



Remarks With Polish President Lech Kaczynski

Secretary Condoleezza Rice

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MODERATOR: (Via interpreter.) Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to this briefing organized on the occasion on the visit of Madame Secretary for the United States, Ms. Condoleezza Rice and to the President of the Republic of Poland, Mr. Lech Kaczynski. Now, the floor goes to Mr. President Lech Kaczynski.

PRESIDENT KACZYNSKI: First of all, I'd like to express my great satisfaction with the fact that long-lasting negotiations concerning missile defense have been concluded successfully, that in an hour and a half, an agreement concerning the installation of missile defense will be signed, that there are (inaudible) chances for the ratification of this agreement. So to put it in other words, I'm very satisfied that one of the main strategic goals, which I have placed before myself as the President of the Republic of Poland, have been realized. I would like to thank -- to the authorities of the United States, to the operation of Poland, to the incoming government, to the former government, to Minister Fotyga, to Minister Sikorski. I would like to express my gratitude that this huge operation from the part of the Polish interest has been concluded successfully.

And another thing that I'm very pleased about is the fact that today, during my conversations with Madame Secretary, we have concluded that from the point of view of my country and from the point of view of the United States, the way of thinking about interests connected with the missile defense are very similar. So both sides have achieved their goals. This is a huge success of Poland. I think this is another stage in building the global position of the United States, the most powerful country in the world, which is where they're going to remain, the most powerful country for a long time still. So for this reason, this day of the 20th of August, 2008, is the date of success and the date of satisfaction for me.

Thank you very much, Madame Secretary.

SECRETARY RICE: Thank you very much, Mr. President. And thank you for having established the strategic goal of this missile defense agreement and having achieved it. I want to thank very much my foreign ministry colleagues, both Foreign Minister Sikorski and also my good friend Anna Fotyga who we worked with earlier. I want to thank our negotiators who've done an excellent job in putting this together.

But mostly, I want to thank all of the people here in Poland who have seen the value of this strategic agreement. This is an agreement that, of course, will establish a missile defense site here in Poland, a missile defense site that will help us to deal with the new threat to the 21st century of long-range missile threats from countries like Iran or from North Korea. This is a system that is defensive and is not aimed at anyone. It is nonetheless a system that establishes firmly, again, and reaffirms the strategic cooperation, relationship and friendship between Poland and the United States.

It will deepen our defense cooperation. It will deepen our capability to deal with new threats. And it says strongly to the world what we already know, that Poland is one of America's greatest friends and allies. As members of NATO, we also will be able to contribute great -- more greatly to the efforts of NATO to improve its capability to deal with the threats of the 21st century. And so indeed, this is an historic day. And Mr. President, I want to thank you for the foresightfulness and vision of having laid out this goal and having achieved it. Thank you very much.

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