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EU Foreign Policy 2006-2010

Key points* of the Speech

by the Polish Foreign Minister Anna Fotyga,

at the Conference of the European Union Institute for
Security Studies and European Centre Natolin: 'Europe as
a Global Power'

Warsaw-Natolin 19 May 2006

* The key points are taken from minister's oral presentation and are not authorized by the MFA.

I. The immediate neighbourhood

In the near future, the key task for the EU will be to promote good governance and the rule of law in the areas with which it shares borders. This objective has been highlighted in the European Security Strategy and this should continue to be the focus of the EU's foreign policy. What does this mean in practice?

- *Bulgaria and Romania* – should join the EU in 2007. Poland's position on the *Western Balkans* is similar – these countries' future is in the EU. There is no more effective stabilisation strategy for the Western Balkans than a clear prospect of EU membership. It is, however, essential that a strict interpretation of the Copenhagen criteria is applied when the road to future enlargements is considered.
- *Ukraine* – Poland has made the promotion of the area's closer links with the EU its priority. The current situation in Ukraine is difficult and the momentum created by the Orange Revolution has weakened. Ukraine needs stronger external stimulation. After the expiry of the *action programme* we should move towards completing an *association agreement* with Ukraine. But Warsaw is aware that upgrading the EU's relations with Ukraine will be a difficult process and that it will take a long time.
- *Turkey* – Poland supports the European aspirations of Ankara but, as in the case of Ukraine, it is aware that it may take a long time before they are fulfilled.
- *The Mediterranean and the Middle East* – Poland supports the EU's priorities in the South. It is important that the EU strengthens its presence, its financial commitments and policy outreach in the Maghreb area and in the Middle East. The EU needs to remain cautious *vis-à-vis* Hamas and it must be mindful of the interests of Israel – a country with which Poland has strong links. It is imperative, however, that aid to the Palestinian authority is maintained.

II. Russia and Energy Security

- *Relations with Russia* – ‘strategic partnership’ between the EU and Russia is achievable. Poland would like to maintain and enhance good relations with Russia and it supports the policy of ‘four spaces’. However, Poland believes that Russia should reciprocate the EU’s willingness to reach out more often than it does. This especially concerns energy-related matters.
- *Energy security* – Poland is concerned about Russia’s tendency to instrumentalise its energy policy for political purposes. Russia’s signature to the EU *Energy Charter* would be most welcome in Warsaw. Poland would like to strengthen the EU’s competence in energy matters and it will be promoting a multilateral solution to the issue.

Warsaw is aware that its interests in energy security do not always coincide with those of the older member states. Both the old and the new member states desire greater diversification of their energy supplies but they are to different degrees dependent on Russian sources. For Poland and its Central European neighbours it is imperative that they reduce their almost absolute dependence on Russian gas whilst the older member states would like to do exactly the opposite. However, despite these divergent interests regarding Russian gas, all EU member states are concerned about their dependency on external sources and their vulnerability to oil and gas price increases. Hence, there is a space for joint action – developing terminals for receiving LNG – liquid gas and approving the principle of solidarity in energy matters. In a case where one of the member states experiences shortages in energy supply, the rest of the EU should come to the rescue.

From Poland’s point of view the greatest danger to its security are the projects like the Russo-German Baltic pipeline, which undermine the principle of interdependence between Poland, the Baltic States and Russia. Whilst the Poles and the Balts will continue to be dependent on Russian gas, Russia will not be

dependent on them as transit countries. Hence Poland has been exploring other opportunities such as the LNG option or building a pipeline from Norway.

III. Iran

Warsaw perceives the E-3/EU handling of the nuclear dispute with Iran as an example of 'effective multilateralism'. It is also essential that Russia is engaged in the process as much as possible. Warsaw supports the diplomatic solution to the conflict and is of the view that diplomatic means will prove sufficient to deal with the issue. However, the EU should not exclude any other means to prevent Iran from becoming a nuclear state.

IV. EU foreign policy instruments

To deal with its security challenges and ambitious foreign policy agenda, the EU needs more effective instruments than those provided by the existing treaties. After the failed French and Dutch referenda, the EU is going through a period of reflection about the Constitution. Poland is willing to participate constructively in the coming debates about the future of the EU.