

Joint Statement of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania Gabrielius Landsbergis and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland Zbigniew Rau on the Occasion of the 30th Anniversary of Re-establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Lithuania and Poland

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Lithuania and Poland, after Lithuania regained its independence and Poland cast off the communist regime. 30 years ago the two countries revived a comprehensive cooperation as modern and democratic European states. Connected by geography, bound together by common history and cultural heritage, as well as extensive people-to-people contacts and pursuing the same geopolitical interests, Lithuania and Poland once again became natural allies and friends.

Over the past 30 years, our cooperation has evolved significantly, boosted by both countries' economic and social development as well as international integration, not least through membership of the EU and NATO. Today, Lithuania and Poland are strategic partners on bilateral, regional, and Euro-Atlantic levels, tackling regional and global challenges jointly and in close consultations.

Nowadays together with Western partners we build Europe where peace, human rights, democracy and the rule of law prevail. We believe that the future should be based on truth, irrefutable historical facts, justice for victims of totalitarian crimes and reconciliation. We are ready for dialogue with all those interested in pursuing these principles.

We draw inspiration from our centuries-old common history and shared responsibility for freedom, democracy and human rights in the region. This year we celebrate the 230th Anniversary of the May 3 Constitution and the Mutual Pledge of the Two Nations presenting it jointly across the world as an outstanding European heritage. This fruitful cooperation between our governments, institutions and diplomatic missions constitutes for us an excellent example of our bilateral relations and we are glad that it resulted in numerous promotional activities, including concerts, exhibitions, seminars, films, articles and social media campaigns carried out worldwide.

We will continue our strategic cooperation in enhancing security of our region as well as supporting free and democratic choices of the Eastern Partnership partner States. In regional dimension, we are committed to implementing common actions within the Lublin Triangle format, along the lines of the Road Map adopted at its meeting in Vilnius in July 2021.

We condemn the Lukashenka regime's continuous attacks on human rights, fundamental freedoms, and international law. We call for the regime to end its repressive practices against its own people and start an inclusive dialogue with civil society and opposition, leading to free and fair elections as soon as possible. We are committed to continue our support to the democratic aspirations of the people of Belarus.

Our security is indivisible. We reaffirm our commitment to NATO unity, solidarity and cohesion, all the while underlining the importance of strong transatlantic bonds and a continued allied military presence in the region. We highlight the importance of reinforcing NATO's adequate defense and deterrence measures, especially in the context of Russia-Belarus deepening military integration and the upcoming strategic military exercise ZAPAD 21. We also note the ever-growing Lithuania-Poland security and defense cooperation in response to common threats in the region in the wake of aggressive military posture of the Russian Federation.

We are willing to closely coordinate Lithuania's and Poland's positions on the key issues of NATO's adaptation, including the upcoming process on the renewal of the NATO Strategic Concept and preparation for the NATO summit in Vilnius. We reaffirm our commitment to NATO's Open Door

Policy to provide more support to NATO partners, especially to our closest associates – Ukraine and Georgia.

We call for ensuring complementarity and coherence between the EU and NATO with a stronger focus on cyber security and hybrid threats. We will also draw attention to the necessity to increase resilience, including societal resilience. We support the deployment of NATO Counter Hybrid Support Team – with a Polish expert on board – to Lithuania.

Reaffirming NATO's role as the cornerstone of the collective defense in the Euro-Atlantic area, Lithuania and Poland are also committed to the further development of an effective Common Security and Defense Policy in the EU that promotes peace and security, protects its citizens and enhances cooperation with Partners to foster security sector reforms, resilience and capacity building.

Lithuania and Poland stand together in defending the values and security of the European Union and express grave concern regarding the ongoing hybrid attack by Alexander Lukashenka regime against the integrity of the EU external border. We strongly condemn all attempts to instrumentalize irregular migration with a view of exerting political pressure on the EU and its Member States. We call on the EU Council and our partners to extend individual and sectorial sanctions on the Belarusian regime. Restrictive measures targeted at migrants' smugglers abusing human rights should be considered and swiftly implemented. We condemn the Belarusian regime for spreading disinformation and propaganda, fielding blackmail, inciting smuggling and lastly demonstrating force.

We express our commitment to strengthen the cooperation on the EU external border security, including countering illicit trafficking of people and goods as well as nuclear smuggling. The EU has to further develop a united, coordinated and effective external migration policy and maintain the integrity of its eastern external border intact.

Lithuania and Poland are like-minded partners, always strongly advocating for successful Eastern Partnership States's pathway towards a closer integration with the EU. We are eagerly looking forward to the EaP Summit in December, which should provide a motivating long-term perspective both for the EU Member States and EaP Partner States. The EaP Summit will provide an opportunity to express our support to the European aspirations of our Associated Partner States: Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, and reconfirm our commitment to building value-driven EaP policy beyond the technocratic approach.

We reaffirm our unwavering support to Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within internationally recognized borders. We strongly condemn the ongoing Russian military aggression against Ukraine and the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol in gross violation of international law. We call on Russia to fully implement the Minsk agreements. We welcome the establishment of the Crimea Platform as an important instrument to internationally address the issue of illegal annexation of the Peninsula

We recall to all members of the international community that the imperative of international peace and stability requires continuous adherence to the international law and norms including first and foremost sovereignty of all states and their right to choose their own political system and international alliances.

Both our countries are united in tackling the threats and challenges arising from Russia's authoritarian rule. We welcome the EUCO mandate to the Commission and the High Representative to present options for additional restrictive measures, including economic sanctions. We expect the inclusion of an EU contingency plan for a rapid and robust response to new Russian attacks and provocations. At the same time, we stress the importance of supporting Russia's civil society and free media.

In view of ongoing disinformation campaigns and the Kremlin's efforts to rewrite our history, Lithuania and Poland will coordinate closely to counter Russia's historical revisionism. It is of the utmost importance that we stick to the objective historic narratives and protect our shared identities.

Europe's tragic past should continue to serve as a moral compass and political inspiration to face the challenges of today's world. This is our input in future of Europe the EU founding fathers have dreamed of - Europe free, united and at peace.

We are proud of the fact that our relations are based on the Polish – Lithuanian Treaty on Friendly Relations and Good Neighbourly Cooperation, signed in 1994. Emphasizing the importance of its provisions, as well as the strategic partnership, that our countries currently enjoy, we believe that this is the right time to fully implement its provisions with regard to national minorities' rights.

Lithuania and Poland emphasize the importance of a common European approach towards such challenges as health crisis or climate change. Solidarity and cooperation among the EU Member States and EU institutions proved to be the most efficient way to mitigate the negative consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and to ensure the necessary resources for the ambitious green agenda.

Significant progress has been made over the last years implementing energy and transport infrastructure projects, which are of a strategic importance to Lithuania and Poland. Synchronization of the Baltic States' electricity grids with the Continental European Network, Lithuania-Poland gas interconnection, Rail Baltica and Via Baltica projects as well as strengthening of border infrastructure linked to Suwalki corridor will bring the Baltic States and Central Europe closer and ensure the security of the region.

Poland and Lithuania reaffirm their continued strong commitment to the Three Seas Initiative. In the current global context affected by the COVID-19 outbreak, we firmly believe that the Three Seas Initiative activities could stimulate the post pandemic recovery and resilience of our economies. We agree that better infrastructure connections between the countries of Central and Eastern Europe will allow us to fully use the potential of our region. We see the need to strengthen regional cooperation in the field of cybersecurity also with regard to infrastructure, bearing in mind the fact that any modern infrastructure that includes intelligent solutions is exposed to hostile actions in the digital sphere. We believe that strengthening energy security and diversification of routes and sources of supply across the region, together with the transition to carbon free energy sector, are our paramount priorities.

Welcoming the success of cooperation, we acknowledge the critical importance of interconnectivity, including military mobility, to withstand third countries' political pressure and maintain a particular attention to the highest safety and security standards of energy production.