjskiej korony," *Polska*, 8 August 2008.

⁴⁴ Trade figures as supplied by Eurostat (epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu), unless otherwise stated. The notion of intra-EU trade applies in this article to the 27 member states of the EU as of 1 January 2007.

Over the past years, the UK's share in Polish trade has been relatively stable, having fallen slightly to 4.1% since 2007 (to 5.5% of intra-EU trade) (Figure 2).

Figure

The UK's share in Polish trade in 1996–2008

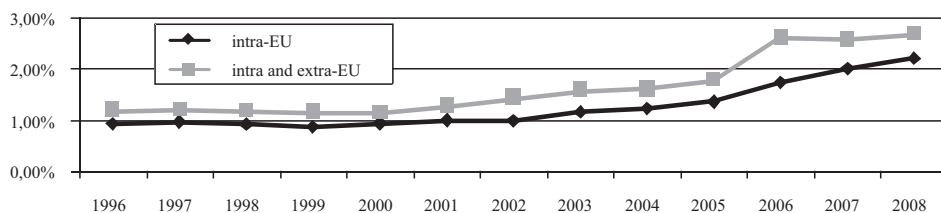


Source: Author's presentation based on Eurostat data.

Highly processed goods (electrical engineering machines and equipment) account for over 50% of Polish exports to the UK. Engines, telecommunications equipment, cars, furniture and sweets are shipped to the UK by large international companies that have invested in Polish-based production. Co-production ties have also been expanded, with British companies moving to Poland the manufacture of subassemblies and components. In Polish imports from the UK, highly processed products and chemicals (mostly pharmaceuticals) dominate (over 50%).⁴⁵

Figure

Poland's share in British trade in 1996–2008



Source: Author's presentation based on Eurostat data.

Although the UK's largest partner among the new EU member states, Poland accounts for only a small proportion of British trade. Over the past years, this

⁴⁵ Ministry of Economy, *Współpraca gospodarcza..., op. cit.*

proportion has been rising slowly, to reach 2.7% in 2008 (and 2.2% in terms of intra-EU trade) (Figure 3). Poland ranks in 16th place among the UK's largest trading partners (and 9th within the EU).

Investments. Poland is not a major investment partner for the UK, but Polish companies have shown an increasing interest in doing business in the British market (mostly in the services sector). Most registrations involved construction firms, producer/distributor representation offices, wholesaling businesses, shops, bars and restaurants. At the end of 2007, the cumulative value of Polish investments in the UK was close to €780 million, placing the UK in 6th position among Poland's outward-investment partners. And on the Polish inward-investment list the UK came 8th, with €4.6 billion. The biggest British investors are: Tesco supermarkets, Imperial Tobacco, GlaxoSmithKline (pharmaceuticals), British Oxygen Corporation (industrial gases), AVIVA (finance), Bates (transport, storage), Cadbury's Schweppes (food), British-Dutch Overseas Holdings (petroleum products).⁴⁶ In 2008 a leading UK bank, the Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS), entered the Polish market following its acquisition of a part of the Dutch ABN AMRO bank, which in Poland focused on corporate clients and the parent bank's units abroad.

Social and Cultural Relations

The sphere of social and cultural relations encompasses all measures launched by the Polish authorities to promote the country's image in the UK. A key initiative planned in this respect is the Polish Season 2009/2010, a year-long undertaking scheduled to start in May 2009, after several forerunner events held from March. The Season's idea was first presented during an official visit to the UK by President Lech Kaczyński in November 2006.⁴⁷ In the course of 2008, preparations for the Season were continued, with a series of study visits by representatives of culture institutions, journalists and art critics from both countries. The aim of the project is to establish long-term collaboration with British cultural institutions and broaden Britons' knowledge of Poland. The Polish Season project is held under the aegis of the Polish president and the British queen.

⁴⁶ Ministry of Economy, *Współpraca gospodarcza...*, *op. cit.*

⁴⁷ "Sezon Polski" w Wielkiej Brytanii, 8 November 2006, www.prezydent.pl/x.node?id=6042879&eventId=7527202; and Adam Mickiewicz Institute, *Sezon Polski w Wielkiej Brytanii*, www.iam.pl/pl/site/wielka_brytania/index_html.

The world's largest theatre festival held in Edinburgh in August 2008 provided an opportunity for the presentation of Polish theatrical output. Reviewers' attention was drawn to the Wrocław Opera production of Karol Szymanowski's *King Roger*, directed by Mariusz Treliński, and performances by Teatr Rozmaitości from Warsaw; Szymon Anski's *Dybuk* adapted by Krzysztof Warlikowski and *4.48 Psychosis* directed by Grzegorz Jarzyna.⁴⁸ Actress Magdalena Cielecka, appearing in both plays, won the Herald Angel Award.⁴⁹ Also film and literary presentations were made in Belfast during the Week of Polish Culture held in May as part of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue.⁵⁰

The leading UK institution promoting contacts in the social and cultural sphere in Poland is the British Council which celebrated in 2008 the 70th anniversary of its Polish operations. To mark the occasion, it organized a Polish edition of the International Young Creative Entrepreneur competition, which sought to pick the best Polish young managers active in seven creative fields, including music, stage arts and multimedia. All seven finalists took part in the international finals in London in November 2008.⁵¹

The large Polish presence in the UK has prodded an expansion of Polish-language media and the emergence of organizations seeking to support and integrate the Polish community.⁵² The media in both countries showed growing interest in the subject of migration, but a deplorable development on the part of British media was a false presentation of Poles and Poland. For example, responsibility for the Holocaust and Nazi crimes was suggested to lay with Poland, with expressions such as "Polish camps" or "Polish gas chambers," and a stereotyped, untrue picture of Poles living in the UK was presented.⁵³ The most notorious case was an article by Giles Coren, published by *The Times* on 26 July, where he used an ethnic slur, "Polack," and wrote that the ancestors of

⁴⁸ J. Derkaczew, "Edynburg chwali Polaków," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 3 September 2008.

⁴⁹ *Herald Angel Awards*, www.theheraldangels.co.uk/awards_2.php.

⁵⁰ For more on individual cultural initiatives see interview with Anna Tryc-Bromley, "Sezon na polską kulturę," *Dziennik Polski*, 4 December 2008, www.dziennikpolski.co.uk.

⁵¹ See British Council, *Konkurs International Young Creative Entrepreneur*, www.britishcouncil.org/pl/poland-iyce2008-archive.htm.

⁵² For more on Polish expatriate organizations in the UK see *Sprawozdanie z konferencji – Formy społecznej pomocy Polakom w Wielkiej Brytanii ze strony środowisk polskich i organizacji działających w tym kraju*, 25 April 2008, www.zpwb.org.uk/files/13.04.2008%20-%20konferencja%20pomoc%20Polakom%20w%20UK.doc.

⁵³ W. Lorenz, "Czy BBC wznieca antypolskie nastroje?," *Rzeczpospolita*, 5 June 2008.

contemporary Poles used to amuse themselves at Easter by locking Jews in the synagogue and setting it on fire.⁵⁴ Polish Ambassador Barbara Tuge-Erecińska protested in a letter to *The Times* published on 31 July, and the Polish ombudsman raised the matter in letters to the British ambassador in Poland and to the *Polska* daily, which cooperates with *The Times*.⁵⁵ In this context, mention should be made of an important role played by representatives of the Polish community in the UK, and especially the Federation of Poles in Great Britain, which monitors the British media, registers such articles and statements and lodges complaints.⁵⁶

Polish-British relations were the subject of discussions in various forums. Standing out among these was the 2 September meeting in Warsaw "Poland-Great Britain: The true picture?" organized by *Newsweek Polska*; it included a panel discussion with the participation of Minister Radosław Sikorski and Ambassador Ric Todd.⁵⁷ Another valuable initiative was the Polish-British Round Table held in Cracow in May 2008 and attended by a group of experts, politicians and journalists from both countries. The main theme of the debates was the development of Polish-British relations in the context of both countries' EU membership and relations with the United States.⁵⁸

Poland's accession to the EU has resulted in a perceptible increase in the number of Polish citizens taking up studies in the UK and a development of their associations. In the academic year 2003/2004, close to 1,000 Poles were studying at British universities. The figure then rose to around 6,800 in 2006/2007 and to some 8,600 a year later.⁵⁹ During his visit to the UK in April 2008, Minister Sikorski attended the First Congress of Polish Students. Since 1999, a British Alumni Society (BAS) has been in existence in Poland, with the British ambassador as its honorary chairman. An event of great importance for university-level cooperation was the opening on 23 April of a branch of a Polish honorary

⁵⁴ G. Coren, "Two Waves of Immigration, Poles Apart," *The Times*, 26 July 2008.

⁵⁵ B. Tuge-Erecińska, "Poland's Role in the Holocaust," *The Times*, 31 July 2008; also Ombudsman's letter no. RPO-R-072-20/08 of 5 August 2008, www.rpo.gov.pl/pliki/12179472060.pdf.

⁵⁶ R. Małolepszy, "Raport Moszczyńskiego," *Dziennik Polski*, 10 March 2008, www.mojawyspa.co.uk/artykuly/20789/Raport-Moszczynskiego.

⁵⁷ "Polska-Wielka Brytania: jak jest naprawdę?" *Newsweek*, 3 September 2008, www.meetingpoint.newsweek.pl/debaty/debata.asp?Artykul=28113.

⁵⁸ *Szczególne partnerstwo: Wielka Brytania i Polska wobec Unii Europejskiej i Stanów Zjednoczonych*, Polish-British Round Table, 10–11 May 2008, www.villa.org.pl/index.php?nr2=327.

⁵⁹ Data based on UNESCO, www.unesco.org, and UKCISA (United Kingdom Council for International Student Affairs), www.ukcosa.org.uk.

consulate at the University of Hull, with the task of promoting the University's contacts with Polish institutions of higher learning. In September 2008, the Polish honorary consul at Hull, Professor Joseph Carby-Hall, was presented with the Order of Merit by President Lech Kaczyński for his commitment to the development of Polish-British relations.⁶⁰

The growth of tourism is worthy of note. The number of Polish tourists in the UK went up steadily after 2004 to peak at 850,000 in 2007. But in 2008, the figure fell steeply to 450,000 as a result of the economic crisis. And the number of British tourists in Poland has been rising systematically in the past years, exceeding 550,000 in 2008 (from 210,000 in 2003).⁶¹ The most popular destination here is Cracow, which ranked second only to Sydney, Australia, on a list compiled by *The Guardian* readers within the Travel Awards 2008 competition (a year earlier, Cracow was in 10th place).

Assessment

Even though the UK is an important partner for Poland, given both countries' membership in the EU and NATO and Polish economic emigration, mutual relations are not of the same rank as relations with Germany, France or the United States. The Donald Tusk government has dropped the previous cabinet's over-optimistic declarations about room for a special partnership between the two countries, focusing on developing dialogue on key aspects of EU and NATO membership and measures to intensify mutual political contacts. But the Polish government's documents and declarations regarding its policy towards the UK reveal an absence of a separate concept and accurately defined goals that would transcend the general lines and declarations on the need for cooperation and a tightening up of two-way relations. Lacking is a broader expert discussion about chances and opportunities in this respect.

The Polish authorities have failed to attain their political objectives. Attempts to raise the level of two-way contacts have not succeeded, as reflected in the absence of visits to Poland by top-level UK politicians or failure to follow up on the European Dialogue formula. This can be explained by differences in both countries' potentials and interests, and also the much weaker interest in Poland on the part of Prime Minister Gordon Brown and Foreign Secretary David Miliband compared to their respective predecessors. The vigorous

⁶⁰ *Polish Ambassador Visits University of Hull*, 28 April 2008, www.hull.ac.uk/news/apr08/polish_ambassador.html.

⁶¹ Data based on Institute of Tourism, www.intur.com.pl.

activities pursued by the British ambassador to Poland may suggest that the UK's diplomatic mission in Warsaw is seen by the British government as an institution sufficient to effectively pursue British interests in Poland and develop bilateral relations.

The perceptible development of economic cooperation and contacts in the social and cultural sphere has only to a limited extent been rooted in the policies and activities of the Polish authorities, resulting largely from Poland's EU accession and its consequences: freedom of movement, opening up of the UK labour market and economic migrations. How the Polish Season in the UK is run will provide a test for the effectiveness of foreign policy in promoting Poland's image at a time when Polish non-governmental organizations and media based in the UK are gaining increasing importance in this field.

Given the differences in both countries' potentials and interests, it would be hard to expect the UK's interest in boosting the level of its relations with Poland. Under the circumstances, Polish authorities should intensify dialogue at lower levels and search for collaboration opportunities in matters where both countries share similar positions, such as EU enlargement or relations with the bloc's eastern neighbours.

III.

Selected Problems of Poland's Foreign Policy

Poland's Policy Regarding the Georgian Conflict

Georgia's role in Polish foreign policy increased following the victorious Rose Revolution of 2003, and, coming into office of President Mikheil Saakashvili. Support for democratic transformations in the post-Soviet area and reduction of Russian influence there has been a tenet of Poland's Eastern policy, accepted by all major political forces.¹ In the Georgian case, that translated into establishment of close political contacts, voicing opposition against aggressive moves by Russia (such as its engagement in Abkhazia and South Ossetia or Russian trade restrictions imposed on Georgia) and active support for calls to admit Georgia, as soon as possible, into NATO and bring the country closer to the European Union.² Importantly, joint work also was carried out on projects involving the transit of Caspian Sea energy resources bypassing Russia. Georgia, along with Ukraine, was to be part of an oil-and-gas transport corridor from the region to the European Union area. A factor of considerable importance for the development of mutual relations were good personal contacts established between Presidents Lech Kaczyński and Mikheil Saakashvili; and there was also a positive perception of Georgia and the Georgians among Polish society. Georgia became an important destination for activity by Polish non-governmental organizations, and the recipient of a large portion of the Polish government's development aid programme: PLN 3.8 million in 2007 (ranking in third place, after Belarus and Ukraine) and PLN 4.5 million in 2008 (in fourth place, after Afghanistan, Belarus and Ukraine).³

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¹ See R. Kuźniar, *Droga do wolności: polityka zagraniczna III Rzeczypospolitej*, Warszawa, 2008, p. 233.

² See E. Wyciszkievicz, "Poland's Policy Regarding the States of the Middle East and North Africa," *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy 2008*, pp. 234–249.

³ Ministry of Foreign Affairs reports of 2008 and 2009 r.: *Program polskiej pomocy zagranicznej udzielanej za pośrednictwem MSZ RP*. As part of a major project launched in 2008, support was extended to the reform of Georgia's regional policy, by co-financing the proceedings of and delegating experts to the Task Force for Regional Development of Georgia.

Policy towards Georgia Prior to the August 2008 Conflict

In early 2008, Poland expected a further deepening of bilateral relations. After the easing of a political conflict between the government and the opposition in Georgia (involving the brutal dispersion of street demonstrations in November 2007), partly as a result of Polish mediation, Polish politicians believed it was possible to persuade NATO and EU partners to increase their commitment to support Georgia.⁴ Poland sought to reach an agreement within NATO on offering Georgia the Membership Action Plan (MAP).

The first test for the effectiveness of Polish policy came at NATO's Bucharest summit on 24 April 2008. Prior to the meeting, the Polish delegation set the goal of having Georgia and Ukraine granted the Membership Action Plan, but that ran into opposition from some European allies (including France and Germany), while the position of the George W. Bush administration, a proponent of a positive MAP decision, proved too weak to bring others around. Poland then actively worked for a compromise solution, i.e. to include in the final summit declaration a statement promising both countries' to obtain NATO membership, but without specifying any binding MAP timetable.⁵ Immediately after the summit, members of the Polish delegation described the provision as a Polish success.⁶ In retrospect, it seems that Russia was right in interpreting that as a sign of disunity within NATO, whereas Georgia mistakenly assumed that it could expect NATO support in the event of a conflict with Russia. While it would be a mistake to see the outcome of the Bucharest summit as a decisive factor in Russia's plans for a conflict with Georgia, it certainly encouraged Russia to escalate tensions and provocations in Abkhazia and South Ossetia so as to demonstrate Georgia's instability to NATO and provide a pretext for an attack against that country.⁷ Russia found the international environment at the time in the closing months of President Bush's term and with France in the presidency of the EU Council to be favorable to isolating Georgia diplomatically and to tempering other countries' reactions in the event of a conflict.

⁴ See "Złota epoka w stosunkach z Tbilisi," interview with Paweł Kowal, *Rzeczpospolita*, 5–6 January 2008; "Wspieramy Gruzję, ale nie samotnie," interview with Krzysztof Lisek, *Rzeczpospolita*, 5–6 January 2008.

⁵ *Bucharest Summit Declaration*, NATO Press Release, 3 April 2008, par. 23.

⁶ *NATO obiecuje, że Ukraina i Gruzja będą jego członkami*, Polish News Agency (PAP) report of 3 April 2008.

⁷ In response to the Bucharest summit decisions, President Putin ordered the Russian administration to establish closer contacts with the breakaway regions.

When the South Caucasus crisis deepened in the spring and summer of 2008, Poland provided active backing to the Georgian government. Just after NATO's Bucharest summit, the centre of conflict escalation was Abkhazia, where Russia increased its military contingent to the upper limit allowed under the ceasefire agreement of 1994 (3,000 troops), sent a railway troop battalion to repair a section of the Sukhumi-Ochamchira railway line, and shot down several Georgian unmanned reconnaissance drones. To demonstrate political solidarity with Georgia and size up the situation, five foreign ministers from EU member states Lithuania, Latvia, Sweden, Slovenia (holding the Council presidency) and Poland—paid a brief visit to Tbilisi on 12 May 2008.⁸ President Lech Kaczyński, meeting President Saakashvili while visiting Israel on 12–15 May,⁹ declared that an absence of a firm reaction to the Russian moves posed a threat to the credibility of the Atlantic Alliance: “It must not be that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in April promises membership to a country, and just a fortnight later that country (Georgia) experiences very serious problems on a large portion of its territory.”¹⁰ The Polish president was also a guest of honor at the 26 May 2008 celebrations to mark the 90th anniversary of the restoration of Georgia's independence, and again he expressed his support for Georgia.

Polish Policy during the Georgia-Russia War

Tensions in South Ossetia increased in July 2008, following an unsuccessful attempt to assassinate Dmitri Sanakoyev, the Georgia-recognized head of local administration. On 8 July, Russian planes flew over Georgian territory. Villages controlled by both sides were shelled, there was a concentration of Georgian and South Ossetian troops and, presumably, Russian preparations for a military intervention were completed.

Along with the Russian provocations, one must also note the launch (on the night of 7 to 8 August) of Georgia's assault on Tskhinvali and villages under Ossetian control.¹¹ Assuming that the Georgian authorities saw a Russian

⁸ A. Lobjaskas, *Georgia: Visiting EU Delegation Offering Support, But Little Else*, Radio Free Europe, 12 May 2008, www.rferl.org/content/article/1117468.html.

⁹ Both presidents attended ceremonies to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the State of Israel.

¹⁰ *Lech Kaczyński chce gwarancji NATO dla Gruzji*, Polish News Agency (PAP) report of 15 May 2008.

¹¹ P. Kościński, “Gruzja zaatakowała Osetię,” *Rzeczpospolita*, 8 August 2008. According to the Georgian authorities, the offensive was a reaction to the shelling of Georgian villages from South Ossetian positions, and to reports about additional Russian troops entering South Ossetia.

operation as inevitability, the move to regain control of Tskhinvali should be seen as an attempt risky but understandable from President Saakashvili's viewpoint to take the initiative and "internationalize" the conflict.¹² The Georgian offensive did not reach its military goals (to take Tskhinvali and block the Roki tunnel leading to Russia), and the Russian intervention, conducted under the pretext of "forcing Georgia into peace," defeated most of the Georgian army.¹³ On 8 and 10 August, Georgia declared unilateral ceasefires, but Russian troops continued their offensive, seizing Georgian territories that had been under Georgian control prior to 7 August. Georgia was also attacked from Russia-controlled Abkhazia, and Georgian ports were blocked by the Black Sea Fleet. On 12 August, President Nicolas Sarkozy of France, the holder of the EU Council presidency, agreed in Moscow on the terms of a ceasefire later acknowledged by President Saakashvili.¹⁴ The six-point plan did not mention Georgia's territorial integrity, while permitting Russia to take "additional security measures," which it promptly used to create the so-called buffer zones around Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

With such dynamics to the conflict, Poland had little room to influence the course of events. And the European Union, faced with the rapid pace of the Russian army's offensive on the territory controlled by Georgia prior to August 2008, took up the initiative in ceasefire efforts, and saw persuading Russia to stop hostilities as its most urgent task. The prospect of Russia's savoring the success of its military operation and moving to seize a larger portion of Georgian territory, including Tbilisi, and to form a puppet government there, could not be entirely ruled out. At the same time, however, many European commentators and politicians (e.g. Czech President Vaclav Klaus and Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi) saw Georgia as the main culprit behind the outbreak of the

On 7 August, a dozen hours prior to the escalation of fighting, President Saakashvili held a telephone conversation with President Kaczyński, briefing him on the tense situation in South Ossetia; see *Rozmowa telefoniczna Prezydenta RP z Prezydentem Gruzji*, release of the Presidential Chancellery, 7 August 2008, www.prezydent.pl.

¹² O. Antonenko, "A War with no Winners," *Survival*, October–November 2008, p. 25.

¹³ For a detailed chronicle of the conflict, see A. Eberhardt, "The 2008 Russia-Georgia War," *The Polish Quarterly of International Affairs*, no. 3, 2008, pp. 52–63.

¹⁴ The Georgian president revised the last point of the agreement to ensure that, instead of dealing with international talks about the "future status" of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, it should contain an obligation to start international talks on "means of ensuring stabilization and security" in both areas. The text in this wording was presented by the French presidency on 14 August, see *Protocole d'accord*, www.ambafrance-us.org/IMG/pdf/accord6points.pdf.

war, and concluded that other European states and organizations (EU, NATO) should not make any firm commitment to back Tbilisi.

There can be no doubt that Polish activities were also adversely affected by different reactions to the crisis coming from the president and the government. After a several-day period of cooperation, an internal dispute over policy conduct became apparent to Poland's foreign partners—even despite the continued consent on fundamentals, such as the condemnation of Russian activities and support for Georgia's territorial integrity. The bulk of Polish society was in favor of backing Georgia diplomatically and at the humanitarian level.¹⁵

President Kaczyński's position was that Poland should offer unconditional and far-reaching support to Georgia, even if that was to entail a drawn-out confrontation with Russia. He saw the Georgia war as a test for Poland, NATO and the European Union, and he believed that the absence of any adequate reaction would encourage Russia to pursue a more aggressive foreign policy, also directed against Ukraine, Poland and other countries in Central and Eastern Europe. This meant a threat to Poland's vital interests (especially its energy security) and to the concept of an Eastern policy "from Azerbaijan to Estonia."¹⁶ Poland should, therefore, organize a group of EU and NATO states sharing this view, and force other states in both organizations into firm action against Russia—even if this meant opposing France and Germany.¹⁷ The concept had its flaws, however: the French presidency sought to play the main diplomatic role in crisis-solving, and the United States (a country which could effectively back Poland in invigorating NATO, for instance) was not interested in aggravating the dispute the Russia.

As for the stance taken by the coalition government of the Civic Platform and the Polish Peasant Party, it could be characterized as focusing on action through collective structures (EU, NATO) and seeking to avoid a decision-making paralysis at both organizations. The government had in mind the previous major international crisis, the Iraq intervention in 2003, when European states split over whether or not to back the United States. As Polish

¹⁵ In a *Rzeczpospolita* daily-commissioned survey by Gfk Polonia, 57% of respondents were in favor and 35% were against when asked if Poland should support Georgia. While more than half of respondents backed diplomatic support and humanitarian aid, only 5% would like troops to be sent in. See *Rzeczpospolita*, 12 August 2008.

¹⁶ "Musimy zmienić Unię," interview with President Lech Kaczyński, *Rzeczpospolita*, 16–17 August 2008.

¹⁷ "Z Rosją trzeba ostro," interview with President Lech Kaczyński, *Newsweek Polska*, no. 34, 2008.

Prime Minister Donald Tusk said on 12 August 2008, “the government is interested in Poland actively contributing to the mainstream of European developments.”¹⁸ The government feared Poland would be isolated in international politics if it presented unrealistic proposals and blocked bi- and multilateral contacts with Russia—and that would deprive the country of any effective influence on EU and NATO decision-making in the future.¹⁹ This attitude, though, meant consent to aligning Poland’s position with that of European heavyweights, which, with the passage of time, increasingly stressed the need to normalize relations with Russia, even as the latter continued its aggressive activities in South Caucasus.

At an early stage of the armed conflict, Polish authorities expressed support for Georgia’s territorial integrity (while not approving of the launch of the Georgian offensive) and focused on mobilizing EU and NATO partners to engage in efforts to stop hostilities. On 8 August, Poland called on both sides to cease fire, with a Foreign Ministry release pointing directly to Russia’s responsibility and finding it unacceptable for “foreign military forces” to violate Georgia’s territorial integrity.²⁰ A release from the Presidential Chancellery read that the president “found any interference in Georgia’s internal affairs unacceptable.”²¹ Lech Kaczyński also contacted his counterparts, Lithuania’s Valdas Adamkus, Latvia’s Valdis Zatlers and Estonia’s Toomas Ilves, to take a joint position. Prime Minister Tusk formally asked President Sarkozy to convene an extraordinary meeting of the European Council, and Minister Sikorski proposed to hold an External Relations Council as soon as possible; he also had talks with the EU High Representative for CFSP, Javier Solana, and the foreign ministers of France (encouraging Bernard Kouchner to speed up mediation), Germany, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Ukraine and Georgia.²²

The Polish government proceeded to arrange the evacuation of Polish citizens from Georgia, using a government airplane which landed in Yerevan,

¹⁸ *Premier: trzeba dążyć do zachowania integralności terytorialnej Gruzji*, release by the Prime Minister’s Chancellery, 12 August 2008, www.kprm.gov.pl.

¹⁹ “Harce nie są dla nas,” interview with Prime Minister Donald Tusk, *Newsweek Polska*, no. 36, 2008.

²⁰ Statement by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the situation in the region of South Ossetia in Georgia, 8 August 2008, www.msz.gov.pl.

²¹ Release by the Presidential Chancellery of 8 August 2008, www.prezydent.pl. Deputy head of the Presidential Chancellery, Piotr Kownacki, also went to Tbilisi to examine the situation on the ground and keep in touch with the Georgian authorities.

²² Statement by Prime Minister Donald Tusk at a press briefing at the Prime Minister’s Chancellery, Warsaw, 12 August 2008, www.kprm.gov.pl/templates/admin/userfiles/files/4444_premier_120808.mp3.

the capital of Armenia. Emergency humanitarian aid was provided and collections began for victims of the conflict. The Presidential Chancellery also made its website available to the Georgian authorities, thus providing major assistance to Georgia's information efforts at a time when its servers were blocked by hacker attacks.

President Kaczyński's initiative to establish cooperation with Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia led to the adoption, on 9 August, of the four presidents' joint declaration on developments in Georgia.²³ The presidents condemned the Russian activities and pledged that they would be "pressing" for their governments to take position in EU and NATO forums against changing the strategic partnership with Russia, including the continuation of visa facilities, and to put such talks on hold. It was stressed that "NATO and the EU should take the initiative and oppose the spread of an imperialist and revanchist policy in the east of Europe," for example, by considering the formation of an international peace force to replace the Russian troops.²⁴ Despite an open character of the declaration, no other state expressed a readiness to support it.

The main responsibility for arranging the ceasefire was assumed by France, which only to a limited degree consulted the details of its mediation effort with other EU member states, including Poland.²⁵ On 10 August, President Kaczyński held a telephone conversation with President Sarkozy, but he failed to obtain the latter's support for the declaration of 9 August. On 10–11 August, French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner and OSCE Chairman-in-Office Alexander Stubb, the foreign minister of Finland, visited Tbilisi and Moscow to prepare a visit by President Sarkozy, who agreed to the ceasefire terms at the Russian capital on 12 August (it should be noted that earlier Georgia had announced a unilateral ceasefire and President Medvedev resolved to end the operation of "forcing Georgia into peace"). The pressure of ongoing events could only partly justify the French president's decision to accept an agreement clearly favoring Russia without consulting other member states first. But blocking the presidency's actions was not an option, and the acceptance of the main terms of the ceasefire by President Saakashvili himself, on 12 August (with a modified point 6), turned out to be decisive. The Georgian president finally signed the

²³ Joint declaration on the situation in Georgia, 9 August 2008, see *O Gruzji w Palacu Prezydenckim*, release by the Presidential Chancellery, 9 August 2008, www.prezydent.pl.

²⁴ *Ibidem*.

²⁵ "Z Rosją trzeba ostro..." *op. cit.*

ceasefire on 15 August, in the presence of U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

President Kaczyński's decision to arrange a visit of heads of state to Tbilisi was communicated to President Sarkozy on 10 August, and the following day it was discussed with President Bush, who backed the initiative. Invited to take part in the mission were the three presidents who had signed the declaration of 9 August (this time Latvia was represented by Prime Minister Ivars Godmanis) plus Ukrainian President Victor Yushchenko. The Polish cabinet maintained the visit had not been properly consulted internally, and Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski joined the delegation only at the last moment. The need to make available the government-owned airplane led to logistic problems with the evacuation of Polish citizens (who were finally flown back from the conflict area aboard a chartered plane rather than a government Tu-154).²⁶ The purpose of the visit was not only to express solidarity with Georgia, but also to declare political support for Georgia's territorial integrity and for the negotiation of a ceasefire that would respect the country's interests. It should be stressed that when the decision about the visit was made, it was not yet clear whether the Russian military operation was discontinued.

For security reasons, and against the Polish president's intentions, the government plane landed not in Georgia but in Azerbaijan, and so it was not until the evening of 12 August that the presidents of Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania and Estonia and the prime minister of Latvia arrived in Tbilisi. Already present in the Georgian capital was President Sarkozy, who was negotiating with Saakashvili for his consent to the terms of the ceasefire. At a rally in front of the Parliament building President Kaczyński strongly condemned Russia's actions and made assurances of solidarity with Georgia and support for the country from the whole region of Central Europe. In his opinion, the EU's support for Georgia resulted not only from a community of values, but also from a particular understanding of the Union's interests: "Today Georgia, tomorrow Ukraine, the day after tomorrow the Baltic states, and then, perhaps, time will come for my country, Poland."²⁷ The president also criticized EU member states' for their failure to provide unequivocal support for Georgia. During the talks held in Tbilisi, he was critical of the agreement negotiated by President Sarkozy for

²⁶ "Polskie przepychanki o gruzińską misję Kaczyńskiego," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 12 August 2008.

²⁷ *Wizyta Prezydenta RP w Gruzji*, release by the Presidential Chancellery, 12 August 2008, and the president's address, www.prezydent.pl.

failing to mention the principle of respect for Georgia's territorial integrity.²⁸ In a declaration issued on 13 August, Presidents Kaczyński, Adamkus and Ilves and Prime Minister Godmanis called for a total withdrawal of Russian troops from Georgia and the deployment of peacekeeping forces under EU leadership. They stressed the need for conferring MAP status on Georgia, and reiterated the absence of the "fundamental element" (Georgia's territorial integrity) in the agreement of 12 August.²⁹

President Kaczyński's initiatives were of symbolic value, but their influence on the course of events was marginal. Confrontational rhetoric was not to the liking of most European states, uninterested as they were in a deterioration of contacts with Russia. The actual weight of the coalition with the Baltic states proved too insignificant to influence EU and NATO activities, while the remaining countries critical of Russian moves (e.g. the UK, Sweden) did not seek cooperation with Poland on the matter. As for the Polish government, it focused on seeking a common position with other EU and NATO member states, but did not succeed in bringing about an extraordinary session of the European Council.³⁰

Polish Activities after the Ceasefire

Following the cessation of hostilities in Georgia on 12 August, two issues assumed overarching importance: Russia's observance of the terms of the ceasefire, and the working out of a manner in which the European Union and NATO should define their relations with Russia and Georgia in the future.³¹ Poland's position in its diplomatic endeavours was no doubt strengthened by the conviction of its many partners that Georgian developments had confirmed the diagnoses about Russian policy previously drawn up in Central Europe. Russia's performance after 12 August, such as its foot-dragging on the pullout from parts of Georgia, condoning violence towards Georgian nationals by South Ossetian

²⁸ W. Jagielski, "Lech Kaczyński krytykuje plan Sarkozy'ego," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 14–15 August 2008.

²⁹ *Oświadczenie Prezydentów Estonii, Litwy, Polski i Premiera Łotwy dotyczące dalszych działań na rzecz rozwiązania konfliktu w Gruzji*, Warsaw, 13 August 2008, www.prezydent.pl.

³⁰ For criticism of the effectiveness of Polish diplomatic efforts, see B. Węglarczyk, "Nie słyhać nas w Europie," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 13 August 2008; "Zamiast do Tbilisi trzeba było jechać do Paryża" (interview with P. Zalewski), *Rzeczpospolita*, 20 August 2008.

³¹ For an analysis of EU and NATO reactions, see a PISM report on the consequences of the conflict: Ł. Kulesa (ed.), "Business as Usual? Consequences of the Russian-Georgian Conflict," *PISM Research Papers*, no. 11, 2009.

militias in Russia-controlled areas or recognizing South Ossetia and Abkhazia's independence on 28 August 2008, fuelled a more critical appraisal on the part of France and Germany. In particular, it was the recognition of South Ossetian and Abkhazian independence that provoked condemnation by EU member states, including Poland.³² At the same time, however, no support was found within the EU or NATO for the farthest reaching proposals for confronting Russia.

European Union. The extraordinary session of the European Council, which Poland had been pressing for since the beginning of the conflict, only took place in Brussels on 1 September 2008. On 28 August, the Polish president held talks in Tallinn with his Estonian and Latvian counterparts and a Lithuanian president's envoy to hammer out a common position on proposals to modify EU-Russia relations, e.g. by changing the visa regime and suspending negotiations on a new cooperation agreement (PCA-2).³³ Poland declared that it would not press for sanctions against Russia, but would focus on EU assistance to Georgia, reaching an EU decision to send a stabilization mission, and taking steps towards reaching an association agreement with Georgia and liberalizing the visa regime with that country.³⁴

The government delegation and the president, attending the European Council meeting, described its outcome as Poland's success.³⁵ Decisions were adopted on granting humanitarian and development aid to Georgia and postponing talks on a new partnership and cooperation accord with Russia until the country met the terms of the ceasefire agreement.³⁶ The document also mentioned energy security and the importance of relations with Ukraine, which the Polish authorities played up as confirmation of EU acceptance of Polish proposals.³⁷ Firm support extended to the Polish-Swedish Eastern Partnership

³² See *Oświadczenie MSZ w związku z uznaniem przez Federację Rosyjską niepodległości Osetii Południowej i Abchazji*, 26 August 2008, www.msz.gov.pl; *Oświadczenie Prezydenta RP*, 26 August 2008 – www.prezydent.pl.

³³ P. Wroński, "Z czym do Rosji?," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 29 August 2008.

³⁴ A. Gielewska, D. Kołakowska, "Polska ostrożniejsza," *Rzeczpospolita*, 30–31 August 2008.

³⁵ D. Pszczółkowska, "Unia zjednoczona, Rosja potępiona," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 2 September 2008; also see experts' divergent views: R. Trzaskowski, P. Żurawski vel Grajewski, "Na miarę możliwości – daleko poniżej potrzeb," *Komentarze Natolińskie*, no. 2008.

³⁶ *Presidency Conclusions*, Extraordinary European Council, Brussels, 1 September 2008, document 12594/2/08. At an international conference on aid to Georgia held on 22 October 2008, Poland declared providing €5 million in the period to 2010.

³⁷ A. Słojewska, "Europa daje czas Rosji," *Rzeczpospolita*, 2 September 2008.

initiative played a vital role,³⁸ and preparations began for the deployment of a monitoring mission to the region, and with Poland declaring its readiness to participate and send a contingent.³⁹

Thanks to the ambiguous wording of the ceasefire agreement of 12 August, Russia was able to delay troop withdrawals to pre-conflict positions. This necessitated an additional agreement, which was signed in Moscow on 8 September, during a visit by Mr. Sarkozy and European Commission President José Manuel Barroso. Deadlines for Russian troops to pull out from the buffer zones and for the deployment of EU monitors were then agreed.

Following their withdrawal from most positions by early November, Russian troops remained in control of some areas captured after 7 August (e.g. Akhalkgori region, Kodori Gorge) and proceeded to build military bases in South Ossetia and Abkhazia. That presented a dilemma for the EU member states, including Poland: should they link further development of relations with Russia (and especially the resumption of PAC-2 talks) to the full observance of agreements, or perhaps go on with the negotiations despite failure to meet the terms of the ceasefire.⁴⁰ The latter view was held by most EU member states, which saw continued relations with Russia as a matter of utmost importance. The Polish government initially was in favor of blocking negotiations, as were the United Kingdom, Sweden and Lithuania, and this position was also embraced by President Kaczyński. It should be noted, however, that individual states' opposition to a continuation of negotiations had no legal effect, given that the talks had not been formally suspended.

After the United Kingdom and Sweden had changed their minds, Poland chose not to oppose a continuation of negotiations with Russia, as agreed at the General and External Affairs Council on 19 November.⁴¹ Only Lithuania was against, but its objections had no legal force.⁴² Poland "stayed in the EU

³⁸ See B. Wojna, M. Gniazdowski (eds.), *Eastern Partnership: the Opening Report*, Warszawa, May 2009 r.

³⁹ Poland proposed to send 30 monitors, see "Unia wysyła policję na Kaukaz," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 16 September 2008.

⁴⁰ A. Kreczmańska, M. Terlikowski, "Consequences of the Conflict from EU Perspective," in: Ł. Kulesa (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 18.

⁴¹ A. Lobjakas, *EU Appears Ready To Return To Talks with Russia, If Not To 'Business As Usual,'* Radio Free Europe, 1 November 2008, www.rferl.org/content/EU_Appears_Ready_To_Return_To_Talks_With_Russia_If_Not_To_Business_As_Usual/1337214.html.

⁴² *EU Overrides Lithuania over Russia Talks*, 11 November 2008, www.euractiv.com/en/enlargement/eu-overrules-lithuania-russia-talks/article-177071.

mainstream, agreeing that a return to the negotiating table was needed.”⁴³ The next crisis in EU-Russia relations in 2008 was not caused by Georgia, but came as a result of the discontinuation of Russian natural gas supplies via Ukraine.

NATO. The North Atlantic Alliance’s reaction to the outbreak of hostilities in Georgia was a cautious one, despite the condemnation of Russia’s use of force by the North Atlantic Council on 12 August. Prior to the Council’s meeting at the foreign minister level scheduled for 19 August, President Kaczyński, in a joint declaration with the Lithuanian president, asked NATO leaders to “instruct their foreign ministers to consider awarding MAP to Georgia and Ukraine as soon as possible.”⁴⁴ That did not happen. The Alliance opted to form a NATO-Georgia Commission as a way of demonstrating the continued commitment to Georgia membership as agreed in Bucharest, and to change the mode in which e.g., contacts with Russia within the NATO-Russia Council were to be conducted (“we cannot continue with business as usual”).⁴⁵ Seeking to highlight its support for the operation of the NATO-Georgia Commission, Poland made available its government plane to NATO member states’ permanent representatives in Brussels to enable them to attend the Commission’s inaugural meeting in Tbilisi on 15 September.

An assessment of the two candidate countries’ progress in meeting the Alliance’s standards was to be made at a meeting of NATO foreign ministers on 2–3 December 2008, but—with Ukraine riven by a political crisis and given the situation in Georgia—Poland’s request for the two to be granted MAP status stood very poor chances indeed.⁴⁶ There were some reports about a U.S. initiative, backed by Poland, to admit both countries to NATO while bypassing the MAP stage, but the agreement reached in the course of the North Atlantic Council’s meeting was confined to practical ways of backing Georgia.⁴⁷ It seems that the proponents of NATO Eastern enlargement, Poland among them, have reconciled

⁴³ D. Pszczółkowska, “Unia Europejska: rozmawiamy z Rosją,” *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 12 November 2008.

⁴⁴ Kaczyński i Adamkus do NATO: pilnie zajmijmy się Gruzją, 18 August 2008, http://wiadomosci.gazeta.pl/Wiadomosci/1,80708,5601780,Kaczynski_i_Adamkus_do_NATO_Pilnie_zajmijmy_sie_Gruzja.html.

⁴⁵ *Meeting of the North Atlantic Council at the Level of Foreign Ministers Held at NATO Headquarters, Brussels, on 19 August 2008*, NATO Press Release, 19 August 2008.

⁴⁶ See Ł. Kulesa, M. Madej, “Spotkanie ministrów spraw zagranicznych NATO w Brukseli,” *Biuletyn PISM*, 4 December 2008.

⁴⁷ J. Dempsey, “U.S. Presses NATO on Georgia and Ukraine,” *New York Times*, 26 November 2008.

themselves to the prospect of relegating the subject to the back burner, focusing on other issues, such as the credibility of Article V guarantees, the distribution of Afghanistan operational burdens or the opening of a discussion on the Alliance's future in connection with a new strategic concept. At the same meeting, the resumption of informal contacts within the NATO-Russia Council was agreed.

President Kaczyński's visit to Georgia. Participation in Georgia's national holiday celebrations on 23 November 2008, was to be an expression of President Kaczyński's solidarity and support for that country and for President Saakashvili. Both presidents, instead of visiting a refugee camp near the ceasefire line, travelled to the Akhalkalaki area occupied by Russian troops in violation of the August 2008 agreement.⁴⁸ Shots were fired in their direction near an outpost controlled by either Russian or South Ossetian forces. No one was hurt and the circumstances of the incident remain unclear, but—irrespective of demonstrating clearly Russia's unwillingness to honor the ceasefire terms—it provoked a discussion in Poland about the Georgian president's motives in changing the visit's schedule at the last moment and exposing the Polish president to direct threats, and also about the extent to which Polish and Georgian interests were convergent.⁴⁹ International reactions were cautious, too. On 26 November, the Polish president sent a letter to the European Commission president; citing his experiences, he called on the EU to be more active and press Russia to fully meet its Georgia commitments.⁵⁰

Assessment

The Georgia-Russia conflict of 2008 posed a major challenge for Polish foreign policy, especially in view of different policy approaches by President Kaczyński and the government of Civic Platform and the Polish Peasant Party. That could be seen, for example, in scant government support for presidential initiatives during the Georgia-Russia war, and in the president's taking a more radical line than the government with respect to the Polish position in the European Union and NATO. Although a minimum of coordination and

⁴⁸ A detailed account of the incident is provided in the memo prepared by staff members of the Prime Minister's Chancellery: *Informacja dla Prezesa Rady Ministrów nt. incydentu podczas wizyty Prezydenta RP w Gruzji 23 listopada 2008*, 26 November 2008, www.pliki.kprm.gov.pl/informacja_dla_prm_gruzja_26112008.pdf.

⁴⁹ See J. M. Nowakowski, "Lech Kaczyński – Prometeusz XXI wieku," *Newsweek Polska*, no. 49, 2008), p. 32.

⁵⁰ *List Prezydenta RP do Przewodniczącego Komisji Europejskiej*, 26 November 2008, www.prezydent.pl.

collaboration on Georgia was maintained (as reflected in the joint presence of the president and the prime minister at the European Council of 1 September 2008), disagreement on fundamental issues—measures to be taken during the conflict, post-conflict relations with Russia and Georgia—had the effect of weakening Poland's position.

Close relations with Georgia prior to the outbreak of the war strengthened the Polish hand (by an in-depth knowledge of the situation on the ground and direct contact with President Saakashvili), while at the same time imposed certain constraints. Poland was treated as a country whose interest was to unequivocally back the Georgian authorities. Also, Poland was positioned as a proponent of confrontation with Russia, as confirmed by some passages in the four president's declaration of 9 August, and President Kaczyński's pronouncements during his visit to Tbilisi. Given that most member states of the EU and NATO were interested in bringing the war to a speedy end through mediation, and then in stabilizing the situation in Georgia, attempts to enforce a firmer position and initiatives that could result in antagonizing Russia were doomed to failure.

It seems that the government succeeded in identifying correctly the international environment in which Polish diplomacy had to operate. Poland's position was too weak to influence the course of events single-handedly, and the room for forming a firmly pro-Georgia coalition was narrow—with neither the United States nor any major European state ready to engage in activities that could durably and perceptibly undermine their relations with Russia. The Polish government itself also espoused the position that Poland, while pursuing its interests, must not stand out as an EU member state which had the worse relations with Russia.⁵¹ The NATO and EU reaction, to which Poland had made its contribution, met the most important of Warsaw's expectations: Russian activities were unequivocally condemned and support for Georgia was declared. For Poland's partners it was important that—despite a stereotyped image of being anti-Russian—Poland did not press for excessive confrontational measures. The assessment is more problematic when it comes to Poland's attitude to the normalization of EU and NATO contacts with Russia. A decision taken towards the end of 2008 was tantamount to both organizations' restoring the pre-August 2008 relations, even though Russia had not only failed to meet the terms of the ceasefire, but actually supported the "statehood" of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, e.g., by entering into border protection agreements and strengthening its military presence. It seems that Poland could have endeavoured, within both

⁵¹ "Harce nie są dla nas...", *op. cit.*, p. 24.

organizations, to preserve a joint position by a group of countries (including Western European members, such as the United Kingdom) that would explicitly link successive stages of normalization of relations with Russia's progress in meeting the terms of the agreement reached with the French presidency.

The most visible success of Polish diplomacy in the period immediately after the Georgia-Russia war was the effective promotion of Poland's own political initiatives among its partners. This is true, in particular, turning the Eastern Partnership concept into practice and intensifying intra-NATO discussion about the credibility of the collective defense obligation (Article V of the Washington Treaty). Although the conclusion of the agreement with the United States on 20 August 2008 on fielding elements of the missile defence system was not directly linked to the outbreak of the Georgia conflict, the coincidence was favorable for the Polish foreign policy (in addition to influencing a change in the Polish public's sentiments). Positive marks should also be given to the idea of the so-called Sikorski doctrine, formulated in the aftermath of the Georgia conflict, which stipulated that the transatlantic community should develop joint reactions to attempts at border revisions in Europe).⁵²

Poland failed to use the "Georgia shock" to forge closer relations with Ukraine, the prime reason being a permanent political crisis in Kiev.⁵³ Another impact of the Georgia conflict was on Polish energy policy, although here an added influence was exerted by the Russia-Ukraine gas conflict of late 2008 and early 2009. The greatest attention in this area was devoted not to diversification projects with Georgia's participation, but to contracting LNG supplies and building facilities for their reception, and also to nuclear energy projects.

From the Polish perspective, the most damaging long-term consequence of the Georgian decision to launch the military operation in South Ossetia was the blockade of the NATO integration process not only for Georgia, but also for Ukraine. The usefulness of the Alliance's "open door" policy for Poland's security and Eastern policy was called into question even prior to August 2008 (the absence of the Alliance's consent to award MAP status to Ukraine and Georgia at the Bucharest meeting), but it was the Georgia conflict that has rendered highly questionable a repeat of the "Central European" scenario of integration with Western structures (first membership in NATO and then in the

⁵² *The Barack Obama Promise: A European View*, address by Minister Radosław Sikorski at the Atlantic Council, Washington, 19 November 2008, www.msz.gov.pl/index.php?document=23140.

⁵³ On the Georgia conflict's impact on Polish-Russian relations, see Bartosz Cichocki's article in this Yearbook.

EU). Consequently, Poland has focused rather on enhancing the European Union's engagement in Eastern Europe, not on further promotion of NATO's enlargement.

The circumstances of the outbreak of the August 2008 war are not without importance for the future of Polish-Georgian relations. The credibility of Georgia under President Saakashvili has dwindled among European states, including Poland. The new Polish initiatives aimed at Eastern Europe's integration with European and transatlantic structures have no longer been confined to that single country. Instead, these were either comprehensive and "positivist" approaches to the region (Eastern Partnership), or attempts to tap the emerging opportunities to improve contacts with individual states, for instance by undertaking a diplomatic initiative towards Belarus.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ See Minister Radosław Sikorski's statement during parliamentary debate on Polish foreign policy in 2009, *Informacja ministra spraw zagranicznych o zadaniach polskiej polityki zagranicznej w 2009 r., Sprawozdanie stenograficzne z 35. posiedzenia Sejmu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w dniu 13 lutego 2009 r.*, Warszawa, 2009, p. 305.

A Long Way to a Missile Defense Shield

Introduction

One of the toughest challenges for Polish diplomacy in 2008 was to negotiate an agreement—with provisions best serving Polish interests—on hosting in Poland a U.S. base with elements of the missile defense (MD) system. The high importance of the matter stemmed not only from the political context of the strategic Polish-U.S. partnership, which successive Polish governments had steadily—and by a variety of methods—been seeking to deepen, but also from the prospects it would offer for launching and intensifying bilateral cooperation in many fields. Even though neither party was ready for concessions (with talks deadlocked for several months between autumn 2007 and mid-2008), two documents signed on 20 August 2008—an agreement and a strategic declaration—demonstrate that both Poland and the United States managed to attain their goals. For the outgoing Bush administration, securing the consent of yet another ally to participate in the global missile defense programme—a Republican priority—was undoubtedly a success, especially in view of problems in other areas, such as Afghanistan's, and growing destabilization, stagnation in the Middle East peace process. And as far as Poland is concerned, the outcome of the negotiations deserves positive marks, too. The two documents contain a host of obligations, both political and technical (especially regarding the Polish armed forces' modernization and cooperation in science and technology), which by far transcend of the context of interceptor-base construction vigorously sought by two Polish cabinets, with one starting the negotiations and another concluding them.

Much seems to suggest, however, that an effective implementation of the agreements will prove a much taller order than just negotiating them. In the years to come, the future of MD's European component will be contingent on decisions of the new administration, which in turn will be influenced by a number of factors. The question of whether to build missile defense

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installations in Poland¹ will soon become part of a broader debate on international security, to be dominated by issues such as the financial crisis, the future of the disarmament process, NATO's reforms, Afghanistan operation, the West's relations with the Russian Federation and the need to seek cooperation in solving these problems with European partners as well as Russia. If the Obama administration finds that the U.S. indeed needs a European component of the missile defense system, it will face a tough choice: to go on with a project that is contested by some NATO allies and chastised by Moscow, or to slow down or abandon it, thus removing a weighty contentious issue and improving dialogue with partners of importance for other U.S. interests.

Benefits

The negotiations on siting in Poland a base with ground-based interceptors (GBI) were expected to strengthen Poland's status as the United States' closest political and military ally in Central and Eastern Europe (largely by getting additional U.S. guarantees with respect to threats to Polish security,² complementing those available under Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty) and intensify cooperation with the United States in several areas of interest to Poland, including the arms industry, missile defense and assistance in modernizing the Polish armed forces.³ Poland also demanded that a battery of Patriot missiles be permanently deployed on its territory. This demand, presented by the Tusk government as a *sine qua non* for acceptance of the U.S. offer, reflected a belief that having a U.S. installation in Poland would beget certain threats (especially in the context of Russian announcements of deploying Iskander tactical missiles at Kaliningrad) that could not be handled without an effective system of air and missile defense.⁴

¹ And also in the Czech Republic, which in July 2008 concluded its negotiations with the U.S. and signed an agreement on the deployment of an X-band radar.

² For more on the subject, see B. Górka-Winter, "Poland's Policy Regarding the United States," *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy 2008*, p. 79. Also see a statement by A. Szczygło, defense minister in the Jarosław Kaczyński cabinet, made during a Sejm debate in: *Informacja rządu na temat umieszczenia w Redzikowie elementów amerykańskiego systemu obrony przeciwrakietowej* (printed material 1297), 6th Sejm, 28th sitting, 3rd day, <http://orka2.sejm.gov.pl/Debata6.nsf>.

³ As far as the last issue is concerned, the talks were held within the Strategic Cooperation Consultative Group and the main aim was to assess the Polish armed forces' modernization needs, with account taken of the threats to Polish security and the extent to which the U.S. could provide such assistance.

⁴ This view provoked a heated dispute between the cabinet and the president. Lech Kaczyński feared that Donald Tusk's too rigid position on the Patriot battery might provoke the U.S. to drop its offer. See President Lech Kaczyński's interview for *Newsweek Polska*, 18 August 2008, www.prezydent.pl/x.node?id=19043117.

Presented with such a wide range of expectations, the United States had many reservations for quite a long time, reflecting a diametrically different approach to negotiations. First, the U.S. was wary of the idea of concluding a formalized deal with additional obligations other than those that all allies assume upon entering NATO. Second, the G. W. Bush administration pointed out that missile defense elements that may be located in Poland and the Czech Republic will serve in the future defense of most NATO member states (with only a few exceptions), thus constituting an important and sufficient U.S. contribution in that field. And third, the U.S. was hoping to succeed in softening Russia's objections, so as to make the Polish misgivings ungrounded.

These arguments were rejected by Poland. Following the takeover of power by a coalition government of the Civic Platform (PO) and the Polish Peasant Party (PSL), four rounds of negotiations were held in addition to the first four rounds conducted under the Jarosław Kaczyński cabinet. In the seventh round, the proposed tenor of the agreements still fell short of Polish expectations: on 4 July 2008, Prime Minister Tusk said in a statement that without additional safeguards the installation of the missile shield would not increase Polish security. He was most likely referring to the U.S. proposal for the Patriot battery to be deployed in Poland on a temporary basis rather than permanently, as requested by Poland.⁵ At the same time, he said that the negotiations were not closed and that Poland was waiting for a new offer.

It was only after the eighth round of negotiations that a breakthrough emerged. The wording of the two documents—the Declaration on Strategic Cooperation between the United States of America and the Republic of Poland and the Agreement Concerning the Deployment of Ground-based Ballistic Missile Defense Interceptors in the Territory of the Republic of Poland—was finally agreed on 14 August. On 20 August 2008, Minister of Foreign Affairs Radosław Sikorski and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice announced the adoption of the Declaration and signed the Agreement.⁶ There can be no doubt that the U.S. position was softened and a compromise made possible (especially on Patriot deployment in Poland⁷), by the Russo-Georgian conflict, unfurling from 8 August. The Russian Federation's offensive actions in Georgia made it possible for Poland

⁵ Full text of the statement at www.kprm.gov.pl/s.php?id=2330.

⁶ The package of deals connected with the deployment of an MD base in Poland is going to include a SOFA supplement and a framework agreement on scientific, technological, industrial and economic cooperation in the field of missile defense. Negotiations on these two agreements were not completed in 2008.

⁷ One Patriot battery is expected to be deployed temporarily in Poland starting from 2009; from 2012 this is going to be a permanent deployment, together with a U.S. garrison to service the battery.

to demonstrate the importance of establishing cooperation with the United States on air space protection, strengthening the country's negotiating position with regard to battery deployment in Poland. Another important circumstance was that for the G. W. Bush administration, in its last months, an agreement concluded with Poland helped weaken—even if only so much—the impression that the outgoing administration was incapable of effective action to improve national security (such impression was fuelled primarily by the generally critical tone in which the effects of G. W. Bush's foreign policy were assessed).

An analysis of the two documents concluded by Poland and the United States shows them to incorporate most of Poland's weightiest demands formulated during the negotiations, including those put forward in early rounds by the Kaczyński government. That cabinet sought the declaration to include provisions that would provide a basis for a tightening of both countries' relations in the sphere of security (actually allowing the emergence of a bilateral Polish-U.S. alliance).⁸ In fact, both documents transcend the bounds of missile defense cooperation. The Strategic Declaration (even if it is a political document, not binding legally) announces a very wide scope of collaboration aimed at increasing the security of Poland, the United States and the whole North Atlantic area. It provides for joint actions to ward off military and non-military threats that might come from third parties. Importantly, the U.S. committed itself to the security of Poland and all U.S. facilities on Polish territory. The declaration announces a deepening of cooperation in three areas of importance for Poland: political and military cooperation, exchange of information (also about threats that might emerge in response to the deployment of interceptor missiles in Poland), and also research, technology and collaboration between the arms industries.

Regarding technology cooperation, which Poland had sought forcefully, both parties undertook to identify projects that could be pursued jointly (e.g., investment projects in security- and defense-related industrial technology, research and development for defense technology). In particular, it was announced that a framework agreement on missile defense would be concluded, specifying the room for joint research and industrial cooperation in project implementation. A regular forum for discussion on political and military subjects is to be provided by a Strategic Cooperation Consultative Group⁹ comprising senior representatives of Poland's Foreign and Defense Ministries and U.S. State and Defense Departments, or by lower-level working groups.

⁸ For the texts of both documents see www.msz.gov.pl/index.php?document=25914&subpage=8.

⁹ The modernization needs of the Polish armed forces were already assessed on that forum.

The other document, an agreement concerning the deployment of ground-based ballistic missile defense interceptors on the territory of the Republic of Poland, is by its very nature mostly technical. It specifies the character, manner and terms of use of missile interceptors to be deployed at Ślupsk-Redzikowo. Questions related to base ownership, protection and financing and both parties' rights and obligations are regulated. Under the document, the United States undertakes to protect and defend Poland against a ballistic missile attack and provide information about potential missile movements to be tracked by the system. In the longer term, problems may arise with respect to those provisions of the agreement that fail to specify unambiguously the liability for hypothetical losses incurred upon the launch of an interceptor missile. The United States will "take legal responsibility for damage or loss resulting from the operation of elements of the United States ballistic missile defense system deployed on the Base if the United States determines, given the circumstances, that it should bear responsibility for such damage or loss and it will settle claims for such damage or loss in accordance with U.S. law"¹⁰ (Article XIV). Other than that, the United States only agreed to "give sympathetic consideration to a request from the Republic of Poland for reimbursement of a final judgment from a claim based on damage or loss attributable to the operation of ground-based ballistic missile defense interceptors deployed in the territory of Poland."¹¹

The position taken by the Tusk government, emphasizing that Poland's security should be taken into account in the context of the negotiated documents, was embraced by the Polish public. As early as February 2008, half of those questioned declared themselves in favor of building the missile defense shield in Poland "if the United States contributes perceptibly to increasing Poland's security" (with another 4% declaring unconditional support). In successive surveys, (e.g. taken in August), most respondents (56%) were against hosting a U.S. base in Poland, but after the signing of the agreements, in the period between August and October 2008, the proportion of the opponents dropped by 10 percentage points, to 46%. Support for the shield then ran at 41%. Towards the end of 2008, the pattern was 39% in favor and 47% against.¹²

¹⁰ See www.msz.gov.pl/Agreement,regarding,the,placement,in,Poland,of,anti-ballistic,defensive,missile,interceptors,20825.htm.

¹¹ In the opinion of some senior U.S. officers, the United States should also have the capability to protect its territory against cruise missiles—and such protection could be offered by multiple warhead missiles. See e.g. a statement by General Victor Renuart Jr., Commander, North American Aerospace Defense Command, www.aviationweek.com.

¹² See CBOS survey reports BS/31/2008 of February 2008, BS/153/2008 of October 2008 and BS/188/2008 of December 2008, at www.cbos.pl/PL/publikacje/raporty_2008.php.

New U.S. Administration's Position on the European Component of the Missile Defense System

The conclusion of agreements with Poland¹³ did not end an internal U.S. debate about the advisability of creating MD's European component. The subject was taken up by both contestants in the presidential campaign. None questioned the need for a strategic missile defense system, although it was only the Republican candidate, Senator John McCain, who clearly confirmed his support for building MD capabilities in Poland and the Czech Republic.¹⁴

A much more cautious stance was adopted by the ultimate winner, Barack Obama. Significantly, the MD project did not make it at all to the list of his top priorities, in clear contrast to the approach of the previous administration. Mr. Obama said his position towards the missile defense programme would be pragmatic, based on cost analysis, technological capabilities and potential political consequences (e.g., checking if the system is not directed against Russia; the Democratic candidate also emphasized his intention to hold direct talks with the government of Iran on the country's nuclear programme¹⁵). It is thus reasonable to expect that skeptical opinions about the missile shield (as such, or about its individual components), as expressed by many American experts,¹⁶ will be given more attention by the new administration. It should also be noted that advocates and opponents of the programme are found among both Democrats and Republicans, which, however, does not translate into automatic backing for the construction of new bases in Europe. The biggest cuts in the 2009 MD budget (by some 34%¹⁷) were precisely in the European component. And that budget was designed so as to enable an easy blocking of funding for new bases in Europe. For the project to be financed, the agreements on the interceptor base in Poland and the radar base in the Czech Republic need to be signed and ratified together with the SOFA supplements, and a report with an

¹³ In July and August 2008, media reports suggested that the U.S. was prepared to approach Lithuania with a GBI offer should Poland prolong the negotiations or reject the offer. See e.g.: www.usatoday.com/news/washington/2008-07-01-lithuania-defense_N.htm.

¹⁴ See www.reuters.com/article/politicsNews/idU.S.N0937822020080709.

¹⁵ President-elect Barack Obama also steered clear of unequivocal declarations in his first telephone conversation with President Lech Kaczyński, on 7 November 2008.

¹⁶ For example, in *2009 National Security and Nonproliferation Briefing Book*, brought out by Proliferation Security Initiative, suggestions appeared to the effect that the European component poses a threat not only to U.S.-Russian relations but also to Russia's security. Also see S. Pifer's opinion, proposing e.g. to slow down the construction of the European component and engage Russia in the solving of the Iran problem in: *A New Approach to Missile Defense in Europe*, Brookings Institution, 2 July 2008.

¹⁷ See <http://appropriations.senate.gov>.

independent evaluation of the European programme for 2008 should be submitted to defense and budget committees at both houses of U.S. Congress. Additionally, the secretary of state should testify that the interceptors to be employed at the Redzikowo base will be capable of delivering in operational conditions. This means that the “fly before you buy” rule—suspended by the Bush administration with respect to the MD system—is back, at least in the context of one of its elements. Meeting all three conditions may prove extremely difficult. As of the end of 2008 the ratification process did not start in Poland, and in the Czech Republic the agreement was ratified only by the upper house of Parliament (27 November 2008). A major obstacle in launching base construction (even with the ratification process completed) may prove to be posed by technical imperfections in the missile defense system. Tests of two-stage missiles to be sited in Poland (in contrast to three-stage missiles that are to be deployed in bases in Alaska and California) have yet to begin.

But the removal of technological impediments will not necessarily suffice to produce a decision on the continuation of the “European project,” which no doubt will be a subject of political bargaining. The new administration’s priorities will be the stabilization of Afghanistan and Pakistan and a disarmament deal with Russia. An important challenge will also be to improve the U.S. image among NATO allies, many of whom (e.g. France, Italy) do not conceal their aversion to the European component, citing the damage that it may cause to relations with Russia. All these factors may surely influence a decision for agreement implementation to be temporarily suspended or at least considerably slowed. Even if the slowdown is impacted by technology problems (insufficient number of successful tests), the Obama administration may seek to capitalize on the decision, portraying it (probably in an indirect manner) as motivated by a desire to improve relations with some partners. This scenario is not unlikely, bearing in mind that an abandonment of the European component would hardly deal any major blow to the missile defense programme as a whole. The U.S. may well opt to finance other projects that not only provoke fewer political reservations, but are also more effective in operational conditions (e.g., the sea-based Aegis system). Nor can one rule out that abandonment of a third base will be advocated by the corporations involved in project implementation. With the European component steeped in controversy (translating into greater uncertainty about future profits from the investment), these corporations may opt for arrangements that carry a lower risk of failure.

Russia First?

Russia invariably remains the staunchest opponent of the U.S.-built missile defense system and particularly of its European component—a position it signaled

even before the official launch of Polish-U.S. negotiations. Back in 2001 the Bush administration's pullout from the ABM Treaty was viewed by Russia as violating the strategic balance between the two powers. The Russian government has repeatedly rejected U.S. arguments in favor of the European component (Iran threat) and it finds potential bases a threat to Russia's security. Although technically the 10 ground-based interceptors (GBI) that might be deployed at a base in the Polish territory cannot neutralize the Russian nuclear potential,¹⁸ the very prospect of creating a base (together with an accompanying radar station in the Czech Republic) is regarded by Russia as a major step in this direction. It has been pointed out that in the future the facility may be expanded and that missiles of different parameters (than those currently planned) may be deployed.

Hence even before the beginning of U.S.-Polish negotiations, Russian government representatives took many initiatives aimed to block the talks and then the implementation of the agreement once it was signed in August 2008. On the one hand, Russian declarations left no doubt that the deployment of elements of the missile defense system in Europe would provoke its firm reaction, including military steps. Mention was made of a possible deployment of Iskander missiles close to the Polish border—in Kaliningrad district¹⁹ and Belarus²⁰—targeting the base in Poland. Besides, Russia was then threatening to withdraw from the 1987 Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-range- and Shorter-range Missiles.²¹ On the other hand, the Russian authorities sought to create the impression that they were ready to cooperate with the United States if only negotiations with Poland

¹⁸ There is no shortage of opinions that the missiles deployed in Poland would be capable of intercepting intercontinental missiles shot from Russia. See, e.g., the computations by T. Postol, professor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, published in response to a presentation by the U.S. Missile Defense Agency, <http://cstsp.aaas.org/files/BriefOnEastEuropeMissileDefense.PDF>.

¹⁹ In his message to the Federal Assembly of 5 November 2008, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev said that the disbandment of the 28th Missile Division stationed in Kozelsk (60 six-warhead SS-19 missiles) would be suspended and that the Iskander tactical/operational missile systems would be deployed in Kaliningrad (to replace the 120km-range Tochka-U missiles, kept by the 152nd Missile Division in Chernyakhovsk) along with radio- and electronic-warfare means, with a view to neutralizing MD elements in Central Europe. See www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2008/11/05/2144_type70029type82917type127286_208836.shtm. Also see interview with President Vladimir Putin of 14 February 2008, www.kremlin.ru/eng/text/speeches/2008/02/14/1011_type82915_160266.shtml.

²⁰ Russia's negative position on MD is also backed by the Belarus government. Although President Lukashenko previously declared having no military plans in connection with the bases in Poland and the Czech Republic, in November 2008 he announced an intention for Iskander missiles to be accepted or purchased from Russia (given the condition of the country's finances, the latter option is unlikely). See President Lukashenko's interview with *The Wall Street Journal* of 14 November 2008, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB122662176384426603.html>.

²¹ One form of reaction to the start of Polish-U.S. negotiations on the missile shield was Russia's suspension of CFE Treaty implementation (formally in December 2007).

and the Czech Republic were suspended. Back in 2007 Russia offered to the U.S. that a radar station in Gabala (Azerbaijan) could be included into the project in exchange for abandoning base construction in Poland and the Czech Republic.

The credibility of Russia's declarations about openness to cooperation with the U.S. is undermined, however, by its previous rejections of virtually all MD proposals addressed to Russia. U.S.-Russian talks on the American missile defense project started as early as March–April 2006 (when Russia was notified about Polish-U.S. consultations), and they continued on a regular basis in 2007 and 2008, whether at the top level (in the 2+2 formula, involving meetings by ministers in charge of defense and foreign affairs), among technical experts (from spring 2007),²² or at sessions of the Russia-NATO Council. During the talks, the Bush administration was steadfast in rejecting the option of suspending negotiations with Poland and the Czech Republic, offering Russia a series of confidence- and security-building measures in the missile defense sphere. The U.S.-Russian consultations even led to the signing of a bilateral framework agreement in Sochi on 6 April 2008.²³ It created the possibility of establishing a global system in which both partners would participate on an equal footing. While the absence of Russian approval for the bases in Poland and the Czech Republic was emphasized in the agreement, the document noted that confidence- and security-building measures, if adopted and introduced, would mitigate Russia's objections. Nor were Russian misgivings dispelled by decisions of session of the North Atlantic Council in Bucharest (2–4 April 2008), including its declaration, which stressed that the future system to be formed by the Alliance should integrate the systems of NATO, the U.S. and Russia. Instead, the Russian Foreign Ministry said the country would have to re-examine the advisability of further participation in the project if the U.S.-built strategic missile defense system were to be merged with the programme carried out within the framework of the Russia-NATO Council.²⁴ And yet another U.S. proposal was ignored—to make Europe-based installations operational only once the Iran threat is confirmed.

Poland joined consultations with Russia in 2008. Both parties presented their respective positions on MD and confidence- and security-building measures (base inspection, monitoring, etc.) during a visit to Poland by Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Kislyak (these talks were continued at an undersecretary

²² See *Missile Defense Program Overview*, March 2007, www.marshall.org/pdf/materials/495.pdf.

²³ For texts of the agreements see <http://moscow.usembassy.gov/sochi-factsheet-040608.html>.

²⁴ See *Missile Defense Update*, 2008, no. 3, www.cdi.org.

of state level) and during a subsequent visit to Warsaw, in September, by Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov.²⁵ The biggest controversy was aroused by arrangements for base inspection by Russian representatives. Russia demanded a permanent presence at the base for its observers, which the Polish government opposed, and Russia did not agree to visits by Polish monitors in selected military bases in the Kaliningrad district.

The rejection of such far-reaching cooperation proposals reveals the purely political nature of Russian objections and shows that what the Russian government values most is to have influence on military decisions taken in this part of Europe. Irrespective of that, the Russian position may provide a major factor weakening the new administration's determination to quickly go on with the project. There is no shortage of opinions in the United States, from experts and from politicians alike, to the effect that it is worthwhile to sacrifice the Europe base on the altar of agreement with Russia on issues such as strategic arms reduction (all the more so, given Russian suggestions that they would seek to link disarmament talks to the U.S. decision on the European component), cooperation in Afghanistan or Iran's nuclear programme.²⁶ A decreasing risk of ballistic missile proliferation, the system's technical malfunctioning and the absence of unanimous position by European countries' on the matter have also been pointed out.²⁷

European Consensus

The European component project, pushed for by the Bush administration, also gives rise to controversy among some U.S. allies in NATO. The U.S. has been accused²⁸ of dodging an open debate on MD and willingness to cooperate with selected countries only,²⁹ thus skipping the North Atlantic Alliance, which would adversely impact NATO's political cohesion and lead to a situation where the project's implementation actually worsens the security of those member states that

²⁵ See *Informacja rządu na temat umieszczenia...*, *op. cit.*

²⁶ See e.g., M. Ostrowski's interview with Professor Steven Miller, under the title: *Boję się ryzyka*, www.polityka.pl/boje-sie-ryzyka/Text01,934,278615,18.

²⁷ See e.g., an opinion by Joseph Cirincione, one of President Obama's most influential aides, "Europe and Missiles: Changes and Myths," www.carnegieendowment.org/publications.

²⁸ See e.g., a Bundestag address by F. W. Steinmeier of 21 March 2007, www.auswaertiges-amt.de/diplo/en/Infoservice/Presse/Reden/2007/070321-Abruestung-Btg.html.

²⁹ In this case, Denmark, the United Kingdom, the Czech Republic (expected to either modernize or build radar stations within the global MD system) and Poland.

stay outside it.³⁰ A wave of strong criticism in Europe prompted the Bush administration to a more open approach, with emphasis on the benefits that the missile defense system offers European states with regard to protection against ballistic missiles. Consultations with allies eventually led to the conclusion that the programmes already implemented by NATO and the MD system pursued by the United States should complement each other. That conclusion was formulated in the declaration adopted at the North Atlantic Council's summit in Bucharest, which emphasized that in view of the growing ballistic proliferation threat, the planned European facilities would make an important contribution to the allies' protection against long-range missiles.³¹ It was also agreed that NATO would study the possibility of integrating both projects: NATO's Active Layered Theatre Ballistic Missile Defense and the American strategic system. Those decisions were confirmed at a December 2008 meeting of NATO foreign ministers, with possible integration options to be presented at the Alliance's jubilee summit at Strasbourg/Kehl slated for April 2009.

Despite the appearance of a consensus about bases in Poland and the Czech Republic, as reflected in the Bucharest Declaration, the differences of opinion over MD's European component remained pretty sharp within NATO. Soon after the announcement of presidential election results in the U.S. and prior to the EU-Russia summit in Nice in November 2008, French President Nicolas Sarkozy appealed to Barack Obama to put the MD shield project on hold until the launch of a European security discussion at the forthcoming OSCE summit in mid-2009. Mr. Sarkozy also stressed that MD deployment would fail to exert a positive influence on international security. And Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi pointed out that the European component might be interpreted as a provocation against Russia.³²

There are several premises behind the objections from states averse to MD's European component, objections articulated ever more openly in step with increasingly clear signals from the future administration about its intention to

³⁰ This criticism was refuted by B. Tertais, who writes that open discussions with European partners about MD were already held by Bill Clinton, although it was only in 2005–2006 that the concept emerged of extending the system to cover Europe as well. See B. Tertais, "The Transatlantic Strategic Debate: Deterrence, Non-proliferation and Missile Defense," in: R. Alcaro (ed.), "Re-launching the Transatlantic Security Partnership," *Quaderni IAI*, Istituto Affari Internazionali, November 2008, pp. 22–23.

³¹ See *Bucharest Summit Declaration*, www.nato.int/docu/pr/2008/p08-049e.html.

³² See *Sarkozy joue au médiateur entre Moscou et Washington*, www.france24.com, 16 November 2008; *Berlusconi Calls U.S. Missile Shield a 'Provocation' to Russia*, www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601092&sid=aWnbuqGuujeo.

review programmes pursued within the overall missile defense project. To traditional objections—such as the conviction about diplomacy’s primacy over costly military installations in countering proliferation threats, apprehensions about outer space militarization and fear of unilateral instincts of successive U.S. administrations—new ones were added in the course of 2008. The most important among these was an aversion to a further worsening of relations with Russia in the context of the Georgia war, especially in view of Russian threats to deploy Iskander missiles at Kaliningrad, issued soon after the U.S. election. Furthermore, if the system were to be embraced by the entire NATO (in line with the Bucharest Declaration), the European member states would be forced to make financial contributions to the project, e.g. to provide protection for the allies not covered by the U.S. facilities (as estimated by Science Applications for International Corporation, the integration of both systems would generate a €1 billion cost over the next 20 years, or €50 million a year, to be shared by all NATO allies³³). The prospect of financing what is believed to be the Bush administration’s pet project would be unacceptable to many allies, especially at a time of a financial crisis—and the more so in view of the present shortage of funds for projects of much greater importance for NATO from the operational viewpoint (strategic transportation, Afghanistan mission). In signing the Bucharest Declaration, the European allies were convinced that the United States would finance the integration scheme, especially if victory went to the Republicans, for whom the missile defense would be a priority. But the triumph of Mr. Obama, who was sending unequivocal signals about his expectations of support from the European allies, leaves no doubt about the United States’ opposition to covering the full cost of the initiative.

MD’s European component was also discussed within the European Union, which has for long been shunning the project, regarding the missile shield as a defense project, i.e. one lying beyond its interests and competences. But a report on the subject published by the European Parliament reads: “There is no logical, military or moral reason why Europe should accept vulnerability against ballistic missile attack.”³⁴ Therefore, if protection against such threats is feasible (in terms of costs), the EU should undertake efforts in this direction and work

³³ See a statement by R. Bell of SAIC made during a discussion organized by the Security and Defense Agenda: *What Are NATO’s Next Steps on Missile Defense? SDA Roundtable Report*, 17 March 2007.

³⁴ See *Missile Defense and European Security*, Policy Department External Policies, European Parliament, November 2007, www.europarl.europa.eu/activities/expert/eStudies.do?language=EN, pp. 43–45.

out a common stand on the missile defense system. The report points out that opposition towards the missile shield could be softened thanks to an arrangement—which, incidentally, was proposed by the U.S. in talks with Russia—whereby the European facilities would remain inactive until an Iranian threat is confirmed. Furthermore, the EU should not opt for a watertight protective umbrella, but rather back the idea of building several bases in Europe, making it possible to neutralize individual missile attacks. And if the EU chose to have a tighter protection of its territory, it should throw in its lot with NATO projects over bilateral cooperation between the U.S. and some European partners. At the same time, the report argues, the EU must not give up preventive diplomacy and promotion of multilateral agreements on proliferation, which translates into the need to cooperate with Russia. The system must not compromise Russian nuclear deterrence capabilities or leave out any European state. The Parliament's fairly well-balanced position stands in contrast with opinions by some experts, who insist that U.S. plans to site missile shield installations in Poland and the Czech Republic contravene the interests of the European Union, which should, therefore, adopt its own strategy in this field and present it to President Obama.³⁵

Conclusions

The signing of agreements on deployment in Poland of elements of the U.S. missile defense system was described by Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski as “one of the most important developments related to Poland's security policy in the past several years.” Importantly, the two documents make it possible to intensify Polish-U.S. strategic partnership (especially if they are fleshed up with detailed deals on cooperation in the defense industry, science and technology, missile defense, etc.) and they warrant a belief that major progress has been achieved in pursuing the goals of Polish policy towards the U.S. in the political and military sphere. And seeing the distance with which the new administration approached the European component, it can be said that a chance for agreements better serving Polish interests would hardly have emerged any time later.

But many aspects of the MD deal should be viewed in a broader context, taking into account the pursuit of other foreign and security policy goals in 2009 and in the longer run. Here, the timing of the government's announcement that it

³⁵ See S. Biscop, J. Howorth, B. Giegerich, “Europe: A Time for Strategy,” *Egmont Paper*, 27 January 2009, p. 12.

accepts the U.S. offer concerning the missile defense system—several days after the outbreak of the Russo-Georgian conflict—should be seen as definitely unfavorable.³⁶ While it is true that Russia's invasion of Georgia was instrumental in demonstrating to the U.S. how important it is for Poland to increase the capacity to defend its airspace, at the same time a damage was done to the country's image. To Russia that provided another confirmation of the opinion (later cited in talks with European states) that the future MD base in Poland is targeted at Russia. The argument, no matter its fallacy, has been and will continue to be made also by some European NATO allies (France, Italy, Germany) which, in fact, are against building the so-called third base, for reasons stated above. The reactions from states such as France or Italy, calling on Barack Obama (after his electoral victory) to quit the MD project in Europe, have revealed that too little effort was invested in dialogue with the European allies most skeptical of the missile shield. The assumption that the so-called third base in the missile defense system is a bilateral U.S.-Polish question has proven not quite correct, as dislike of the shield by some European states may provide an added factor further weakening the determination to go on with the project on the part of the new U.S. administration (whose major priority is to improve relations with European partners). On the other hand, Poland undoubtedly made a good move by launching dialogue with Russia. Even if it does not result in a softening of the Russian position on the third base, it will be instrumental in building the image of a country open to talks and will help avoid a situation where some Russian proposals (such as a permanent presence of Russian monitors at the base) would be approved by the U.S. without consultation with the Polish government.

In the short term, the conclusion of the agreement with the U.S. may also adversely affect the pursuit of other goals, also in the NATO forum. The perception of Poland as an advocate of the missile defense shield, coupled with the conviction among many states about a "Polish Russophobia" and Polish calls for NATO's immediate enlargement to embrace Ukraine and Georgia may undermine chances for Polish representatives to be appointed to senior positions in the Alliance and weaken the appeal of Polish concepts for NATO reform.

In view of the above, the overall scoresheet of negotiations with the U.S. cannot but be seen as beneficial for Poland. Image losses (dealing with the discredited administration of G. W. Bush on a project that provokes a great deal of controversy) may be offset by promoting and actively joining uncontroversial initiatives, such as the European Union's Eastern Partnership.

³⁶ See a statement by R. Sikorski for *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 8 March 2008.

Given both parties' sufficient determination, the missile shield agreement may produce durable effects, especially if we remember that in its stance on the missile defense system Poland has since the beginning sought to transcend the context of the shield alone. This is reflected in the wording of the Strategic Declaration—and no effort should be spared to implement the document, irrespective of the fate of the Agreement. A particularly useful forum for political discussions should be provided by the Strategic Cooperation Consultative Group. Its frequent and regular meetings would enable a regular powtórzenie exchange of opinions and presentation of the parties' positions on matters of importance for Poland and also a presentation to the U.S. of the Polish vision of NATO evolution, the Alliance's cooperation with some partners, such as Russia, Ukraine and Georgia, questions of energy security, etc.³⁷ This is all the more important as a Polish agenda will be very difficult to pursue in the inaugural year of the new administration, pressed to cope with the catastrophic consequences the financial crisis has brought for the U.S. economy.

³⁷ A more intense cooperation with the U.S. in the Group's forum would be desirable, given that the existing institutions—especially Strategic Dialogue meetings, held only twice a year—by their nature limit the dynamics of Polish-American bilateral debate on security policy.

International Dimension of Poland's Climate Policy

Background

In the first decade of the 21st century climate change became one of the major issues in international relations. While climate protection and the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions have long been recognized as major challenges confronting humanity, their rank soared as they became one of the chief subjects discussed by the leaders of the world's most important states. In this regard, the year 2005 appears to have marked a breakthrough, as the UK, which then held the G8 presidency, put cooperation on the prevention of climate change (alongside aid to Africa) on the agenda of the G8 Gleneagles summit.

Broadly commented scientific publications, in particular the "Stern Review" (*Stern Review Report on the Economics of Climate Change*)¹ and the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), contributed importantly to the understanding of the scale of the challenge. The awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007 to the IPCC and to former U.S. Vice President Al Gore for their efforts to disseminate knowledge about climate change and to lay the foundations for the measures to counteract such change was another landmark. Under the combined impact of all these factors, the UN Climate Change Conference in Bali in December 2007 adopted a decision to start negotiations on a future climate change agreement to succeed the Kyoto Protocol due to expire in 2012.

For Poland, the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions represents a serious challenge, for a number of internal reasons. The foremost of these, the nearly total reliance of thermal and electric energy generation on high-emission coal not only has an adverse impact on the environment, but makes cutting down CO₂ emission a difficult task. To change the structure of the primary energy mix is a long process involving substantial financial outlays, which, given other dev
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¹ See N. Stern, *The Economics of Climate Change: The Stern Review*, Cambridge, 2007.

ds of the Polish economy, are not available in sufficient amounts for investment in the implementation of environment-friendly technology. Even so, it can be expected that in the next several years more efforts to this end will be taken. This is connected with two key external determinants of Poland's climate policy: the country's membership in the European Union and its commitments under international agreements (present and future) on greenhouse gas emissions.

Upon its accession to the EU, Poland became a member of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (EU ETS). Under the scheme, till 2012 emissions caps are allocated to each member state by the European Commission for distribution by the national authorities among the different industries covered by the scheme. Emissions allowances saved by individual enterprises come to the market, where they are purchased by entities with allowance deficits. The market mechanism regulates the price of allowances and encourages investment in low- or zero-emission installations. As an additional investment incentive, the Commission has been gradually reducing the number of free-of-charge emissions allowances. Given the Polish industry's high emissions intensity, allowance allocation initially gave rise to much controversy and the European Commission's decision on national caps for 2008–2012 was even challenged in the European Court of Justice.² Poland was concerned from the start that an overambitious climate policy of the EU could hurt the competitiveness of the Polish economy and slow down the process of developmental “catching-up” with the Western European states.

In 2005, EU energy policy was focused on enhancing the security of supply, creating a competitive energy market subject to the principles of sustainable development, and preventing climate change, and gained momentum. In January 2007, the European Commission unveiled proposals on measures to achieve these objectives. Significantly, the chosen strategy targets of the EU's energy policy covered: a 20% greenhouse gas emissions reduction by 2020 (compared with 1990), a 20% increase in energy efficiency and a 20% share of renewable energy sources, both to be attained also in 2020 (20–20–20 in 2020).³ The European Commission made the mitigation of climate change the centerpiece of

² Joint Meeting of the Committee for the Environment, Natural Resources and Forestry (no. 22) and the Committee for the Economy (no. 20), *Biuletyn*, Sejm Chancellery, Sejm Committees Office, 7 May 2008, p. 4.

³ *An Energy Policy for Europe*, communication from the Commission to the European Council and the European Parliament of 10 January 2007, COM(2007) 1 final. The full texts of documents, proposals and strategies are available at the website of the Directorate General for Energy and Transport DG TREN), http://ec.europa.eu/energy/index_en.htm.

its evolving energy policy. Also, the Commission intends the climate policy to be an important element of a strategy for enhancing the global significance of the European Union.

In March 2007 the European Council adopted guidelines on the implementation of these objectives. At the request of some states, including Poland, a provision was added that a differentiated approach to the contribution of member states is needed reflecting fairness and transparency as well as taking into account national circumstances and capabilities. Also, it was noted that in view of energy-intensive industries' importance to the European Union the proposed measures needed to serve the purposes of environmental protection and improved competitiveness alike.⁴

The international determinants of Poland's climate policy arise from the provisions of the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and of the 1997 Kyoto Protocol. As one of the commitments laid down in the Convention, the states undertook to develop and launch national strategies for addressing greenhouse gas emissions. The relevant document titled "Polityka klimatyczna Polski" [Poland's Climate Policy] was adopted by the Council of Ministers in November 2003. The paramount quantitative target of the Polish climate policy is to bring down the scale of greenhouse gas emissions to 40% of the 1988 level by 2020.⁵

In the Kyoto Protocol, Poland committed itself to cutting greenhouse gas emissions by 6%, relative to 1988, over 2008–2012.⁶ With greenhouse gas emissions down from 563,400 tons CO₂ equivalent in 1988 to 400,500 tons CO₂ equivalent in 2006, i.e., nearly 30%, there are grounds to believe that this target will be more than met.⁷ The steepest drop in emissions—by nearly 110,000 tons—occurred between 1988 and 1990, but between 2002 and 2006 emissions in Poland rose some 28,000 tons. For this reason, one of Poland's priorities in a future climate agreement is that a year adopted as the base year against which to

⁴ *Presidency Conclusions*, Brussels European Council, 8–9 March 2007, 7224/1/07 REV 1.

⁵ *Polityka klimatyczna Polski: Strategia redukcji emisji gazów cieplarnianych w Polsce do roku 2020*, Ministerstwo Środowiska, Warsaw, October 2003, p. 14.

⁶ The economies in transition were allowed to choose a base year other than 1990. Poland chose 1988, the last pre-crisis year when the economy had functioned relatively normally and when greenhouse gas emissions had been the highest in the decade.

⁷ K. Olendrzyński, I. Kargulewicz, J. Skośkiewicz, B. Dębski, J. Cieślińska, A. Olecka, M. Kanafa, K. Kania, *Krajowa inwentaryzacja emisji i pochłaniania gazów cieplarnianych za rok 2006: Raport wykonany na potrzeby Ramowej konwencji Narodów Zjednoczonych w sprawie zmian klimatu oraz Protokołu z Kioto*, Warsaw, April 2008, p. 21.

gauge greenhouse gas emissions reduction makes it possible for previous progress in this area to be discounted. However, the 2002–2006 greenhouse gas emissions figures show that the target set in 2003—the 40% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2020—will be difficult to meet. Hence, the second of Poland's priorities in negotiations on a future climate agreement is to work towards the adoption of realistic reduction commitments that will take into account the structure of the primary energy mix and the energy-intensity of industry as well as the capability to finance projects contributing to greenhouse gas emissions reduction.

EU Dimension of Poland's Climate Policy

In 2007, the European Commission set out to develop detailed legislative proposals. These were presented in January 2008 as an energy/climate package comprising five draft laws: Directive 2003/87/EC to improve and extend the greenhouse gas emission allowance trading scheme; Decision on joint efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 (known as the non-ETS, or Effort-sharing Decision); “Framework Directive” on the promotion of renewable energy sources; Directive on carbon capture and geological storage of carbon dioxide (CCS); and Guidelines on state aid for environmental protection.⁸

From Poland's perspective, the modification of the EU ETS scheme through: (1) the establishment of a single EU-wide emissions cap and the substitution of a central allocation of allowances for the national allocation plans currently in effect; (2) the introduction, as of 2013, of full auctioning for the power and electricity sector; and (3) the gradual progress of other sectors towards full auctioning—from 20% allowances to be bought in 2013, to 100% in 2020 and beyond—is the most consequential element of the package. Other important components include a greenhouse gas emissions limit imposed on non-ETS sectors (including transport, construction, services, agriculture, waste management) and the individual states' commitment to arrive at a certain percentage share (in the case of Poland, 15%) of renewable sources in the national final energy consumption. Given the risk of these proposals' (the ETS scheme in particular) adverse impact on the competitiveness of the Polish economy and on national energy security, the energy/climate package negotiations were central to Poland's European policy and they became a test of Poland's capability to co-shape Community projects.

⁸ The full texts of the documents are available at the European Commission website at http://ec.europa.eu/environment/climat/climate_action.htm.

Poland's Policy Objectives on Climate/Energy Package. The Polish government submitted a number of reservations to the European Commission's legislative proposals. It criticized these drafts for a failure to sufficiently take into account the principles of equitability, cost-effectiveness and flexibility, the observance of which was critical in view of the development diversities of the EU states and the near-total dependence of Poland's power generation on coal. Nevertheless, it subscribed to the package's general objectives of emissions reduction, renewable sources development and efficiency improvement and questioned only the implementation method proposed by the Commission.

The government adopted its preliminary position late in February and unveiled it at a meeting of the European Council (13–14 March 2008).⁹ A more detailed position statement was promulgated in September 2008, as negotiations on the package were entering their decisive stage. At that time the government identified major negotiation problems and expectations voiced by this country.

Poland did opt for phasing in full auctioning for the power and electricity sector, in particular in countries with low per capita GDP, but it objected to the Commission-promoted timeframe (full auctioning to take effect as of 2013). Moreover, the Polish government sought—as a matter of the principle of solidarity—an equal distribution of the costs of future reduction commitments. Poland wanted auctioning principles that would not be discriminatory against financially weaker member states. Since under a purely market system economic actors from those countries would be incapable of outbidding stronger Western European operators (or non-EU ones, in which case additional energy security threats could arise), they would have no option but to buy their allowances at speculative prices, with the result that the costs sustained by their economies and by their societies would be markedly higher than in the other member states.

Poland was of the opinion that the European Commission's estimates of future allowance prices were underrated. The government argued that under the new system energy costs in this country would soar, perhaps as much as 60%, with grave consequences for industry and households.¹⁰ Higher energy prices

⁹ Statement by Janusz Zaleski, undersecretary of state at the Ministry of the Environment, at a meeting of the Sejm Committee for the European Union (no. 25), *Biuletyn*, 7 March 2008.

¹⁰ On 12 September, Vice-premier Waldemar Pawlak wrote a letter to Günther Verheugen, European Commission vice-president responsible for industry. In the letter he addressed the matter of electricity price rises in the wake of the adoption of the climate/energy package. The letter was an element of debate during the September Council for Competitiveness. Poland was supported by Austria, Romania, Lithuania, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Italy, Hungary, Bulgaria and Malta, with Sweden, the Netherlands, Britain and Belgium against. See statement

would slow down economic development, push up inflation, depress production and affect the balance of foreign trade through deteriorating competitiveness of the Polish economy (in particular of its energy-intensive industries) *vis-à-vis* other EU members and non-EU states.¹¹ Accordingly, Poland proposed that variations of allowance prices be kept within a strictly defined range (Austria made the same request).

Poland argued that the new regulations should take into account the member states' track records in emissions reduction. The government objected to the proposal that 2005 be established as a point of reference for future emission reductions. Poland insisted, in the name of an equitable distribution of costs, on the different countries' varied previous reduction achievements being taken into account in the planning of further emissions cuts. Unlike Poland, which had reduced its emission by 20% over 1990–2005 (and down 32% from 1988, its Kyoto Protocol's base year), a number of Western European states had increased theirs in the same period (e.g. Spain by nearly a half).¹² Poland contested the Commission-proposed formula for the distribution of the auctionable allowances among the member states in proportions: 90% depending on individual countries' emissions in 2005 and 10% according to per capita GDP. The government proposed an 80% + 10% + 10% formula, the additional 10% to be allocated according to an index arising from the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol reduction targets—i.e. applicable only to countries with records of effective emissions reduction.¹³

As for the draft non-ETS decision, the Polish government pointed to the artificiality of segregating the economy into EU ETS and non-EU ETS

by Marcin Korolc, undersecretary of state at the Ministry of the Economy, at a meeting of the Sejm Committee for the European Union, *Biuletyn*, 29 September 2008, p. 16.

¹¹ The Polish government was drawing on a document "Synteza analiz dotyczących skutków społeczno-gospodarczych pakietu energetyczno-klimatycznego UE" [Synthesis of Studies on Socio-Economic Impact of the EU Energy/Climate Package] commissioned from Earnst & Young by the Office of the Committee for European Integration (UKIE). E&Y cited studies and assessments commissioned by other ministries and financial institutions (Deutsche Bank, Fortis Bank and other) and in particular data in "Report 2030" prepared by EnergySys for the Polish Electricity Committee. See *Wpływ proponowanych regulacji unijnych w zakresie wprowadzenia europejskiej strategii rozwoju energetyki wolnej od emisji CO₂ na bezpieczeństwo energetyczne Polski, a w szczególności możliwości odbudowy mocy wytwórczych wykorzystujących paliwa kopalne oraz poziom cen energii elektrycznej*, Warsaw, June 2008.

¹² *Annual European Community Greenhouse Gas Inventory 1990–2006 and Inventory Report 2008*, www.eea.europa.eu/publications/technical_report_2008_6.

¹³ It should be remembered that, as proceeds of the auctions will go to the different states' budgets, the larger an allocation, the higher the receipts.

industries and opted instead for allowing room for the flexible transfer of unused allowances between systems (a possibility the European Commission had not allowed for). The countries would then be able to determine for themselves the levels of burden for the different sectors.

On the carbon capture and storage issue, the government backed the Commission's proposal on setting up demonstration CCS projects in high-emission countries. Poland wanted these projects to be financed from the European Union budget as a "Joint Undertaking." The government took a favorable view of the non-mandatory nature of the CCS Directive and pointed out that industrial implementation of such projects should be determined by their cost efficiency.

In the course of negotiations, Poland, besides putting forth economic arguments, proceeded to voice reservations as to the energy security consequences of the package. Its representatives argued that if the package were implemented in its unmodified form, those EU states that currently produced energy from coal would be forced to switch to natural gas.¹⁴ The resulting increase in reliance on imports would bring in its wake more political and strategic challenges.

Before the October meeting of the European Council the government supplemented its position on EU ETS by proposing that full auctioning be replaced by a benchmark-and-auctioning regime for the power and electricity industry. The allocation of allowances was to be based on best-EU-available-technology benchmarks determined strictly separately for each fuel (coal, lignite, oil and natural gas). Installations below the benchmark would receive their allocations for free and the others would have to buy theirs at auctions. The idea was to reward operators investing in low-emission installations and to encourage such investment by others. Poland also raised the matter of administrative regulation of potential allowance price fluctuations. Furthermore, the government highlighted the problem of carbon leakage, i.e., of energy-intensive industries' moving production abroad to non-EU ETS countries and of electricity generation there. Poland was one of the initiators (alongside Germany) of a debate on the introduction of mechanisms to prevent such relocation.¹⁵

¹⁴ Statement by Waldemar Pawlak, vice-premier and minister of the economy, at a meeting of the Sejm Committee for the European Union, *Biuletyn*, 29 September 2008, pp. 10–11.

¹⁵ Statement by Marcin Korolec, undersecretary of state at the Ministry of the Economy, at a meeting of the Sejm Committee for the European Union, *Biuletyn*, 3 October 2008. Cooperation with Germany on carbon leakage helped reach a compromise at the December summit and it became one of Poland's bargaining points as the negotiations were drawing to an end.

Energy/Climate Package Negotiations. In pursuit of its adopted targets, the government took steps at several levels: (1) it participated in relevant working groups responsible for drafting directives and decisions for consultation with the European Parliament and the EU Council; (2) it engaged in building a coalition of states that had reservations about the European Commission's proposals; and (3) it was using bilateral mechanisms (chiefly in relations with Germany and with France, which was then holding the EU presidency). The work practices and the extent of state institutions' involvement in the effort to push through solutions advantageous to Poland were unprecedented in the short history of Poland's EU membership.

Initially, the main responsibility for the negotiations and for developing positions on issues rested with the Ministry of the Environment—and on the Ministry of the Economy with respect to the draft directive on renewable energy sources. Then, to make work on the package more efficient, the Council of Ministers' European Committee adopted in August 2008 an Action Plan: Energy/Climate Package Negotiations. The Office of the Committee for European Integration was made responsible for the coordination of efforts. With the negotiations entering their crucial stage, one agency was appointed to oversee the increasingly frequent consultations with partners in the European Union.

At first, the government was active mainly in the EU Environment Council's working groups for EU ETS/effort sharing, CCS and renewable energy sources. Beyond that, Poland addressed the matter of the package at numerous EU Council meetings at a ministerial level, because it did not agree to the debate's being conducted exclusively by ministries for the environment, which, when environmental matters are at issue, are as a rule less compromise-minded and unwilling to take economic issues into account.¹⁶ To elevate the rank of long-term social and economic consequences of the implementation of the package, the Competitiveness Council, the Economic and Financial Affairs Council (ECOFIN) and the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council were also included in the debate.¹⁷ Poland's representatives repeatedly met with EU

¹⁶ What's more, often there are inter-ministerial disputes within the governments of member states, as evidenced by the rivalry and conflicts within the German cabinet, between the Christian Democratic minister of the economy and the Social Democratic minister for the environment.

¹⁷ Statement by Piotr Serafin, undersecretary of state at the Office of the Committee for European Integration at a meeting of the Sejm Committee for the European Union, *Biuletyn*, 3 October 2008, p. 19.

commissioners and European Commission officials, trying to win them over to their arguments.

The focus was on building a coalition of states capable of blocking decision-taking in the Council. By rallying a blocking minority around the demands discussed above, Poland intended to enhance its negotiating power and to induce the proponents of the package to come up with compromise solutions. However, without support from a sufficient number of countries Poland would have found itself in an extremely difficult position, because the package was scheduled for a majority vote procedure. Fearing marginalization, Poland was pushing for the unanimity requirement to apply to the package.

After sounding the different states' positions the Polish government set out to form a coalition of states that had voiced similar concerns about the package. Poland was courting support mainly from the new European Union members, for whom preserving the competitiveness of their economies and sustaining growth was crucially important in the context of closing the development gap separating them from the Western European states. In May 2008 at the invitation of the Polish government, representatives of Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Malta came to Warsaw. A nucleus of a coalition emerged—a “friends of coal club” (in time Poland gave up promoting that name, because of the negative response it was receiving and its too narrow scope). From there, Poland took pains to maintain the cooperation that had been established while responding to the Commission's attempts to break up the coalition.¹⁸ Its representatives put climate change on the agendas of all regional meetings, a strategy rewarded by the September 2008 joint position of the ministers for the environment of the Visegrád Group states,¹⁹ followed several days later by a joint statement on the package issued by the ministers for European affairs of the Visegrád Group and of Bulgaria and Romania.²⁰ In November 2008, the Visegrád Group prime ministers jointly

¹⁸ Shortly after Polish representatives' consultations in Estonia, Slovakia and the Czech Republic, European Commission officials arrived in those countries bearing their own proposals.

¹⁹ *Wspólne stanowisko Grupy Wyszehradzkiej*, communication of the Ministry of the Environment, 19 September 2008, www.mos.gov.pl.

²⁰ *Deklaracja Ministrów i Sekretarzy Stanu odpowiedzialnych za sprawy europejskie Bułgarii, Polski, Rumunii, Słowacji i Węgier przyjęta w Warszawie dnia 26 września 2008 r.*, www.ukie.gov.pl.

emphasized the need for particular recognition in the package “of the member states’ special situations and levels of economic development.”²¹

The durability of the Poland-centered coalition was put to test in the autumn of 2008 at the October meeting of the European Council. Until the last moment it was far from certain that Poland would succeed in maintaining the blocking minority. As the debate was about to start, at the initiative of Poland and Hungary a meeting was organized between the prime ministers of these countries and the heads of government of Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Bulgaria, Rumania and Slovakia (the Czech side did not attend, and neither did it join the common statement, due to a lack of agreement within the ruling coalition). The statement addressed to the European Council called for limiting the costs of the package for Europe in view of the financial crisis; it pointed to an inequitable distribution of the costs of the climate package and to insufficient recognition of the 1990–2005 reductions, and it called for unanimity in the adoption of the package.

The European Council accepted the Polish request for unanimity. The fact, that the package could be vetoed by any country, weighted heavily on the further course of negotiations. Moreover, now that the Council had not endorsed the presidency’s opinion that the European Commission’s proposals were cohesive enough to be kept intact, chances for their modifications improved.²² At that point Poland proposed a benchmark-and-auctioning method, a price corridor as a safeguard against speculation, and a modified system for the distribution of emissions allowances. Final decisions were postponed till December. The European Council reaffirmed its determination to meet the March 2007 and 2008 commitments and it requested the Commission develop solutions appropriate for all sectors and all member states, with their individual situations taken into account.²³

Besides coalition-building, Poland engaged in bilateral activities. Consultations via diplomatic missions were in progress in most member states. The most important talks were conducted with Germany in May, consultations of the ministers for European affairs took place; and in June representatives of both countries’ ministries of the economy met to discuss potential effects of the

²¹ *Wspólne oświadczenie premierów Grupy Wyszehradzkiej*, Warszawa, 5 November 2008, www.kprm.gov.pl.

²² Presidency’s position, see *Presidency Guidelines for Further Work on the Energy/Climate Package*, 14240/08 + REV 1 (cs) + REV 2, Brussels, 15 October 2008, <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/pl/08/st14/st14240-re02.pl08.pdf>.

²³ *Presidency Conclusions*, Brussels European Council, 15 and 16 October 2008.

implementation of the package for the power sector and to analyze the risk of carbon leakage. In July, a group formed at the initiative of the prime minister of Poland and the chancellor of Germany to bring closer the two states' positions met in Berlin. In September, studies on the impact of the Commission's proposals on both economies were compared during a meeting in the Chancellor's Office.²⁴ Poland was soliciting Germany's support for a revision of the proposal on the electricity and power sector and in return it responded favorably to Germany's concerns (shared by Polish industry) about carbon leakage. Talks continued until the December meeting of the European Council.

Besides Germany, the government conducted intensive consultations with France, which was holding the EU presidency in the second half of 2008. Poland's representatives consulted their position with the presidency on a regular basis, making known their doubts and main requests. In August bilateral consultations were held. Playing the time card, the Polish government argued that undue haste was uncalled for, yet the European Commission and the presidency had already scheduled final agreement on the package for December. France needed a success to show at the end of its difficult presidency, during which it had had to address unexpected challenges, such as the financial crisis and the Russia-Georgia conflict.

December 2008 European Council Meeting. The negotiations on the package continued well into the eleventh hour and they ended in a compromise achieved at a meeting of the European Council on 11–12 December 2008. Several days later the package was approved by the European Parliament. The most important modifications concerned the draft EU ETS directive and the decision on emissions reduction in non-ETS sectors.

The Polish government pronounced the final outcome a success, even though—as it admitted—not all of its aims had been achieved. On the power sector allowances issue, Poland succeeded in preventing the introduction of full auctioning in 2013, while compromising on the phasing in of that scheme by 2020. In 2013 the electricity producers will have to buy no less than 30% of their emissions allowances and they will receive the balance free of charge. The share of purchased allowances will be rising gradually, to 100% in 2020 at the latest, at a pace to be determined by individual states—which is what Poland stipulated. States in which a single fossil fuel accounted for 30% of electricity produced in

²⁴ A list of meetings held and scheduled was annexed to the government's positions on the package presented in September 2008 to the Sejm Committee for the European Union.

2006 and with per capita GDP no higher than 50% of the EU average are eligible for a transition period in which to bring in the full auctioning regime.

Moreover, three limitations were adopted: (1) free allowances to be untradeable; (2) funds equivalent to the market value of free allowances to be invested in sector modernization under a national plan to be submitted to the Commission; (3) allowances allocation to be conditional on a given installation's compliance with a pre-determined best-available-technology benchmark. The above provisions apply only to installations already in place. All new power stations will have to buy 100% of their emissions allowances. The threat of soaring energy prices was put off rather than eliminated altogether, yet this offered a chance to better prepare the industry and to implement efficiency-improving schemes. Poland was included among the countries allowed to increase emissions (by 14% till 2020) in non-EU ETS sectors, with an option to resell any unused surplus to other member states.

Significant modifications were also introduced in the carbon leakage prevention system. That matter had aroused grave concern, in particular in Germany—the EU's largest exporter of industrial goods at risk of losing the competitive edge of its production. Backed by the Polish government, which was also concerned about the damaging consequences of that phenomenon, the German government pushed for—and won—the development of a method to assess sectors' exposure to carbon leakage. Industries considered “at significant risk” (the European Commission estimates that about 90% of European installations will qualify, with a final list to be compiled by December 2009) will be eligible to receive up to 100% free emissions allowances in an amount corresponding to an emission resulting from the use of state-of-the-art technology. This system is meant to reward modernized installations and to prompt obsolete operators to invest with a view to reducing their allowance purchasing costs. Industries invulnerable to carbon leakage will have to buy their emissions allowances: from 20% in 2013, to 70% in 2020 and 100% in 2027.

Poland succeeded in causing the emissions allowances distribution mechanism to be modified to a certain extent, with respect to the allowances to be auctioned in 2013–2020. The bulk (88%) will be distributed among the member states in proportion to their past verified emissions; 10% will be allocated to certain member states (including Poland) for reasons of special circumstance. The balance (2% rather than the 10% Poland stipulated) will be distributable among states that by 2005 succeeded in cutting their emissions by 20%, measured against the Kyoto Protocol base year (i.e. to a majority of the new member states, including Poland).

In return for their additional allocations, Poland and others states gave in on the matter of adoption of the Kyoto Protocol base year as a starting point for calculating allowances. The European Council decided that 2005 emissions, or average emissions from 2005 to 2007—at the discretion of the state concerned—would be the benchmark. The proceeds of allowance auctioning will go to the state budgets, to be used in part for the modernization of the power sector and for financing environment-friendly projects.²⁵ The government claims that Poland benefits from the revision of the allocations distribution formula to the tune of PLN60bn (at a fixed allowance price of €39 per ton of CO₂). This is not a direct transfer of funds from the EU, but potential earnings from a surplus of tradable allowances—assuming that Poland successfully meets its reduction targets. Failing attainment of the reduction targets, equivalent funds—or more—will have to be allocated to the purchase of additional allowances on the market.

Global Aspects of Poland's Climate Policy

Negotiations about a Future Climate Agreement. Poland as an EU member may not present directly its individual position in negotiations conducted by the parties to the United Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Kyoto Protocol. The position on specific issues are developed within the EU consultations framework and presented during negotiations by the country holding the presidency of the European Union. From the perspective of Poland's interests, priority should be accorded to reducing its share of the EU's financial contribution to climate change actions in developing countries as may arise under a future climate agreement.

According to the Bali Action Plan adopted by the UN Climate Change Conference in December 2007, the negotiations proceed in four main thematic building blocks: mitigation; adaptation to climate change, technology transfer; financing activities in developing countries. Guidelines on the European Union's position for the 14th Climate Conference in Poznań were adopted by the EU Council for the Environment on 20 October 2008 and detailed EU proposals for a Copenhagen agreement on climate change were unveiled by the European Commission in January 2009.

Mitigation. Medium- and long-term greenhouse gas emissions reduction commitments are to be the central element of a future climate agreement.

²⁵ For government assessment of the summit results see also an address by Maciej Nowicki, minister of the environment, to the Sejm Environmental Protection, Natural Resources and Forestry Committee, *Biuletyn*, 11 February 2009.

According to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change, for a temperature increase to be contained below 2°C (relative to the pre-industrial era), a reduction by more than 50% of carbon dioxide emissions reduction by 2050 (measured against 2000) will be required.²⁶ The European Union's position assumes, in accordance with the IPCC's recommendations on long-term goals, that by 2020 the developed countries will have reduced their GHG emissions by 25–40%. The individual countries' targets should allow for such indices as per capita GDP, greenhouse gas emission per unit of GDP, emission trends in 1990–2005, and demographic trends. The European Union has already committed itself to a 20% emissions reduction and it is willing to go further, to a 30% reduction target by 2020, provided other developed countries achieve comparable emissions reductions and provided economically more advanced developing countries undertake respective commitments (15–30% reductions relative to predicted growth in their emissions).

With respect to a base year for reduction targets, the European Union opts for the Kyoto Protocol base year, 1990, but it admits the possibility of earlier reference years.²⁷ For Poland, this is a crucially important issue. Under the Kyoto Protocol, 1988 is the point of reference for its emissions reduction and, a substantial proportion of the reduction having occurred in 1988–1990, the adoption of a later base year would amount to Poland's losing part of its achievements in this regard. Another problem is that the EU intends to set long-term reduction goals at 80–95% (by 2050), which would impose on the Polish economy very high costs, mainly related to power sector transformation. It follows that the foremost task of Polish negotiators is to prevent the imposition on Poland of such high commitments.²⁸

Adaptation. The problem of adaptation is important mainly to the poorest and insular countries that, while the most vulnerable to the adverse impact of climate change, contribute very little to global warming. The European Union

²⁶ B. Metz, O. R. Davidson, P. R. Bosch, R. Dave, L. A. Meyer (eds.), *Climate Change 2007: Synthesis Report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*, Cambridge, 2007, p. 67.

²⁷ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, *Towards a Comprehensive Climate Change Agreement in Copenhagen*, (COM) 2009 39 final, Brussels, 28 January 2009, pp. 4–6.

²⁸ Meeting of the Sejm Environmental Protection, Natural Resources and Forestry Committee, *Biuletyn*, 21 October 2008, p. 13.

has emphasized the need for solidarity with these countries, to be shown by higher financial outlays and technological support for their efforts to adapt to climate change. A sizable part of the costs of specific adaptation measures in the most exposed countries should be financed from the Adaptation Fund established at COP 13 in Bali. From Poland's perspective, the size of the financial contribution to the fund is of paramount importance. Poland intended to push for the development of concrete operating principles of the Adaptation Fund during COP 14 in Poznań.

Technology transfer. Support for the development of clean technologies in developed countries and, subsequently, the dissemination and implementation of new solutions in the developing countries with low innovation capabilities and growing CO₂ emissions, is one of the main instruments of furthering reduction targets. The European Union has emphasized the need to develop appropriate principles of technology transfer, for instance by rewarding developing countries for efforts to disseminate clean technology, by linking the adoption and financing of technology to the implementation of national emissions reduction plans, by sectoral agreements, and by improved coordination of the work of relevant institutions.²⁹

From Poland's perspective it is important that technology transfer financing should be handled by institutions already in place. Poland objected to the establishment of a new institution for this purpose and it made a reservation that, should a decision to that effect be taken, financing must be the responsibility of the parties to Annex 2 to the Climate Change Convention.³⁰ Poland objected to the financing of technology transfer from the carbon market, by the auctioning of Assigned Amount Units (AAUs), and it insisted that new forms of financing be looked for instead. It supported the private sectors' involvement in facilitating developing countries' access to low carbon technologies.³¹

Financing. The financing of climate actions in the developing countries has been one of the most challenging issues in the climate change negotiations. The UNFCCC Secretariat estimates that till 2030 additional investment and fund

²⁹ Press release, 2898th Council Meeting, Environment, Council of the European Union, Luxembourg, 20 October 2008, p. 13.

³⁰ The parties to Annex 2 of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change consist of developed countries, members of OECD in 1992. Poland, which at the signing of the Convention had the status of a country with economy in transition, is an Annex 1 party.

³¹ "Przygotowania Polski do COP 14 na tle polityki UE i Polski i negocjacji zobowiązań po roku 2012 (Poznań, 1–12 grudnia 2008 r.)," report for the Sejm Committee for Environmental Protection, Natural Resources and Forestry, September 2008.

flows of \$200 billion to \$210 billion will be required to keep annual greenhouse gas emissions at the current level (26 Gt of CO₂).³² This matter was discussed in 2008, with detailed arrangements to be agreed on at the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen (COP 15).

The European Union's position is that funds for financing the climate change actions should come from various sources, the private sector first of all, while government policies should create conditions encouraging investment in low-carbon technology, infrastructure and innovation. The EU proposed in the energy/climate package that a proportion of the emissions allowance auctioning receipts be allocated to climate protection efforts in developing countries.³³ It wants allowances trading to be subject to tax, the resulting receipts to be allocated to the developing countries' needs. Globally, the EU proposed that the developed countries contribute their shares from public funds and via international carbon crediting mechanism.³⁴ Public-fund contributions should depend on a given country's economic capabilities and should be based on the "polluter pays" principle. The size of the contribution should be an integral part of the Copenhagen agreement.

As a party to Annex 1 to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, Poland has no obligation to support developing countries, but as a member of the European Union—and because it waived in 2005 the "economy in transition" status—it will have to participate in financial commitments for climate actions in developing countries. These commitments will concern support for the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) and the Adaptation Fund; negotiations on this matter are conducted by the European Union. Poland wanted the size of aid to the developing countries to be in line with the state's financial capabilities and—in connection with its relatively high emissions level—unlinked to the negotiated post-2012 emissions limits. Also, the Polish

³² "Investment and Financial Flows to Address Climate Change," United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Bonn, October 2007, p. 92.

³³ Press release, 2898th Council Meeting..., p. 15.

³⁴ The Kyoto Protocol introduced three new market mechanisms, called flexible mechanisms, to enable a desirable global-scale reduction of greenhouse gas emissions to be achieved through an exchange of "emissions reduction units." These include: Assigned Amount Unit (AAU)—a unit of greenhouse gas emissions assigned to a Kyoto Protocol party and tradable under the emissions trading scheme; Certified Emissions Reduction (CER)—a unit of effectively reduced or avoided greenhouse gas emission, allocated following implementation of a Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) project; Emission Reduction Unit (ERU)—a unit of effectively reduced or avoided greenhouse gas emission, allocated following implementation of a Joint Implementation (JI) project.

government has objected to plans to levy issuing fees on the allocated AAUs, or to set aside a proportion of AAUs to be auctioned in support of funds for the developing countries. Poland shared the European Union's position that the bulk of emissions reduction costs should be covered by the enterprises sector, with the developed countries supporting rather than wholly financing climate change adaptation projects in the developing countries. Prior to COP 14 in Poznań, the Polish government held that it was too early for putting on the table a detailed financial proposal from the European Union, pointing out that this could be a bargaining point in 2009 negotiations on a future climate agreement.

During the UN Climate Change Conference Poznań two important decisions were taken. First, the Poznań Strategic Program on Technology Transfer was adopted. The program, prepared at the Poznań conference by the Global Environment Facility in accordance with a decision adopted in 2007 at the COP 13 in Bali, provides for: taking a better assessment of the developing countries' needs and enhancing their capacity to adopt environment-friendly technology; piloting priority technology projects; dissemination of successfully demonstrated technologies. The improvement of technology transfer efficiency is to be the task of the Global Environment Facility, which is also responsible for the funding of projects in this area. Pending issues to be resolved before a final agreement is reached in Copenhagen include: protection of intellectual property, which is perceived as a barrier to technology transfer, and detailed arrangements for technology transfer financing by the parties to the Convention and by the private sector.

The second important decision adopted at COP 14 concerned operationalization of the Adaptation Fund. Parties agreed that the Adaptation Fund Board should have legal capacity to grant direct access to developing countries. On an interim basis the Global Environment Facility and the World Bank will be providing support to the operations of the Adaptation Fund, an arrangement that enables first projects to be launched in 2009. However, efforts to ensure additional resources for the Fund were unsuccessful. Its present sources of funding consist of 2% of the proceeds of Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) transactions (this principle has not been extended to include other Kyoto Protocol flexible mechanisms, such as Joint Implementation or International Emissions Trading, because of objections from some countries, including Poland)³⁵ and grants from individual states. Also agreed in Poznań

³⁵ A. Kassenberg, "COP 14—spodziewano się za wiele, a osiągnięto niewiele," *Biuletyn Klimatyczny*, 2009, no. 18, p. 5.

was an agenda of 2009 meetings devoted to reducing differences of position on key negotiating issues so that during the meeting in Copenhagen a post-2012 climate agreement could be concluded.

Poland's Role as Host to UN Climate Change Conference. In 2008, Poland played a special role in the international thrust for climate change mitigation. This was because Poznań hosted the 14th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change serving as the meeting of the parties to the Kyoto Protocol on its fourth session (COP 14/CMP 4). An application for the organization of the 14th Conference had been made on behalf of the Polish government by Minister for the Environment Jan Szyszko at COP 12 in Nairobi, and a year later a decision to grant Poznań the organization of the conference was adopted. On 17 January 2008 in Bonn, Polish Minister of the Environment Maciej Nowicki and Executive Secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Yvo de Boer signed the host country agreement between the government of the Republic of Poland and the UNFCCC Secretariat. The Poland was chosen to host the 14th Conference had two-fold consequences: it required active substantive participation in the global debate and in negotiations on a future climate change agreement and confronted this country with the challenge of efficient preparation and organization of one of the major regular international meetings and the first UN summit to take place in Poland.

Throughout 2008 Poland was actively involved in the global debate on combating climate change. At the beginning of the year at the UN General Assembly session on climate change, the minister for the environment emphasized that Poland wanted the Poznań conference to be an important step towards identifying concrete efforts aimed at the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change and an important landmark on the road to a climate change agreement to be reached at the 15th Conference in Copenhagen. As host to the 14th Conference, Poland intended to highlight the importance of demonstrating examples of successful technology transfer and undertakings in adaptation to climate change. This purpose was to be served by an exhibition of innovation, new inventions and innovative solutions serving for reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.³⁶

In March 2008, Minister Nowicki took part in a ministerial-level meeting of 20 countries (G8 and the largest greenhouse gas emitters) organized as part of

³⁶ *Minister Środowiska przemawia na forum ONZ*, communication from the Ministry of the Environment, 12 February 2008, www.mos.gov.pl.

the Gleneagles Dialogue on Climate Change, Clean Energy and Sustainable Development in Chiba, Japan. At the meeting the Polish delegation participated in plenary sessions and in discussions on innovative environmental technology (use of renewable energy sources, carbon capture and storage), energy efficiency, project financing, and international negotiations on a future climate change agreement. In his address the minister highlighted the need for rich countries to support poorer ones, pointing out that technological as well as financial aid was required. He offered, among other things, sharing this country's experience as repayment for environmental investment swap (owing to these arrangements with a number of creditor states many state-of-the-art solutions had been brought into Poland and a number of important environmental projects, including greenhouse gas emissions reduction, had been implemented).³⁷

The Polish delegation also attended a number of other important meetings on climate change, such as a meeting of the Executive Board of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), the Conference of Environment Ministers from the European Union and Latin America and Caribbean Countries, the Accra Climate Change Talks and a meeting of UNFCCC Subsidiary Bodies in Bonn. Consultations on ongoing negotiations also were held within the Troika—the representatives of three consecutive COP presidencies: the Indonesian, Polish and Danish.

Before the Poznań Climate Change Conference two important meetings were held in Poland. On 13 and 14 October representatives of 40 states came to Warsaw at the invitation of Minister Nowicki for informal ministerial-level consultations. The purpose of the consultations was to discuss the headway made on the implementation of the Bali Action Plan, a long-term (till 2050) common vision of cooperation on climate change, and an expected outcome of the 14th Conference. During the meeting it was emphasized that the financial crisis should not be an excuse for neglect of financial support to climate protection efforts.³⁸

The other important meeting, a Summit on Sectoral Cooperation organized at the initiative of Minister of the Economy Waldemar Pawlak, was held in Warsaw on 27 and 28 November. It was attended by ministers from 20 countries

³⁷ *IV spotkanie ministerialne "Gleneagles Dialogue" w sprawie zmian klimatu, czystej energii i zrównoważonego rozwoju (13–16.03.2008 r., Chiba—Japonia)*, communication from the Ministry of the Environment, 17 March 2008, www.mos.gov.pl.

³⁸ *Ministrowie przekonani: kryzys finansowy nie powinien zniweczyć globalnych wysiłków na rzecz klimatu*, resume of informal consultations ahead of COP 14, press release, 14 October 2008, www.cop14.gov.pl.

responsible for the bulk of global emissions, and by representatives of the most energy-intensive industries: steel, cement, aluminum and power generation. Besides an exchange of views between the industry ministers, the purpose of the meeting was to discuss opportunities for public-private cooperation in terms of climate change policy making. The inclusion of enterprises in the debate on future solutions under the sectoral approach is important, because they will be shouldering the bulk of the costs of future emissions reduction efforts. The Warsaw meeting inaugurated a "Warsaw dialogue," a process meant to support UNFCCC negotiations.³⁹

On the first day of the Poznań UN Climate Change Conference Minister for the Environment Maciej Nowicki was appointed president of the conference, a position that involves chairing debates. During the debates the president must remain impartial and may not directly represent his country (the country designates another person to represent it at the session as a party to the Convention). The role of the president is to moderate the Convention parties' debates, to support the negotiating process and to help arrive at an agreement. This involves remaining at all times in touch with the representatives of the most important parties so as to understand their positions, identify the extent of their convergence, and attempt to develop compromise proposals. At Minister Nowicki's initiative the COP 14 High Level Segment on a shared vision for long-term cooperation action, attended by more than 100 ministers, was organized as a round-table debate—for the first time in the history of the climate change conferences. The Polish minister will hold the function of president until the beginning of the next conference in Copenhagen. This will require constant international activity and cooperation with the host of the 15th UN Climate Change Conference.

The UNFCCC Secretariat gave high marks to the organization of the Poznań conference. Preparations had been started already in 2007 so that at the Bali meeting the delegates could be provided with highlights of the next summit. In 2008, information and promotional activities were launched, with information stands (e.g., at the EXPO 2008 international exhibition in Saragossa) and briefings (at the Bonn session of UNFCCC Subsidiary Bodies, the New York session of the Economic and Social Council, Accra Climate Change Talks in Ghana, or for representatives of embassies in Warsaw) organized.⁴⁰ The conference, held in the International Poznań Fair, was attended by delegations of

³⁹ "Chairman's Conclusions," Summit on Sectoral Cooperation, Warsaw, 28 November 2008.

⁴⁰ "Przygotowania Polski do COP 14..."

191 states, 44 UN agencies and inter-governmental institutions, and nearly 400 non-governmental organizations—all in all, 9,300 delegates.⁴¹ Prime Minister Donald Tusk attended the opening of the conference and President Lech Kaczyński took part in the closing. Special guests included UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Nobel Peace Prize laureate Al Gore and Senator John Kerry as a special envoy of U.S. President-elect Barack Obama.

Assessment

In 2008 the energy/climate package negotiations were the focus of Poland's climate policy. The outcome of Polish efforts can be seen from two perspectives: the effective impact of the adopted package, and of the attainment the adopted targets and the use of opportunities.

The government's enthusiasm is by no means shared across the board. Some opinions present the achieved results differently, pointing to flaws in the adopted solutions and to the government's belated response, attributable partly to the change of government and the ruling coalition in the wake of the 2007 parliamentary election, and partly to the administration's having been poorly equipped to evaluate the consequences of the implementation of the package. The latter was evidenced by the fact that in the autumn of 2007, when European Commission representatives visited this country to present assessments of the impact of the package on the Polish economy, their opinions went uncontested.

The government's assessments, with references to a fundamental remodeling of the EU ETS system under pressure from Poland, are much of an overstatement. In truth the mechanism has remained intact, with just some temporary derogations and waivers (won by Poland, among other countries) added. The Central European states were allocated, for their past reductions on which they had indeed outperformed Western European countries, 2% of the allowances to be divided among them. This "extra" is modest indeed, even if the allocation of 10% allowances to lower-GDP countries sugared the pill (it should be remembered, however, that the 10% had already figured in the EC's original proposal). Of course, had the package been adopted in its original version, the resulting burdens on the Polish economy in 2013–2020 would have been much higher than under the ultimate version. Yet it must be borne in mind that the post-2020 implications of the package will be very grave nevertheless. The seven-year transition period appears short in the context of the power industry

⁴¹ Meeting of the Sejm Environmental Protection, Natural Resources and Forestry Committee, *Biuletyn*, 11 February 2009.

investment gestation cycle. As for other Polish demands, it should be noted that both the efforts to have a benchmark-and-auctioning method substituted for full auctioning and to incorporate mechanisms to control emissions allowance prices in the package failed.

Yet, as assessments are made, it is only fair to consider what real chances of completely blocking undesirable solutions Poland had. Initially, the package was scheduled for adoption by majority voting, which would have reduced to a minimum the individual states' chances for introducing amendments. For this reason, the first thing Poland needed to do was to bring about a change in the manner of procedure and to solicit the support of other members. To give credit where it is due, as regards the methods and the efficiency of efforts to rally a blocking minority Poland did well. This was its unique test of the capability for forming *ad hoc* alliances—that important way of building a state's position in the European Union that translates, indirectly, into opportunities for co-shaping Community law. In this context, Poland's performance appears praiseworthy, particularly as both the Commission and the presidency were quite adamant on the necessity of adopting the original version of the package.

Because of the intricate pattern of intra-EU powers and interests, and allowing for the political risk of a veto on a proposal, the government can be presumed to have won all that was there to win—though, obviously, not all the desirable things. From the European perspective, the conclusion of the compromise should be considered an example of the management of differences of interests between the Western European states, with their higher development and different needs, and the “catching-up” of Central European countries. In that sense the compromise can be regarded as an important development, for the new members partly succeeded in safeguarding the motion that intra-EU differences are taken into account in policy planning. Yet the real success will come only if the resources saved through the negotiations are rationally allocated to power sector modernization, renewable resources development and—an important point—to energy efficiency improvement. Failing that, the black scenario, which features a Poland with a gravely weakened competitiveness, petering out growth, and high social costs, will indeed materialize, even with several years' delay.

In the context of a future global climate change agreement it was not to be realistically expected that the most difficult negotiation issues would be resolved in 2008. Admittedly, the European Union was putting forward the most advanced proposals for measures to contain greenhouse gas emissions, yet much depends on the adoption of equally ambitious commitments by the other developed

countries and by the most advanced developing countries. On principle Poland subscribes to the main assumptions of the EU negotiating position, but the reduction of its share of the additional financial burdens on behalf of other countries remains the main problem. The effects of the Poznań conference—the decisions on technology transfer and on the Adaptation Fund—matched Poland's expectations. Given the number of outstanding issues on which compromise will be hard to reach, the burden of negotiations was moved forward to 2009. Now that the developing countries play a more active role, transfer of technology and project financing in these countries—i.e., negotiation issues that are important also from Poland's perspective—are moving increasingly to the fore.

The organization of the UN Climate Change Conference in Poznań, a major-scale event which had required efficient preparations, was an unquestioned success for Poland. The organization and the progress of the conference earned high acclaim, including from the UNFCCC Secretariat. It should also be remembered that the Polish minister for the environment is the current COP president, a function involving the demanding task of preparing, jointly with the Convention Secretariat, the base for a future climate change agreement scheduled for signature in December 2009 during the upcoming UN Climate Change Conference (COP 15) in Copenhagen.

Poland's Foreign Economic Relations

Poland enjoyed strong macroeconomic performance in 2008, with a GDP growth rate that placed it among the EU's top performers and with an unemployment rate down to the single digits. The remaining macroeconomic indicators, including the budget deficit, inflation, and interest rates, were affected by external factors, in particular by the global financial crisis and its increasingly strong spillover into the real economy.

Unlike in the first three quarters of the year, when Poland's macroeconomic stability and still-strong outlook for economic development had a positive influence on the development of its external economic relations, in the fourth quarter, symptoms of a recession in countries that are Poland's major economic partners as well as deteriorating economic performances in some Central and Eastern European countries hurt the growth of foreign trade and direct investment inflow to Poland.

Macroeconomic Performance

In 2008, Poland's gross domestic product totaled PLN 1,271.7 billion. After a record 6.8% GDP growth in 2007, the rate of growth decelerated to 4.9% in 2008 on the back of turmoil on global financial markets.¹ Poland's economic growth rate was one of the highest in the European Union, markedly outstripping those of the "old" EU countries. Only Romania, Slovakia and Bulgaria outperformed Poland in terms of GDP growth.

Because Polish banks were only moderately involved in "toxic assets," the country's exposure to the direct impact of the international financial market turmoil was relatively low. Also, unlike Spain and Ireland, Poland had avoided a property market bubble, and the proportion of foreign currency-denominated loans in Poland was lower than in, for instance, Latvia. Nevertheless, in the second half of the year, the increasingly powerful impact of the financial crisis

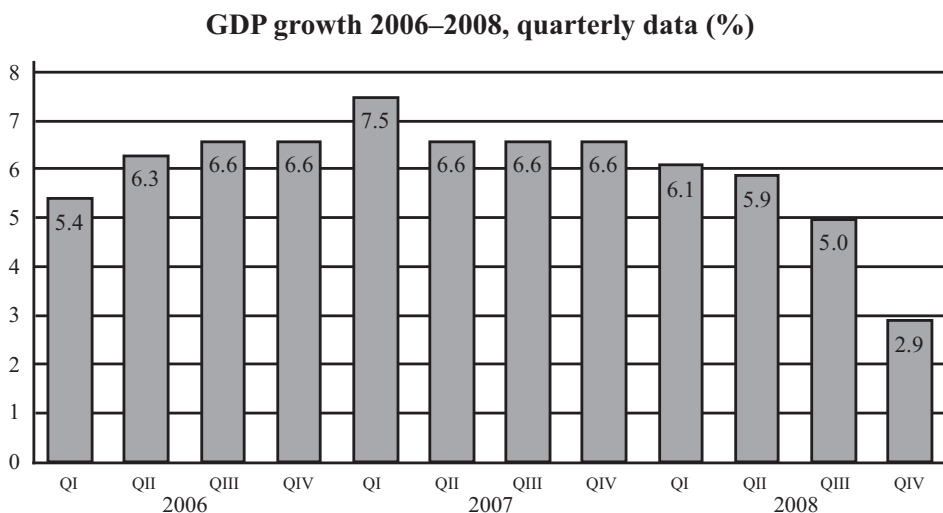
* The author is an analyst at the Polish Institute of International Affairs.

¹ *Produkt krajowy brutto w I kwartale 2009 r.*, Główny Urząd Statystyczny (Central Statistical Office), www.stat.gov.pl.

on the real economy was also felt in this country, as evidenced by a marked slump in the fourth-quarter GDP growth rate (Figure 1).

The steady growth of private consumption in 2008 and a high, albeit waning, growth of gross capital formation were the decisive factors shaping the size of the gross domestic product. Their contributions to real GDP growth were 4.6 percentage points and 1.0 percentage point respectively, against exports' contribution of minus 0.7 percentage point. The rapid growth of private consumption was due to rising households' purchasing power, in particular in the case of enterprise-sector incomes, while high retail sales testified to strong consumer confidence in 2008² despite disconcerting news from abroad about the financial and economic crisis.

Figure 1



Source: Central Statistical Office data.

The crisis had a much stronger impact on the enterprise sector, where investment slowed in the second half of the year due to tighter lending criteria and more expensive credit, accompanied by an economic downturn in Poland's key export markets and increased business uncertainty. Due to these factors, the growth of gross capital formation decelerated from 16.4% in the first quarter to

² *Analiza sytuacji gospodarczej Polski w 2008 r.*, Departament Analiz i Prognoz, Ministerstwo Gospodarki, February 2009, p. 5.

9.4% in the second and 3.4% in the third quarter, followed by a drop of 4.6% in the fourth quarter.³

The economic slowdown was one of the factors responsible for a drop in government revenue in the second half of 2008. Revenue fell below the budget target, mainly as a result of declining goods-and-services tax receipts (which shrank by PLN 11.2 billion) and reduced European Union funds and other non-refundable receipts (down by PLN 20.5 billion).⁴ Spending cuts made in the fourth quarter helped keep the budget deficit below its PLN 27.1 billion target, at PLN 24.3 billion.⁵

Table 1

**Deficit and public debt of central and local government institutions,
2005–2008 (PLN million)**

Item	2005	2006	2007	2008
Gross domestic product (GDP)	983 302	1 060 031	1 175 266	1 271 715
Central and local government sector deficit	42 358	41 131	22 131	49 537
% GDP	4.3	3.9	1.9	3.9
Central and local government sector debt	462 742	505 149	527 570	598 402
% GDP	47.1	47.7	45.2	47.1

Source: Central Statistical Office data.

Local governments failed to exercise similar budget discipline⁶, as a result the aggregate deficit of central government and local government institutions rose from 1.9% of GDP in 2007 to 3.9% in 2008 (Table 1). Attempts to sustain the downward trend in public debt failed and the debt rose by over PLN

³ *Kwartalne mierniki gospodarcze*, Główny Urząd Statystyczny, www.stat.gov.pl.

⁴ *Sprawozdanie z wykonania budżetu państwa za okres od 1 stycznia do 31 grudnia 2008 r. Omówienie*, Ministerstwo Finansów (Ministry of Finance), Warsaw 2009, pp. 56–57.

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 41.

⁶ *Poland: IMF Country Report No. 09/138*, International Monetary Fund, Washington, D.C., 2009, p. 5.

70 billion in 2008, to 47.1% of GDP. Domestic debt accounted for about 75% of the overall public debt, while foreign debt stood at \$50.6 billion at the end of 2008.⁷

With the economy enjoying a sustained boom, 2008 was yet another year when the situation on the labor market improved. For the first time since the start of market reforms in the country, the unemployment rate dropped to a single-digit level in May. The registered unemployment rate dropped from 11.2% at the end of 2007 to 9.5% in December 2008. At 1,473,800, the number of jobless registered with employment agencies in December decreased by 272,800, or 15.6%, from a year earlier.⁸

Employment rose to 8.27 million as of 31 December 2008, up 1.8% on a year earlier. The proportion of employment in the private sector was 60.5%, against 59.9% a year earlier. On the hand, high employment growth was reported in the construction sector (up 9.0%), retail and repair services (up 8.0%), real estate and business services (up 7.8%), financial services (up 7.4%), and hotel and restaurant services (up 5.5%). On the other hand, average employment dropped in the electricity, gas and water utilities sector (down 0.8%) and in agriculture, hunting and forestry (down 1.1%).

More than 18,000 work permits were issued to foreigners in 2008, most of them to citizens of Ukraine (5,400), China (2,040), Belarus (1,325), Moldova (1,218), and Vietnam (1,200). The average monthly pay in the economy was PLN 2,943.88, up 10.2% on a year earlier. In the public sector, the figure was PLN 3,411.33 (up 12.0%), and in the private sector PLN 2,781.44 (up 8.8%).⁹

Despite the country's generally robust 2008 performance, the economic slowdown was making itself felt also in the labor market. Unlike in the first three quarters of the year, when unemployment decreased steadily to a low of 8.8% in October, from November onward the unemployment rate picked up (Figure 2) as enterprise-sector employment dropped by 44,000 between October and December.¹⁰ Whether these undesirable trends persist in the Polish labor market will depend on how the situation develops in other European countries, which are the main markets for many Polish producers. The slump in external

⁷ *Roczne mierniki gospodarcze*, Główny Urząd Statystyczny, www.stat.gov.pl.

⁸ *Rynek pracy w Polsce: 2008 rok*, Ministerstwo Pracy i Polityki Społecznej, Departament Rynku Pracy, Warsaw, March 2009, p. 6, www.mps.gov.pl.

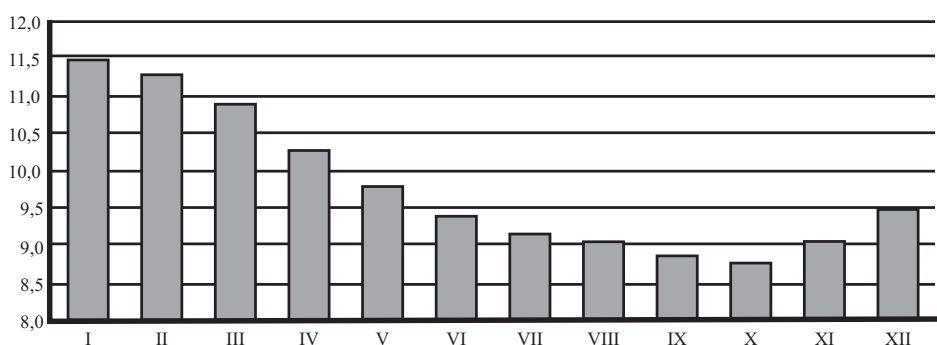
⁹ *Zatrudnienie i wynagrodzenia w gospodarce narodowej w 2008 r.*, Główny Urząd Statystyczny, Warsaw 2009, pp. 19, 92.

¹⁰ *Wybrane miesięczne wskaźniki makroekonomiczne*, Główny Urząd Statystyczny, www.stat.gov.pl.

demand and worsening conditions in the financial market brought about a drop in output and employment.

Figure 2

**Changes in the unemployment rate in Poland in 2008
(%)**



Source: Central Statistical Office data.

Consumer prices rose 3.3% in 2008, less markedly than in 2007 when they increased by 4.4%. In the first eight months of the year, an upward trend prevailed, with year-on-year inflation up from 4.0% in January to 4.8% in July and August. The growth of inflation was driven mainly by rapidly growing prices of electricity, fuels and some services, in particular residential utilities.

Soaring global energy prices (with oil priced at \$147 per barrel in July) were the key external factor that had an impact on Poland's inflation—one that, with some delay, led to higher domestic prices of energy and selected services. Growing food prices also contributed to higher inflation. On the other hand, the prices of many imported goods, which declined on the back of an appreciating zloty, were conducive to curbing inflation.¹¹

In the last four months of the year, the trend reversed and the Consumer Price Index (CPI) was down to 3.3% by December (Table 2). A powerful inflation-reducing factor were falling fuel prices—as a result of a global trend whereby oil prices plummeted under the combined impact of reduced demand and a markedly worse outlook for global economic growth. On one hand slower growth in the prices of food and non-alcoholic beverages—attributable in part to

¹¹ *Raport o inflacji*, Narodowy Bank Polski, Rada Polityki Pieniężnej (National Bank of Poland, Monetary Policy Council), Warsaw, October 2008, pp. 11–12, 34.

falling agriculture prices on global markets—also contributed to lower inflation in the last four months of the year. On the other hand, steeply rising regulated prices and a strong depreciation of the zloty—as a result of which oil and food prices fell more markedly in dollar terms than in zloty terms¹²—slowed down the decrease of inflation from September onward.

Table 2

Core inflation indices by month

		Core inflation indices		
	CPI	Excluding administered prices	Excluding most volatile prices	Excluding food and energy prices
	Same month of previous year = 100			
December 2007	104.0	104.1	103.2	101.3
January	104.0	104.1	103.0	101.6
February	104.2	103.9	103.6	101.8
March	104.1	103.8	103.8	102.0
April	104.0	103.7	103.9	102.1
May	104.4	103.8	104.1	102.1
June	104.6	104.1	104.2	102.2
July	104.8	104.2	104.2	102.2
August	104.8	104.3	104.3	102.7
September	104.5	103.8	104.4	102.9
October	104.2	103.5	104.4	102.9
November	103.7	102.8	104.3	102.9
December 2008	103.3	102.4	104.2	102.8

Source: National Bank of Poland's calculations based on Central Statistical Office data, www.nbp.gov.pl.

In the 12 months of 2008, the consumer price index remained above the inflation target of 2.5% with a +/- 1 percentage point fluctuation band established by the Monetary Policy Council in 2004. Moreover, until December, inflation

¹² *Raport o inflacji*, Narodowy Bank Polski, Rada Polityki Pieniężnej, Warsaw, February 2009, pp. 11–12, 39–40.

persisted outside the upper end of the fluctuation band. Forecasts of sustained inflationary pressure—fueled mainly by fast economic growth; developments in the labor market, including rapidly growing wages and recurring pay raise demands in the public finance sector; rising agricultural commodity prices in global markets; and, government-controlled price hikes at the beginning of the year, including higher prices for residential utilities—prompted the Monetary Policy Council to increase the key interest rate four times (Table 3).¹³

Table 3

Changes in NBP base interest rates in 2008

In effect as of	Reference rate	Lombard rate	Rediscount rate	NBP deposit rate
31 Jan. 2008	5.25	6.75	5.50	3.75
28 Feb. 2008	5.50	7.00	5.75	4.00
27 March 2008	5.75	7.25	6.00	4.25
26 June 2008	6.00	7.50	6.25	4.50
27 Nov. 2008	5.75	7.25	6.00	4.25
24 Dec. 2008	5.00	6.50	5.25	3.50

Source: National Bank of Poland.

In the fourth quarter, the adverse impact of the global financial crisis on the global business cycle became even more pronounced, sending commodity and food prices down and reducing inflation. This trend was also a factor behind the decrease in CPI in Poland. However, increases of controlled prices during 2008 had the effect of keeping inflation close to the upper limit of its allowable deviation from the inflation target. Nevertheless, as forecasts of national economic growth worsened and tension in the labor market decreased in the wake of reduced demand for labor and the easing of pay pressures, the Monetary Policy Council decided that the probability of medium-term inflation staying below the inflation target was high and reduced the interest rates by 1 percentage point in total at its meetings in November and December.¹⁴

¹³ *Sprawozdanie z wykonania założeń polityki pieniężnej na rok 2008*, Narodowy Bank Polski, Rada Polityki Pieniężnej, Warsaw, May 2009, pp. 13–16.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 17.

The deteriorating situation in global financial markets in the fourth quarter had a discernible impact on the domestic market, where foreign financial institutions struggling with problems in their home markets were among the shareholders of domestic banks. In Poland, the mounting problems of the banking sector were reflected by reduced liquidity in the inter-bank market, while the cost of credit rose and lending criteria became more restrictive amid growing risk aversion.

To improve commercial banks' access to funds for foreign exchange transactions, in October, the Monetary Policy Council introduced an additional monetary policy instrument: the foreign exchange swap. Initially, operations of this type were offered to banks for zloty-euro and zloty-dollar pairs of currencies; then, in November, following a swap facility agreement between the NBP and the National Bank of Switzerland, forex swaps were also introduced for zloty-Swiss franc transactions.

The scope of interest rate rises in Poland in the first three quarters of 2008 was much higher than in the eurozone. In that period the European Central Bank (ECB) raised its basic interest rates only once (in July), by 25 basis points. As a result, the disparity between Polish and eurozone interest rates widened to 1.75 percentage points, from 1.0 percentage point at the end of 2007, thus influencing both Poland's foreign investment appeal and the appreciation of the zloty. Yet, in the face of a stronger-than-expected economic downturn in the eurozone, the ECB Governing Council decided to cut interest rates much deeper than in Poland—in all, by 175 basis points between October and the end of 2008, as a result of which the interest rate disparity between Poland and the eurozone widened to 2.5 percentage points.

The exchange rate of the zloty against major currencies showed two opposing trends in 2008: a gradual appreciation between January and July, followed by a sharp depreciation thereafter, in a trend that continued into early 2009. In the January-July period, the zloty gained against major currencies: to 3.20 against the euro, from 3.58; 2.02 against the U.S. dollar, from 2.44; and 1.96 against the Swiss franc, from 2.16.¹⁵

After hitting their respective lows in late July, the main currencies began to regain ground against the zloty. By the end of the year, the euro appreciated to cost PLN 4.10; the dollar traded at PLN 2.96; and the Swiss franc at PLN 2.89.¹⁶ All three currencies were more expensive than at the beginning of the year

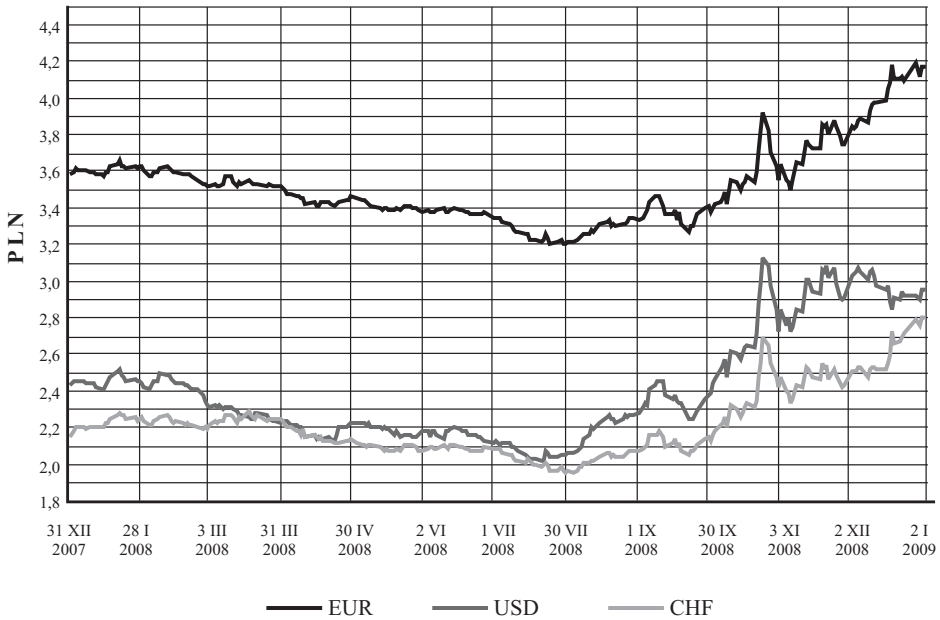
¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 29.

¹⁶ *Archiwum średnich kursów walut w 2008 r.*, Narodowy Bank Polski, www.nbp.gov.pl.

(Figure 3). The Swiss franc gained the most against the zloty, over 50% between July and December, hitting hard on many Polish households that had taken out Swiss franc-denominated mortgage loans.

Figure 3

**Fluctuations in the nominal exchange rates of the euro,
US dollar and Swiss franc, 2008 (in PLN)**



Source: National Bank of Poland data.

In the first part of the year, the exchange rate was under the influence of the strong fundamentals of the Polish economy. The zloty benefited from investors' positive attitude toward Central and Eastern European currencies and a widening disparity of interest rates between Poland and the eurozone. From late July onward the zloty began to depreciate, chiefly due to global factors, including a persistent risk aversion that triggered an outflow of capital from emerging markets in the wake of deteriorated trends in some countries in the region, in particular Hungary and Latvia.

Besides the global factors, reports on Poland's deteriorating current-account balance also contributed to the weakening of the zloty. Other contributing factors included forecasts of a stronger-than-expected economic slowdown in

2009 in the wake of a mounting global recession, and contracting liquidity in the domestic foreign exchange market.¹⁷

In September, Prime Minister Donald Tusk declared that Poland would strive to join the Economic and Monetary Union, also known as the eurozone, on 1 Jan. 2012. This was the first-ever declaration of its kind by the government, indicating a target date for adopting the European currency, since Poland's European Union entry on 1 May 2004. On 16 September the prime minister met with the Monetary Policy Council, including central bank governor Sławomir Skrzypek. The meeting produced an agreement that Poland should work to meet the convergence criteria and get approval from the European Commission to join the eurozone by 2011. Meeting participants decided that the Ministry of Finance and the National Bank of Poland would set up special task forces to prepare the country to join the Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM II).¹⁸

At its Oct. 28 meeting, the government approved a document referred to as Poland's "euro adoption roadmap." In the document, the government stated that its intention was for Poland to meet the nominal convergence criteria in 2011. Then, after the approval by the European Commission and the Economic and Financial Affairs Council (Ecofin), the country would be able to adopt the single European currency as of 1 January 2012, as the crowning of its efforts to join the Economic and Monetary Union, the document said.¹⁹

The roadmap contained a list of conditions and necessary decisions and measures (with an indicative timetable) to be taken so that the goal set by the government could be attained. Stage one provided for various preparatory activities (such as studies of the various aspects of euro adoption, including the required amendments to the constitution; the updating of Poland's Convergence Program; and negotiations with European institutions on the ERM II entry to make sure that the Polish currency is included in ERM II in the first half of 2009.

Not all the work went according to schedule and the more and more profound impact of the global financial crisis on Poland's economic performance indicators included among the convergence criteria (notably the exchange rate

¹⁷ *Raport o inflacji*, Narodowy Bank Polski, Rada Polityki Pieniężnej, Warsaw, June 2008, pp. 42–43; *Raport o inflacji*, Narodowy Bank Polski, Rada Polityki Pieniężnej, Warsaw, October 2008, p. 44; *Raport o inflacji*, Narodowy Bank Polski, Rada Polityki Pieniężnej, Warsaw, February 2009, pp. 50–51.

¹⁸ *Komunikat po spotkaniu premiera z przedstawicielami Rady Polityki Pieniężnej*, Kancelaria Prezesa Rady Ministrów (Prime Minister's Office), Warsaw, 16 September 2008, www.kprm.gov.pl.

¹⁹ *Obroty handlu zagranicznego ogółem i według krajów (I–XII 2008 r. wyniki ostateczne)*, Główny Urząd Statystyczny, July 2009, www.stat.gov.pl.

and the budget deficit) reduced the chances for meeting the deadline for including the zloty in ERM II as halfway target on the road toward euro adoption.

Foreign Trade

Poland's exports and imports continued to grow in 2008. In euro terms, exports totaled €116.2 billion, growing by €14.4 billion, or 14.1%, over the previous year (0.9 percentage point less than in 2007). Imports totaled €142.4 billion, rising by €22.1 billion, or 18.3% (0.4 percentage point more than in 2007). With imports growing faster than exports, the country's foreign trade deficit exceeded €26.2 billion, increasing by more than €7.6 billion from 2007.²⁰

Poland's foreign trade volumes felt the impact of decreased demand abroad in the wake of the financial crisis. A consistently brisk growth of exports and imports in the first three quarters was followed by a marked slowdown in October and a major decline in November (Figure 4). After the first three quarters, exports were 18.9% higher than in the first three quarters of 2007 and imports were 22% higher; then in November and December exports plunged by 12.3% and 14.5% respectively, compared with the same months of the previous year, and imports shrank by 7.4% and 11.3% respectively.²¹

The relatively fast growth of merchandise trade in the first three quarters was fueled by the still-good macroeconomic performance of both Poland and its key trade partners in Europe. The appreciation of the zloty against the euro and the U.S. dollar at the time did not undermine the growth of exports to a significant extent. Instead it mitigated the impact of high global energy and food prices.

The mounting symptoms of an economic recession in Western Europe as well as in Russia and Ukraine—Poland's important trade partners—led to lower demand for imported goods in these countries. As a result, Poland's trade turnover plummeted in most of its key markets. The banking liquidity crunch triggered by the crisis reduced the availability of credit to businesses, for financing both day-to-day operations and foreign trade transactions.

The crisis hurt the credit ratings of Central and Eastern European countries, including Poland, which resulted in a relatively fast outflow of foreign capital and, consequently, in a serious weakening of the zloty against major currencies.

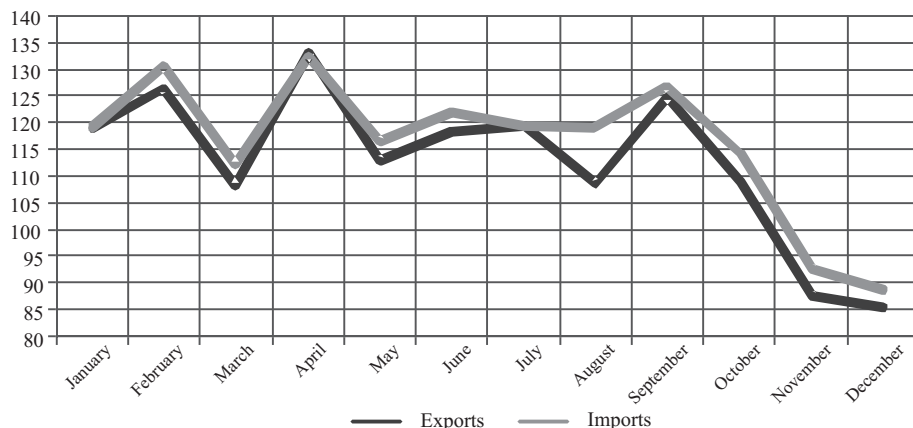
²⁰ *Ibidem*.

²¹ *Ocena sytuacji w HZ po 4 miesiącach 2009 r.*, Ministerstwo Gospodarki, Departament Analiz i Prognoz, Warsaw, July 2009, p. 2.

The depreciation of the zloty, while mitigating the exports decline, sent the prices of imported goods—including imported inputs for export production—soaring. With access to financing more difficult, Polish exporters found this had grave consequences for production operations.

Figure 4

Poland's foreign trade turnovers in 2008: monthly growth of merchandise trade (corresponding month of previous year = 100)



Source: Economic Ministry data.

Machinery and transport equipment (Sections XVI, XVII, XVIII) are the single largest and most important group of commodities in Poland's foreign trade, accounting for about 45% of the country's total exports and 38% of imports. The first half of 2008 saw an acceleration of exports in this group. They grew by more than 21%, over 2 percentage points more than in the first half of 2007 and 4.5 percentage points above the average growth rate for all exports. At the same time, imports grew by 20.6%, only 0.4 percentage points more than a year earlier, but 2 percentage points above the average growth rate for imports.

In the third quarter, the growth trend in this group continued at a level of 19–20%, with promising changes (exports rising at a faster rate than imports) noted in all three sections, in particular the two most important ones: XVI—Machinery and Electrical Appliances, and VII—Vehicles and Vessels. In the fourth quarter, trade in this group decreased, with exports shrinking by 7.1% and imports by 3.7%. The drop in exports in this period was attributable for the

most part to lower exports of machinery, electrical appliances, electronic devices, cars, car parts and accessories.²²

In the case of metal products, which accounted for 13.3% of Poland's total exports and 11.8% of imports, exports rose faster than the country's overall exports in the first three quarters, with a difference of nearly 1 percentage point, and almost three times faster than imports. This resulted in a marked narrowing of the trade deficit for this group of products (by over €1 billion, to under €300 million). Of all major commodity groups, metal goods showed the deepest plunge in the fourth quarter, with exports down by 12.1% and imports down 10.6%. This decline was attributable mainly to a substantial decrease in the exports and imports of iron, pig iron and steel.²³

Mineral product exports showed dynamic growth in the first three quarters, expanding by 30% after a plunge of nearly 2% in 2007. However, in absolute terms, exports increased far less dynamically than imports, which grew by a whopping 52% in the first three quarters of 2008, up from 14% in the same period of 2007. This resulted in a drastic widening of the trade deficit in this product group, by nearly €3.9 billion to more than €9.9 billion, chiefly due to record-high global oil prices in this period. In the fourth quarter, as the global prices of mineral products (including crude oil) plummeted, the value of Poland's imports went down by 8%, while exports remained unchanged. As a result, the deficit in the trade of mineral products narrowed.²⁴

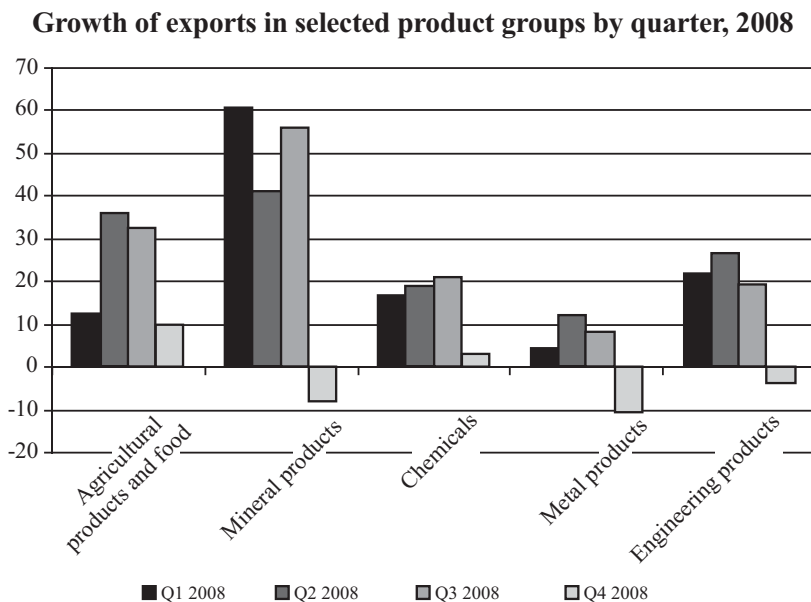
The crisis had relatively less impact on the trade of two other product groups important to Poland's foreign trade: food and live animals, and chemicals (each accounting for about 12% of Poland's exports). In the trade of agricultural products, exports grew by 14% and imports rose by 24.7% in the first three quarters, followed by a slackening of the upward trend in the trade of these commodities in the fourth quarter, to 5.9% in the case of exports and 9.9% in the case of imports.

²² Cf. *Syntetyczna ocena sytuacji w polskim hz za I półrocze 2008 r.*, Ministerstwo Gospodarki, Warsaw, 12 September 2008; *Ocena aktualnej sytuacji w handlu zagranicznym po trzech kw. 2008 r. oraz prognoza na rok 2008 i 2009 w kontekście zagrożeń kryzysowych*, Warsaw, 5 December 2008; *Ocena sytuacji w obrotach towarowych z zagranicą po 11 miesiącach 2008 r.*, Warsaw, 26 January 2009; *Ocena sytuacji w HZ po 4 miesiącach 2009 r.*, Warsaw, 10 July 2009.

²³ *Ibidem*.

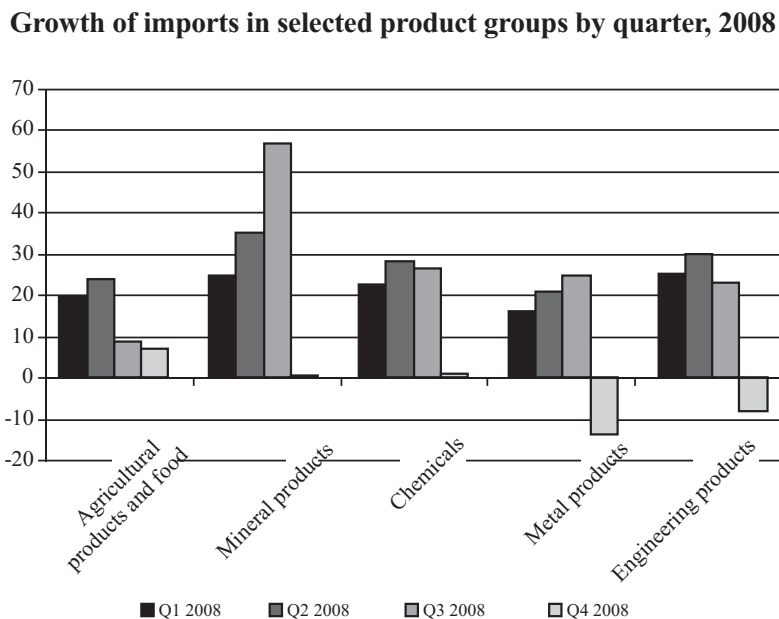
²⁴ *Ibidem*.

Figure 5



Source: Based on Economic Ministry data.

Figure 6



Source: Based on Economic Ministry data.

In the case of chemicals, exports and imports grew about 20% in the first three quarters of 2008, while the fourth-quarter growth was roughly on par with that recorded in the fourth quarter of 2007. With imports 150% higher than exports, this added to the upward trend in Poland's trade deficit.²⁵

No significant changes occurred in the geographic structure of Poland's foreign trade in 2008. The European Union countries remained Poland's most important trade partners, accounting for 77.8% of its overall exports (1.1 percentage points less than in 2007) and for 61.9% of imports (2.3 percentage points less than a year earlier). The share of Central and Eastern European countries²⁶ inched up by 0.5 percentage point in exports, to 10.3%, and by 1 percentage point in imports, to 11.6%. The same was true of developing countries, which accounted for 6.7% of Poland's overall exports, 0.6 percentage points more than in 2007, and for 19.1% of its imports, up by 0.8 percentage points from 2007.²⁷

The role of other European Union countries in Poland's trade has decreased consistently for several years. One of the reasons is that Poland's trade with the EU was liberalized before the country joined the EU in 2004. In 2003, EU27 countries accounted for 81.8% of Poland's exports, while in 2008 the figure was down to 77.8%. In imports, the corresponding figure shrank from 69.6% to 61.9%. Significantly, in the same period, the role of new member states increased by 3 percentage points, to 16.1%, in exports and by 0.6 percentage points, to 9.1%, in imports.

The EU's declining share in Poland's foreign trade is related to the operations of multinational corporations, which, through foreign direct investment in Poland, have changed the country's position in the international division of labor, contributing to a modification in the structure of imports (increased importance of intermediate goods) and exports (increased importance of finished goods) and offering better export opportunities to third markets. At the same time, the declining role of the EU27 in Poland's imports was attributable in part to a strong increase in consumer goods imports from China and raw materials imports from Russia.²⁸

²⁵ *Ibidem*.

²⁶ Trade with Central and Eastern European countries covers Albania, Belarus, Croatia, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine (according to Central Statistical Office data).

²⁷ *Obroty handlu zagranicznego ogółem i według krajów (I–XII 2008 r. wyniki ostateczne)*, Główny Urząd Statystyczny, 24 July 2009, www.stat.gov.pl.

²⁸ W. Mroczek, "Handel zagraniczny Polski po przystąpieniu do Unii Europejskiej," *Wspólnoty Europejskie*, 2009, no. 2, pp. 3–11.

Germany, France and Italy remain Poland's most important trade partners in the EU (Table 4). Exports to Germany rose 13.4% in the first three quarters of 2008, only to drop by 5.6% (faster than overall exports) in the fourth quarter. An even steeper drop was registered in imports from Germany: down by 16.4% after an increase of 16.2% in the first three quarters. The decreased trade of goods with Germany was due to a downturn in domestic demand in that country in the wake of the international economic crisis. This led to a drop in the exports of machinery and transport equipment, which dominate in the composition of Poland's exports to the German market.

In the merchandise trade with France, the first three quarters saw exports rise faster than imports, at 19.4% versus 13.7%. In the fourth quarter, imports declined more dramatically than exports, by 2.7% and 18.6% respectively. The plunging imports were largely due to reduced orders from French-owned businesses based in Poland. The growth of exports outpacing that of imports contributed to Poland's higher trade surplus with France; it grew from about €50 million in 2007 to €487 million in 2008. In the structure of bilateral trade, electrical appliances, furniture, metals, and agricultural products and food showed the highest surpluses, while the trade of chemicals, chiefly medicines, produced the highest deficit.

Table 4

Poland's top trade partners in 2008

Country	January-December 2008			2007			2008	2007
	million zlotys	million dollars	million euros	Jan.–Dec. 2007 = 100			I–XII	
				PLN	US\$.	euro	Share (%)	
EXPORTS								
1. Germany	101 520.0	43 104.5	29 124.1	101.4	120.1	110.4	25.9	25.0
2. France	25 178.4	10 668.0	7 210.4	106.9	126.4	116.2	6.1	6.2
3. Italy	24 252.3	10 273.8	6 942.6	95.0	112.3	103.3	6.6	6.0
4. U.K.	23 377.4	9 900.6	6 700.0	101.8	120.2	110.7	5.9	5.8
5. Czech Republic	23 122.5	9 803.7	6 630.7	107.9	127.6	117.5	5.5	5.7
6. Russia	21 070.7	8 917.3	6 049.6	118.0	138.6	128.5	4.6	5.2
7. Netherlands	16 323.8	6 910.9	4 674.8	110.3	130.3	120.0	3.8	4.0
8. Ukraine	15 085.0	6 436.7	4 345.3	98.6	116.8	107.7	4.0	3.7
9. Sweden	12 862.5	5 465.4	3 690.7	103.4	122.4	112.7	3.2	3.2
10. Hungary	11 247.4	4 791.4	3 230.1	100.1	118.8	109.1	2.9	2.8

Country	January-December 2008				2007		2008	2007
	million zlotys	million dollars	million euros	Jan.–Dec. 2007 = 100			I–XII	
				PLN	US\$.	euro	Share (%)	
IMPORTS								
1. Germany	114 166.3	48 555.4	32 755.2	103.9	123.1	113.2	24.1	23.0
2. Russia	48 340.8	20 545.0	13 877.2	121.5	143.1	132.2	8.7	9.7
3. China	40 066.9	16 797.9	11 465.9	122.9	142.9	133.3	7.1	8.1
4. Italy	32 346.6	13 689.4	9 260.5	103.3	121.8	112.2	6.9	6.5
5. France	23485.4	9 946.8	6 723.4	100.5	118.7	109.3	5.1	4.7
6. Czech Republic	17 667.7	7 532.2	5 073.6	111.7	132.8	121.8	3.5	3.6
7. Netherlands	17 083.7	7 233.4	4 896.8	109.5	129.1	119.1	3.4	3.4
8. U.K.	14 093.6	5 968.3	4 040.5	99.2	116.9	107.8	3.1	2.8
9. South Korea	12 369.3	5 157.6	3 531.2	115.8	133.8	125.3	2.3	2.5
10. Belgium	11 795.7	5 022.4	3 388.5	101.8	120.9	111.1	2.5	2.4

Source: Central Statistical Office, *Obroty handlu zagranicznego ogółem i według krajów (I–XII 2008 r., wyniki ostateczne)*, Warsaw 2009.

In the merchandise trade with Italy, the growth of exports, at 8.4%, lagged behind that of imports, at 13%, in the first three quarters. However, in the fourth quarter, imports decreased more considerably than exports, by 25.9% versus 14.2%. The decline in the merchandise trade was largely due to a slump in the sales of car industry products and machinery products, which dominated in both exports and imports, due to a factory operated in Poland by Italian automaker Fiat and other facilities producing mechanical components. However, because of the trends in the first three quarters, Poland's trade deficit with Italy doubled to more than €2.3 billion.²⁹

In trade with Russia and Ukraine, Poland's key partners in Eastern Europe, the first three quarters saw exports and imports soar: exports to Russia expanded by a healthy 40.2% and exports to Ukraine increased by 22.6%; imports from Russia rose by 44.7% and imports from Ukraine increased by 31.5%. On one hand this dynamic growth in Polish exports to these two markets was driven by

²⁹ Based on *Obroty handlu zagranicznego ogółem i według krajów (I–XII 2008 r. wyniki ostateczne)*, Główny Urząd Statystyczny, 24.07.2009; *Ocena sytuacji w obrotach towarowych z zagranicą po 11 miesiącach 2008 r.*, Ministerstwo Gospodarki, Warsaw, January 2009; and *Ocena sytuacji w HZ po 4 miesiącach 2009 r.*, Warsaw, July 2009.

strong demand for Polish machinery and transport equipment in Russia and Ukraine; these products accounted for 45% of Poland's total exports to Russia and 34% of its exports to Ukraine. On the other hand, the growth of imports to Poland was fueled by rising prices for major commodities exported by Russia (mineral products, including oil and natural gas) and Ukraine (metal and mineral products, chiefly iron ores).

In the fourth quarter, Poland's bilateral trade with Russia and Ukraine nose-dived. The growth of exports to Russia slowed to 0.6%, while imports contracted by 16.3%. Exports to Russia stopped growing as the crisis spilled over to that market, causing implications such as a devaluation of the ruble. The decline of imports, on the other hand, was mostly due to falling energy prices. The downturn in bilateral trade with Ukraine was much deeper, with exports down by 27.7% and imports shrinking by 18.8%.³⁰

The slump in bilateral trade was the consequence of a serious crisis in the Ukrainian economy that hit hard on Poland's car and car parts exports. On the imports side, the volume of mineral products imported from Ukraine contracted.³¹ Poland's trade with Ukraine continues to show the largest surplus, at nearly €2.8 billion, while its trade with Russia shows the second largest deficit (after that with China), at €7.8 billion.

In trade with developed non-EU countries, which account for nearly 5.7% of Poland's total exports and almost 7.8% of its imports, the downturn occurred later than in the case of other regions. Exports to EFTA countries expanded by 8.2% in the first three quarters and 12% in the fourth quarter.

In trade with other developed countries, a group dominated by the United States, Canada and Japan, exports grew by 19.3% in the first three quarters and 17.8% in the fourth quarter. Trade with developing countries showed dynamic growth in the first three quarters (with exports up by 42.5%, and imports rising 25.2%); while in the fourth quarter exports contracted by 7.9% (far above the average) and imports grew 7.6%.³² Notably, Poland's trade deficit with China widened by almost €2.6 billion, to €10.4 billion.³³

³⁰ *Ibidem*.

³¹ *Ukraina: Dwustronna współpraca gospodarcza*, Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych. Informator ekonomiczny o krajach świata, www.msz.gov.pl.

³² *Ocena sytuacji w HZ po 4 miesiącach 2009 r.*, Ministerstwo Gospodarki, Warsaw, July 2009, pp. 7–8.

³³ *Chińska Republika Ludowa: Informacje o stosunkach gospodarczych z Polską*, Ministerstwo Gospodarki, www.mg.gov.pl.

Foreign Direct Investment

Foreign direct investment in Poland totaled €10.97 billion in 2008, falling by 33.84% from its 2007 level, when it stood at €16.58 billion, according to preliminary data by the National Bank of Poland. The level of foreign direct investment was lower than in the two preceding years (Figure 7) due to mounting turmoil in international financial markets, which restrained access to credit and reduced international companies' sources for financing investment projects. With economic growth tapering off, most of these companies reported declines in profits and reduced their expectations of potential gains from foreign expansion as global demand waned.³⁴

At the end of 2008, Poland's total foreign direct investment liabilities were in excess of €130 billion. According to the National Bank of Poland's end-2007 data,³⁵ investors from EU25 countries accounted for 84.5% of FDI in Poland, a figure reflecting the country's strong investment ties with the European Union.

The country's highest FDI liabilities were toward investors from the Netherlands (€22.11 billion), Germany (€19.08 billion), France (€13.36 billion), Luxembourg (€9.78 billion), Italy (€5.15 billion), Sweden (€4.68 billion), the U.K. (€4.61 billion), Austria (€4.32 billion), Belgium (€3.67 billion), Spain (€3.51 billion), Denmark (€3.04 billion), Switzerland (€2.85 billion), and Ireland (€2.21 billion). Among non-EU countries, the highest liabilities were toward investors from the United States (€7.92 billion).

The pattern of foreign direct investment liabilities by sector was as follows: manufacturing €40.04 billion; financial services €22.86 billion; distribution and repairs €19.52 billion; real estate services, information technology, lease of machinery and other business-related services €17.78 billion. The remaining sectors accounted for a combined €19.34 billion.³⁶

The single largest FDI project in Poland in 2008 was one by Britain's Cadbury, budgeted at more than €250 million. It was named the "Investment Project of the Year" and won an award from the Ministry of the Economy and the Polish Information and Foreign Investment Agency (PAIiZ). The project covers the expansion of a factory in the southwestern city of Wrocław, construction of a new chocolate factory at Skarbimierz near the town of Brzeg, and modernization of a plant in Warsaw.³⁷ The decision to launch the project,

³⁴ *EU10 Regular Economic Report*, The World Bank, May 2009, p. 12.

³⁵ Detailed data on foreign direct investment in Poland in 2008 were due to be released in late 2009.

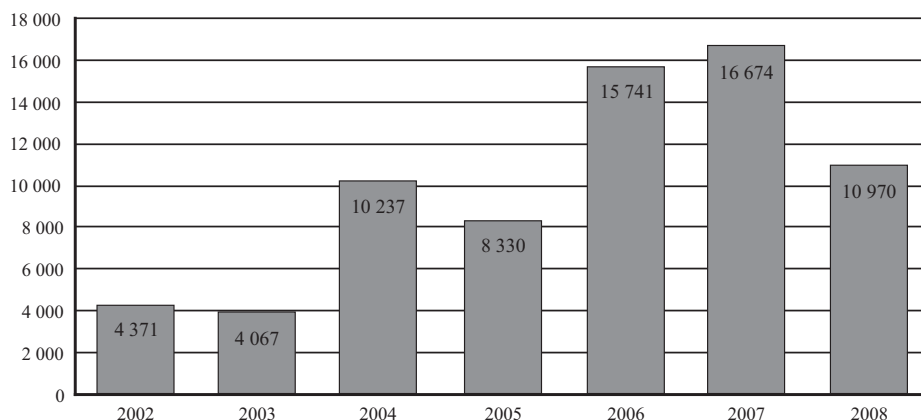
³⁶ *Zagraniczne inwestycje bezpośrednie w Polsce w 2007 r.*, Narodowy Bank Polski, Warsaw, January 2009, pp. 22–23.

³⁷ "Słodka inwestycja," *Aktualności PAIiZ*, 6 February 2008.

with support from the government, was announced in February 2008. Cadbury has been in Poland since 1993 when it gained a foothold in the Polish market by building a chocolate producing facility at Bielany Wrocławskie in the Kobierzyce district. The company's flagship investment in this country was when it acquired the Wedel chocolate brand and its Warsaw factory in 1999. Cadbury has consistently modernized and expanded the Warsaw plant since then. Moreover, in 2006, it started building a chewing gum factory at Skarbimierz, in what was one of the largest FDI projects in the Polish food industry at the time. The project was completed in 2008. At present Cadbury's plants in Poland have a combined work force of around 2,000.³⁸

Figure 7

Foreign direct investment in Poland in 2002–2008
(million euros)



Source: Preliminary National Bank of Poland data.

China's Lenovo Technology received an award from the Polish Information and Foreign Investment Agency for the investment that would create the largest number of new jobs. The project was planned for the Legnica Special Economic Zone. It aroused high hopes because of the large number of new jobs promised by the company and because Lenovo is a leading global producer of computers. Its investment in Poland could have encouraged other major Chinese companies in high-value-added sectors to follow suit. The company committed itself to creating a total of 1,276 jobs in Poland, but it eventually scrapped the plan in a decision that was officially announced in April 2009.³⁹

³⁸ See www.cadbury.com.pl.

³⁹ A. Woźniak, "Lenovo zrezygnowało z fabryki w Polsce," *Rzeczpospolita*, 8 April 2009.

The Polish Information and Foreign Investment Agency provides assistance to investors carrying out projects in sectors such as the automotive industry, electronics, chemicals, and service centers. The agency promotes the Polish economy abroad by taking part in seminars and trade fairs. Its role in attracting foreign investors to the country has grown steadily. In 2008, the PAIiIZ handled 56 new FDI projects involving investors from 17 countries and worth a combined €1.5 billion. Most of these projects were in the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) and automotive sectors.

The top-ranking projects included those by: Lafarge (France; construction; €115 million; 625 jobs); Credit Suisse (Switzerland, BPO; €8.3 million; 500 jobs); Cadbury (U.K.; €256.7 million; food; 250 jobs); Jabil (U.S.; electronics; €20 million; 600 jobs); City (U.K.; BPO; €7.5 million; 500 jobs); SWS Group (Ireland; BPO; €1 million; 370 jobs); Lenovo Technology B.V. (China; electronics; €4 million; 1,276 jobs); ADFP (a German-Japanese project; automotive sector; €150 million; 700 jobs).

In 2008, Polish outward FDI totaled €2.3 billion, down from €3.5 billion in 2007.⁴⁰ The decreased value of Polish investment abroad was due to a depreciation of the zloty in the first half of the year, which increased the costs of buying shares in foreign businesses. In the second half of the year, the implications of the international financial crisis were increasingly felt, making it difficult for Polish companies to finance their direct investment abroad. In addition, the prospect of a slump in demand and declining corporate profits in the wake of incipient symptoms of a recession compounded concerns about the profitability of outward expansion.

Recent data⁴¹ show that European Union countries account for more than 80% of Poland's direct investment abroad, with EU15 countries making up 60% of the total. The Americas, Asia and Africa host far less Polish FDI. The geographic pattern of Polish enterprises' outward expansion shows that the distance factor plays a critical role in Polish enterprises' investment decisions. This, however, fits into the prevailing trend in the global economy where businesses expand their operations chiefly by investing in countries in the same region. Expansion to remote markets requires considerably higher outlays, which few Polish businesses can afford. For this reason, not too many Polish FDI projects are located in fast-growing Asian economies or potentially appealing

⁴⁰ *Bilans płatniczy Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej za IV kwartał 2008 r.*, Narodowy Bank Polski, Warsaw 2009, p. 71.

⁴¹ Detailed data on Polish direct investment abroad in 2008 were due to be released in late 2009.

African markets. In the latter case, yet another factor plays a role—difficulties in obtaining practical and comprehensive information on the rules of doing business in these markets, which are culturally and institutionally different from their counterparts in Europe.

Most of Poland's direct investment in other EU countries is in the service sector, including business services. Significantly, Polish investment in Western Europe is often in the form of financial flows—classified as foreign direct investment but not involving the acquisition of foreign assets or implementation of greenfield projects. Large outward capital flows to European and global financial centers such as Luxembourg, Switzerland, the Netherlands, and Britain, show that Polish businesses tend to transfer their profits abroad for tax reasons. Some Polish companies register their subsidiaries in these countries with the principal aim to invest in a third market. Funds channeled to these subsidiaries are usually classified as “capital in transit.”⁴²

In a positive trend, recent years have seen much investment activity among Polish businesses across Central and Eastern Europe. The region comprises one of the world's fastest-growing markets and Polish businesses have sought to benefit from this, particularly given the geographical proximity of these markets and their similarity to the Polish market. Polish enterprises have the advantage of usually being larger than their local competitors and they tend to understand these markets better than most Western European investors. Manufacturers of simple commodities have the best expansion prospects. The most common way to set up operations in a Central or Eastern European country has been to take over a local company, a leader in its home market with a well-established brand, or—based on strong exports performance—to build or acquire a production facility in the host country, so as to reduce the costs of transport or bypass the tariff barriers in place.⁴³ However, the poor macroeconomic performance of some of the countries in the region, especially Ukraine, Russia, and Hungary, prompted Polish enterprises to reassess their presence strategy in these markets. Some have been considering not only limiting their expansion, but an outright pullout, an attitude prompted by the withdrawal of certain concessions for foreign investors, such as VAT refunds, coupled with plummeting orders and difficulties in obtaining payment for goods and services (for example, from Ukrainian customers).⁴⁴

⁴² *Polskie inwestycje bezpośrednie 2006/2007*, Ministerstwo Gospodarki, Departament Analiz i Prognoz, Warsaw, March 2008, p. 15.

⁴³ J. Krzemiński, “Teraz czas na Ukrainę,” *Forbes*, 2008, no. 5, pp. 109–113.

⁴⁴ A. Woźniak, “Spółki wracają ze Wschodu,” *Rzeczpospolita*, 16 March 2009.

Assessment

Despite the mounting financial crisis and its spillovers in the global economy, the Polish economy showed strong macroeconomic performance that furthered the development of its international economic relations in 2008. Year-on-year foreign trade data show that the trends in evidence in previous years continued. These included a two-digit growth of exports and imports and a widening current-account deficit. While no major changes were noted in the breakdown of Poland's foreign trade by product and geographical area, the fluctuations of global prices and the varying extent to which Poland's major economic partners were affected by the crisis, were powerful factors shaping both exports and imports. While the first half of the year brought no major shifts in the growth of Poland's trade with other European Union countries, in the second half of the year, and in particular the fourth quarter, Polish exports and imports (including those of intermediate goods) fell after growing signs of a recession affected demand for imported goods and services markets, including Germany. In trade with Russia and Ukraine, Poland's two most important Eastern European partners, two different trends were noted in 2008. The first half of the year saw a dynamic growth of exports and imports, driven by rising prices of imported energy and mineral products and strong demand for Polish commodities. Then, in the last few months of 2008, an aggravated economic crisis in Russia and Ukraine, combined with falling prices of energy and mineral products, brought about a drop in mutual trade—far deeper than in the case of Poland's trade with EU countries.

The global financial crisis also resulted in a reduction of the inflow of foreign direct investment into Poland, compared with the two preceding years. Although Poland is perceived by foreign investors as one of the world's most attractive host countries, the 2008 situation in the global financial market cut into its investment financing capabilities. What's more, growing risk aversion prompted an outflow of capital from emerging markets, including Poland, with the result that from July onward the zloty began to steadily lose its value against the major currencies. While this trend mitigated the impact of the downturn in Polish exports in the wake of decreased demand abroad, it also depleted liquidity in the domestic foreign exchange market.

In this context, the government's September announcement of a target date for adopting the euro by Poland was hailed as an important event. Even though the Polish economy boasted one of the highest growth rates in the European Union, the global crisis affected its macroeconomic indicators, including those included among the convergence criteria, and reduced Poland's chances for joining ERM II as a step preceding the planned adoption of the single European currency.

Poland at the United Nations

Introduction

Poland achieved its principal security and development objectives when it joined NATO in 1999 and the European Union five years later. But membership in these two organizations means that Polish foreign policy makers have to take into account Community interests and the country's obligations as an ally. Aims and values shared with other EU member states make it possible to pursue common interests, while legal ties obligate Poland to work together with its European partners in multilateral institutions such as the United Nations.

The United Nations is the world's largest and most important international organization. It is in Poland's interest to strengthen this organization because it plays a major role in areas such as international peace, security and development. Poland welcomed the organization's reform plans outlined by the previous UN secretary-general and upheld by the current secretary-general. Poland has contributed some new ideas to these plans.¹ Policies pursued by the United Nations are an integral part of Poland's foreign policy and an element of its presence in the world. UN policies are associated with ideas such as liberty, democracy, human rights, and solidarity. These notions form the framework of Poland's interest and involvement in the UN.²

Poland supports the work of the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and the Human Rights Council (UNHRC). These two new UN bodies should demonstrate their ability to attain the goals set out for them by the organization's member states. Poland has consistently pressed for a reform of the Security Council as it believes that the international situation calls for efforts to modify Council membership and functioning. Poland and other EU countries have

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¹ See A.D. Rotfeld (ed.), *A New Political Act for the United Nations for the 21st Century. Proposals and Concepts*, Warsaw 2004; and A.D. Rotfeld (ed.), *Towards the UN Reform. New Threats, New Responses*, Warsaw 2004.

² See government reports on Polish foreign policy in 1990–2009 published in successive editions of *Rocznik Polskiej Polityki Zagranicznej*, and also in R. Stemplowski, *Wprowadzenie do analizy polityki zagranicznej*, Warsaw 2007.

expressed their appreciation of the achievements of the Working Group on Security Council Reform, a group of experts led by General Assembly President Hasan Kerim.³ EU members carefully analyze developments in areas such as international disarmament, nuclear nonproliferation and arms control regimes.

The year 2008 marked 60 years since the proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and 10 years since the adoption of the statute of the International Criminal Court. It also marked the 60th anniversary of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, whose beginnings were shaped by Polish lawyer Rafał Lemkin.⁴ Poland has consistently supported the development of international law, a process thanks to which individual countries as well as the international community as a whole increasingly recognize the need to protect populations from genocide, ethnic cleansing and war crimes. Poland also recognizes the importance of development assistance as well as the role of environmental protection policies in areas such as global warming and climate change. Poland actively supported the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change with a view to bringing about an international agreement in this area by the end of 2009.

Background

The UN has struggled with a host of problems over the past decade, and there is constant talk of a crisis afflicting the organization. It is difficult to resist the impression that some countries are in fact happy with this state of affairs because they are interested in pursuing their own interests rather than strengthening the organization as a whole.⁵ It is therefore important to appreciate the ongoing efforts to reform the UN, and to applaud the policies of countries that have been capable of looking beyond their particular interests. The widespread criticism of the UN in the media may stem from the fact that reporters simply do not understand how this organization of 192 member states functions, and they are also unfamiliar with its decision-making procedures. Another reason may be that the UN, which is a universal international organization, is often blamed as the proverbial whipping boy for failing to react

³ The president of the 62nd session of the UN General Assembly.

⁴ For more on the subject see R. Szawłowski and K. Pol, "Rafał Lemkin (1900-1959). Polski prawnik twórcą pojęcia 'ludobójstwo,'" *Sprawy Międzynarodowe* 2005, no. 2; J.-L. Panné, "Rafał Lemkin, czyli potęga bezsilności," *Polski Przegląd Dyplomatyczny* 2008, no. 3.

⁵ See S. Stebelski, "Polska w Organizacji Narodów Zjednoczonych," *Rocznik Polskiej Polityki Zagranicznej* 2007, pp. 195-210.

to various crisis situations.⁶ It is worth remembering that the UN does not create crises or threats to world peace and security; it only tries to prevent and remedy them.

One can get the impression that the importance of the UN in Poland's foreign policy is decreasing, especially when it comes to security.⁷ A look at government reports on Polish foreign policy priorities adds to this impression.⁸ Nevertheless, it seems that the UN continues to be an important part of Poland's foreign policy although it tends to be less often mentioned in public debate. Presumably, it is not so much that the importance of the UN has decreased, but the manner in which this part of Poland's foreign policy is shaped has changed—today it needs to be coordinated with other EU countries.⁹ On the one hand, factual discussions have moved from General Assembly committees to internal EU bodies, and European institutions now play a greater role in defining the aims of member states during UN General Assembly sessions. This is exemplified by priorities approved by the Council of the European Union for UN General Assembly annual sessions,¹⁰ and by the European Parliament's recommendations for the Council concerning these priorities.¹¹ On the other hand, Polish diplomats have faced challenges in some new, previously unexplored, areas. The European Union is an important political and financial partner of the UN in combating poverty, promoting economic and social development, and ensuring collective security and respect for human rights in the world.

The extent to which EU member state positions are coordinated as part of the UN varies considerably and depends on the body involved and the importance of the political problem. Such coordination requires closer cooperation between Council working groups based in Brussels, on the one hand, and EU offices and

⁶ R. Kuźniar, "ONZ jako porządek międzynarodowy," *60 lat Organizacji Narodów Zjednoczonych. Osiągnięcia i wyzwania. Materiały z konferencji*, Warsaw 2005, p. 94.

⁷ A. Bieńczyk-Missala, "Polska w Organizacji Narodów Zjednoczonych," *Rocznik Polskiej Polityki Zagranicznej* 2008, p. 299.

⁸ In the government's *Informacja rządu na temat polskiej polityki zagranicznej w 2008 r.*, only the following passage was dedicated to the UN: "In our concern for world security matters, we must not forget the United Nations. For this reason, we will support a reform of the UN aimed at adapting it to new challenges and needs. We are in favor of appointing a common EU permanent representative to the Security Council as part of a comprehensive reform of the UN."

⁹ At present, when UN committees or the General Assembly meet, an official representing the country holding the rotating EU presidency takes the floor on behalf of the entire EU to present a stance that was previously consulted with member states.

¹⁰ Document DGE IV 9978/08, <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/pl/08/st09/st09978.pl08.pdf>.

¹¹ Document P6_TA(2008)0339, www.europarl.europa.eu.

the permanent missions of EU member states in New York and Geneva, on the other. The Lisbon Treaty provides the EU with legal status, something that will have a far-reaching impact on how the EU is represented at the UN.

The European Parliament has called for an in-depth, wide-ranging debate between the Parliament, the Council and the Commission on the EU's priorities for UN General Assembly sessions. According to the Parliament, the permanent UN missions of EU member states in New York should treat the Council's official position on these priorities as binding in terms of political guidelines for negotiations with other countries. Such a policy is already followed in some areas. Efforts to coordinate EU member state positions at the UN should begin within Council working groups. This would make it easier for EU diplomats in New York to agree on a common position on specific issues tackled by UN bodies. EU diplomats would also be able to use their time more rationally while holding consultations and negotiations with other regional groups.

Overall, organizational changes are indispensable and EU member state offices in New York will have to be enlarged. This will ensure an appropriate level of coordination between the Community's political strategies, programs and funds, on the one hand, and the instruments and aims of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy, on the other.

Aims

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who was elected in 2007,¹² set out his priorities in a document containing many personal commitments. The document clearly reflects the influence of the Asian culture from which Ban Ki-moon hails.¹³ In addition to personal commitments, the document lists an agenda of specific problems that the new secretary-general recognizes as important. These are peace and security; Africa; the Middle East; disarmament and nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction; Millennium Development Goals, climate change; human rights; and a reform of the UN. In large measure, these aims reflect the overall direction mapped out for the UN by its previous

¹² R. Tarnogórski, "Po wyborze nowego sekretarza generalnego ONZ," *Biuletyn (PISM)*, 2006, no. 62.

¹³ "As Secretary-General, I resolve to: Lead by example; Seek excellence with humility; Set the highest ethical standard; Pursue dialogue and engagement; Play the role of harmonizer and bridge-builder; Make transparency and accountability the cornerstone of my tenure; Be animated by both passion and compassion in achieving our goals; Be sensitive to the concerns of all Member States, big and small." Ban Ki-moon, *My Priorities as Secretary-General*, www.un.org.pl/dokumenty/folder.pdf.

Secretary-General Kofi Annan. They make it possible to get a working idea of the principal areas of interest for the new secretary-general in the coming years.

When it comes to declarations, Poland and other EU states have consistently supported a multilateral approach in which the UN plays a key role. Strengthening the organization and reforming its principal authorities—in order to make them more representative and increase the transparency and efficiency of the entire UN system—is one of the priorities defined by EU countries. The EU also supports calls for administrative reform of the UN. At the same time, the bloc expresses its concern over the growth of the UN's regular budget, constant use of additional funds, and a fragmentary approach to the last UN budgetary process.¹⁴

EU countries underscore the importance of strengthening the rule of law in both national and international terms.¹⁵ They pressed for adding this issue to the agenda of the Sixth Committee for the 63rd session and the following sessions. They also supported efforts to make sure that the work of the Rule of Law Coordination and Resource Group—supported by the Rule of Law Team responsible to the Assistant Secretary-General—is financed from the UN's regular budget so that the group can carry out its responsibilities properly and without obstacles. The group is responsible for the overall coordination and coherence of the rule of law within the United Nations system, including quality control and planning.

On issues concerning peace and security, it would be advisable to increase the UN's operational potential, according to EU member states. The EU supported a strengthening of the position of the Military Affairs Office within the framework of the Peace Operations Department so as to make strategic information management more efficient. One of the EU's priorities for the 63rd General Assembly session was to bring about the introduction of unified UN practices thanks to which it would be possible to synchronize UN and EU peacekeeping missions. In this context, EU member states stressed the significance of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security and Resolution 1612 on children in armed conflicts.

As far as the UN reform plan is concerned, EU member states set out to strengthen the role of the General Assembly president and establish regular

¹⁴ Document DGE IV 9978/08, p. 3.

¹⁵ See A. Makarewicz, "Rządy prawa w stosunkach międzynarodowych," J. Menkes (ed.), *Prawo międzynarodowe – problemy i wyzwania. Księga pamiątkowa prof. Renaty Szafarz*, Warsaw 2007, pp. 415–431.

cooperation between the General Assembly, the secretary-general and the Security Council. The operational political aim of EU countries during General Assembly sessions was to support a much-awaited review of the UN's agenda to meet the expectations of EU countries. According to EU member states, this should be done through reviewing all UN mandates that are more than five years old and have been established under General Assembly resolutions and decisions made by other UN authorities. The system of UN sanctions, including a blacklist of terrorist organizations, should also be subject to review, according to EU countries, to bring it in line with the requirements of the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. EU member states are also determined to support the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs to make sure that these departments have qualified staff capable of handling their tasks and responsibilities. EU countries are also determined to support the UN secretary-general's efforts in this area. Another priority for EU countries is to support the introduction of the UN protection agenda approved at a world summit in 2005. EU member states are determined to agree on a common position for reform of the UN Security Council. Their long-term aim is to secure a permanent Security Council seat for the EU as part of the UN reform. At the same time, EU member countries believe that the EU's interests should be secured in a manner reflecting these countries' contribution to UN peacekeeping missions and development aid. According to EU member states, EU countries represented on the Security Council should support the official position of the EU worked out as a result of intra-Community consultations.

EU member countries also set out to support the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, especially in the Fifth Committee. Their operational aim was to monitor the procedure for appointing the new High Commissioner to replace Commissioner Louise Arbour, whose mandate expired in June 2008. Efforts in this area produced the desired results.¹⁶

Yet another priority for EU countries is effective cooperation between countries in the Third Committee to promote human rights standards and work on issues important to the EU, such as Resolution 62/149 of the UN General Assembly calling for the introduction of a global moratorium on the use of the death penalty.

¹⁶ Navanethem Pillay, a South African lawyer and former judge with the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, was appointed High Commissioner for Human Rights. The EU's declaration concerning her appointment is accessible at www.europa-eu-un.org/articles/en/article_8051_en.htm.

With regard to the Millennium Development Goals, the EU's efforts can serve as an example for other aid donors, even though the bloc's development assistance is still insufficient and 75 billion euros lower than promised for the period until 2010. EU states should work out binding national schedules and budgets to increase real aid with a view to reaching a collective target of 0.56% GNP in 2010 and 0.7% in 2015.

Specific Issues

The agenda of the 63rd session of the General Assembly included 153 items and was traditionally divided into nine areas: maintenance of international peace and security; promotion of sustained economic growth and sustainable development; development of Africa; promotion of human rights; effective coordination of humanitarian assistance efforts; promotion of justice and international law; disarmament; drug control, crime prevention and combating international terrorism; and organizational, administrative and other matters. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann was the president of the session.

The General Assembly passed a total of 307 resolutions during the session.¹⁷ The First Committee focused on issues such as work on an arms trade treaty; implementation of regional nonproliferation programs; illegal arms trade; and the risk of accidental use of weapons of mass destruction. The work of the Second Committee was marred by continued misunderstandings between developing and developed countries concerning issues such as climate protection and migration as well as the secretary-general's report on globalization and interdependence. The Third Committee approved a Human Rights Program for 2010–2011, with the United States and Israel opposing. The committee failed to agree on a new resolution to introduce a global moratorium on the death penalty; it upheld a previous resolution of last year and put off the discussion on the subject for two years. The work of the Fourth Committee was dominated by the problem of Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories. The Fifth Committee dealt with the financing of the organization's day-to-day activities in 2008–2009, and it also approved a draft budget for 2010–2011.¹⁸ The Sixth Committee examined issues such as international terrorism, the rule of law, and the criminal responsibility of UN officials and experts. The committee also reviewed a report from the 60th session of the International Law Commission.

¹⁷ All adopted resolutions can be accessed at www.un.org/ga/63/resolutions.shtml.

¹⁸ Poland contributed USD 10,323,752 to the UN's regular budget in 2008.

At its plenary meeting, the General Assembly supported Serbia's request to ask the International Court of Justice to rule on whether or not Kosovo's declaration of independence was consistent with international law.

The Polish delegation to the 63rd session was headed by President Lech Kaczyński, who, in his speech, focused on the breakaway Georgian regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia and on Russia's intervention in Georgia in August 2008. President Kaczyński stated that the problem of Georgia is shared by all countries that struggle with territorial integrity issues or have more powerful neighbors. He said that the international order should be based on absolute respect for the UN Charter by all international law entities and on common responsibility for the plight of those countries that cannot single-handedly provide for their own security. President Kaczyński also mentioned the subject of energy security in Europe, including the need to diversify energy supplies. Poland's position in this area is that dialogue, solidarity and consistency in carrying out an energy policy should become priorities for all European countries and particularly for EU member states, the Polish president said. He added that the actions of the principal suppliers of energy to Europe are "unpredictable" as they tend to use energy supplies as a means of achieving political ends. The Polish president also urged an acceleration of work to reform the Security Council. He voiced the view that increasing the number of nonpermanent Security Council members would help better reflect the image of the contemporary world.¹⁹

Poland consistently supported Ukraine in its efforts to have the UN adopt a resolution commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Great Famine in that country. However, such a resolution proved to be impossible in the face of opposition, primarily from Russia. Ultimately, in December 2008, a declaration on the 75th anniversary of the Great Famine in Ukraine in 1932-1933 was appended to the documents of the 63rd session of the UN General Assembly. Poland and 32 other countries, including most EU member states, signed that declaration.²⁰

Poland decided to withdraw its bid to become a nonpermanent member of the UN Security Council in 2010-2011 and supported Bosnia and Herzegovina's bid instead. At a meeting on 25 September 2008 in New York between Polish Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski and his counterpart from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sven Alkalaj, the Polish minister expressed the Polish government's

¹⁹ See www.prezydent.pl.

²⁰ Document A/63/613.

support for strengthening the international position of countries that emerged after the break-up of Yugoslavia. Minister Sikorski promised that Poland would ask those countries that previously supported its own UN Security Council bid to back Bosnia and Herzegovina instead. Considering that Bosnia and Herzegovina is now the only candidate country from the East European Group, the two ministers expressed the hope that other countries in this group would also support Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Bosnian minister said that Poland can count on the support of his country should it decide to seek to join the Security Council in the future. He also declared that, in such a situation, Bosnia and Herzegovina would make every effort to drum up support for Poland's bid from other UN member states.

As regards the UN Trusteeship Council, Polish officials believe that this body no longer plays any role in today's world. As a result, Poland has urged the removal of Chapter 13 of the UN Charter, while acknowledging that any changes to the Charter should be made as part of a comprehensive reform of the UN system.

When it comes to maintaining international peace and security, Poland's position is that all disputes should be resolved in accordance with international law. In this context, Poland recognizes the special role of the International Court of Justice and the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea.

The General Assembly held a vote to fill vacancies among the judges of the International Court of Justice; it elected judges supported by countries including Poland.²¹ Moreover, Poland financially supported the Audiovisual Library of International Law,²² which was launched at a special meeting of the Sixth Committee.

Karol Jakubowicz, a media expert who represents Poland at UNESCO's "Information for All" Program (IFAP), was elected the new chairman of the program's Intergovernmental Council.

Under the General Assembly's Resolution 62/69, the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations was tasked with examining the implementation of Charter standards concerning assistance to countries affected by sanctions aimed against other countries. The committee was also asked to work out ways to make its work more effective. Poland's position that UN sanctions should be used as a measure of last resort has not changed. According to Polish officials, the use of UN sanctions should be examined by the Security Council's sanctions

²¹ See www.icj-cij.org/presscom/files/3/14863.pdf.

²² See www.un.org/law/avl.

committees (in line with Report S/2006/997 of December 2006 concerning best practices and methods for using sanctions by the UN; the report was the result of work by the Security Council Informal Working Group on General Issues of Sanctions).

In May 2008, the First Annual Review Conference of the International Compact with Iraq (ICI) initiative was held in Stockholm under the auspices of the UN and the Iraqi authorities. The Polish delegation underscored the importance of continued international assistance to Iraq. The delegation proposed that the range of ICI measures be expanded to include protection of Iraq's national heritage. Highlighting the contribution of Polish archaeologists in this area, the delegation expressed Poland's readiness to grant further support and assistance to Iraq's authorities and scientists in researching and protecting the country's archaeological sites and artifacts.

To mark 60 years since the proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the UN organized a yearlong campaign under the slogan "Dignity and Justice for All of Us." Poland contributed to the project by supporting changes in countries in transition to democracy and the activities of human rights defenders in authoritarian states.

Polish officials also took part in the 52nd session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women. The session focused on the enforcement of the decisions of the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing and the 23rd Special Session of the UN General Assembly titled "Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the 21st Century." The main topic of the session was the financing of gender equality efforts, strengthening the status of women and support for "gender budgeting" as a means of equalizing opportunities for men and women in all UN member countries.

In 2008, Poland underwent a Universal Periodic Review by the UN Human Rights Council. The review is a new mechanism for assessing and monitoring respect for human rights in member countries and was launched under a UN General Assembly resolution of 15 March 2006 on the establishment of the Human Rights Council. The review involves a comprehensive assessment of a country's human rights record on the basis of factors including a report submitted by the country's authorities (compiled in line with the recommendations of the Human Rights Council)²³ and documents from the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. All UN member

²³ See www.msz.gov.pl/Polska,w,Powszechnym,Okresowym,Przeglądzie,Rady,Praw,Człowieka,ONZ,18087.html.

countries are expected to be reviewed every four years. Poland was among the first batch of 16 countries reviewed following a declaration submitted to the Human Rights Council in March 2007. The first session of the Universal Periodic Review Working Group took place on 7–18 April 2008 in Geneva. The report on Poland was approved by the group on 16 April and the final report was adopted on 10 June.²⁴ The Human Rights Council recommended that Poland make more effective efforts to prevent discrimination, by adopting a special law and reinstating the Office of the Commissioner for Equal Status, among other measures. Poland is also expected to take action to relax regulations on defamation and ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. These recommendations were made on behalf of UN member states in a follow-up to what UN treaty bodies previously recommended for Poland.²⁵

In terms of climate protection, the most important event of 2008 was the 16th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which took place in the western Polish city of Poznań on 1–12 December 2008. The conference attracted about 8,000 participants, including more than 190 government delegations headed by environment and climate change ministers, in addition to officials from international and environmental institutions, nongovernmental organizations and entrepreneurs.²⁶

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) concluded its mission in Poland in March 2008 with a conference on diversity management and social integration and closed its Warsaw office as of the end of 2008.

Assessment

In 2008, Poland supported UN resolutions on strengthening international security, disarmament and nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction, peacekeeping missions, human rights and democracy, and the development of international law.²⁷ The list of Poland's traditional priorities also included

²⁴ See document A/HR/8/52, www.ohchr.org.

²⁵ For more on the subject see *Notatka informacyjna nt. udziału Polski w Powszechnym Przeglądzie Okresowym Praw Człowieka Rady Praw Człowieka ONZ* – www.msz.gov.pl/files/docs/Prawa%20czlowieka/UPR%20notatka%20informacyjna.pdf; as well as A. Gliszczyńska and K. Sękowska-Kozłowska, “Polska przed Radą Praw Człowieka ONZ,” *Rzeczpospolita*, 19 June 2008.

²⁶ For more on this subject see A. Gradziuk and E. Wyciszkiewicz, *International Dimension of Poland's Climate Policy*, above, p. xx

²⁷ S. Stebelski, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

climate change, especially after the city of Poznań was selected to host a major UN climate conference—a project that involved substantial intellectual and financial resources and helped unleash new opportunities for the future.

It seems that Poland, which is widely seen as an active and responsible member of the international community and a dependable partner, is not taking full advantage of its EU member status to influence UN policies. Given its international role, Poland should be encouraged to be more effective in pursuing its own interests, especially as it can count on the support of other EU members. Poland's rotating presidency of the EU in the second half of 2011 will require increased efforts and involvement in global issues, and the UN is where these efforts will be visible through the work of Polish diplomats. This does not have to involve rolling out high-profile campaigns—sometimes small-scale projects produce better results in terms of promoting the country and raising its profile internationally. The best example is Poland's support for the UN Audiovisual Library of International Law in line with the country's traditional policy of supporting the development of international law.

IV.

**Polish Foreign Policy:
Discussion**

Polish Foreign Policy Twenty Years Later **9th Foreign Policy Forum**

Warsaw, the Royal Castle, 4 June 2009

Sławomir Dębski: Allow me to welcome you warmly, on behalf of the Polish Institute of International Affairs, to the 9th Foreign Policy Forum held at the Royal Castle in Warsaw. As every year, the participants in this debate on foreign policy are members of the main political parties represented in Parliament.¹ This has become our way of contributing to disseminating knowledge about Poland's foreign policy and enhancing its understanding. Not surprisingly, today's debate will be devoted to Poland's foreign policy "twenty years later," to the anniversary of the year 1989, to the experience we have accumulated over these past twenty years, and to questions about capitalizing upon this experience in the future.

Moderating this debate will be Professor Ryszard Stemplowski, the founder of the Polish Institute of International Affairs and of the Chancellery of the Sejm of the reborn Republic of Poland, who subsequently served as Polish Ambassador to London.

Ryszard Stemplowski: Every year the Polish Institute of International Affairs offers political parties, in particular those represented in the Sejm and the Senate, an opportunity to present in this hall their programmes and foreign policy concepts. In connection with the anniversary, today's debate will additionally be aimed at looking in retrospect at the past two decades, at the years between 1989 and 2009.

We are fortunate today in that the parties have sent their highly competent representatives, MPs for whom foreign policy issues are a special area of interest and who are also personally involved in the work of the European Parliament. They will surely have a lot to tell us. Gentlemen, you have ten minutes each for your opening addresses. Starting with those seated to the right, I ask Paweł Zalewski, MP, former chair of the Sejm's Foreign Affairs Committee, to start the ball rolling.

Paweł Zalewski: Today's date, 4 June, is very special indeed, marking the twenty years of independent foreign policy we had been dreaming about earlier.

¹ The participants in the discussion included: Andrzej Grzyb, Polish Peasant Party (PSL), member of European Parliament; Wojciech Olejniczak, Democratic Left Alliance (SLD), member of European Parliament; Krzysztof Szczerski, Law and Justice (PiS); and Paweł Zalewski, Civic Platform (PO), member of European Parliament.

For me, the very thought of a foreign policy of an independent Polish state was fantastic. It was one of the reasons why I had made the foreign policy of the two inter-war decades my special subject of study. The start in 1989 was incomparably more auspicious than in 1918, so much so that there is practically no analogy between these two dates. This is one of the greatest achievements of the road Poland had traveled to win independence in 1989. This is the first important point I want to make, for there is always a temptation to compare one twenty-year period with the other.

Point two. It was Poland's great achievement that security and catching up with the West in economic and social terms had correctly been defined as the main targets of foreign policy. Obviously, back in 1989 things looked very different indeed: there was the Soviet Union, Soviet troops were stationed in Poland, yet the fact that Poland was able to reach an understanding with the West, cooperate with its neighbors in the region and bring about the withdrawal of Soviet (subsequently Russian) troops from this country, all this made possible the attainment of its two fundamental goals. We achieved these goals by joining the European Union and NATO. It is not surprising at all that after Poland's accession to the European Union the debate on foreign policy was reopened, for by then our sense of security had been guaranteed. How strong this sense really is, we should ask here. The way NATO has been evolving obviously does not match our expectations, but NATO membership is no doubt a major success. The European Union also safeguarded for Poland a strong position among the Western countries, so the time was ripe for reopening the debate on foreign policy.

One hitch is that the manner in which the debate has been conducted does not, in my opinion, provide opportunities to seize all the chances we have. Since around 2005 foreign policy has been the central plane for conducting political disputes, and this seems to be very much to Poland's disadvantage, for a state is an international actor only when it is capable of articulating its aims with reasonable unanimity. When it is heard speaking in two voices on the international scene, both voices become less relevant. In short, two voices amount to no voice at all. I believe the Sejm has a vital role to play in this respect as a forum for discussing foreign policy and developing a consensus on the main issues Poland addresses internationally.

It would be difficult today not to comment on elections to the European Parliament. I see the European Union and Poland's presence therein as an opportunity not only for the much-invoked social convergence, but first of all for it to become one of the main player countries. This is not simple; this is a process we have to learn, we have to understand how the European Union

works. It took the Spaniards and the Portuguese many years to accomplish this. As for Poland, after five years it came up with a project that strongly enhances its national policy: the Eastern Partnership. I see this project as one of the greatest Polish successes in recent years, and not because it responds to the challenges coming from the East. The €600 million allocated to the project is not enough, and neither is the Western states' involvement in Eastern Partnership adequate. But this is a start of the process.

This is a challenge for the Polish state coming from within, so to speak, with the country's external potential determined by its domestic potential. This is a truism, but in Poland's case it is clear that many chances were missed. Today our greatest challenge is to consolidate the state so that it is strong internally, and to enhance it regionally so that Poland, as the leader of the region, becomes an important and interesting partner one sought after in planning compromises. Germany is our most important partner in the European Union and it happens to be our neighbor. We can be effective in our relations with Germany, also on historical issues, provided we are the important partner it needs for concluding compromises. We will be such a partner if Poland is a strong state with a firmly established position in the region.

Andrzej Grzyb: These days we are marking a number of anniversaries. We are celebrating an anniversary of 1979, when a message from the Holy Father stirred the hopes and hearts of Poles. Ten years later we saw the birth of the Polish Solidarity movement and the round-table talks, followed by the 4 June elections and changes on a scale that could not have been foreseen. Then the Tadeusz Mazowiecki government was formed and it declared, for the first time ever, "Poland wants to be part of the Communities." Of course, it was not in a position to declare that Poland wanted to join NATO because the withdrawal of Russian forces from this country did not come until the Lech Walesa presidency. Instead, we needed to stabilize the situation. It was then that the foreign policy goals were defined: membership in the Communities and in NATO. These goals were the driving force behind the consensus built over Polish foreign policy. Reaching such a consensus was a relatively easy task for successive governments, although governments were changing every eighteen months on average (the Buzek cabinet being an exception). The foreign policy consensus was nonetheless maintained, which was a tremendous asset and should be appreciated as we review the past twenty years.

On 4 April 1994, Poland formally applied for membership in the European Union. Two months earlier, on 2 February, if my memory serves me, we signed the Partnership for Peace programme (PfP). Although at the time it seemed to be

a back door to NATO, or perhaps even the shutting of the door altogether, several years later we became a NATO member. We have been in the European Union for five years now, although the process of approaching membership had sometimes called for sacrifice and sometimes proceeded amidst internal disputes, or outright demagoguery. It is incredibly important that Poland has built and defined its place and position in Europe and in the world.

Then the process of defining Poland's current foreign policy and its aims began. The target should be to strengthen Poland's political and economic position in Europe and globally, and hence questions emerge over how this should be done. It seems that the most appropriate way is to take advantage of our presence in NATO and in the European Union. The better we cooperate and negotiate our position in the EU, the more important a partner we will be for the non-EU states, which will see Poland as a state with a strong standing in the Union and in NATO. This works the other way around, too: the better our relations with non-EU states, the stronger our position in the Union.

Two processes have been unfolding in parallel in the world: strong globalization in the economy and information, and the need for identity definition. I would call it a drive towards a kind of localism, i.e., towards defining the space of individuals, groups and also states in this globalized world.

Please note that this does not undermine the role of national states. We emphasize the role of states in post-1990 Europe. New states have been emerging in Europe. They are cooperation-minded, and we should capitalize on this factor as a country that will be holding the presidency of the European Union in two years' time.

Krzysztof Szczerski: I would like to center my address on a sentence which, in my view, is the main foreign policy directive: foreign policy should at all times be targeted at building the geopolitical subjectivity of a state. This in fact means generating and accumulating assets of what in international relations is known as *actorship*. First of all, the state should be able to be an independent and significant actor in international relations. From this perspective, the past twenty years of the Polish foreign policy obviously qualify as a success story, because NATO and EU membership did transfer Poland from an unwanted zone, via the grey zone, to one where we properly belong civilizationally and by virtue of our global strategic position. Surely, no one in his right mind will deny that the first twenty years of Polish foreign policy cannot but be seen as successful from the perspective of this subjectivity.

This said, a number of problems that surfaced during these twenty years need to be mentioned, as to some extent they still remain challenges for Poland's foreign policy.

First, we had kept membership in NATO and the European Union classified as foreign policy goals for too long, or too consistently. Too late did we switch to thinking of them in terms of foreign policy tools. I dare say that even today being in the European Union, or "in the mainstream of European policy," is at times seen as a policy aim rather than an instrument.

Second, the question of independence and patronage is a recurring challenge for Polish foreign policy. In foreign policy there is a strain of thought that holds that Poland should at all times—in European policy, for instance—have a stronger patron to be our point of reference, a landmark of Poland's European policy and one that we cannot do without. From the perspective of subjectivity as a foreign policy goal, this approach is unacceptable.

Third, the evident institutional weakness of Polish foreign policy, in particular its underinvestment, is also a challenge. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs relies on annual budgets that are far from impressive (to mention only the budget of the Polish Institute of International Affairs). These budgets do not reflect, at least not in my view, the potential level of spending on Polish foreign policy. The institutional weakness of Polish foreign policy itself, which comes to the surface now and again, in particular in the European context, is a problem to be constantly kept in mind and addressed.

Last but not least, I see the weakness of the debate as the fourth problem of these past two decades. I do not mean that no ideas have been advanced, or that there have been no participants with something to contribute. I mean that only too often the debate on foreign policy has been reduced to simple statements. Indeed, we have lost a lot through this shallow foreign policy debate conducted chiefly in top opinion-forming media, which usually tend to oversimplify.

As for the future, I want to mention four issues that seem important. I understand the doctrine of subjectivity mainly in two dimensions. First, in order to preserve or build subjectivity, a policy of Poland's international presence should be pursued. Poland should invest its assets, intelligently and after careful consideration, wherever it believes its national interests lie. It would be a mistake to reduce Poland's presence in international organizations, in the Blue Helmets or in the network of diplomatic missions. On the contrary, Poland's international presence should be enhanced.

Status is of course the second element of subjectivity, and in this sense membership in the European Union and NATO is a useful tool for building

Poland's international status. Nowadays we should safeguard Poland an equal status reflecting our aspirations and aims. This, as it were, is an imperative for an assertive policy that should build this status.

Thirdly, subjectivity means security. As things are, Poland certainly does not enjoy such a level of guaranteed security as we might expect, either in terms of energy security, environmental security, or strictly military security, including in terms of terrorism or defense capabilities. Hence the debate on the missile shield issue. I would like to declare loud and clear here: Poland's security is inseparable from the North Atlantic Alliance, and this dimension of security is vital for Poland.

Finally, subjectivity is also a policy of values. Let's face it: not every system of values in international relations serves Poland's interests well. We should not forget that certain international policy principles and values, which Poland should and has to uphold, are also elements of a sound Polish policy. Obviously, such a policy should invariably be a policy of realism, and never a policy that expects things to be different from how they are and consequently goes about policy-building as if the world were different than it is. It must be realistic at all times. The recent crisis has also to some extent been verifying this world of European policy.

And my final point: this feasibility and effectiveness of Poland's foreign policy will best be verified by the Polish presidency of the European Union in 2011. This is one of the most interesting intellectual challenges in store for Polish foreign policy.

Wojciech Olejniczak: Twenty years ago Poles opted for a European dream. As a consequence of that choice, political leaders set out to define new targets for Polish foreign policy. This was not an easy task. Fortunately, the international situation at the time played into Poland's hands.

First of all we were seeking security guarantees. Poland's presence in NATO became our goal, and we made the most of favorable international circumstances in the process of pursuing it. This was possible thanks to a consensus reached by the major political forces, with the consensus hammered out at the time subsequently maintained for many years. The accord built around national interests prevailed, regardless of political preferences or differences on other issues. A look at the press published at the time shows that political emotions were then running high and fierce disputes were waged over outlooks on life, but the consensus over foreign policy goals prevailed.

Poland's membership in NATO was the first and most important goal achieved. This membership alone warrants a positive assessment of the past

twenty years. Yet besides external security linked to NATO membership, Poles were expecting internal security, social safety, guarantees that the country would develop and that the fruits of development would be equitably divided. That was why we set out to seek accession to the European Union. We covered the road my colleagues here have described and we reached the destination. In 2004 Poland joined the European Union. By then it had become clear that the consensus on international issues no longer held. The parties represented in Parliament were voicing their objections or reservations with respect to Poland's accession to the EU. That was a significant novelty.

The efforts of euroskeptics notwithstanding, the two fundamental foreign policy goals were achieved, as were other aims, only seemingly less important. I am referring here to the normalization of relations with our neighbors. Two problems persist in this respect, and I will address them in due course.

To cut a long story short, subsequent successes of Polish foreign policy included the country's involvement in international cooperation in fighting terrorism and organized crime, and also in environmental protection and countering undesirable climate change. The involvement of non-governmental organizations and local government in international policy in recent years is also worth noting as a novel and highly positive development.

Now for the downsides. The fact that we have not been able to normalize relations with Russia is the number one major failure of the past two decades. This failure lies at the door of all political forces. In my opinion, relations with Belarus have also been mismanaged; they were schematic, routine, dogmatic.

The year 2005 marked a turning point in Polish foreign policy. It was then that the practice started of defining foreign policy through negative goals. It was assumed that what was bad for our "eternal" enemies was automatically good for Poland; this was very crude reasoning, primitive in fact. It might seem that our foreign policy is based on fear of our two largest neighbors, on very old, archaic phobias. Nowhere in the world is foreign policy conducted in such a way. Second, our international stance came to smack of clientage relations with the U.S. I regret to say that the stories about the Trojan horse, or ass, are not strict fiction. Third, after 2005, internal conflict soared, with foreign policy deprived of protection and entangled in the conflict. Indeed, foreign policy was then created for domestic policy purposes. Two rival command centers emerged, and as a result Poland started squandering the international position enjoyed earlier. Today our partners are confused over many issues. They may not show their annoyance openly, but we have nonetheless been receiving sufficient signals to detect it.

Under the circumstances, it would be worthwhile to define anew our foreign policy priorities, taking into account the changes underway at home and globally.

The European policy context obviously remains vital in our foreign policy, and this will not change in the years ahead. Yet other international policy contexts have also emerged, notably the financial crisis or the economic downturn with its present and future repercussions, including political.

It should be emphasized that for several years to come Poland's security will remain anchored in NATO and in our relations with the United States. Even so, we cannot fail to perceive the massive changes of a geopolitical nature. A multi-polar world is emerging and American policy is changing on the back of this process. This has been particularly visible since the last presidential election in the U.S. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have eroded the global position of the United States.

This being the case, influencing and co-creating the EU's policy and contributing to the shaping of NATO's defense doctrine should be a fundamental paradigm of Poland's security policy. As I have already said, from Poland's perspective relations with Russia play a special role. Today Poland should shape its relations with Russia within the framework of the European Union's common foreign policy. It should strive to become a bridge between Russia and the West. I might add that Poland had had such a chance already, but failed to seize it, so now efforts to build this bridge should be resumed. In a longer perspective, the European Union and Russia are bound to be allies in a multi-polar world. The Germans, Italians or the French understand this. Inevitable rivalry between Russia and China, as well as Russia's natural resource potential, indicate that cooperation between the European Union and Russia is vital for the future of all of Europe.

I agree that energy security is an important matter for Poland. Yet, this security will be ensured only if an EU-wide consensus is reached on the matter. Energy policy is the Polish government's top priority and a potential platform for a non-partisan accord. Instead grave differences persist over this issue, and I believe that we should be flexible in our efforts to ensure Poland's energy security; some concessions or compromises should not be ruled out at the start. The Nord Stream pipeline is an example here. If a compromise over this project were to be a price to be paid for ensuring Poland's energy security and long-term contracts for the entire European Union, it might be a compromise well worth accepting.

Finally, I have two brief observations. First, the importance of the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty for the process of deepening European integration needs to be emphasized in the strongest possible terms. Second, let me comment briefly on the CDU-CSU declaration. I am not concerned about this document in the context of borders, but I find it very disturbing in the context of EU enlargement. Here is one of the major political forces in Germany saying “no” to the enlargement of the European Union; this is against Poland’s interests.

Ryszard Stemplowski: How does your party define *raison d’état*?

Wojciech Olejniczak: When a left-wing party speaks of the reason of state, it no doubt has to have the interests of the country in mind, but first of all it must keep in sight the interests of society. The reason of state means concern for people’s interests, ensuring that the security and living standards of citizens are not lower than in other countries. Other European Union countries are our benchmark in this respect. This is also how I understand the essence of my functioning in politics: to ensure Poland’s success, safeguarding the country’s security understood also as the security (including social) of individual citizens. We have not been paying enough attention to the latter in Poland. Indeed, nearly all over Europe the debate on European integration is proceeding along the lines of institutions’ integration, while we are not addressing the integration of European society.

Krzysztof Szczerski: There are two dimensions to *raison d’état*: the continuity of the state and its development. For Poles, the state is a value in its own right, an inalienable common good, so *raison d’état* stands for the continuity and development of the Polish state. On the one hand, it is about ensuring the security and existence of the Polish state, meaning international security in the economic, political and military dimension and in all dimensions that are globally relevant today; on the other hand, it is about guaranteeing the “right to development”—opportunities to develop the nation’s own vital forces using available instruments, including international.

So it is necessary to safeguard that membership in organizations such as the European Union offers—or guarantees—Poland this right to development; in the other dimension, this means a primacy of national over transnational interests, because the reason of state is focused on developing the state’s own potential. These are two important dimensions: continuity and development of the state.

Andrzej Grzyb: A sovereign Poland is one that is developing economically and socially, enjoying security within its borders thanks to cooperation within alliances it belongs to, thanks to international treaties it is a party to and thanks to cooperation with its neighbors. This is not to say that we are giving up on

answering difficult questions our neighbors try to ask from time to time, or on the issues they emphasize—sometimes in ways meant to arouse concern.

We have often been asked how different governments define the Polish *raison d'état*. The same question has been asked in Parliament on a number of occasions, and diverse answers have been offered, the most frequent one being, “This is difficult to define.” Yet it seems that we all understand intuitively that this is about the state being sovereign in what it does, cooperating under agreements it has entered into. It goes without saying that such a state must ensure its continuity in the future. Far from being a goal solely here and for now, this is also a goal for future generations. I believe that we are particularly alert to this on account of our experience, our difficult history. Obviously some refocusing is taking place under the influence of the environment, of international conditions. New threats emerge and must be responded to. Barely twenty years ago terrorist threats were hardly as significant as they are today. At the time we had a problem accepting the presence of Polish troops beyond Poland's borders. Today this is no longer a problem, even though many citizens are calling into question Poland's involvement in missions of this kind.

Paweł Zalewski: As a Civic Platform member of barely a few days' standing, I am going to present my personal understanding of *raison d'état*, which I see in three dimensions. The first dimension is internal: to ensure the state's security and development opportunities, this convergence we have mentioned earlier. Does this involve economic activity, business expansion, making the state economically stronger? Another very important element is to strengthen the national community, in the French meaning of the term, as a political community. This is vital, enhancing the ability to operate in the European environment or, more broadly, in the international environment.

The second dimension is European: to influence European policies so that they boost Poland's national policy. The thing to understand about the European Union, about the essence of its functioning—the legitimized essence that determines its success—is that in practice the Union creates policy instruments that support the national policies of individual states. This works in different ways, to be sure: one policy will enhance the policies of this state or group of states, another policy will prop up the policies of other states. The important thing is for us to be part of this process and to benefit from it just like others do—the Germans, the French or the British. In this context, it is important to safeguard that the Polish voice on foreign policy is meaningful. After energy policy, I believe this is the greatest challenge for the years ahead, so that we can successfully shape our relations with Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and other states.

Now for the global dimension: at this highest level, the reason of state is Poland's contribution to upholding the values and international relations conducive to economic development and peace. On this level Poland also has a lot to offer.

Ryszard Stemplowski: Should the integration of the European Union be deeper or shallower? Are you for deepening integration or for weakening it?

Paweł Zalewski: When you put it this way, it is an extremely difficult question to answer—not because I cannot say with respect to specific areas whether they require deeper integration or just the opposite, but because I believe this is not what European integration is about. I have already said that the European Union is functioning successfully as an institution preparing instruments that strengthen national policies. This is the idea behind the European Union—not being deeper or weaker, but being effective. Effectiveness is the yardstick of actions to be taken.

As for the European Union's foreign policy, it was created under the Maastricht Treaty, so it is obsolete or rather, for all practical purposes, nonexistent. The European Union is capable of creating a policy on problems in Africa, for example in Chad. The French have been using this skillfully, strengthening their policy within the European Union framework by being convincing and consequently effective; winning over other states, including Poland. On the other hand, there is no policy on the greatest challenges the European Union is struggling with today. For instance, it seems that it is necessary to promote and build institutions supporting the development of a common foreign policy. In this sense, I believe that the Lisbon Treaty can provide an impulse—but institutions, which in their own right are a drive behind the implementation of certain policies, will not suffice.

Political will is extremely important. We should keep persuading our partners, we should appear credible to them, so that they are willing to conduct a common foreign policy towards, say, Russia. I do not mean a policy like the present one, with Russia demanding (and obtaining) political concessions from France, Germany or Italy, in exchange for economic concessions, but a policy whereby these states could achieve their aims in relations with Russia without such tradeoffs. This is very difficult, so let me repeat: Poland must be an internally strong, convincing and credible state. We must have the status described by Doctor Szczerski, only it has to be won by a method that will render us credible.

Wojciech Olejniczak: Never did I expect that three days before the elections to the European Parliament I would have an opportunity to speak of

my political dreams. I dream of a European Union modeled after federal United States. I dream of common European policies in all major areas: welfare, education, health policies. This would mean that the Poles would have achieved a living standard similar to the rest of the Europeans. I am aware that my views probably differ from those of the rest of you, gentlemen, but I am a firm supporter of deeper integration—provided history and traditions are respected, of course. I am not saying that the building of the Union of my dreams is a matter of tomorrow, the day after tomorrow, next year or perhaps five years. Yet I am sure that—just as several decades ago a common European currency appeared inconceivable—today many of are unable to imagine the integration of European society. The day when we have a European health care or education system seems far away, but I firmly believe that it will come.

Krzysztof Szczerski: To answer your question, I would say I am for all those things happening at the same time.

Integration needs to be deepened in the solidarity of states, in the sphere of security, such as energy security, but my vision of energy security differs radically from Mr. Olejniczak's, in particular with respect to Nord Stream's role in European energy security. This is a black-and-white case, but there is no time to go into all that. There certainly is room for deepening European integration, there is no doubt about that.

This is also the time to stop European integration at its present stage of development. This is where the *raison d'état* comes in. In this sense, we do not need to build any European supra-state.

Last but not least, it's high time to weaken European integration in certain areas, for instance in the sphere of regulation, which is depriving individual states of the right to development. In areas where the Union is over-regulated, we simply need to take regulation a step back, for the cost of regulation is too high.

It follows that there is room for deepening, arresting and relaxing European integration. The Union certainly needs remodeling. The economic crisis has shown that the European umbrella does not shelter even eurozone states from the impact of the European crisis, so remodeling is a must.

Andrzej Grzyb: What is one of the fundamental principles of the European Union? It is the principle of subsidiarity, made even stronger by the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty, which, hopefully, will become a binding treaty following a positive decision of the Irish. This is a general principle which states that matters that are difficult or impossible to solve at the national level, are solved jointly, because joint solutions benefit all member states.

Should we expect changes in certain areas, a redefinition of the subject matter in the European Union's common interest? We certainly should. Yet new challenges have been emerging, too. Following the emergence of the threat of terrorism, the security of citizens has become the chief guideline—or one of the chief policies—in the European Union. The energy security threat is much the same case. Poland has made its contribution, the Polish concept of energy solidarity is evolving into a joint project. It turns out that energy security issues can be dealt with more successfully when addressed jointly rather than individually by the member states. Challenges of this kind will be emerging in the future. Also, I agree with Doctor Szczerski that on some issues the European Union should back out of certain regulations—or at least codify them—for the sake of performance efficiency. The vast scope of regulations in effect in the European Union sometimes makes it difficult to control the arrangements already in place. The Union has set a goal of better regulation, so it is also possible to lift certain regulations which, far from serving the Union well, at times just make the EU utterly incomprehensible for the citizens. What do the citizens expect? They expect the Union to be understandable to the citizens of member states.

On the other hand, I would not worry about the disappearance of national states that now make up the European Union. I think this is still a very remote prospect. The powers to be surrendered by the intergovernmental level to a future president of the European Union are still under debate. The president will have as much power as the governments of the member states choose to vest in this office. The same goes for the Commission vice-president, who will also act as the European minister of foreign affairs.

Ryszard Stemplowski: The representatives of some parties came prepared for an extensive debate and they could elaborate on their statements, and some members of the audience would certainly be ready to listen, but we have to wind up this meeting. In any case, we have been provided with savory material to digest and quote. By the way, today's experience invites comparison with the media-created image of the Sejm. We have heard MPs presenting their parties in a competent way, providing answers to clear questions, addressing key issues, discussing their differences in a civilized way. Yet the widespread media image of a politician is very different and very unflattering. Is this image false? The media image is faithful within its sphere of interest, which usually means negative manifestations of politics. It does not embrace the whole spectrum of issues the Sejm addresses. Regrettably, in the public's perception this negative projection is generalized, taken to faithfully portray the Sejm's—and Senate's—work.

I have never been a politician, but after 1989 I supported the work of the Sejm as the head of the Sejm Chancellery, and of the Council of Ministers as an ambassador. I know how difficult the social role of the politician can be and how complicated the work of a state agency is. If the negative media-projected image of the Sejm were true, how could the change of the political system in Poland be accounted for? This change could not have come about without a major revamping of the legal system. This formidable work was done by the Sejm and Senate, and they deserve to be treated seriously in public discourse. As citizens, we have the right to expect the media to present the entire spectrum of legislative work rather than just selected cases of misconduct by some parliamentarians, or selected resolutions criticized because they fall short of the expectations of some interest groups.

Public diplomacy in turn is among the tasks of the Polish Institute of International Affairs. The Foreign Policy Forum is a form of practicing public diplomacy, as is the Public Diplomacy Foundation established by the Institute some time ago. We thank the director of the Polish Institute of International Affairs, Doctor Sławomir Dębski, for the invitation to this public debate on foreign policy with such a representative panel of parliamentarians. I would like to thank the MPs for participating in this Foreign Policy Forum. I feel that this debate is very much worth continuing. Perhaps foreign policy forums should be held more often, twice a year and not just once, possibly under an autumn and spring formula?

V.

Annexes

International Chronology

General

16 January. President Lech Kaczyński hosts a New Year's reception for the diplomatic corps, during which he says: "My country has been in the European Union for almost four years and it has been a member of the Atlantic Alliance for more than eight—almost nine—years. When discussing Polish policy, this is precisely the point where we should start."

30 January. President Kaczyński signs decisions on the deployment of a Polish military contingent for NATO's Air Policing Mission Over Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia; and on the deployment of a Polish military contingent to the European Union Force Chad/Central African Republic.

The government approves a resolution on the recognition of the Republic of Kosovo.

7 May. Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski delivers an address to the lower house of parliament on Polish foreign policy in 2008.

23 May. The third energy summit is held in Kiev, Ukraine, attended by presidents from seven countries: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. A joint declaration is signed on the principles of global security, along with documents on a plan to launch a Baltic-Black Sea-Caspian Sea energy association and a Euro-Asian oil transport corridor. At the summit, President Kaczyński meets with his Ukrainian counterpart Victor Yushchenko and, together with the presidents of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, he also meets with the president of Georgia, Mikheil Saakashvili.

25 September. Poland joins the International Energy Agency (IEA) as its 28th member state.

7 October. The European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, France, dismisses a complaint filed against Poland by the Prussian Trust 15 November 2006. The complaint was accompanied by 23 claims from individual German citizens whose families lost their property in Poland after World War II. Minister Sikorski writes in a statement: "The court's ruling demonstrates unequivocally that it has made an objective, multifaceted analysis of the Prussian Trust's complaint in the light of historical facts and international law and considering Poland's postwar national law concerning the takeover of property left by Germans. The court found that the complaint must be rejected on each count under the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of 4 November 1950, and Protocol 1 to this convention."

13 November. The fourth energy summit is held in Baku, Azerbaijan, focusing on a search for alternatives to oil and gas resources Russian supplies. Summit participants adopt a declaration to support oil and gas deliveries from Caspian fields to Europe. During the summit, President Kaczyński meets with his Azerbaijani counterpart, Ilham Aliyev.

Multilateral Cooperation

Visegrad Group

23 April. Minister Sikorski attends a meeting of foreign ministers from Visegrad Group countries in the Czech capital Prague. Meeting participants discuss the Eastern dimension of the European Neighborhood Policy. They also push for closer dialogue between the EU and Georgia, and express their support for Ukraine and Georgia's NATO membership aspirations. Moreover, the ministers discuss opportunities for cooperation between the Visegrad Group and GUAM countries (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova).

15–16 June. Prime Minister Donald Tusk attends a Visegrad prime ministerial meeting in Prague, where the participants express the hope that problems with ratifying the Lisbon Treaty would not slow the process of European Union enlargement.

12 September. President Kaczyński attends a Visegrad presidential meeting in Piestany, Slovakia, where participants discuss the latest developments in the Caucasuses, in addition to EU-Russia relations and bilateral ties. The president meets with his counterparts from Hungary and the Czech Republic.

5 November. A meeting of Visegrad Group and Baltic prime ministers, with the participation of Prime Minister Tusk, is held in Warsaw, discussing the EU's climate and energy package, energy security, the global financial crisis, and the Eastern Partnership.

24 November. Minister Sikorski attends a meeting of Visegrad Group foreign ministers in Warsaw. Also held is a joint meeting of foreign ministers from Visegrad countries as well as Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Romania, Sweden, and Slovenia. The discussion focuses on European issues and ends with a joint statement.

6 December. A meeting dedicated to the climate and energy package is held in the Polish coastal city of Gdańsk, attended by prime ministers from Visegrad and Baltic countries as well as their counterparts from Bulgaria and Romania. The president of France, the country holding the rotating EU presidency, also takes part in the meeting. Prime Minister Tusk holds talks with European Commission President José Manuel Barroso, Macedonian Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski, and

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, who visits Gdańsk to take part in celebrations to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Nobel Peace Prize for former Solidarity leader Lech Wałęsa.

NATO

5–6 March. Minister Sikorski attends a meeting of Atlantic Alliance foreign ministers in Brussels, which discusses chances for Ukraine and Georgia to be granted Membership Action Plan (MAP) status. The ministers also discuss ways of broadening cooperation with Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro.

13 March. NATO Secretary-General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, ends a visit to Poland after talks with Foreign Minister Sikorski, Defense Minister Bogdan Klich, and President Kaczyński.

4 April. President Kaczyński and Minister Sikorski attend NATO's Bucharest summit, which adopts a final declaration but fails to reach an agreement on offering Ukraine and Georgia Membership Action Plan status. President Kaczyński meets with the presidents of France, Lithuania, Latvia, and Romania; the prime ministers of Luxembourg, Belgium, Greece, Britain and Italy; and the German chancellor. Minister Sikorski meets with Afghanistan's Foreign Minister Rangin Dadfar Spanta and Defense Minister Abdul Rahim Wardak.

19 August. Minister Sikorski attends an extraordinary meeting of the North Atlantic Council at the level of foreign ministers, dedicated to the situation in Georgia, among other subjects. A statement critical of Russia is issued, calling on that country to withdraw its troops from Georgia.

10 October. At a meeting in the Romanian capital Bucharest, NATO defense ministers discuss the future of the NATO Response Force, the alliance's command structure and HQ reform. While attending the meeting, Poland's Defense Minister Bogdan Klich holds talks with U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, Afghanistan's Defense Minister Abdul Rahim Wardak, and Ukraine's Defense Minister Yuri Yekhanurov.

3 December. Sessions of the North Atlantic Council, the NATO-Ukraine Commission and the NATO-Georgia Commission are held in Brussels, along with discussions within a group of countries participating in the NATO Mediterranean Dialogue, and an informal ministerial meeting in the NATO-EU format. Allied operations in Afghanistan and Kosovo, and the alliance's relations with Georgia and Ukraine—in the context of both countries' integration aspirations—are discussed, along with prospects for NATO's relations with Russia. The Polish delegation is headed by Minister Sikorski.

United Nations

4 March. The Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs provides the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees in Geneva with a report on Poland's human rights performance, as part of the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review procedure.

10 March. While on a visit to the United States, Prime Minister Tusk meets with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to discuss issues related to ensuring peace and security.

22–26 September. While attending the 63rd session of the UN General Assembly, Minister Sikorski meets with the foreign ministers of the Palestinian National Authority, Iran, Tanzania, Iraq, Italy, Cape Verde, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Indonesia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Morocco, and Vietnam.

23–24 September. President Kaczyński attends the 63rd session of the UN General Assembly in New York; he meets with the UN secretary-general, the heads of "Climate Troika" delegations, including the Danish prime minister and the Indonesian foreign minister, and the presidents of Ukraine, Slovenia, Serbia, and Albania.

13 October. The Polish government opts to withdraw Poland's bid to become a nonpermanent member of the UN Security Council in 2010–2011, and decides to support Bosnia and Herzegovina's bid instead.

12 December. A UN Climate Change Conference ends in the western Polish city of Poznań, allowing participating countries to edge closer on climate change issues. Bilateral meetings are held, among them President Lech Kaczyński's talks with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Swedish Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt.

Weimar Triangle

16 June. Minister Sikorski attends a meeting of Weimar Triangle foreign ministers in Paris to discuss pressing European and global issues as well as trilateral cooperation.

European Union

28 January. Minister Sikorski heads the Polish delegation to the General Affairs and External Relations Council in Brussels. The Council decides to deploy a European force to Chad and the Central African Republic, and supports a proposal to make a provisional political agreement with Serbia.

20 February. The Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union, Javier Solana, meets in Warsaw with President Kaczyński, Prime Minister Tusk and Minister Sikorski, to exchange views on Europe's topical political and security issues, with a special focus on the Balkans and Kosovo.

13–14 March. Prime Minister Tusk and Minister Sikorski attend a European Council session in Brussels to discuss issues including climate change objectives. Prime Minister Tusk meets with Ukrainian President Victor Yushchenko, Czech Prime Minister Mirek Topolánek, and German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

29 March. At an informal Gymnich-format meeting of EU foreign ministers in Brdo, Slovenia, Minister Sikorski speaks about a worrying course of developments in Belarus. He also meets with the foreign ministers of Turkey and the Republic of Macedonia (FYROM).

29 April. Minister Sikorski attends a meeting of the General Affairs and External Relations Council in Luxembourg, which discusses the European Neighborhood Policy, Western Balkans, and the Middle East peace process.

27 May. At a session of the General Affairs and External Relations Council, Minister Sikorski pushes through Poland's idea of the Eastern Partnership as a Community approach to Eastern Europe. The agenda includes European Neighborhood Policy and developments in Serbia, Georgia, the Balkans, Somalia, Iraq, Zimbabwe, and the Middle East.

16 June. Minister Sikorski attends a session of the General Affairs and External Relations Council in Luxembourg, where the agenda includes preparations for the European Council, issues related to Georgia and the Western Balkans, the Middle East peace process, and developments in Sudan and Darfur, Zimbabwe, Somalia, and the Rift Valley lakes.

20 June. Prime Minister Tusk and Minister Sikorski attend a European Council meeting that accepts a Polish-Swedish proposal to deepen the Eastern dimension of the European Neighborhood Policy.

13 July. President Kaczyński attends a meeting of heads of state and government from the EU and the Mediterranean region, at which a Union for the Mediterranean is established. The Polish president meets with French President Nicolas Sarkozy, mainly to discuss Lisbon Treaty ratification, and with Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen.

23 July. At a Brussels meeting of the General Affairs and External Relations Council, ministers discuss relations with Ukraine, the Western Balkans and Iran, in addition to developments in Zimbabwe, Chad, Somalia and the Central African Republic. The Polish delegation is headed by Deputy Foreign Minister Grażyna Bernatowicz.

13 August. At an extraordinary session of the General Affairs and External Relations Council in Brussels, a six-point agreement on resolving the Russia-Georgia conflict is approved. The Polish delegation is headed by Minister Sikorski.

1 September. At a special summit in Brussels, dedicated to the Georgian conflict and the EU's relations with Russia, the European Council emphasizes Georgia's territorial integrity and demands a complete withdrawal of Russian troops to their pre-conflict positions. At Poland's request, the final document is expanded to include a declaration that Europe should "intensify its efforts with regard to the security of energy supplies." Poland is represented by President Kaczyński, Prime Minister Tusk and Minister Sikorski. President Kaczyński meets with Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus.

6 September. At an informal Gymnich-format meeting in Avignon, France, foreign ministers from EU countries discuss details of the EU's mission to Georgia, the issue of appointing a special envoy for the Georgia crisis, and reconstruction assistance to that country. Minister Sikorski proposes that the EU consider removing sanctions against Belarus as a reward for President Alexander Lukashenko's decision to free all political prisoners in that country.

15–16 September. EU foreign ministers agree in Brussels to send a 200-strong European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM) to Georgia to watch the observance of the ceasefire agreement.

1 October. EU defense ministers hold a meeting in Deauville, France, to discuss strengthening the bloc's defense capabilities and rationalizing European defense measures. Poland is represented by Minister Klich.

13 October. A meeting in Luxembourg of EU foreign ministers, attended for the first time by Belarusian Foreign Minister Syarhei Martynau, suspends for six months a ban on EU travel by senior Belarusian officials.

16 October. A European Council meeting focused on climate change and financial market trends ends in Brussels, with Poland represented by President Kaczyński, Prime Minister Tusk and Minister Sikorski. Prime Minister Tusk meets with British Prime Minister Gordon Brown and Ukrainian Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko. Following Prime Minister Tusk's meeting with his counterparts from Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Romania, Slovakia and Hungary, a statement is issued emphasizing that EU policy on climate change and energy should take into account the requirements of sustainable development.

23 October. Minister Sikorski meets with Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn to discuss EU enlargement issues, including progress on the road to membership made by Western Balkan countries and Turkey.

3 November. An informal meeting of EU foreign ministers in Marseilles, attended by Minister Sikorski, discusses the transatlantic partnership in the context of relations with Russia and developments in Afghanistan, Pakistan and the Middle East.

7 November. An extraordinary EU summit is held in Brussels to discuss the ongoing financial crisis and adopt a position for a G20 summit. The meeting is attended by President Kaczyński, who meets with Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus.

10 November. A meeting of the General Affairs and External Relations Council is held in Brussels, gathering defense and development ministers to discuss preparations for a European Council meeting and an EU-Russia summit, in addition to the situation in Iraq, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Afghanistan, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the development of civil and military capabilities under the European Security and Defense Policy. The Polish delegation is led by Minister Sikorski. The Council decides to resume talks with Russia on a new Partnership and Cooperation Agreement.

27 November. President Kaczyński meets with the visiting Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighborhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner. The president expresses his opposition to the European Commission's climate and energy package proposal, which he says is unfavorable to Poland. Minister Sikorski and Prime Minister Tusk also meet with Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner.

8 December. Minister Sikorski leads a Polish delegation to a meeting of the General Affairs and External Relations Council in Brussels, held to discuss the latest developments in the Western Balkans, Pakistan, DR Congo, and the Middle East. Reviews are made of the European Defense Strategy and the WTO's Doha Round negotiations.

12 December. President Kaczyński and Prime Minister Tusk attend a two-day meeting of the European Council in Brussels, which adopts a package of measures to produce a 20% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020, compared with 1990. The Polish government's request concerning the final version of the climate and energy package is granted, with Poland given the go-ahead to spend some 60 billion zlotys on energy sector modernization.

30 December. Minister Sikorski attends an extraordinary meeting of EU foreign ministers in France.

Baltic cooperation

4 June. A Baltic Sea States' Council summit in Riga is attended by Prime Minister Tusk, who meets with Swedish Prime Minister Frederik Reinfeldt.

28 August. A meeting of Baltic region presidents is held in Tallinn, Estonia, to discuss the conflict in Georgia, in the context of an upcoming European Union summit in Brussels. President Kaczyński meets with his Estonian counterpart Toomas Hendrik Ilves and Latvia's President Valdis Zatlers.

5 November. A meeting of Visegrad and Baltic prime ministers is hosted in Warsaw by Prime Minister Tusk. The officials discuss the climate and energy package, energy security, the global financial crisis, and the Eastern Partnership.

6 December. A meeting in Gdańsk brings together the prime ministers of Visegrad Group and Baltic countries, in addition to the prime ministers of Bulgaria and Romania and the president of France, the country holding the rotating EU presidency. They discuss the climate and energy package.

Central European Cooperation

1 May. President Kaczyński attends the 15th meeting of Central European presidents in Ohrid, Macedonia, where he meets with the presidents of Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Turkey.

Other

21 February. Deputy foreign ministers from Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova—the four countries collectively known as GUAM—arrive in Warsaw to discuss economic and political cooperation with a group of Polish officials led by Grażyna Bernatowicz, undersecretary of state at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The meeting, the first of its kind in the region, also focuses on the economic performance of the GUAM countries, cooperation in European matters, including the European Neighborhood Policy, and democracy prospects in the GUAM area.

30 April. During an informal meeting of leaders from Austria, Finland, Latvia, Germany, Poland, Portugal, Hungary, and Italy in Graz, Austria, President Kaczyński meets with his German counterpart Horst Köhler, Latvia's President Valdis Zatlers, and Austria's Heinz Fischer.

30 May. Minister Sikorski meets with the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Thomas Hammarberg, to brief him on Poland's efforts to carry out the Council of Europe's human rights recommendations formulated in a memorandum of 2007.

1 July. President Kaczyński attends the 3rd GUAM summit in Georgia, where he meets with Ukrainian President Victor Yushchenko and his Azerbaijani counterpart Ilham Aliyev.

23 October. Prime Minister Tusk attends the 7th Europe-Asia (ASEM) summit, discussing interregional economic issues. During the summit, he meets with South Korean President Li Myung-bak and the prime minister of Singapore, Li Hsien Loong. He also meets with the prime minister of Vietnam, Nguyen Tan Dung, and the prime minister of Pakistan, Yousaf Raza Gillani.

Bilateral Relations

Afghanistan

4 June. Minister Sikorski pays a visit to Afghanistan, where he holds talks with his Afghan counterpart, Rangin Dadfar Spanta, and meets with President Hamid Karzai and Vice President Ahmad Zia Massoud.

14 July. The Afghan minister for energy and water management, Ismail Khan, visits Warsaw to hold talks with Minister Sikorski.

22 July. Prime Minister Tusk meets with the commanders of the Polish Military Contingent in Afghanistan, to discuss issues related to the presence of Polish troops in that country, including equipment supplies and security.

11 November. Afghan President Hamid Karzai comes to Warsaw to attend events commemorating the 90th anniversary of Poland's regained independence; he meets with President Kaczyński, who declares that Poland will stay in Afghanistan as long as necessary, and will provide that country with development assistance.

Austria

12 June. President Kaczyński, staying in Vienna for the 2008 European soccer championship, meets with Austrian President Heinz Fischer.

Azerbaijan

26 February. Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev holds talks in Warsaw with President Kaczyński and Prime Minister Tusk on international cooperation, with a special focus on economic issues related to the energy sector, bilateral relations, and Azerbaijani-EU cooperation. A joint declaration is signed.

17 April. President Kaczyński meets with Azerbaijani National Security Minister Eldar Mahmudov to discuss bilateral security issues, especially strategic cooperation in this area.

12 June. Minister Sikorski holds talks with Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov on political issues, including developments in the South Caucasus, and political and economic cooperation. Minister Mammadyarov also meets with President Kaczyński.

Belgium

3 March. Minister Sikorski meets with Foreign Minister Karel De Gucht in Warsaw to discuss bilateral cooperation, European affairs, including Lisbon Treaty ratification, and international issues.

Belarus

12 September. Minister Sikorski pays a working visit to Belarus to hold talks with his counterpart Syarhei Martynau at Viskuli near Brest. The two discuss issues related to the European Union and bilateral cooperation. Minister Sikorski refers to changes that have taken place in Belarus' policy vis-à-vis the European Union and in that country's domestic politics, exemplified by the release of the last group of internationally recognized political prisoners.

10–13 September. Belarusian Deputy Prime Minister Andrei Kobyakov, attending the 18th Economic Forum in the southern Polish resort of Krynica, meets with Prime Minister Tusk and Deputy Prime Minister Pawlak.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

10 November. President Kaczyński meets with the Bosnia and Herzegovina Presidency Chairman, Nebojša Radmanović, who comes to Poland to attend the 90th anniversary celebrations of the restoration of Polish independence.

Bulgaria

8 April. President Kaczyński meets with Bulgarian President Georgi Parvanov to discuss the Western Balkans, Polish and Bulgarian energy policies, European Union affairs, and issues related to Ukraine, Georgia, and Azerbaijan. The two presidents adopt a joint declaration in which they declare their will to seek a deepening of political dialogue. Prime Minister Tusk also meets with President Parvanov.

Canada

2 February. Minister Sikorski pays a visit to Canada for talks with Defense Minister Peter Gordon MacKay and Foreign Minister Maxime Bernier, on developments in Afghanistan and prospects for military and civilian cooperation. Other topics discussed include visa issues and prospects for concluding an agreement on social provision, youth exchanges, and extradition.

4 April. A visa waiver program for Polish citizens and military cooperation in Afghanistan are among the main topics discussed in Warsaw by Prime Minister Tusk and his Canadian counterpart Stephen Joseph Harper. International issues are also tackled, including Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic aspirations.

2 September. Minister Sikorski meets with the Canadian Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Helena Guergis, to discuss the Georgian crisis and the Transatlantic community's cooperation in this area.

China

16 January. Chinese Deputy Prime Minister Chin Zeng Peiyan meets with Prime Minister Tusk in Warsaw to talk about opportunities for the development of bilateral economic cooperation. Prime Minister Tusk says that Poland is strongly interested in seeing an EU-China strategic partnership become reality. The Chinese deputy prime minister also meets with President Kaczyński.

23 October. Prime Minister Tusk pays a visit to China where he meets with the President of the People's Republic of China, Hu Jintao, and Prime Minister Wen Jiabao, with whom he discusses bilateral relations, economic cooperation, and Chinese investment in Poland. Prime Minister Tusk also attends a Polish-Chinese Economic Forum and the 7th ASEM summit.

Croatia

24 January. After talks in Croatia with President Stjepan Mesić, President Kaczyński declares Poland's support for Croatia's bid to join the European Union in 2009.

26 November. Minister Sikorski meets with Foreign Minister Gordan Jandroković in Warsaw to discuss bilateral, regional and European issues, in addition to international affairs. President Kaczyński also meets with the Croatian minister.

Czech Republic

10 January. Prime Minister Tusk holds talks in Prague with his Czech counterpart Mirek Topolánek, and the two agree that their countries should act together during negotiations with the United States on the missile defense shield. The security of energy supplies is another topic discussed. Prime Minister Tusk also meets with President Václav Klaus.

11 March. President Kaczyński meets with visiting President Klaus, and the two emphasize that they have identical views on many political issues.

24 July. President Kaczyński holds talks in Prague with President Klaus.

13 October. President Klaus and President Kaczyński meet with residents of the Cieszyn/Těšín region on the Polish-Czech border, and then hold talks in Warsaw.

23 October. Minister Sikorski meets in Warsaw with visiting Czech Deputy Prime Minister Alexandr Vondra.

14 November. Minister Sikorski pays a visit to Prague, where he holds talks with Foreign Minister Karel Schwarzenberg and Deputy Prime Minister Vondra, and also meets with President Klaus. Minister Sikorski declares support for the priorities of the Czech Republic's EU presidency, as expressed by the Czech government. The

foreign ministers sign a memorandum on the establishment of a Polish-Czech Forum in 2009.

Denmark

22 April. Bilateral relations within the European Union and cooperation in environmental protection are the two main topics discussed in Warsaw by Prime Minister Tusk and Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen. The Polish prime minister says the two countries are preparing a range of environmental protection measures as a follow-up to efforts launched at the Kyoto conference.

8 May. Minister Sikorski pays a visit to Denmark, where he holds talks with Foreign Minister Per Stig Møller on issues including Lisbon Treaty implementation, the climate and energy package, and the European Neighborhood Policy.

Egypt

12 March. President Mohammed Hosni Mubarak ends a visit to Poland, where he holds talks with President Kaczyński and Prime Minister Tusk to analyze the latest developments in the Middle East and neighboring countries, and to review opportunities for intensifying economic cooperation, investment, and political ties. Minister Sikorski meets with his Egyptian counterpart, Ahmed Ali Aboul Gheit.

Estonia

18 March. President Kaczyński pays a visit to Estonia to talk with President Toomas Hendrik Ilves about NATO enlargement and decision-making mechanisms in the European Union. In a joint declaration, the presidents appeal for communist crimes against humanity and human rights violations to be investigated and tried in court.

22 May. President Kaczyński meets with his Lithuanian counterpart Valdas Adamkus in Vilnius, and the two then go to the Latvian capital Riga for consultations with the presidents of Latvia and Estonia. There the four presidents adopt the Riga Declaration, a document that hails Georgia's presidential election as democratic.

2 August. President Ilves ends a two-day visit to Poland after discussing bilateral relations, Baltic regional cooperation, and the situation in the European Union and Russia with President Kaczyński.

Finland

10 April. President Kaczyński pays a visit to Finland, where he meets with President Tarja Halonen and Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen.

29 May. At a meeting in Warsaw, Prime Ministers Tusk and Vanhanen discuss energy cooperation, especially in the Baltic Sea region, and Poland's proposal for an Eastern dimension of the European Neighborhood Policy.

France

15 April. Minister Sikorski meets with French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner, who visits Poland to commemorate the 65th anniversary of the 1943 Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. The two officials discuss what they call strategic partnership between Poland and France as well as European policy and international issues.

28 May. French President Nicolas Sarkozy pays a visit to Poland for talks with President Kaczyński and Prime Minister Tusk. Topics include the European Union's agenda and the latest developments in Eastern Europe, especially in Ukraine and Georgia. A political declaration on a strategic partnership is signed, committing both parties to tighten their political, economic, social and cultural cooperation.

9 October. Prime Minister Tusk makes a trip to Paris to meet with President Sarkozy. The talks focus on the EU's climate and energy package; the economic performance of EU member states at a time of global financial crisis; the security of energy supplies; and the bloc's role in the ongoing search for a settlement to the Caucasus conflict.

14 November. Prime Minister Tusk meets with President Sarkozy in Paris to discuss issues including the climate and energy package. The Polish leader says that Poland's policy in this area is close to that of the French presidency.

Georgia

20 January. President Kaczyński attends a ceremony to swear in Georgian President-elect Mikheil Saakashvili. He also meets with Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus.

2 March. President Saakashvili pays a visit to Poland for talks with President Kaczyński and Prime Minister Tusk. The talks focus on the situation in Georgia and neighboring countries. President Kaczyński declares that Poland supports Georgia's NATO aspirations, and welcomes that country's EU membership bid.

12 May. Minister Sikorski pays a visit to Georgia, together with the foreign ministers of Sweden, Lithuania, Slovenia, and Latvia.

25 May. President Kaczyński takes the salute at the Georgia Independence Day parade and meets with President Saakashvili.

29 July. The Polish-Georgian Presidential Committee holds its first meeting in Batumi. Views are exchanged on the latest developments in Abkhazia and South

Ossetia, and the officials also discuss the prospect of Georgia being granted NATO Membership Accession Plan (MAP) status.

12 August. President Kaczyński and Minister Sikorski, together with the presidents of Lithuania, Estonia and Ukraine and the prime minister of Latvia, take part in a national-unity demonstration in Tbilisi, during which President Saakashvili announces Georgia's withdrawal from the Commonwealth of Independent States and describes Abkhazia and South Ossetia as occupied territories.

13 August. In a statement on further measures to resolve the Georgian conflict, the presidents of Poland, Estonia, Lithuania, and Ukraine, as well as the prime minister of Latvia, press for an immediate ceasefire and an end to "the aggression and occupation of a sovereign and democratic Georgian state;" they also lend full support to Georgia's territorial integrity within the borders recognized by the international community.

11 November. President Kaczyński meets with President Shaakashvili during ceremonies marking the 90th anniversary of Poland's regained independence. The officials discuss the latest developments in Georgia in the context of that country's conflict with Russia, and the implementation of the Sarkozy-Medvedev agreement.

23 November. President Kaczyński attends celebrations of the 5th anniversary of the "Rose Revolution," and meets with President Saakashvili.

Germany

5 February. Polish-German talks on the two countries' troubled past are held in Warsaw, co-chaired by Władysław Bartoszewski, undersecretary of state at the Polish Prime Minister's Office, and Bernd Neumann, secretary of state at the German Chancellor's Office. Both parties emphasize the importance of open historical dialogue for Polish-German relations and the need to look for such forms of dialogue that will further historical truth and prevent misunderstandings.

7 April. Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier ends a two-day visit to Poland, during which he holds talks with Minister Sikorski and meets with Prime Minister Tusk.

20 May. Defense Minister Franz Josef Jung comes to Poland for talks with Ministers Klich and Sikorski on NATO affairs, the European Security and Defense Policy, the Afghanistan mission, the CFE Treaty, and military cooperation within the Weimar Triangle.

16 June. Prime Minister Tusk and Chancellor Angela Merkel meet in Gdańsk to discuss a Polish-Swedish proposal for an Eastern dimension of the European Neighborhood Policy. The talks also focus on bilateral relations, energy security and the future of the Lisbon Treaty in the wake of its rejection by Ireland. Germany backs the Polish-Swedish Eastern Partnership proposal.

12 July. Minister Sikorski meets with Minister Steinmeier in Berlin to discuss major plans related to Polish-German relations and selected European and international issues.

9 October. Prime Minister Tusk meets in Berlin with Chancellor Merkel to discuss a ruling by the European Court for Human Rights rejecting the Prussian Trust's demand for the return of real estate to Germans resettled from Poland after World War II.

5–6 December. Minister Sikorski meets with Minister Steinmeier in Berlin.

9 December. The 9th Polish-German intergovernmental consultations on mutual relations and closer dialogue and cooperation within the European Union are held in Warsaw, co-chaired by Prime Minister Tusk and Chancellor Merkel. After the talks Prime Minister Tusk says they helped Poland secure an understanding for its chief demand with regard to the EU's climate and energy package.

Hungary

31 January. Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány meets with Prime Minister Tusk in Warsaw.

25 March. President Kaczyński holds talks in Hungary with President László Sólyom and Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány. The officials note that Polish-Hungarian relations benefit from a well-developed social infrastructure.

Iraq

4 October. An official ceremony marking the completion of the Iraq mission by the Polish military contingent is held at the Echo base in Al Diwaniyah, attended by Minister Klich and senior Iraqi and U.S. commanders.

Ireland

28 February. Following a meeting with Taoiseach Bertie Ahern, Prime Minister Tusk emphasizes what he calls a special nature of relations between the two countries. The agenda of the meeting includes the Lisbon Treaty, the situation in the Balkans after Kosovo's declaration of independence, and the EU's relations with Russia. President Kaczyński also meets with the Taoiseach.

Israel

9 April. Prime Minister Tusk ends a visit to Israel, where he meets with President Shimon Peres and Prime Minister Ehud Olmert. The two countries express readiness for close cooperation in areas that add to their sense of security as well as global security.

17 April. President Peres pays a visit to Poland to talk with President Kaczyński, Prime Minister Tusk and Minister Sikorski about bilateral relations and a peaceful solution to the Middle East conflict.

12 May. President Kaczyński, while attending Israel's independence anniversary ceremonies, meets with President Shimon Peres, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Education Minister Yuli Tamir. He also meets with Ukrainian President Victor Yushchenko and his Latvian counterpart Valdis Zatlers.

Japan

1–5 October. Minister Sikorski pays a visit to Japan, where he meets with Foreign Minister Hirofumi Nakasone and Defense Minister Yasukazu Hamada, and also with Crown Prince Naruhito. Views are exchanged on bilateral political, economic, scientific, technical and cultural relations, and on international developments.

7 December. President Kaczyński ends a visit to Japan after holding talks with Prime Minister Taro Aso and Foreign Minister Hirofumi Nakasone.

Kyrgyzstan

21 May. Prime Minister Tusk meets with his Kyrgyz counterpart Igor Chudinov in Warsaw to discuss economic cooperation, energy, tourism, and cultural ties.

South Korea

5–7 October. Minister Sikorski pays a visit to the Republic of Korea where he holds talks with Prime Minister Han Seung-soo and Foreign Affairs and Trade Minister Yu Myung-hwan.

7 December. President Kaczyński ends a visit to South Korea, where he meets with President Li Myung-bak and Prime Minister Han Seung-soo.

Kuwait

19 November. Prime Minister Tusk ends a visit to Kuwait where he holds talks with the country's Prime Minister, Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammed Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah; and the Emir, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. The talks focus on ways of strengthening bilateral political relations and expanding investment and economic cooperation in the energy and chemical sectors.

Latvia

5 February. President Kaczyński meets with his Latvian counterpart Valdis Zatlers in Warsaw to discuss energy security, bilateral cooperation, regional developments, and European Union affairs. The Latvian president also holds talks with Prime Minister Tusk.

22 May. Following a meeting in Vilnius, Presidents Kaczyński and Adamkus go to Riga for consultations with the presidents of Latvia and Estonia. The four presidents adopt a Riga Declaration, emphasizing the democratic character of the elections in Georgia.

18 November. President Kaczyński attends the 90th anniversary celebrations of Latvia's independence.

Lithuania

1 February. During a visit to Lithuania, President Kaczyński meets with President Valdas Adamkus to discuss plans for bilateral and regional cooperation as well as ties as part of the EU and NATO in 2008.

12 February. An agreement establishing a company tasked with connecting the Polish and Lithuanian power systems is signed in Warsaw in the presence of President Kaczyński and his Lithuanian counterpart Adamkus, accompanied by Poland's Deputy Prime Minister and Economy Minister Waldemar Pawlak and Lithuania's Economy Minister Vytas Navickas.

16 February. President Kaczyński attends the 90th anniversary celebrations of the restoration of the Lithuanian state.

22 May. Following a meeting in Vilnius, President Kaczyński and his Lithuanian counterpart Adamkus go to Riga for consultations with the presidents of Latvia and Estonia. The four presidents adopt a document known as the Riga Declaration, which emphasizes the democratic character of the presidential elections in Georgia.

16 June. President Kaczyński pays a visit to Lithuania to discuss the outcome of the Irish referendum on the Lisbon Treaty and developments in Georgia together with his Lithuanian counterpart Adamkus.

13 July. President Kaczyński holds talks with Lithuanian President Adamkus on a working visit to Poland.

18 August. In a statement, Presidents Kaczyński and Adamkus appeal to leaders from NATO member states to consider granting Georgia and Ukraine Membership Action Plan (MAP) status.

8 October. Minister Klich meets with Defense Minister Juozas Olekas in Vilnius to discuss bilateral cooperation and the deployment of troops for international missions.

3 November. Presidents Kaczyński and Adamkus issue a joint declaration on the withdrawal of Russian troops from Georgia, in which they point out that the ceasefire agreement of Aug. 12 has not been implemented in full, especially with

regard to Russian troop pullout to pre-conflict positions and free access to humanitarian assistance.

Luxembourg

25 February. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs and Immigration Minister Jean Asselborn pays a visit to Poland to discuss bilateral cooperation, European affairs and international issues with Minister Sikorski.

10 June. Prime Minister Tusk meets with Luxembourg's Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker in Warsaw to talk about a European Council meeting in Brussels and Lisbon Treaty ratification. The Luxembourg prime minister backs a Polish-Swedish proposal concerning the Eastern dimension of the European Neighborhood Policy. Prime Minister Juncker also meets with President Kaczyński.

Macedonia

10 November. President Kaczyński meets with Macedonian President Branko Crvenkovski, who visits Poland for the 90th anniversary celebrations of the restoration of Polish independence.

Moldova

11 July. Minister Sikorski ends a visit to Moldova, where he holds talks with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs and European Integration Minister Andrei Strătan, and also meets with President Vladimir Voronin and Prime Minister Zinaida Grecianii. Poland confirms its commitment to the EU's Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine (EUBAM). The Polish minister's visit aims at invigorating bilateral relations and giving them a new momentum.

Mongolia

7 December. President Kaczyński ends a visit to Mongolia, where he meets with President Nambaryn Enkhbayar and Prime Minister Sanjaagiin Bayar. A joint declaration is issued.

Montenegro

10 November. President Kaczyński meets with Montenegro's President Filip Vujanović when the latter visits Poland to attend ceremonies marking the 90th anniversary of the restoration of Polish independence.

The Netherlands

26 March. Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende ends a visit to Poland, where he holds talks with Prime Minister Tusk and meets with President Kaczyński. The talks revolve around bilateral cooperation, Lisbon Treaty ratification, and NATO membership prospects for Ukraine and Georgia.

24 April. During the 18th session of the Utrecht Conference, held in Warsaw, Ministers Sikorski and Maxime Verhagen hold talks on bilateral cooperation and European and global issues.

Peru

17 May. Prime Minister Tusk ends a visit to Lima, where he meets with President Alan García Pérez for discussions on economic ties and relations between Latin America and the European Union. Prime Minister Tusk also attends the 5th Latin America/Caribbean-European Union summit, where he meets with Brazil's President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, Mexico's President Felipe de Jesús Calderón, and Colombia's President Álvaro Uribe Vélez.

The Philippines

9 September. Philippine Foreign Minister Alberto Romulo comes to Warsaw for a visit aimed at invigorating bilateral relations; he meets with the Undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Jan Borkowski, and Deputy Prime Minister Grzegorz Schetyna.

Portugal

2 September. Portuguese President Aníbal Cavaco Silva pays a visit to Poland, during which he meets with President Kaczyński—to discuss opportunities for the development of economic cooperation, the situation in Germany and Ukraine, and the Union for the Mediterranean—and with Prime Minister Tusk. The two countries' foreign ministers, Radosław Sikorski and Luís Filipe Margues Amado, discuss international issues, including the future of NATO and the Community's democratic functioning.

Qatar

19 November. Prime Minister Tusk ends a visit to Qatar, where he meets with the country's Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister, Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jaber Al-Thani; and the Emir, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani. The talks focus on Qatari gas supplies to Poland, joint investment in the energy and chemical sectors, and the privatization of Polish shipyards. An agreement is signed on the avoidance of double taxation.

Russia

10 January. Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Kislyak holds talks in Warsaw with Deputy Foreign Minister Witold Waszczykowski. He also meets with Minister Sikorski to discuss the U.S. missile defense shield plan.

21 January. Minister Sikorski pays a working visit to Moscow where he holds talks with Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov to discuss economic relations and

border-region traffic facilities. Both parties find it desirable to speed up work on bilateral agreements, including those on mutual recognition of educational diplomas, exchange of classified information, navigation in the Strait of Pilawa/Baltiysk, and protection of intellectual property. Developments in Georgia, Kosovo and Moldova are also discussed.

8 February. Prime Minister Tusk pays a visit to Russia where he holds talks with Prime Minister Victor Zubkov, Deputy Prime Minister Dmitri Medvedev, and President Vladimir Putin. The topics discussed include relations between the European Union and Russia, in addition to energy policy, two-way trade and concessions for both countries' entrepreneurs. An agreement is signed on the mutual protection of classified information.

8 April. Polish and Russian delegations fail to reach an agreement on a U.S. plan to deploy parts of an American missile defense shield in Poland. The negotiations end in failure after Russia demands permanent access to the planned shield sites. Poland rejects the demand.

11 September. Minister Lavrov pays a working visit to Poland to hold talks with Minister Sikorski and meet with Prime Minister Tusk. The officials discuss the U.S. missile defense shield plan and the issue of restoring navigation through the Strait of Pilawa/Baltiysk, developments in Georgia, and the Nord Stream pipeline project.

Romania

27 June. Minister Sikorski meets with Foreign Minister Lazăr Comănescu to discuss bilateral relations and multilateral cooperation, particularly in the context of the latest European and NATO policy agenda.

Serbia

12 November. President Kaczyński meets with President Boris Tadic, who visits Poland for the 90th anniversary celebrations of the restoration of Polish independence. President Kaczyński declares Poland's support for Serbia's integration with the European Union and NATO, and for the consolidation of security and peace in that country and across the Balkan Peninsula.

Slovakia

18 January. During a visit to Bratislava, Prime Minister Tusk talks with his Slovak counterpart Robert Fico about ways of reducing both countries' dependence on Russian oil and gas supplies. The officials also discuss a plan to expand the road network between Poland and Slovakia. Prime Minister Tusk also meets with President Ivan Gašparovič.

6 June. President Gašparovič pays a visit to Poland for talks with President Kaczyński and Prime Minister Tusk on tightening bilateral cooperation in areas such

as communications infrastructure and border-region cooperation, with a special focus on ties within the Tatra Euroregion. Energy security is also discussed.

19 September. Minister Sikorski pays a visit to Slovakia, where he meets with Foreign Minister Ján Kubiš and Deputy Prime Minister Dušan Čaplovič.

Slovenia

20 March. Slovenia's European Union presidency experience is the main topic of Prime Minister Tusk's talks with Slovenian Prime Minister Janez Janša and President Danilo Türk. Other issues discussed include ways to expand economic cooperation, European Neighborhood Policy, and the need to strengthen EU membership prospects for Ukraine and Serbia. The officials also talk about the international situation, especially developments in the Balkans following the proclamation of independence by Kosovo.

6 November. President Kaczyński travels to Slovenia for talks with President Türk and Prime Minister Janša. The officials discuss issues related to Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Georgia. Developments in the European Union are also on the agenda.

Spain

8 October. The 5th Polish-Spanish intergovernmental consultations are held in Cordova, co-chaired by Prime Minister Donald Tusk and his Spanish counterpart José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero. The agenda includes two-way trade, cooperation in home affairs, and the European Neighborhood Policy. The parties announce a plan to strengthen bilateral political and economic cooperation.

Sweden

16 April. Foreign Minister Carl Bildt pays a working visit to Warsaw to hold talks with Minister Sikorski and meet with President Kaczyński. The subjects discussed include bilateral relations, the European Neighborhood Policy, Baltic Sea region cooperation, and the countries' involvement in the EU's Chad mission.

18 September. Prime Minister Tusk pays a visit to Sweden where he and his Swedish counterpart Frederik Reinfeldt discuss the Eastern Partnership, a common policy on the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, and the climate and energy package.

24 November. President Kaczyński meets with Minister Bildt, who comes to Poland to attend a meeting of foreign ministers from Visegrad Group countries and Baltic states as well as Bulgaria, Romania, Slovenia, and Sweden. The two officials discuss issues that include Lisbon Treaty ratification by EU member states. The president declares that Poland will not obstruct the process.

25 November. Deputy Prime Minister Pawlak goes to Stockholm for talks with Deputy Prime Minister Maud Olofsson on the climate and energy package and the Swedish-Polish sustainable energy platform. Prospects for two-way trade are also discussed.

Turkey

18 November. Foreign Minister Ali Babacan pays an official visit to Poland to exchange views with Minister Sikorski on international security and European policy, and discuss bilateral cooperation. Minister Babacan also meets with Deputy Prime Minister Pawlak.

Ukraine

29 January. During a visit to Ukraine, Minister Sikorski holds talks with Foreign Minister Volodymyr Ohryzko, confirming the Polish government's steadfast will to support Ukraine's European aspirations. He also meets with Deputy Prime Minister Oleksandr Turchynov and President Victor Yushchenko to discuss international affairs, including developments in Transnistria and energy issues.

4 March. Minister Ohryzko pays a working visit to Poland to hold talks with Minister Sikorski and meet with President Kaczyński and Prime Minister Tusk. The talks focus on consular affairs, the situation on the Polish-Ukrainian border, and energy issues. An agreement on border area traffic is initialed.

14 March. President Kaczyński holds talks in Warsaw with President Yushchenko, who is reassured of Poland's support for Ukraine's efforts to be granted Membership Action Plan (MAP) status. The subjects discussed also include Ukraine's European perspective and the Odessa-Brody-Gdańsk pipeline. An agreement is signed on cooperation in health care.

28 March. Prime Minister Tusk pays a visit to Ukraine to meet with Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko and President Yushchenko. The countries sign a letter of intent on cooperation in building administrative structures for Ukraine's integration with Europe, along with an agreement on border area traffic, an agreement on working together to hold the 2012 European soccer championships, and a declaration on establishing a Polish-Ukrainian European University.

9 April. During a visit to Poland by Ukrainian Defense Minister Yuri Yehhanurov, an agreement is signed on priority areas of bilateral military cooperation by 2010. The countries emphasize their desire to develop political and military dialogues, intensify military and technical cooperation, tighten bilateral defense relations, and work out a framework for a joint force to take part in NATO and EU missions and other military operations.

14 April. President Kaczyński meets with Ukraine's President Yushchenko, who arrives in Poland for a working visit. In the presence of both presidents,

international pipeline company Sarmatia and Granherne Limited sign a contract to provide a feasibility study for the Euro-Asian oil transport corridor project. The presidents sign a joint declaration on deepening cooperation in the run-up to the 2012 European soccer championship.

14 July. Ukrainian Prime Minister Tymoshenko pays a one-day visit to Warsaw, meeting Prime Minister Tusk to discuss both countries' preparations for the European soccer championship in 2012. The officials also discuss the situation on Polish-Ukrainian border crossings and border area traffic.

19 September. Prime Minister Tusk holds talks with Ukraine's Prime Minister Tymoshenko in Kiev to discuss preparations for the 2012 European soccer championships, developments in the Caucasus, political stability in Ukraine, the Eastern Partnership, and prospects for the European Union's eastward enlargement. The two politicians express concurring views on regional affairs, including the settlement of the Georgia conflict. Prime Minister Tusk also meets with President Yushchenko.

29 October. During the 9th Polish-Ukrainian economic summit in Donetsk, President Kaczyński meets with Ukraine's President Yushchenko to discuss mutual cooperation issues, including value-added tax, border crossings and tariffs.

11 November. President Kaczyński meets with President Yushchenko, who is in Poland for the 90th anniversary celebrations of the restoration of Polish independence.

22 November. President Kaczyński attends the 75th anniversary commemoration of the Great Famine in Ukraine.

10 December. A host of senior Foreign Ministry officials from Poland and Ukraine, led by Polish Foreign Minister Sikorski and his Ukrainian counterpart Ohryzko, meet in Warsaw to discuss issues including global security policy challenges, European integration, and the need to hammer out a common policy on solving bilateral problems related to economic cooperation, history and culture. While in Warsaw, Minister Ohryzko also meets with President Kaczyński.

22 December. An intergovernmental Protocol revising a Polish-Ukrainian agreement of March 28, 2008, on border area traffic is signed in Warsaw, along with a Polish-Ukrainian declaration on modifications to this agreement.

United Kingdom

28 April. Minister Sikorski holds talks in London with the British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, David Miliband, on strengthening bilateral cooperation and EU affairs.

24 November. Prime Minister Tusk holds talks in London with his British counterpart Gordon Brown on issues including the climate package, energy security, and the global financial crisis.

United States

17 January. Minister Klich pays a visit to the United States for talks with Secretary of Defense Robert Gates about the plan to deploy parts of a U.S. missile defense shield in Poland. The officials also discuss ways to strengthen Poland's air defense system and tackle issues related to the withdrawal of the Polish military contingent from Iraq and Poland's increased involvement in the ISAF operation in Afghanistan.

30 January-3 February. Minister Sikorski pays a visit to the United States, where he meets with Vice President Dick Cheney and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. The subjects discussed include prospects for security policy cooperation, specifically the plan to deploy a U.S. missile defense shield in Poland and the planned modernization of the Polish armed forces.

10 March. Prime Minister Tusk meets with U.S. President George W. Bush in Washington to talk about issues including the planned modernization of Poland's armed forces, the missile defense shield, Poland's military contribution to the Afghanistan and Iraq missions, and a visa waiver program for Poles. Briefing the U.S. president on Poland's position on the missile defense shield plan, the Polish prime minister says that the missile shield will have to contribute to Poland's security if it is to be deployed in the country.

14 April. Minister Sikorski meets with U.S. Undersecretary of State for Democracy and Global Affairs Paula Dobriansky in Warsaw to discuss ways to promote democracy and human rights.

10 July. Minister Sikorski ends a visit to the United States, where he meets with Secretary of State Rice and Republican presidential candidate John McCain. The purpose of the visit is to specify in greater detail the countries' positions on the missile defense shield. Poland specifies the conditions for deploying a Patriot missile battery in its territory. Minister Sikorski also holds a telephone conversation with the Democratic presidential candidate, Barack Obama.

20 August. Secretary of State Rice and Minister Sikorski sign an agreement in Warsaw on the deployment of parts of a U.S. missile defense shield in Poland. The officials also sign a declaration on strategic cooperation, in which the United States undertakes to ensure the security of Poland and all U.S. facilities deployed in Polish territory. President Kaczyński and Prime Minister Tusk meet with Secretary Rice.

8 September. Minister Sikorski meets with the Republican presidential candidate, John McCain, in Chicago to discuss NATO affairs, the missile defense program, and issues related to Ukraine.

15 October. In connection with the completion of the Polish military mission in Iraq, Secretary Rice thanks Minister Sikorski, in a telephone conversation, for the Polish contingent's contribution to the stabilization mission.

16 December. Minister Sikorski meets with the Undersecretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, John Rood, to discuss details related to the implementation of an agreement on deploying parts of a U.S. missile defense shield in Poland. The officials also talk about a declaration on strategic cooperation between the United States and Poland.

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Sources: www.prezydent.pl; www.premier.gov.pl; www.msz.gov.pl