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**Man of the Year 2005 Award**

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## **EU foreign policy: a chance for Europe**

Mr President, dear friends, I am absolutely delighted to receive this award today. It is a great honour which the Gazeta Wyborcza has decided to bestow on me. This is a memorable day and I am glad to spend it with so many old and close friends, including Adam Michnik.

Above all, I see this award as a recognition of our collective success in creating a Europe that is united, free and at peace. Yes, united, free and at peace. We use these words so often that we undervalue their meaning. But only a brief glance at our history proves how revolutionary this state of affairs really is. Poland, perhaps more than other countries, understands the historic significance of this new European order.

Europeans and Americans, the EU and NATO: we all played our part. Today we can take sober satisfaction. It proves that with courage, statecraft and transatlantic unity, we can achieve great results.

Like many other West Europeans, I have come to appreciate the complexities of Polish history by reading Norman Davies' book, *God's Playground*. I am grateful to my good friend Bronislaw Geremek for giving me this book years ago. Davies rightly stresses how much Poland has always been part of Europe's major transformations. He also reminds us how your history has been rich in successes and drama. Especially in the past two centuries, the Polish nation has been threatened. You have seen foreign occupation, dismemberment and deep internal strife. And you have been object and subject of great power politics.

All the way through, the Polish people have responded with self-reliance and tenacity. Different generations of Poles have made heroic sacrifices. Here in Warsaw, within the Jewish ghetto in 1943. And again the following year with the Warsaw Uprising. But also around your country and indeed abroad. In 1848, during the Springtime of Nations, when the Polish state did not exist, Poles fought for freedom across Europe. They did so under the fitting banner: "For your freedom and ours". All of us also know the roll-call of Polish bravery in World War Two: Monte Cassino, Narvik, Tobruk and Breda, to name just a few.

But you are at home today. I was NATO's Secretary-General in 1999 when you joined the Alliance. Only 12 days later, with the start of the Kosovo campaign, the call of duty came again. And again you proved your reliability. Last May, you became an important member of the European Union. The first year of your membership has been a tremendous success. You have already made your mark, injecting a welcome dose of dynamism into the stale corridors of Brussels. It may be trite, but let me repeat to you again: enlargement is a triumph for all of us.

However, pride and satisfaction come with a sense of responsibility. While we have achieved much together, there is even more work to be done. Europe is not complete. And the world around us cries out for a stronger and more self-confident European Union.

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Dear friends, we are meeting at a crucial time. The case for choosing Europe is as strong as ever. And yet, amongst some Europeans, self-doubt and hesitation has crept in. A sense of drift exists across our continent. When I travel around Europe, I am struck that the very idea of Europe is being contested. But when I travel around the world, I see the exact opposite. Europe is universally admired and most people want Europe as a partner.

The precise reasons for this disenchantment are hard to pin down. It rests in part on an amorphous sense of insecurity. Ours is a confusing world, which demands a lot from citizens and leaders. It is understandable that some prefer simpler schemes of national action or ideological purity. Understandable, but self-defeating.

Others object to the trade-offs that are inevitable in building a Union for a large and diverse continent. You all know the fault-lines and coalitions: large vs. small; old vs. new; liberal vs. social market, net-payers vs. net-receivers. In the EU we have to reconcile these differences on a daily basis - and we do. But like all compromises, they risk disappointing some - and they do. Citizens everywhere are asking: why this European Union? Why enlargement? Why this EU Constitution? How is it relevant to our new world?

From time to time, we have to re-make the case – for Europe and its role in the world. And that is what I will try to do today.

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For me, the case for Europe rests essentially on three arguments. First, to exorcise the demons of our past. Second, to extend the zone of peace and prosperity across our continent. And third to deal with a borderless and chaotic world.

Let me dwell a little on each of these arguments.

To start off, let us review where we have come from and why we embarked on this project. Europe, as you Poles know well, experienced the horrors of the 20th century to a degree unmatched anywhere else. Invasion, occupation, civil war and the descent into barbarism. It was no surprise that after 1945 an exhausted continent was ready to try a radical new idea: building a zone of peace through institutional integration and the voluntary pooling of sovereignty. What was a surprise, even to the founding fathers, was how successful this project turned out.

Let us be clear: Soviet control forcibly excluded Central and Eastern Europe from this great project. But those taking the initial steps were fully conscious that a divided Europe would be incomplete. It was a terribly long wait until 1989.

The watchwords of this European journey have been simple: the triptych of deepening, widening and reform. Each element depended on the other for success - and still does today. From coal and steel, via atomic energy to the single market, Schengen and the euro. From six, to nine, twelve, fifteen, now twenty-five and soon twenty-seven. From Paris in 1951, via Rome, Maastricht, Amsterdam and Nice to the Constitution signed, once again, in Rome in 2004. We have come a long way and achieved a great deal. It is worth saying so, especially in this period of uncertainty.

As you know, foreign and security policy was not part of the original package. Quite the contrary. The European Community had adopted a posture of self-denial in matters of security and diplomacy. These were the preserve of NATO and the transatlantic link.

Of course, the 1950s and 1960s were not short of bold initiatives, such as the Pleven Plan or the Fouchet Plan. All were brave attempts. All sank without trace. In the 1970s and 1980s, we had European Political Co-operation. It was an attempt to exert a degree of collective influence on international events. But, if truth be told, our critics had a point: EPC was too reactive, too long on process and too short on substance.

Maastricht was the next chapter in the story. It brought us, amongst others, the birth of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP): an attempt to construct a sea-worthy foreign policy. It promised a serious strengthening of our ability, should member-states agree, to take collective action.

But when Maastricht entered into force, Yugoslavia had already fallen apart. A divided and hesitant Europe was unable to stop the bloodshed. The wars in ex-Yugoslavia scarred a generation of Europeans, myself included. They represented a frightening return of the demons. They taught us that diplomacy not backed by credible threats was no match for determined ultra-nationalists. And when we finally took action, together with the US - in Bosnia and later in Kosovo – Europe's weakness in military capabilities stood out.

In short, between 1990 and 1992, we only had European Political Co-operation when we should have had the Common Foreign and Security Policy. And, between 1993 and 1999, we only had the Common Foreign and Security Policy, when we should have had the European Security and Defence Policy too.

Nonetheless, this historical review also points us to an enduring truth. The key strength of the European Union is that after every failure, we draw the appropriate lessons. After every setback, we re-group and emerge stronger. So our Balkans misadventures somehow also led to the creation, in Amsterdam, of the post of High Representative for the CFSP. Bosnia and Kosovo gave a decisive impulse to the ESDP. And in a way, Iraq led to the European Security Strategy.

We should remain vigilant. But in Europe at least, the demons are gone for good. In 50 years, we have moved from a divided and physically bankrupt continent to a prosperous, political Union of 25. From the vagaries of the balance of power, ad-hoc alliances and imperial designs to a new regional order based on peace, integration, democracy and the rule of law. This is quite a feat. The Polish people, of course, know and appreciate the difference.

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Let me now turn to the second rationale for the European project: spreading this zone of peace, democracy and prosperity across our continent.

You, and the other new member-states, understand just how difficult the transition is which all post-communist societies have to make. Ralf Dahrendorf has described it as travelling through a 'valley of tears'.

Let us be clear: you made the greatest efforts. The adjustments on our side were modest in comparison. But surely it helped to pass this 'valley of tears', knowing that there was a clear destination at the other end. The strong incentives and resources of the EU must have made it easier to mobilise support for the necessary reforms. This was the underlying bargain of enlargement. Despite the doomsayers and because of your efforts, enlargement happened on time. Without favours or special pleading. What a way to re-unite our continent! What a contribution to European and global security!

Best of all, enlargement is not over. Europe as a transformative power has further to go. Romania and Bulgaria have just signed their accession treaties. If the appropriate conditions are met, Turkey and Croatia will start their negotiations later this year. And you all know our long-term vision of eventual accession by all Balkan states to the European Union.

Moreover, Europe's power of attraction remains strong further afield. Think of Georgia in 2003. Think also of Ukraine in 2004. I remember vividly how President Kwasniewski, President Adamkus and I travelled to Kiev at the height of last year's demonstrations. We had a clear goal: helping Ukrainians find a peaceful and democratic resolution to the political crisis. And that is exactly what we achieved, together with those Ukrainians who took to the streets and stayed there peacefully and resolutely throughout the crisis.

This was EU foreign policy at its best: robust in its support for European values; staunch in its defence of the democratic aspirations of Ukraine; open and frank in our dialogue with Russia, and pragmatic in the co-operation between capitals and Brussels. I want to thank President Kwasniewski for his exemplary role.

Since those exhilarating days, we have made good progress in EU-Ukraine relations. There is an ambitious action plan on the table. It offers the prospect of much closer economic and political ties. It is rich in opportunities and can be implemented flexibly. Speed will depend on the success of Ukraine's own reforms and her political will. Let me underline that from the EU's perspective, we are ready for a genuine step-change in our relationship.

Since Ukraine, and in very a different way, Moldova has also chosen the path of closer links with the EU. And who knows what is still to come, for instance in Belarus next year? When I met with Belarus opposition groups last month, I detected a strong desire for European values and democracy.

We often hear from our Polish friends that they would like the EU to develop a substantive 'Eastern policy'. You are right. And this is what we are doing. Since last year, we have been putting flesh on the bones of our European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), which applies to Eastern Europe, the southern Caucasus but also the Mediterranean. In less than two years - incredibly fast by Brussels standards - we have moved from general principles to tailor-made action plans which are being agreed with our partners. The Neighbourhood policy will engage significant resources: the offer of a stake in the internal market plus €15 billion in grants for the period 2007-2013. This is double the figure for 2000-2006. It will also involve a substantial 'thickening' of our dialogues, involving nearly all aspects of public policy.

There is a clear underlying philosophy to our approach: those countries which advance faster on the path of reform will be rewarded with closer relations with the Union. The more they do for themselves; the closer they stick to common values of democracy and the rule of law, the more we can do together. This is a long-term approach towards sustainable change. European history shows that crisis management is not the same as building security.

Like so much else in political life, the Neighbourhood policy is a tool. What matters is what we make of it. As we develop and implement these action plans, I very much look forward to Poland's continued input and support.

This brings me, indirectly I guess, to Russia. I arrived here straight from the EU-Russia summit in Moscow. There we forged a landmark new agreement, with the roadmaps on the "four spaces", on economics; on justice, freedom and security; on external security; and on research, education and culture.

I am pleased we have finally come to an agreement on this. Russia may not always be easy to deal with. Its turbulent history makes that unsurprising. But Russia is a crucial partner for all of us, not least as a major player on the international scene. We now have a robust framework to intensify our co-operation in the many areas of common interest: from energy to the environment to crisis

management and regional conflicts. Now we have to use this framework in a pragmatic fashion. Everybody in the European Union, including Poland, has a responsibility and a role to play. We look forward to a similar approach from Russia.

And yes, where we disagree with, or have concerns about, some of Russia's domestic and international choices, we have all the rights to say so. That is what close partners do. And that is what we mean when we emphasise that EU foreign policy is values-driven.

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Let me turn to the third reason for wanting Europe, which is to become a global power. To make our views known on the strategic issues of tomorrow. And to build, progressively, a rules-based international order, built on democracy and effective multilateralism.

The end of the Cold War, globalisation and the spread of democracy have created unique opportunities for millions to better their lives. In many ways, this borderless world is bringing us closer together. But we also know that political violence and radicalism are on the rise. New technologies in the wrong hands could cause unprecedented destruction. Meanwhile, instability and oppression remain rife in many parts of the world.

Gaza, Darfur, Belarus, Uzbekistan and Myanmar: each requires a different response. But being a bystander, accepting the status quo, that is not the European way. This is a troubled world. Europe has to be engaged. Let me briefly explain why.

First, there is really no such thing as doing nothing. If you do nothing, people often believe that is our deliberate policy. The genocide in Rwanda happened in part because the perpetrators thought we, the international community, would do nothing.

Second, it would be unreasonable to leave the US as the sole global actor - or to create that impression in Washington. America needs help and support just as much as a responsible Europe deserves respect and influence.

Third, in our globalised world, things that happen in far away places, such as Afghanistan, can and do affect our security in unexpected ways. Distance and borders offer no protection.

If the complexity of this world is one reason for an ambitious EU foreign policy, then size is another. For what is each of us, acting alone, capable of achieving? Divisions among Europeans all too often translate into strategic irrelevance. We can already see the contours of an emerging international order where new powers such as China, India and others will play leading roles. Time is not neutral. Unless we Europeans club together, future historians may conclude that, at the beginning of the 21st century, Europe's moment came and went.

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Dear friends, to achieve our objectives, we will need partnerships. And the most important partner we have is the United States. I am pleased that the poison has withdrawn from the overall US-European debate. The transatlantic relationship remains the bedrock of the international system. When the EU and the US pull in the same direction, there is little we cannot achieve. Just look at our co-operation on the Balkans, Lebanon or counter-terrorism.

However, to maximise the potential of the transatlantic relationship we need to update and adapt it to new realities. This means that in future, more 'traffic' will have to pass through the EU-US channel. Because the international agenda has changed. And because the EU has developed policies and instruments which are directly relevant to America's new priorities.

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Dear friends, in 2004 we acquired the right to be able to say, with a straight face, that Europe is a credible global actor. Whether it is in the Balkans, the Middle East or elsewhere; whether the issue is non-proliferation, failed states or global warming, the conclusion is always the same: we are putting out a united message. We are pooling our resources. And, as a result, we are making a meaningful contribution to global security.

In just a few years, we have moved from declarations to action. We are performing missions from Bosnia-Herzegovina, to the Democratic Republic of Congo, to Georgia and Iraq. In principle, the EU has it all: a wide range of instruments, an awareness of the need to act plus the necessary staying-power. More than others, the EU can bridge the worlds of diplomats, soldiers and development experts.

But we are still not as effective as we could be and should be. This is why we need the European Constitution. This audience needs no reminding of the main elements and advantages. Politically, we need the Constitution because Europe at 25 needs a new founding act.

Let me focus on what the Constitution could do for Europe's global role. I see two major improvements. First, it offers a massive improvement in our ability to tackle old and new security threats. Think of the solidarity clause which will cover both terrorist and natural or man-made disasters. Then add enhanced cooperation on civil protection and structured co-operation on defence. Both promise a more capable Europe, addressing today's and tomorrow's problems.

Second, in terms of effectiveness, it inaugurates a new way of preparing and taking decisions. Perhaps the biggest innovation here is the proposed EU Foreign Minister. As you know, this will combine, in one person, the ability to mobilise the different components of EU external relations, allowing us to operate more coherently. To ensure more consistency, the EU Foreign Minister will also represent the Union abroad. Our partners will thus have one main interlocutor – something which is long overdue.

Finally, the Constitution foresees the creation of an EU External Action Service. This will bring together staff from different institutions which today shape and implement the EU's foreign policies. Thus Europe will have a single team working under one roof and answerable to one person responsible for the full range of EU external relations.

It is the cumulative total that matters. If you add up the EU Foreign Minister, the External Action Service, the solidarity clause and structured co-operation, you will see a real difference to Europe's international impact. This is what European citizens demand: the verdict from opinion polls is clear. And this is what non-Europeans, including Americans, insist upon.

Let me make it crystal clear: neither Europe nor the world can afford the self-inflicted wound of a rejection of the Constitution. Failure to ratify would not just put a break on future progress in EU foreign policy. It could even endanger the massive progress we have already made in recent years.

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Dear friends, these are my three reasons for wanting Europe. For insisting on an ambitious EU foreign policy. And for promoting the Constitution. None of this is easy. But nothing of value in political life was ever achieved without a tough fight.

Schopenhauer once said that all truths pass through three stages. First, they are ridiculed. Second, they are violently opposed. Third, they are accepted as self-evident. The idea that Europe could develop a credible foreign policy is now stuck between the second and third phase. It is up to us to make it a reality.

That is our chance and our responsibility.

Thank you very much.

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