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Departament Strategii

Polish foreign policy tasks in 2026:
Information from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
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Mr President,

Mr Speaker,

Madam Speaker,

Mr Prime Minister,

Honourable Ministers,

Honourable Members of Parliament,

Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

Honourable Guests,

Introduction

This is the tenth time that I, as minister of foreign affairs, report to parliament on the tasks of Polish diplomacy. Yet for me, this address is anything but routine.

We are all aware of being under threat. The situation is serious. Realising one is in danger can either paralyse or mobilise. We cannot afford to be paralysed. Passivity or counting on others merely invites escalation. Raising a hue and cry that this is not our war has the same effect. In the early hours of 19 November of last year, a Russian missile attack on Ternopil killed a seven-year-old Amelia, a **Polish** citizen, along with her mother.

The challenges ahead of us are dauntingly complex. Grand, world-shaking disruptions—in politics, the economy, and technology—are taking place in front of our eyes.

1. Assessment of the international situation

Let me remind you that security is a precondition for a state to perform any of its other tasks. At the same time, in various countries of Europe, ever louder warnings are resounding against—let me be clear—**war**. Denmark's prime minister has said that "a Europe that is not able and willing to protect itself is going to die at some point." The chief of France's defence staff warned that his country needs to be ready to—quote—"lose its children" in a potential armed conflict with Russia. NATO's secretary general has stated that—let me quote again—"Russia has brought war back to Europe" and because of that we must be prepared for a conflict on a "scale [...] our grandparents or great-grandparents endured." The German minister of defence does not rule out the possibility that Russia could be ready to attack a NATO ally not in two or three years' time, but as soon as this year. The head of MI6, referring to Russian activity, has said that "we are now operating in a space between peace and war." History is throwing us into the deep end. In the words of Jean Monnet, one of the European Union's founding fathers: "Europe will be forged in crises, and will be the sum of the solutions adopted for those crises."

We are already experiencing a campaign of sabotage and subversion across the whole continent. Polish airspace has been violated by Russian drones. There have been arson attacks and even an attempted terrorist attack on the railway system. The perpetrators, already detained, were acting on behalf of a foreign intelligence service.

A general feeling of disorientation is deepened by aggression in the information space, accompanied by fake news and online manipulation campaigns. The Ministry of Digital Affairs reports that Poland is targeted by two to four thousand cyberattacks **each day!** The vast

majority is effectively blocked. Nevertheless, this phenomenon's scale should cause concern.

The enemy's goal is simple—to frighten, to sow divisions, to turn Poles against one another and undermine trust in public authorities. The arsenal deployed is well-known:

- botnets spreading fake news and hate;
- use of artificial intelligence to create fake content mimicking real information;
- exploiting cryptocurrencies to finance hybrid warfare;
- attacks on critical infrastructure;
- and, last but not least, useful idiots who amplify dangerous lies.

Just after Russian drones invaded our skies, a disinformation campaign was launched that reached 8 million Polish internet users within a single day. Its authors wanted to put the blame on Ukraine and NATO. Unfortunately, they were heeded, even among those present here in this Chamber. Similar actions were taken after last November's bomb blast on the Warsaw–Lublin rail line.

The Kremlin will not relent. It will keep testing our boundaries. In this struggle, the enormously important thing is to build up our society's resilience. That is why Poles of all ages must be armed with knowledge about how to handle cyber threats. Understanding the who, what, and why of online activity, along with solidarity in countering disinformation, constitute our collective, patriotic duty.

Because it is cheap and easily accessed, the Internet provides a convenient battleground for our enemies. The overwhelming majority of automated web traffic comes from malicious bots. These are often leveraged and

financed by organisations from hostile countries. As a result, the offensive we are mounting against cyber threats will harness all relevant state institutions in close collaboration.

Poland's commitment and expertise in combating hostile information operations have been recognised worldwide, as evidenced by an invitation to the prestigious G7 Rapid Response Mechanism, which assembles countries most advanced in countering disinformation.

We have met Russian provocations to date with a firm response:

- In 2025, I withdrew permission for Russia to operate its last two consulates in Poland—in Kraków and Gdańsk. The Poznań consulate had been closed earlier, in November 2024, for the same reasons. As a result, a significant number of Russian diplomats left Poland.
- Those who remain are subject to restrictions on their movements within the country. Alongside our partners, we led to the adoption of EU sanctions that limit the mobility of Russian diplomatic personnel on Union territory. Russians are now banned from travelling with non-biometric passports. This is to hamper Russia's ability to conduct "active measures," to use Soviet phraseology.
- During Poland's presidency of the Council of the EU, our efforts contributed to tightening sanctions targeting Russia's "clunker fleet", or "shadow fleet." These are decrepit, uninsured ships flying flags of convenience, which Russia uses to smuggle oil. Income from these sales goes to fund the war. The clunker fleet does not just fuel Russia's war machine—it also poses a serious threat to our offshore infrastructure and, of course, the environment. At the beginning of our presidency, there were fewer than 80 vessels on the sanctions list. When the Polish presidency was coming to an end—there were

almost 450. On average, this translates to two new tankers added to the sanctions list every day. Today, the total is 600. That's a good result, but still not good enough—which is why we continue to work towards gradual expansion of the list. We respect freedom of navigation as long as rules are observed. All European countries require vehicles travelling on their roads to undergo regular technical inspections and have valid insurance. The same must apply to vessels under navigation, including in international waters. Ships that break the law should be detained.

- In response to Russian hybrid actions, we are enhancing cooperation with our allies. After the Russian drone incursion into Poland, NATO launched Eastern Sentry—an operation to bolster air and ground-based defences along the entire eastern flank with modern anti-drone technology.
- We also support countries in our region like Moldova which want to be part of the Western world but remain within the orbit of Moscow's territorial ambitions. Last year, Moscow spent the equivalent of up to 2% of Moldova's GDP to secure a victory for pro-Russian parties in parliamentary elections. That effort failed. Moldovans chose Europe because they want to live better, safer lives. We will assist Moldova in adopting the reforms needed to join the EU, including helping the state administration prepare for accession negotiations.

Why are we doing all this? Our actions stem from an analysis of the opportunities and challenges posed by the international situation. Here are the main elements.

First and foremost, war is still raging in Ukraine, for which full responsibility is borne by the aggressor—Russia. Attacks on civilians, residential buildings, schools, trains, and hospitals violate the fundamental principles of international law.

Putin does not want peace. What he wants is capitulation. Let me remind you that back in the 1990s, Russia granted Ukraine security guarantees. In exchange, Ukraine gave up its nuclear weapons—the world’s third largest nuclear arsenal at the time. This agreement was reached with the involvement of Western countries. In 2014, at the time of Crimea’s annexation, Ukraine was a constitutionally neutral state!

Thanks to the courage of its soldiers, the sacrifice of its citizens, and the support of its allies around the world—including Poland—Ukraine is holding on. Let me send a clear message to all those who reckon that helping Ukraine is unnecessary or unprofitable: you are in error.

And if you will not listen to me, please listen to one of the greatest authorities on Poland’s eastern policy, Jerzy Giedroyc, who would have celebrated his 120th birthday this year:

“We must endeavour at all costs to uphold the independence of Ukraine, Lithuania, and Belarus, because this is in our vital interest,” Giedroyc said in the 1990s. “If Russia devours Ukraine, then we are **cooked**—they will have us by the throat.”

If Ukraine loses the war, do not imagine that the threat posed by Russia would diminish. It will increase! Just imagine what would happen if Putin’s tanks stood in Medyka, near Przemyśl.

For one thing, we would have to devote much more money to strengthening our own defences than we spend today on helping

Ukraine. In 2022–2025, the European Union and individual member states allocated almost EUR 200 billion to supporting Ukraine. But estimates of the cost of defending the countries on NATO's eastern flank against a hypothetical Russian aggression run to at least EUR 1.2 trillion, or twenty-four times Poland's defence budget.

A free Ukraine that belongs to the West is an opportunity for us—an opportunity to defang Russian imperialism, strengthen common defence, intensify economic cooperation, carry out joint projects in the defence industry, and involve our companies in the reconstruction process. In terms of value, Poland is already the second largest exporter of goods to Ukraine.

Here is one example: the sale of 54 Krab gun-howitzers for approximately PLN 3 billion was the single largest export transaction in the history of Polish Armaments Group.

That's because cooperation gives us an edge.

This year, on 24–26 June, Gdańsk will host the Ukraine Recovery Conference, which will bring together politicians, experts, and business leaders from across the globe. It also offers an opportunity for Polish companies. Thanks to our membership in the EU and NATO, our predictable regulations, high defence outlays, and dense network of ties with Ukraine, Poland has become an investment gateway to that country.

Ukrainians living in Poland are already helping our country's economy grow. In 2024, their contribution to Polish GDP amounted to almost PLN 100 billion. This represents over half of the annual budget of the National Health Fund!

The vast majority of Ukrainian refugees are employed or self-employed. The level of workforce participation among adult immigrants from Ukraine is even higher than among Poles. Since 2022, Ukrainians have established more than 120,000 businesses in Poland. They create jobs and pay taxes here, in our country. For years, these businesses have increased our trade turnover with Ukraine. Their role will be even greater in times of peace. But the larger point here goes well beyond financial gain.

For four years, we have shown the world what “Polish solidarity” means. Almost every person I spoke with on my last visit to Washington, DC stressed that.

Today, as Russians continue their midwinter bombardment of Ukrainian heating and power plants, Poles have raised enormous sums to ship emergency power generators to freezing residents of Kyiv and other cities. Only two days ago, I visited the ruins of one such demolished plant with leaders from all over Europe. In Kraków, Cardinal Grzegorz Ryś announced that funds collected in offering baskets throughout the diocese on 1 February would go towards that cause. Some expected the collection to come up empty. Instead, the faithful offered nearly **PLN 6 million**.

On a similar note, the Warmth from Poland for Kyiv initiative raised more than **PLN 10 million**. Natalia Panchenko, one of the organisers of this campaign, is here in this chamber with us today. Could you please stand up? Thank you very much and good luck with your future initiatives, which bring out the best in us. The way we have made Ukraine refugees welcome and given help to the wounded and those on the front line will go down in Polish history as a source of pride.

Russia brings war. Poland brings warmth.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are obviously aware of the problems faced by today's Ukraine. Adapting to EU standards, improving how the state functions, introducing transparent administration, eradicating corruption—Ukrainians still have a lot of work ahead of them. The association agreement obliges them to. We understand this and want to help, because we remember how much effort it took to go through the same processes in Poland.

Just as the EU states supported our modernisation in the 1990s because they wanted order and predictability on their eastern flank, so now we see the logic in helping Ukraine grow and stay the course towards EU.

Kyiv's victory will be our victory. Contrary to its propaganda, Russia is not winning the war. Let us not be fooled. Russia is not, and has never been, invincible. As a reminder, in the 20th century alone, Moscow lost:

- the Russo-Japanese war in 1905;
- the First World War;
- the Polish–Soviet war of 1920;
- the war in Afghanistan;
- and the Cold War.

It also lost a series of historic opportunities for democratisation and modernisation.

The attempt to conquer Ukraine has already lasted longer than the Soviet Union's fight against its former ally, Nazi Germany, which started in June 1941. Back then, the Red Army advanced the distance from Moscow's

suburbs to central Berlin in less than four years. Today, Putin's army has been bleeding out in Donbas for four years now.

It is estimated that the Kremlin's decisions have already cost it about 1,200,000 dead and wounded. Some estimates suggest that for every Ukrainian soldier killed, as many as seven Russian soldiers die. In the first year of war alone, at least 800,000 Russians fled the country. Because of sanctions, Russian companies lost access to Western markets. Spending on the war takes up as much as 40% of the state budget. Putin is leading Russia to bankruptcy, just as Brezhnev did.

The coalition of countries supporting Ukraine can be proud of itself: we have contributed mightily to containing Russia's offensive operations and weakening its economy. We have frozen nearly USD 340 billion of the Russian central bank's foreign exchange reserves. Sanctions are a tool that **works**.

Had Moscow not started the war in 2014, its GDP today might be even 20% larger. Russia would not be afflicted by labour shortages and would have had no need to resort to dependency on China. Russia made an historic mistake by mortgaging its future to an unnecessary war. Its dictator mistook self-love for national interest.

The stakes of the war in Ukraine are much higher than one country's independence or even the security of our part of Europe. This war will decide who becomes the third pillar of a new global order alongside the United States and China. Will it be Russia or the European Union? For a Polish patriot, the choice should be obvious.

Mr Speaker, Members of the House,

Our second challenge is the international order, which is being shaken to its foundations. There has been a shift towards a politics of force at the expense of norms. We are witnessing attempts to go back to a concert of powers, where the biggest countries carve up the world into spheres of influence in which they should allegedly enjoy special rights, including of a territorial nature. Unfortunately, in different parts of the globe, people can be found willing to restore that system. While that would be a dream scenario for some nationalists, I submit that it would be **unambiguously dangerous** for Poland. In a world where only power and money matter, there is no place for genuine alliances. Today's ally can be gobbled up or sold down the river tomorrow.

Our unwavering support is for an international order based on the Charter of the United Nations, especially as it concerns respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, and a prohibition on the use of force. These are universal norms that bind all subjects of international law, equally relevant in Europe, Asia, South America, or beyond the Arctic circle. Like the Decalogue, these norms are not always respected but should ever remain a benchmark. Where the laws of God and man end, the law of the jungle starts.

The repercussions of Russia's war against Ukraine touch us directly. This is not the only conflict about which this could be said, however. A short list would include instability in the Middle East, civil wars in Yemen and Sudan combined with a dramatic humanitarian crises, continuing turmoil in Syria, one border dispute between India and Pakistan and another between Thailand and Cambodia. More could be added.

I agree with Pope Leo XIV's words that: "The continuation of hostilities, with increasingly serious consequences for civilians, widens the rift

between peoples and pushes further back the opportunity for a just and lasting peace [...] in Ukraine, in the Middle East, and in every region where, unfortunately, there is fighting going on for interests that are not those of the people.”

The world is feeling the consequences of climate change, water shortages, infectious diseases, technological revolutions and disruptions of food supplies. No country can face all these problems alone. This is why international cooperation is not a matter of choice, but a necessity.

Cooperation gives us an edge.

This is why at the very least we need the most basic norms, such as respect for sovereignty, as well as organisations to help resolve our disputes.

Obviously, some global organisations require urgent reform—for example, the UN Security Council, where Western Europe is overrepresented and Africa, Latin America, and the world’s most populous country, India, lack permanent representation. If these institutions are not reformed, they will collapse or become as ineffective as the 1930s League of Nations.

Usually, communication is easiest among countries with shared values. That is why we support initiatives that promote democracy, human rights, and civil liberties. Last year, the prestigious **Polish** Lech Wałęsa Solidarity Prize went to Berta Soler Fernández, the Cuban dissident and leader of the Ladies in White opposition group. Unfortunately, I could not present her with the statuette and PLN 1 million cheque in Cuba, where she remains under house arrest. Instead, the ceremony was held in Miami, the closest possible location, with Cuban political emigrés and US Secretary of State Marco Rubio in attendance. This year, the award will also go to outstanding defenders of freedom and democracy, whether their struggle takes place

just beyond our borders, as in Belarus, or thousands of kilometres away. Meanwhile, we will support Cuba on its path from dictatorship to democracy, sharing our own experience of democratic transition and economic reforms.

The third element, unfortunately, is deteriorating relations between the US and Europe. This poses a particular challenge for Poland. For decades, our alliance and close ties with the United States have been a pillar of Polish foreign policy, regardless of who resided in the White House, which party had the majority in Congress, and who ruled in Poland. But it is not Europe that is making territorial claims, imposing arbitrary duties or interfering in party rivalries on the other side of the Atlantic.

Our own public is confused by this situation. When, in late January, Poles were asked in a survey if the US were a credible ally, unfortunately, most of them, that is 54%, said no. Only 35% agreed.

Are these worries justified? I will return to this issue later in my speech. At this point, let me just say that no democratic government can ignore such a significant shift in the public mood. Doubts about the importance of relations with the US are worrying, since—**and this is my fourth point**—Poland's security is bolstered by two organisations of which we are an exemplary member: the European Union and, above all, NATO. Each plays a different role. They complement rather than compete with each other.

We know from experience how difficult it is to reach a consensus within NATO and the EU. A Bulgarian philosopher, Ivan Krastev, says that we share common dreams, but our fears are still national. Polish or Finnish

fears of Russian aggression are not necessarily shared in Bratislava, Budapest, or Lisbon.

That is why we form coalitions of the willing and tighten bilateral defence alliances. In May 2025, we signed a treaty on enhanced cooperation and friendship with France. It provides for mutual security guarantees and an obligation to provide military assistance should one of the two countries come under attack. It also covers cooperation in the defence industry, the economy, agriculture, and science. The path is open to sign similar treaties with other countries.

Cooperation around the Baltic Sea littoral has gained in importance. The region's countries are bound by economic and social ties, by a shared assessment of threats, and by a determination to act together. It is no coincidence that the region has seen such rapid growth in defence spending.

We are taking advantage of Poland's current presidency of the Council of the Baltic Sea States to cooperate even more closely. Together, we can more effectively protect our critical infrastructure, including gas and oil pipelines and power cables. We are also open to cooperation within the Bucharest Nine and the Three Seas Initiative.

It is vital to reach agreement on a "military Schengen" to remove legal barriers to the movement of troops and equipment, so that support from other countries does not take weeks to arrive.

2. Poland's place in a united Europe

Members of the House,

Poland's membership of the European Union is neither an accident nor the result of pressure. It was a sovereign, strategic choice we made in the 1990s, after analysing various scenarios of possible developments after the fall of communism. There were and still are other paths available, but they are much less advantageous. Poland's *raison d'état* demands its presence as a member and co-shaper of the European Union.

Again, cooperation gives us an edge.

For those who would prefer a weaker EU or one without Poland, let me point out an obvious paradox. At the very moment when Brussels, after many years, has started to implement our proposals—on migration by focusing on border controls, on environmental policy by lifting excessive burdens, and on relations with Russia by taking determined measures, including on defence—some Polish politicians are spreading anti-European propaganda and want us to leave the EU.

Europe needs reform because the world around us is changing rapidly. But the Europe's future should **be built around the framework of the European Union, not upon its ruins.**

The Polish Ordo Iuris foundation, together with the Hungarian government-backed Mathias Corvinus Collegium and US nationalist circles, have been jointly pursuing an agenda aimed at paralysing the EU. The plan is first to break the EU, and then to criticise it for not working.

What would ensue from the EU's collapse? Unbridled national egoism—a dream of certain people, including some in this room. Without the mediation of EU institutions to ease tensions between the interests of the member states, the egoism of some countries would clash with the egoism

of others. The dire consequences for Poland's security and economic development are easy to predict.

Let us not be fooled that EU membership has harmed Poland, or worse, threatens our sovereignty. I have said it before in this Chamber and will repeat now:

EU membership does not deprive us of our sovereignty. Quite the opposite, it was only thanks to recovering our sovereignty that we were able to join the European Union!

I keep hearing the same slogans about the supposedly bloated Brussels bureaucracy that I used to hear in the United Kingdom before Brexit. Let me point out that this administrative apparatus is made up of about 60,000 officials. That is half of the total employed at the French Finance Ministry.

I agree that not all EU laws seem sensible. However, we should bear in mind that they are based on compromises between member states. And while they may be drafted by bureaucrats, they are negotiated and approved by the governments and parliaments of member states, and by the democratically elected European Parliament. So if we decide that our climate goals are too ambitious, we can always change them.

Is Poxexit or dissolution the right answer for the EU's deficiencies? That would be like junking a car just because its suspension needs fixing.

I keep hearing fearmongering that the EU is essentially a project to build German power and lead to Berlin's alleged hegemony over Brussels and Warsaw. Again, let me rely on facts.

The European Union's predecessor, the European Coal and Steel Community, was established after the Second World War precisely

to impose a framework of shared management on Germany's industrial might. A person who understood this was Robert Schuman, one of the founders of a united Europe, France's foreign minister at the time, and a devout Catholic who is currently on the path to beatification.

Schuman understood better than anyone that a united Europe is the best instrument for avoiding another cataclysm. "A united Europe was not achieved and we had war," he wrote in his declaration of May 1950. The words of this **conservative** should resonate today, especially on the Right.

When the Second World War ended, eminent Poles already had a clear view of their country's place on the map of an integrating continent. Edward Raczyński, whom I later had the honour to meet while he was Poland's President-in-Exile, said this on Radio Free Europe in 1953 about the future European Economic Community: "If such a union is indeed established, then a future free Poland will **undoubtedly benefit** from this turn of events (...), consolidate (...) our security, and gain (...) foundations for all-round development." I recommend these words to the Eurosceptics among us. Would you accuse Count Raczyński of treason as well?

Nowadays, the wisdom of these convictions is shared by politicians **of nearly every stripe in contemporary Poland**. In 2007, then Foreign Minister Anna Fotyga said in this very Chamber—and I quote—that "Thanks to our accession to the European Union, we are part of a dynamic and powerful community. The Community exerts its influence on us, but we are co-shaping it at the same time, true to our values and political objectives. (...) Thanks to our membership of the European Union, we have gained many new political and economic opportunities, which we are using to reduce the gap separating us from the most advanced countries

of the world.” Madame Minister, thank you for these words, they are still true nearly two decades later.

The EU strengthens smaller member states. When it imposes restrictions and standards, everyone has to comply, even the largest countries.

It is true that we have contentious issues with Germany, as we do with other states. But we have more shared interests. Today, Poland is the world’s fourth largest exporter of goods to Germany, behind China, the US, and the Netherlands, but ahead of France and Italy. We are also the fourth largest importer of German goods, ahead of China. Would it really be beneficial to impose tariffs on goods bought and sold in Germany by Polish business? Would it really be worthwhile to return to “traditional” relations with Berlin? If the answer is yes, then which historical period should we take as our benchmark—Poland during the partitions, the Second World War and the occupation, or maybe under communism? Perhaps we should emulate the Battle of Grunwald or Cedyňa? I have the impression that some people get their understanding of international relations from Henryk Sienkiewicz’s *The Teutonic Knights*.

European integration is what helps us manage “the German challenge,” or how to cooperate with the EU’s most populous member state and Europe’s largest economy. It is easier to negotiate with a strong German partner inside the EU than with a powerful Germany unconstrained by EU norms and rules. Let us imagine the EU weak or dismantled, and on the outside, a less prosperous Poland and a Germany armed to the teeth and ruled by the nationalist Right. Is this what you want?

EU countries are our main trading partners. In the past, hardly anyone in Western Europe wanted to buy Polish goods. Nowadays, the annual

value of Polish exports amounts to EUR 350 billion. That total is nearly six times larger than when we entered the EU. Nearly three-quarters of our exports go to EU countries. That means that last year alone, EU citizens spent about EUR 260 billion, or more than one trillion zlotys, on Polish goods.

Whoever remains unpersuaded by these data should take a closer look at the UK over the decade since the Brexit referendum. According to conservative estimates, in 2020-2025 alone, the UK's economic loss attributable to leaving the EU amounted to about EUR 200 billion .

Today, most of the British consider the decision to leave the EU a mistake. Among UK farmers, who mostly voted for Brexit, 69% think they have personally lost out. Be careful what you wish for—it may come true.

Let those who can afford it learn from their own mistakes. Wise men learn from the mistakes of others. Brexit's only silver lining is that some Poles residing in the UK have decided to return home.

Recently I heard the story of Aleksandra Pędraszewska, a businesswoman and economist who straight out of university set up a company developing technology for holographic displays. Even with an excellent British degree and a professional start in the UK, Ms Pędraszewska decided to return to Poland. Today, she invests in Polish technology companies and, as a member of the Future Council at the Chancellery of the Prime Minister, she shares her experience to build the power of Poland's innovation-driven economy.

I will speak more about such inspiring individuals—and about relations with the Polish diaspora in general—in my diaspora address, which I will deliver as usual to the Senate this autumn.

Some worry that it is the EU that is making money off us, enriching itself and exploiting Poles . Let's take a look at the figures. From our EU accession through September 2025, we have received nearly EUR 268 billion, an average of more than EUR 30 million per day! Per day! Over the same period, we contributed EUR 99 billion to the EU budget. The math is simple—we have gained over EUR 167 billion net. **Net**, mind you!

Three basic conclusions can be inferred from these preliminary calculations about the potential costs of Poland leaving the EU, covering the first five to 10 years:

First, a decrease in GDP of 4% to 7%.

Second, a drop in salaries of as much as 8%.

Third, a reduction in exports of meat and dairy products by as much as 45%–50%, assuming a friendly divorce from the EU, not a violent breakup! On top of that, we must not forget that, the UK had to pay a heavy bill for unfulfilled commitments ensuing from its departure from the EU.

Why am I speaking so much about the threat of Polesxit? Contrary to the dictates of patriotism and common sense, anti-EU propaganda is increasingly promoted by prominent members of the former parliamentary coalition. Here is the opinion of Krystyna Pawłowicz, a former MP of Law and Justice (PiS): "I'm IN FAVOUR OF EXIT by Poland and the Central and Eastern European countries from the imperial EUROPEAN UNION, liberating them from Germany's thrall, and establishing new MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL relations with Western European countries and the US that will also benefit Poland. Otherwise, the European Union and Germany will finish Poland off. We must save

whatever we still can.” This is a perfect example of right-wing doublethink. We may be the world’s 20th largest economy, but Poland is being exploited and has fallen into ruin.

This social media post is public. As a piece of disinformation, it has already been viewed by more than 100,000 people. Every symptom outburst of anti-European hysteria is celebrated in Moscow. Poland’s *raison d’état* is EU membership—to build and strengthen the Union.

Members of the House,

In 2026, intensive negotiations on the shape of the EU’s multiannual budget for 2028–2034 await us. Our starting position is more than good. The European Commission’s current proposal allocates to Poland the biggest share of funding for cohesion policy and the Common Agricultural Policy and the largest share in the funds to be spent on internal security. Instead of quarrelling with the EU, it is better to have a fellow countryman as Commissioner for Budget.

But remember—the benefits of membership go far beyond money transfers. The EU is a powerful player on the international arena. It represents 450 million citizens and, taken as a whole, the world’s second largest economy. Our potential is symbolically reflected even in the results of the recent Winter Olympics, where EU athletes brought home 164 medals, which would place us—as the EU—first in the medals table. Of course, we are above all proud of our Polish Olympians—and of their medals. Congratulations, Mr Kacper Tomasiak!

The same goes for foreign policy. If we were alone, our voice would be barely heard. When we act together as a Union, we can take better care of our interests.

Naturally, we do not agree with every EU decision. Sometimes we must simply respect the will of the majority—just as we do here, in the Sejm. Losing a vote does not mean losing our sovereignty. The EU will not supersede national states—that is not what it was created for. What it can help us do is to meet our national goals.

Cooperation gives us an edge.

Mr Speaker, Members of the House,

A united Europe is a cornerstone of the North Atlantic Alliance. Of 27 EU member states, 23 are also members of NATO. As I have already mentioned, both organisations complement each other. Investing in one alliance bolsters and multiplies the capabilities of the other.

That is why it is so important to leverage the EU's financial potential to strengthen our defences. An instrument for the purpose is the Security Action for Europe programme, or **SAFE**. Member states have EUR 150 billion in low-interest loans at their disposal to invest in their defence industries. Nearly one euro in three of this sum, or a total of almost EUR 44 billion, will be spent on the needs of one country—Poland. Long-term loans under this instrument can be obtained much more cheaply than those normally received by the State Treasury. The Ministry of Finance estimates a saving of up to PLN 36 billion in debt servicing costs alone. For this money, we could order another 32 F-35 fighter jets from the US and add

more than 300 Rosomak armoured personnel carriers, made in Siemianowice Śląskie.

We will use SAFE funds mainly to finance arms purchases, including drones and anti-drone systems, along with elements of the East Shield. A total of 129 projects, whose documentation may be consulted by interested MPs at the Sejm's secure office. As much as 80% of the expenditure will go to Polish industry. The Minister of Defence has declared that the Polish army will take delivery of the first batteries of its SAN anti-drone system by the end of the year. This means that if we decide not to take advantage of the SAFE facility and another Russian air attack takes place next year, any failure to shoot down the intruding drones will be the co-responsibility of those who voted against SAFE.

The activities described above all strengthen the European pillar of NATO. We are implementing a justified proposal from the US that Europe should shoulder more responsibility for its security. The opposition claims that Berlin will benefit from investments in the Polish army. That is not true! The Russian drones that violated our airspace last September were not approaching Berlin but Lublin and Zamość. Is it plausible that all 19 countries to receive funds from the SAFE programme, including France, Finland, and your friends from **Hungary**, really want to become Berlin's colonies? There must be some limits to obsession. SAFE investments are the most rational response to appeals from Washington, which should be understood on both sides of the Atlantic.

We should not seek enemies among our allies. The threat to Poland's sovereignty and security comes from one direction—the East, not from the West.

Europe's hour has struck. Either we stand united or we will be swallowed up by bigger predators. Today, all Poles should recall the memorable words of Pope John Paul II: "From the Union of Lublin to the European Union." We have the strength to augment, streamline, and reform the European Union instead of destroying or abandoning it.

3. Transatlantic relations

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have already mentioned fairly widespread confusion regarding relations with the United States. Actually, this bewilderment is shared across Europe. I would like to emphasise that, in the government's view, it is in Poland's interest to develop strategic cooperation with the US:

- on a bilateral level;
- inside NATO;
- and within the G20, which brings together the world's largest economies under the US presidency this year.

However, for Polish-US cooperation and, more broadly, transatlantic cooperation to function effectively, we need **trust**. For nearly a century, the United States has not only been the world's greatest military and economic power, but also a unique one. European countries were not afraid of US power—quite the opposite, they invited American troops and companies to move in! The local presence of US troops was and is perceived as an asset, not a threat. Contrary to Russian propaganda claims, NATO did not "**expand**" into Central European countries. It was the countries in our region, including Poland, that sought membership. They

fled a brutal hegemon, Russia, to join the camp of a benevolent one: the US. This arrangement proved beneficial for both sides, allowing Washington to push danger away from its borders.

The Polish–American alliance is founded on bipartisan support in both countries and beneficial cooperation in many areas. Frequent contacts between our government and President and the US authorities reflect our commitment to furthering cooperation in defence, economic relations, and technological cooperation. For Poland, Washington remains our most important military partner.

The American anti-missile base in Redzikowo, opened in 2024, is the **first permanent** US military installation on Polish territory. Its construction was initiated by President George W. Bush and completed through cooperation between all subsequent Polish governments and US administrations, both Democratic and Republican.

We are not just a recipient of security guarantees. The Redzikowo base mostly serves to protect the US. Poles are taking care of their own security by assuming ever more responsibility. We even provide military support to our allies. Many European soldiers, including Poles, fought alongside their US colleagues in Afghanistan. This operation claimed the lives of 43 Polish soldiers and one civilian. In Iraq, we lost 22 Polish troops. They died with weapons in hand and are honoured as heroes by the Polish and American peoples. We must remember them and pay tribute to their sacrifice.

Today, two of their commanding officers are here with us in this Chamber: General Tomasz Piotrowski and General Mirosław Różański. Gentlemen,

may I extend through you my gratitude to all Polish soldiers who fought shoulder to shoulder with our allies.

Poland's defence spending of 4.7% of GDP in 2025—proportionately, the highest in NATO—shows its words are backed by action. This year, our defence budget will increase again to 4.8% of GDP, or PLN 200 billion, the equivalent of USD 55 billion. Importantly, money for new military equipment accounts for more than half of this figure. In this respect, we are also leaders in NATO.

These are funds devoted solely to “hard” defence. We also finance dual-use infrastructure projects, such as border protection and upgraded transit routes to enable faster deployment of troops and equipment. This means we already meet the 5% of GDP defence spending commitment agreed by NATO member states at The Hague summit just eight months ago!

We are investing in security, with a large portion of these investments going to enhance bilateral relations with the US. At present, we are spending USD 63 billion under 128 procurement contracts to purchase US-made weapons and military technology. These purchases create jobs in 15 American states: from California, Texas, and Florida to Illinois, Ohio, and New York.

If, as we assume, Putin intends to continue destabilising Europe and the world, Poland is willing to play the role of a regional hub for US forces. We are ready to host bases, missions, and exercises, while stockpiling key materiel for NATO's eastern flank. The benefits of this partnership cut both ways. The current administration in Washington can see that, too. President Trump declared in a meeting with President Nawrocki that he would maintain—or even possibly increase—the number

of US troops in Poland. At every meeting, I remind our American partners that they can station their troops more cheaply here than in the US.

We have a lot to protect together. Poland is the largest buyer of US liquified natural gas in this part of Europe. In 2025, the LNG terminal in Świnoujście—built by the previous PO-PSL government—berthed 81 ships carrying 6 million tonnes of LNG, some from Qatar but mostly from the US. A second LNG terminal on Gdańsk Bay, now under construction, will be capable of processing another 4 million tonnes of LNG each year.

There are many more examples of cooperation. Poland will build its first nuclear power plant using reactor technology from US-based Westinghouse, in collaboration with American contractor Bechtel.

This USD 50 billion-plus project is yet another token of **trust** in our US partners. It means a commitment to US technology for decades to come.

This year, the United States celebrates the 250th anniversary of its Declaration of Independence. Poles have written a beautiful chapter in this history, as they supported the American struggle for independence from the very onset. Many of America's towns, streets, bridges, and highways bear the names of shared Polish and American heroes—Tadeusz Kościuszko and Kazimierz Pułaski. Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of Independence, called General Kościuszko “the purest son of liberty.” A few weeks ago, on 4 February, we marked his 280th birthday in the Polish Ambassador's Washington residence.

Today, the US faces new challenges. The current administration's priorities include protection of its own territory, the Western hemisphere, and the Indo-Pacific region. Europe is no longer in the foreground, while

Russia is primarily perceived as a regional threat and a potential partner of an economic reset. This is what we have gleaned from American strategy documents and hear during talks.

America is evolving. We can either recognise the facts and prepare accordingly or cover our eyes and ears. I appreciate the current administration's openness and frankness. I agree that Western Europe has for too long enjoyed a peace dividend. I agree that Europe should shoulder greater responsibility for its security and, as a populous and wealthy continent, is fully capable of doing so. All the more so because Europe does not need an army the size of America's. We will do fine with forces strong enough to deter Putin.

We are view the changes taking place in the US with understanding, but with concern, too. We remember the historic support shown to Poland by such presidents as Woodrow Wilson and Ronald Reagan when, under different circumstances, we fought for independence. But we also remember Yalta. After the fall of Nazi Germany, President Franklin Roosevelt wanted to obtain Stalin's help in the fight against Japan. He succeeded, but at the cost of freedom in this part of Europe. The US national interest was served. It was we who paid the price.

This should be food for thought for those who prefer international relations to be based solely on ruthless competition for narrowly defined interests. It is not for us to define the national interest of the United States. A question for the right side of this Chamber: did you not hear that the day before yesterday the US, just like China, abstained from a UN General Assembly vote on Ukraine's territorial integrity? If we substitute the China of today for the Japan of 1945, can we be sure that US and Polish interests

would align? We have been, and will be, America's loyal ally. But we cannot be pushovers.

4. A strong Poland through a strong economy

Members of the House,

Nowadays, defence and economic resilience start in computing labs and data centres. We are making progress in this field, too, in part through efficient use of EU funds.

Examples include the PIAST artificial intelligence factory in Poznań and the Gaia AI Factory in Kraków. The EU has allocated a total of PLN 350 million to these projects.

We have been driving a change of thinking in the EU about security and defence. In addition to the Polish–American projects mentioned earlier, important investments in this area include the purchase of submarines from Sweden's Saab and optoelectronic and anti-drone systems from Türkiye's ASELSAN. On 30 January, another contract was added to this list, with Norway's Kongsberg, for the delivery of the SAN anti-drone system, which I have already mentioned. What is crucial is that these expenditures are also investments. That is why contracts with foreign partners feature clauses about technology transfers and local production.

Naturally, priority is given to procurement from Polish manufacturers. In 2024 alone, the Polish Army concluded over PLN 50 billion-worth of contracts with domestic defence suppliers. Last year's contracts include the purchase of Rosomak armoured personnel carriers and radar systems for the Narew air defence programme, with a combined of over PLN 12 billion.

But we cannot take a one-dimensional view of security, by concentrating purely on numbers of troops, tanks or planes. The military, the economy, public administration, and civil society institutions operate in a symbiosis. A well-managed army ensures stability, without which a country's economy would find it impossible to grow. A strong economy, in turn, supplies the means to build a modern, well-equipped military.

Poland has come a long way in recent decades. Joining the world's largest 20 economies marked an important milestone. But success hardly means that we can afford to slow down. 2025 was what our government called a "Breakthrough Year" for Poland's economy. 2026 will be the Year of Turbocharged Growth. Last week, Prime Minister Donald Tusk, speaking at the Warsaw Stock Exchange, emphasised that Poland has succeeded in leading Europe's economies in growth despite "geostrategic uncertainty and the dramatic events of the Russia-Ukraine war." This year, Poland will contribute more to EU economic growth than Germany or France. The rate of investment growth is expected to at least double from 2025. That is the result of effective policymaking.

But we can see threats, too. The dependency of Poland and the EU on imported raw materials and technologies limits our ability to act independently and impairs our political and economic resilience. It exposes us to a range of risks, including disruptions in the supply chains of energy or critical elements. For some minerals, imports account for as much as 98% of Europe's demand. We must address these risks by building coalitions with partners from the US, Europe, and other continents. Cooperation gives us an edge.

This was the purpose of the international Critical Minerals Ministerial I participated in a few weeks ago in Washington.

We in the EU also depend on US and Asian suppliers in the microchip and artificial intelligence sectors:

- over 70% of global chip production takes place in Asia,
- 92% of cloud infrastructure is operated by American companies,
- China and the US host 90% of global GPU cluster performance and attract more than double the AI investments of the rest of the world put together.

Technological sovereignty—understood as the capacity to develop proprietary technologies—is crucial to maintaining the political clout of Poland and the EU, developing an innovative economy, and ensuring “hard” security. Strengthening and promoting our economy remains a foreign policy priority of this government. As a means to that end, I have reactivated the Foreign Economic Policy Advisory Board.

5. Beyond the transatlantic theatre

Ladies and Gentlemen,

With a war raging on the other side of our border, it is natural for us to focus on the immediate neighbourhood. Still, we would be wrong to ignore our more distant partners. In today’s interconnected world, threats to Poland can emerge from events in remote parts of the globe. Defence of our national interests, including Polish sovereignty, often begins thousands of kilometres from our frontier.

We have strengthened our ten-year-plus strategic partnerships with Seoul and Tokyo. We will further security consultations with NATO’s key partners in the Asia-Pacific: alongside South Korea and Japan, these

include Australia and New Zealand. We remain consistently interested in technological cooperation with partners in Taiwan.

Relations with a superpower like China should be mutually beneficial. We have kept close track of Beijing's assertive economic and military policies. We strive to balance our relations and, clearly signal our discontent in regard to difficult issues. We will exert growing pressure on Beijing to regulate the access of Polish goods to the Chinese market. China's policies in coming months and years will testify to its intentions towards Poland, the EU, and the international system.

Our contacts with India now rank high on our Asian agenda. The conclusion of free trade talks between the EU and the government in New Delhi, along with the signing of a Security and Defence Partnership, will bring new benefits to our relations.

We will intensify sectoral cooperation in relations with members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Joining the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia this year will serve this purpose. This Treaty's ratification act was adopted by this House last year, for which I thank you.

The Middle East remains a region of vital significance. It has long been far more than a reservoir of oil and gas, as shown by its dramatically surging investments in renewable energy and state-of-the-art technologies that underpin the development of AI. We see these changes as highly conducive to involvement by Polish companies, which is also fostered by enhanced bilateral contacts and tighter collaboration between the EU and the Gulf Cooperation Council.

It is in Poland's interest use diplomacy to help extinguish conflicts that threaten our shared security and prevent escalation of disputes, extremism, and attempts at border revision. Among countries in the region, Syria and Palestine most urgently expect our support. Syria needs help to save the country from fragmentation along ethnic and religious lines and to shore up its administration and economy. Palestine needs assistance to end the humanitarian disaster in Gaza and foster conditions allowing the Palestinian state—already recognised by Poland in 1988—to take effective control of its territory.

In relations with Israel, we regard trade and building a partnership between our two societies as crucial. We recognise Israel's inviolable right to self-defence, especially against terrorist threats. We underline the importance, however, of obeying the provisions of international law, including humanitarian law.

Africa is faced with enormous challenges as well as great opportunities for growth. As a continent, it has the world's youngest population, its fastest growing middle class, and vast natural resources. Dozens of Polish companies see it as an investment destination and an opportunity to boost their international standing.

African states recognise Poland's unequivocal and consistent position on the fundamental principles laid down in the Charter of the United Nations, such as the respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, the equality of sovereign states, and the peaceful resolution of disputes. They remember colonial oppression and wars of national liberation. Yet some of them remain unaware of what is happening in Ukraine due to insufficient engagement on the part of European countries and disinformation spread by the Kremlin. African states have their own priorities, but mutual

understanding also matters. That is why we have consistently pointed out that Ukrainians are fighting to escape being re-colonised by Russia.

Much of what I have just said applies also to Latin American countries. Our priority partners in the region include Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, and Chile, where we have successfully developed advanced cooperation in investments, trade, and research. We emphasise that a peaceful systemic transition is needed in Venezuela as well as Latin America's other authoritarian states.

Last year saw Poland make record-high donations to humanitarian aid. While others cut back on humanitarian funding, we increased ours by more than 20 percent on the year.

Thanks to President Donald Trump's invitation and a collective effort by the Polish government and the President, we have been taking part in the work of the G20 for several months now.

This is particularly important since this year's US presidency of the Group prioritises themes that are also crucial to us, namely:

- a) deregulation;
- b) the creation of competitive supply chains;
- c) supporting development of new technologies.

I hope that this will set a good example of how the government and the President cooperate. President Karol Nawrocki will represent Poland during the G20 Leaders' Summit in Florida this December. Government representatives will be working with the G20 throughout the US Presidency and attend ministerial summits. Political divides will not impede us in representing Poland, which will be more than an observer in the G20.

6. Concluding remarks

Members of the House,

The world is being shaken by military conflicts, economic turmoil, and natural disasters on a scale unseen for decades. New technologies—including artificial intelligence, as I have mentioned before—are bringing much hope but also raising very serious concerns, and quite rightly so. They need proper regulation and safeguards.

Unquestionably, Russia's war against Ukraine will remain Poland's greatest challenge for years to come. We have to build an army that will deter Putin for good by the end of this decade, while forging a parallel system of alliances.

In conclusion, let me reiterate with even more emphasis: Poland will not be free, prosperous or safe without a strong European Union. That conviction is not founded on emotion but on dispassionate analysis. It leads to a simple conclusion: EU membership is our *raison d'état*.

Once again, cooperation gives us an edge.

Our efforts to promote Poland's development will be futile unless they are aligned with measures to make Europe stronger and more united. Failure in this would result in our country being marginalised and losing an historic opportunity. NATO and the EU are twin pillars of our security and well-being; both are indispensable to our national interests.

The world is hurtling forward like a high-speed train. As anyone who has travelled by high-speed rail knows, you need solid footing to avoid a fall when the train leans into a curve. It would never occur to any passenger to stand on one leg. But that is precisely what would happen

if we relied solely on our transatlantic relations at the expense of European ties, or vice versa.

While Poland faces these and other challenges, I am glad to be supported by a professional and dedicated team at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Thank you for your work.

We also need able, professional envoys beyond our borders. This is why I would like to take this opportunity to thank President Duda for signing 24 ambassadorial nominations during his final year in office.

Let me also take this opportunity to make another appeal to President Nawrocki to sign requests for ambassadorial nominations that have been submitted in accordance with the law. The law has not changed. Of the 49 candidates on the table, is not a single one fit for the job? Not even among those who performed these functions when previous United Right governments were in power?

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are standing at a crossroads in history.

However, as a nation, we have certain assets that give us hope for success even in a difficult neighbourhood – including a thirst for success, ingenuity, and industriousness.

Europe needs leadership. Leadership is not something that is given away or just falls into one's lap. It can only be forged through action, not by talking or grumbling about it.

That is why we stand among those who are co-deciding the fate of the European Community. We have already gained much as a member of united Europe. Today, the responsibility for its future rests in our hands.

Here at home, we are free to argue among ourselves. It's only natural. But when it comes to fundamental issues, no dispute should extend beyond **the Polish border**.

International success can only be achieved if we all make the effort: "we, the Polish Nation—all citizens of the Republic". Before us is one and the same goal: a strong, wealthy, and solidarity-driven Poland, a Poland making its way up the global ladder. What we need is less infighting, more collaboration. We'll only get there if we do it together.

Thank you very much.