

Madam Minister,

Excellencies,

Friends,

Let me start by a historical quote from the note verbale dated February 3rd 1950:

„I have the honour to inform you that the Government of the Republic of Poland has read the announcement of the President Ho Chi Minh (...) and decided to recognise the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. The government of Poland, believing in the development of friendly relations between both countries, declares its readiness to establish diplomatic relations and exchange diplomatic representatives”.

(end of quote)

Fast forward to 2025 and we can find the echo of these words in a Joint Statement published by our governments after Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh visit to Warsaw in mid-January. We reiterated our long lasting friendship, recalled past achievements and recognized the vast potential for further, deeper and more effective political, economic, sectoral, and people-to-people cooperation. This shows the maturity, stability and mutual trust present within our bilateral relations.

Here I would like to especially recognise the contribution of thousands of Vietnamese graduates of Polish universities who over decades have played pivotal role in politics, economy and academia in Vietnam, and to express my deepest gratitude to the Vietnam-Poland Friendship Association. Your affection for Poland, your support in fostering our friendship, and your efforts in strengthening the people-to-people connections between our two nations is second to none. Another credit is due to the strong, active and vibrant Vietnamese community that calls Poland its home and enriches it every day.

While our belief and conviction of the choice made 75 years ago remained unchanged some things changed significantly.

Both Poland and Vietnam were totally different countries then compared to what they are now. Both countries enjoy stable and dynamic economic growth, making them leaders of Europe and South-East Asia respectively.

Poland has been a member of NATO for 26 and European Union for 21 years. This semester we hold the presidency of the Council of the EU and promote what we find a priority – security in all the aspects of our life: external, internal, economic, as well as related to information, energy, food and health. Our goal is to make Europe a safe place to live and a competitive place to do business. As such we can be a good partner for Vietnam, a country placing the development and prosperity of its citizens and businesses at the top of its goals.

Ladies and gentlemen,

There is no flourishing economy without security, and there is no international order without principles.

We established our relations in the post-war reality, in the time when politicians and societies across the world kept on repeating “never again”, “no more wars”. The United Nations Charter, a document all our countries hold dear, respect and support, calls upon us, I quote: *“to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes”* (end of quote).

Unfortunately, the international community fails on delivering on the recalled obligation, putting increasingly more meaning to ancient Roman saying: *se vis pacem, para bellum* – if you want peace, prepare to war. In order to provide that our societies can develop safely and peacefully, we need to be ready to defend their right to it. Because *“nothing is more precious than independence and liberty”*.

There is an intensified discussion across European nations about the need to strengthen its defence, and Poland is significantly increasing spending on its armed forces. In the face of Russian aggression against independent Ukraine, we are building powerful and modern Armed Forces that will, without hesitation, be able to effectively defend Poland's external borders, the European Union and NATO, but also be an important player in the international arena and a trustworthy partner.

The challenge that we face, the task of protecting rules-based international order, is an inalienable part of our joint activities. Our common goal should be to build global security through cooperation and partnerships, improve economic

resilience, counter non-traditional threats (such as terrorism, cybercrime and disinformation), and to ensure maritime security.

I strongly believe that as two peace loving nations, painfully experienced by the conflicts of the past century, and not once fallen victims to bigger and more aggressive neighbours, Poland and Vietnam should work hand in hand to contribute to peace, security and development in our regions and worldwide. May this joyful anniversary give us motivation and strength to excel and become ever closer partners and friends.

Thank you for celebrating with us tonight!