

National Security Bureau

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Letter from the President of the Republic of Poland to the leaders of NATO member states to mark the anniversary of the establishment of the Alliance

President: 75 years ago the world's most powerful defense alliance was founded - a symbol of solidarity and the security foundation of the democratic community of the free world.

Your Excellency,

75 years ago the world's most powerful defense alliance was founded – a symbol of solidarity and the security foundation of the democratic community of the free world. The anniversary of the establishment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization reminds us of the historic importance of the Alliance, but is also an excellent opportunity to realize the challenges faced by NATO today. In the wake of the war in Ukraine, Russia's ever-escalating imperial aspirations, and other threats to global security, we must guard the Alliance's unity all the more, while acting boldly and uncompromisingly.

Therefore, during my visit to Washington, in March, I proposed that all NATO members make a joint decision to increase their defense spending from 2% to 3% of GDP, as was already the case during the Cold War, which was victorious for NATO and the West. I am convinced that it constitutes the foundation for the consistent security building process across the entire Euro-Atlantic area. This is a natural and fundamental step that we must take together now in opposing the imperial policy pursued by the Kremlin.

Throughout NATO's history, we have seen many landmark events. These included the Federal Republic of Germany joining the Alliance in 1955, and the 1999 enlargement, when Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic acceded. Thus, all three countries finally broke free from the Russian sphere of influence and joined the democratic West. Other Central and Eastern European countries followed suit in subsequent years. I am absolutely sure that boosting defense spending will have a historic dimension as well. This is a fundamental step in maintaining peace and stopping the expansion of Russian imperialism into Western Europe.

The Kremlin has switched its economy to the war-time mode, while the Middle East and the Pacific region are experiencing numerous tensions. That is why today we must be bold and uncompromising. The accession of Sweden and Finland to NATO confirms just that and it significantly bolsters the Alliance. But we must build unity and develop military potential with even greater determination. Poland, like few countries in the world, knows that security comes at a price, which is why it allocates more than 4 percent of GDP to maintaining and modernizing its armed forces. In 2014, Alliance members pledged to raise their military spending to 2% of GDP. It was enough 10 years ago. It is no longer enough today.

I believe that this issue should be discussed at the NATO summit in Washington in July. What Vladimir Putin is doing today requires our unequivocal response. We need discussions on the future of the Alliance and concrete decisions. I have already raised this topic with many NATO leaders. I am pleased by the positive reactions, as well as the proposals being made to strengthen the Alliance. We all share the same goal – global security.

We are NATO! We are stronger together!

Yours respectfully
President of the Republic of Poland
Andrzej Duda

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