

In sum, I think the relationship between our two countries has never been stronger. I am very proud to come here in order to say thank you to the Polish people for their friendship and to assure them that there are millions of Americans who understand that Poland is one of our closest and strongest allies.

We congratulate Poland for its extraordinary successes under your leadership, Mr. President. And we trust that the next 25 years are going to be bringing as much extraordinary progress to this great country as the previous 25 and, again, thank Poland for the leadership it's taking not just in the region, but

around the world when it comes to promoting democracy not just through word, but also by example.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:52 a.m. at the Presidential Palace. In his remarks, he referred to President Dmitry A. Medvedev of Russia. President Komorowski referred to President Viktor Yanukovych of Ukraine; and journalist Andrzej Poczobut, who faces criminal charges in Belarus for criticism of President Aleksandr Lukashenko of Belarus. President Komorowski spoke in Polish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

## Remarks During a Discussion on Democracy and Development in Warsaw May 28, 2011

*President Bronisław Komorowski of Poland.* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, dear friends, I think we feel it all too well that it's worth having dreams, but dreams come true when, apart from dreams, we have courage and determination to pursue such goals as freedom and democracy.

Mr. President, today in this room you are meeting the Polish democracy. These are those who fought for the Polish freedom and for the democratic state, and they fought well. Those are the people who fought in the anti-Communist position; those are the people of Solidarity. And here in this room, you also see those who have come here to meet you, and those are the protectors of today's democracy. Those are the ones who will take part in the—today's processes of democratization. Here we see the representatives of the—both Chambers of the Parliament. There are Ministers; there are also representatives of the major political forces in Poland—in our democratic Poland.

I also would like to indicate that that part of the Polish democracy, which is not directly involved with politics, but they cocreate Polish democracy, those are nongovernmental organizations, as they are watchdogs; they, in fact, incentivize us as to take due care of democracy as our constant challenge and our constant commitment, and to also be in touch with the society.

Also there is the former Prime Minister, Mazowiecki, together with us, and he is the person who would like to talk with you about our Polish experience in transformation; that is, when we were passing away from the Communist regime and getting onto a democratic society.

And once again, I would ask to speak Mr. President first and then the former Prime Minister.

*President Obama.* Well, thank you very much, Mr. President, and thank you for the great honor of appearing with all of you. I want to express my thanks to everyone who is here today to share with me their experiences and expertise in democracy-building. I look forward to listening and learning from Poland's esteemed democracy leaders and younger activists.

I have to say that it is especially a treat for me to be able to see so many of you who inspired us in America when the Solidarity movement first appeared. I was still a relatively young man. I have a lot of gray hair now, but at the time I was still studying. And I remember at that time understanding that history was being made because ordinary people were standing up and doing extraordinary things with great courage and a great—against great odds.

And the Solidarity leaders and others in this room launched a peaceful revolution that eventually led to a regime's collapse and the

downfall of a broader system of Soviet repression. And that's had ripple effects and ramifications around the world, not just in Central and Eastern Europe.

Your actions charted a course for freedom that inspired many on this continent and beyond. And it has many relevant lessons, so we want to encourage all states undergoing similar experiences to learn from Poland. We all know that in the aftermath of the overthrow of a repressive regime, emotions run high. But new democratic governments have to show themselves to be able to channel that energy in constructive ways, to hold themselves to higher standards than their authoritarian predecessors in being inclusive, respecting the rule of law, respecting minority rights, believing in freedom of expression even when we don't agree with what's being expressed. And so I think that Poland has navigated that process as well as any country in recent history.

I very much value the contributions that Poland is making in Tunisia. I appreciate the fact that your Foreign Minister has now visited Benghazi.

So again, let me thank everybody in this room, but the people of Poland, for being an inspiration to change around the world. And I'm very much looking forward to hearing some of the observations that those who've fought long and hard for democracy may have as we face similarly transformative moments around the world.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:15 p.m. at the Presidential Palace. In his remarks, he referred to Foreign Affairs Minister Radoslaw Sikorski of Poland. President Komorowski referred to former Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki of Poland. President Komorowski spoke in Polish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

## The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Donald Tusk of Poland in Warsaw *May 28, 2011*

*Prime Minister Tusk.* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, before the visit of President Barack Obama, I learned that Ralph Waldo Emerson was your favorite American thinker. And certainly at the time I tried to search for some association, some quotations, some connections. And out of all these ideas, the one that talks about enthusiasm—that nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm—it seems to be especially fit for our way of understanding the world.

When I was thinking about our understanding of the world, I'm thinking about both of us as people, but first of all, about our nations and about our states. I want to tell you that Poland today is the place where we have lots of enthusiasm. We have gone through the previous years, the difficult, critical years, also in the global dimension, with a faith in our own power, our strength. And it's faith and enthusiasm that allow us to overcome the difficulties. It is also the effect of our cooperation.

You Americans have invested in Poland. But you have invested also in the whole region and with lots of your enthusiasm. Some money too; some other types of assistance habitually works. But just as enthusiasm was needed to create the great Solidarity movement in Poland, it was also needed when, except for enthusiasm and freedom, we had nothing else in 1989. But people with the enthusiasm and freedom are enough when you have friends. You have invested in the region, and it works.

We talked, amongst others, about Enterprise Fund that brought so good results in Poland. But that investment was actually the investment in freedom and the related prosperity for 100 million people, because today we are speaking about Eastern Partnership, we are speaking about our cooperation that could help those nations and those people in the region that are waiting for their chance, their opportunity, and their freedom.