

The Ukrainian nation deserves the highest respect of the whole free world, of all the people of good will, of each and everyone who have the fundamental ability to distinguish good from evil, truth from lie, and for whom the moral order, decency, and dignity are not historical artefacts. We admire the Ukrainian nation for the courage and bravery of their sons and daughters, for the extraordinary resilience in the face of inhumane sufferings of the civilian population, including thousands of abducted Ukrainian children, for their faith in the sense of unequal, destined to failure as it had seemed to many, fight against a powerful and brutal aggressor.

During these four years, many beautiful words and compliments have been said about Ukrainians. But compliments are not enough. We still remember your words, Volodymyr, from the first days of the war, when the Americans offered you a safe shelter and transport: “The fight is here, I need ammunition, not a ride.” Today you could say, “The fight is STILL here, we STILL need ammunition, not compliments.”

I also remember our first meeting, right after you won the presidential elections, seven years ago, when we flew in a helicopter over Kharkiev, and when you told me with full conviction that you wanted to end the conflict with Russia, that you became President to bring peace to Ukraine, and that you and the majority of the Ukrainian nation wanted normal relations with all neighbours. The war was not Ukraine’s or Zelenskyy’s choice; their choice was defence against the aggressor, defence of the independent state and its citizens, defence of their dreams about a better world, freedom, human rights, about joining NATO and the European Union.

Today we are grateful to you not only for the fact, that you pay the highest price for your resistance against the enemy, who is also a threat to us. A threat to Poles, Europeans, to the whole Western world. Yes. To the whole

Western world. To understand this, it's enough to bring up this symbolic image from the frontlines in Ukraine of the North Korean soldiers, with Russian commanders and Iranian drones. We are also grateful that you have made the whole free world aware, that without a fight, without the readiness to confront evil, without the strength and determination - it will not survive. And also for the fact that what has become a boring reality for the West, all those rights and freedoms, constitutions and democracies, prosperity and predictability we stopped taking care of, we started to despise, or even undermine and question in many places - that you are ready to fight for this. Because you know very well how horrible is the reality without principles, laws, and freedoms.

Your dreams were once our dreams. Poland is the best example that it was worth dreaming about a free world and that it was worth believing in it and fighting for it. As a Pole, I want to say it today loud and clear: it was worth fighting for becoming part of the free world. Yesterday it was us, today it is the Ukrainians who are demonstrating that these despised, these outdated as some like to call them, values and institutions, are working, they bring good, safety and freedom. Here and there, I hear opinions that Europe is on the verge of collapse, NATO is obsolete, the old world order should no longer exist, and now is the time for transactional politics and the Concert of Great Powers. Nonsense. Those who think that everything can be bought, should also remember that in this philosophy, everyone can be sold.

The united West, with its values and institutions, with NATO and the European Union, is the best political invention in the history of humankind. We cannot allow for anyone from the outside, and what is even more important today, from within, to destroy our world. We have to be strong, because there is nothing worse in politics than the synthesis of strength

and evil. The essence of our civilization was always to stand on the side of good, knowing that good cannot defend itself. We need to be strong, we can't stop being good.

This is the Ukrainian lesson for all of us.

Long live free and independent Ukraine.

Long live strong and united Europe.