



## Remarks at the Prime Ministry of Poland

### Secretary Condoleezza Rice

Warsaw, Poland  
August 20, 2008

**SECRETARY RICE:** Mr. President, Mr. Prime Minister, dear colleagues, other ministers, especially my good friend Radek Sikorski, my counterpart, I want to thank all of you very much for welcoming us here in Warsaw, this extraordinary city, this extraordinary city that stands in so many ways as a monument to the fact that freedom can be denied for a while, but it cannot be denied forever.

Poland has always been a strong defender of freedom, even in dark days when it was not able to fully express its desire for freedom. And now, as we stand here in the halls of a free and democratic Poland, fully integrated into the transatlantic structures of the European Union and NATO, it is really not just an historic occasion, but an extraordinary occasion that we celebrate the signing of this important missile defense agreement.

It is an agreement, of course, which will help us to respond to the threats of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is an agreement that evens the defense cooperation between Poland and the United States. It does so, of course, in the context of our great alliance with NATO and our Article 5 commitments to one another in that alliance. It will help both the alliance and Poland and the United States respond to the coming threats. Missile defense, of course, is aimed at no one. It is in our defense that we do this.

But I am very pleased that we have been able to achieve this accomplishment. As you said, the negotiations have sometimes been tough, but they have never been unfriendly. They have sometimes been difficult, but they have always been purposeful. And because they have been friendly and purposeful, we (inaudible).

I want very much to thank our negotiators. If I may, I would like to pay special tribute to Under Secretary John Rood, who I think logged more miles to Poland in recent months than he might have expected to. It has been great work on the part of our (inaudible). But I also recognize that we have – you have before you the process of ratification, and I want to acknowledge the important goal of (inaudible) this agreement and it's important.

This is a very special day and I, again, just want to acknowledge that for Poland and the United States, this is, of course, an important defense cooperation. It's an important shield against future threats. But it is just one more example of the deepening of our relationship over the last 20 years. And in troubled times, the most important thing is to have friends. But it is more important to have friends with shared values, and your aspirations and your dreams. And Poland and the United States are those kinds of friends. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

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 [BACK TO TOP](#)

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