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## President: Today, NATO must be bold and resolute in its actions

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On March 12th 1999 Poland became part of NATO. Today, we celebrate the 26th anniversary of that event. Exactly one year ago, in Washington, D.C., I was the first NATO leader to present a proposal that all members of the Alliance should increase their defense spending to a minimum level of 3 % of their GDP. I presented it also at the NATO forum.

Back then, many voices were saying that a number of states were not ready to adopt such a solution. Today, its necessity is absolutely evident. In Europe, and across the Alliance, a serious discussion is going on, about rapid increase in defense expenditures. This is the right direction. We must spend more, enhance our military potential and deterrence capabilities. Today, NATO must be bold and resolute in its actions.

Therefore, a few days ago, I submitted an official request to NATO Secretary General, Mark Rutte, that increasing defense spending to a minimum of 3% of GDP by all NATO members, be raised at the upcoming Summit in the Hague. We no longer have time for discussions. We need decisions. We must act now!

Poland has been a proud member of NATO for twenty-six years. Over that time, we have demonstrated that we are a proven and responsible ally. Our soldiers fought, shoulder to shoulder, with the soldiers of the U.S. Army and those of other allied troops. We have consistently invested in the development and modernization of our armed forces and defense infrastructure. This enables us to host in Poland thousands of NATO servicemen and servicewomen. It significantly boosts the security of the entire eastern flank of the Alliance.

We allocate almost 5% of GDP for defense. We are the leader in NATO in this regard. And we want to continue in this vein. We are thinking about our security in terms of decades, not years.

The strength of NATO lies in our unity, resolve and readiness to act. Hence, I urge all members of the Alliance to further care for a robust transatlantic bond. I have been consistent in doing so for my entire presidency.

We appreciate, acknowledge and highlight the importance of American leadership. Because there is no strong Europe without the USA and NATO. Just as there is no strong NATO without a committed Europe.

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