

June 3 / Administration of Barack Obama, 2014

wonderful to have friends when things are going good, the Prime Minister is absolutely right that it's especially important to have friends when things are tough. And we don't have a better friend anywhere in the world than Poland. So we're grateful for that.

Thank you.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Central and Eastern European Leaders in Warsaw

June 3, 2014

Well, thank you very much. Good afternoon. And along with President Komorowski, I'm very pleased to welcome our outstanding allies from across Central and Eastern Europe. We have done this before in Prague and on my last visit to Warsaw. And I want to thank my fellow leaders for being here.

As the President indicated, this 25th anniversary of Polish freedom reminds us of the transformations that have taken place all across the region. The countries represented here have all undertaken hard reforms, have built democratic institutions, have delivered greater prosperity for their citizens, and underlying this progress is the security guarantee that comes from NATO membership. We're here today because as NATO allies, we have to stand absolutely united in our article 5 commitments to collective defense. We stand together always.

And as I've said throughout the day and previously back home, I continue to believe that NATO is the cornerstone, the foundation, of U.S. security, not just European security. Now, given Russia's actions in Ukraine, NATO has increased its presence across the region, from the Baltics to the Black Sea. I thank our allies for the contributions they're making, and I'll be discussing the initiative that I announced today to bolster the U.S. presence in Europe.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 2:29 p.m. at the Chancellery. In his remarks, he referred to President Bronislaw Komorowski of Poland. Prime Minister Tusk spoke in Polish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

A number of countries represented here have already committed to increasing their investments in our collective defense, and today we'll be discussing additional steps that we can take both as individual nations and as an alliance to make sure we have the capabilities that we need. I expect that we'll also have an opportunity to discuss how Europe, especially Central and Eastern Europe, can continue to diversify its energy sources. The United States will be exporting more natural gas to the global market in the years to come. But more immediately, there are steps that we can take together to reduce energy risk, upgrade our energy infrastructure, and improve efficiency.

So again, I want to thank our fellow leaders for being here today. I think our presence sends a powerful message that as NATO allies, we stand as one. Citizens across Central and Eastern Europe need to know that what you've built over the last 25 years no other nation can take away.

So I again thank you, President Komorowski, for your hospitality. And I think once the press clears the room, we can get the meeting started.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:24 p.m. at Koniecpolski Palace. In his remarks, he referred to President Bronislaw Komorowski of Poland.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President-Elect Petro Poroshenko of Ukraine in Warsaw, Poland

June 4, 2014

President Obama. Well, it is a great pleasure for me to have the opportunity to have my first

extended meeting with President-elect Poroshenko and to hear about his plans for a peaceful

and prosperous Ukraine. Obviously, Ukraine has gone through a very challenging time. And what we have seen has been an incredible outpouring of democracy in the face of actions by Russia as well as armed militias in certain portions of the east that violate international law, violate sovereignty, and have spurred great violence.

Despite all that, what the Ukrainians said in the election that resulted in President-elect Poroshenko's Inauguration on Saturday is that they reject that past. They reject violence. They reject corruption. And what they're interested in is the opportunity for Ukrainians to make their own decisions about their own future, a future in which, if people work hard, if they are willing to educate themselves and apply themselves, that they can succeed and that they can choose their own representatives and that those representatives will look out for their interests and not the interests of only those in power.

That's the hope that President-elect Poroshenko represents. And in my discussions with him today, it's clear that he understands the aspirations and the hopes of the Ukrainian people. And when I say the Ukrainian people, I mean all the Ukrainian people. I think that President-elect Poroshenko recognizes that his mandate is not just to help certain portions of his country succeed, but all portions of his country to succeed.

We had the opportunity to discuss President-elect Poroshenko's plans for bringing peace and order to the east that is still experiencing conflict. We discussed his economic plans and the importance of rooting out corruption, increasing transparency, and creating new models of economic growth. We discussed issues of energy: making sure that Ukraine becomes a more energy efficient economy, but also one that is less dependent solely on energy sources from Russia. And I have been deeply impressed by his vision, in part because of his experience as a businessman, in understanding what's required to help Ukraine grow and to be effective.

The challenge now for the international community is to make sure that we are sup-

porting Petro's efforts. And the United States has already stepped up in a number of ways. We're supplementing the assistance that the IMF is providing with \$1 billion in additional loan guarantees, and we've discussed additional steps that we might take to help during this reform and transition process. We've discussed additional steps that we can take to help train and professionalize the Ukrainian law enforcement and military so they can deal with some of the challenges that are still taking place in certain portions of the country. And in fact, today we announced some additional nonlethal assistance that we can provide—things like night vision goggles—that will help a professional Ukrainian military force do its job.

And finally, we discussed how, in my meetings today with the G-7 and tomorrow with the G-7, as well as conversations that I'm having with other European leaders, it's important for the international community to stand solidly behind the efforts of Petro to broker with the Russians a process whereby Russia no longer is financing or supporting or arming separatists on Ukraine's sovereign territory, and that a unified international community that is clear that that is a violation of international law and that is willing to back up those principles with consequences for Russia should Mr. Putin not seize this opportunity to develop a lawful and better relationship with his neighbors—that that has to be part of our mission over the next several days.

So I'm excited about the opportunities. I think that the Ukrainian people made a wise selection in somebody who has the ability to lead them through this difficult period. And the United States is absolutely committed to standing behind the Ukrainian people and their aspirations not just in the coming days and weeks, but in the coming years, because we're confident that Ukraine can in fact be a thriving, vital democracy that has strong relationships with Europe and has strong relationships with Russia. But that can only happen if we stand clearly behind them during this difficult time.

So thank you so much for taking the time to meet.

President-elect Poroshenko. I want to thank President Obama, the United States people, the United States Government and Congress for the continuous support they are demonstrating for the fight, the Ukrainian people, for freedom, for democracy, for building up independent sovereign European state. This is crucially important for us, and now we feel a friend in need is a friend indeed. The American position of the American people is very, very important for us.

Point number two is that from the very beginning, from the first day of Inauguration, we are ready to present the plan for peaceful relation, the situation on the east. And we think that the next several days will be very important, crucial, for the Ukrainian history and for Ukrainian perspective. We pay very much attention about the G-7 meeting, about the statement, about the possibility for finding out the position for peaceful process. On Normandy, when we have—first Ukraine were invited as a member of anti-Hitler coalition and celebration of the D-day. And I think this would be very symbolic because exactly in Normandy, we can start to find out this peaceful process in Ukraine.

I want to thank President for the support in our initiative in the reforming in the energy sector. I'm very satisfied about our future cooperation in the anticorruption deal that I think this is crucially important points for the modernization of the country. I think that the—our top two very important issue: We thank you for supporting Ukraine in solving our Crimea problem. We demonstrate that—

the whole world demonstrate the solidarity in Ukraine in not accepting the aggression in Crimea, in not accepting this whole fake referendum, and not accepting the annexing of the part of Ukrainian territory. And all the time we will demand restore law and order and withdraw the foreign troops from the Crimean territory.

And also, I think that it is very important that the United States support the European aspiration of the Ukrainian people. That is, half a year Ukrainian people, millions of Ukrainian people on the street fighting for now and signing up a association agreement for the European perspective for my country. And I think that the modernization of the country, providing the reform of the—creating the good investment climate, building on the independent code system, providing the energy efficiency and energy diversification helps Ukrainian people to receive, maybe, membership perspective for the European Union in very near future after successful program for the modernization, with the strong assistance of the United States of America.

I thank you very much for that. And I think this was very fruitful and effective negotiation.

President Obama. Good. Thank you, my friend.

President-elect Poroshenko. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:45 a.m. at the Warsaw Marriott Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia.

Remarks on the 25th Anniversary of Freedom Day in Warsaw June 4, 2014

Hello, Warsaw! *Witaj, Polsko!*

Mr. President; Mr. Prime Minister; Madam Mayor; heads of state and government, past and present, including the man who jumped that shipyard wall to lead a strike that became a movement, the prisoner-turned-President who transformed this nation—thank you, Lech Walesa, for your outstanding leadership.

Distinguished guests, people of Poland, thank you for your extraordinary welcome and for the privilege of joining you here today. I bring with me the greetings and friendship of the American people and of my hometown of Chicago, home to so many proud Polish Americans. In Chicago, we think of ourselves as a little piece of Poland. In some neighborhoods, you only hear Polish. The faithful come togeth-