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### Westerplatte. 87th anniversary of the outbreak of the Second World War

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On the 87th anniversary of the outbreak of the Second World War, the President of the Republic of Poland, Karol Nawrocki, took part in commemorations in front of the Monument to the Defenders of the Coast at Westerplatte.

– Remembering 1 September requires us to be truthful and responsible. Truth has its symbols, facts and signs. Westerplatte certainly stands as one of the most important symbols for Poles, one of the most important symbols for the entire Second World War, the President stressed in his speech.

He further noted that it was at Westerplatte that a heroic handful of Polish soldiers, numbering just over two hundred, fought against the overwhelming force of the German enemy.

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*It was here, at Westerplatte, that the archetype of Polish attitudes was forged spanning the entire period of World War II and all latitudes. The Polish soldier fought for the freedom of other nations, but he always died only for Poland, Karol Nawrocki underscored.*

The President pointed out that, just as Westerplatte is a symbol of battle, Wieluń is a symbol of undeserved suffering – a city that was bombed by the Germans while its inhabitants were peacefully asleep.

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*But these symbols of struggle and suffering speak volumes about the Second World War. The most important thing to remember is that on 1 September 1939, the hecatomb and pandemonium were unleashed. 1 September was the gateway to the hecatomb and pandemonium inflicted on the Polish nation by the Germans and the Soviets, he said.*

– Today, when together with our western neighbours we are in the European Union and in the North Atlantic Alliance, we need civil courage, we need responsibility; we need decisiveness on the part of Polish and German politicians alike, he said.

He pointed out that if Europe is to stand together, if the alliance is to be genuine, if good neighbourliness or friendship is to become reality, we finally need deeds and not just fine words.

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*Reparations and compensation to Poland should be paid – not only for the sake of the past, and historical justice, but also for the sake of the future, stressed the President.*

– Mr Prime Minister, the world has put us in a situation where an honest unwavering alliance declaration towards Poland is needed. This requires our allies in Berlin and our neighbours to pay us reparations, which Poland will then use to fund its armed forces and arms industry. This means we will not have to take out western loans, and we will get what we deserve, he said.

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*Therefore, if we are to turn friendship and alliance into reality, I am appealing from here, from Westerplatte, to the German Chancellor and the German people. Let us settle the issue of reparations and redress for the sake of historical justice while also considering the future, he argued.*

The President pointed out that today Poland is the stronghold of the North Atlantic Alliance in the East. As he added, these reparations may now serve European security, they can represent a firm declaration by the German state and our neighbours that we are committed to collective security in Europe.

– It is my call from Westerplatte, and my heartfelt appeal: I am appealing to the Prime Minister, the Minister, the Marshal and all parties in the Polish Parliament, as well as the Polish nation, to work together on this. Mr Prime Minister, I ask for your support and that of the Polish government in seeking reparations from our western neighbours, equally for the sake of historical justice and for our common future. We must work together, and we can succeed together. This is the appeal from Westerplatte on 1 September 2026, stressed Karol Nawrocki.

In keeping with tradition, the morning's commemorations began with the sounding of emergency sirens. The national anthem was sung, after which the Polish flag was raised on the mast. Later, the Peace Torch was lit, and the Roll Call of the Fallen was read, after which twelve cannon salvos were fired. The 'Westerplatte Message' was read out by the Polish Scouts.

Accompanying the President were the Head of the Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland, Zbigniew Bogucki; the Ministers Agnieszka Jędrzak, Karol Rabenda and Mateusz Kotecki; and the Head of the National Security Bureau, Bartosz Grodecki.



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