

**Prezidento Valdo Adamkaus pranešimas konferencijoje  
“Sovereignty, solidarity, security.  
Lech Kaczynski and Central and Eastern Europe”**

**2015 m. gruodžio 21 d., Varšuva**

Your Excellency President of the Republic of Poland,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me to extend my gratitude to Mr President Duda for this invitation and for the cordial hospitality, I have met with. It is a great honor to be in Warsaw again and to attend the conference dedicated to commemorate the legacy of the late President Lech Kaczynski.

I had an honour and privilege to know him personally. We were friends. From the end of 2004 till the mid of 2009 we have worked together as the Presidents of our two countries. I will not lie if I say that this period was a golden years of Lithuanian-Polish strategic partnership.

The 10<sup>th</sup> of April of 2010 was very sad day for me personally as well as many Lithuanians. My friend and my colleague Lech Kaczynski and enormous number of true Lithuanian friends have died during the tragic plane crash. I hope this incident will be investigated properly and all the questions will be answered by Russian side.

Lech Kaczynski was a man with a strong value based backbone. Our positions on many topics of international agenda were almost identical. Sometimes we even sacrificed pragmatic interests for the sake of the values. Sometimes we stood alone. But I still believe that it was a right policy not just from the moral perspective, but also for pursuing of our national interests from the long-term perspective.

Lech Kaczynski had a clear political vision. He saw very clear role of Poland in the region as well as in Europe. Voice of Poland on different topics is very important in Europe.

Working together we could be even more stronger and better heard. Looking at the legacy of President Lech Kaczynski today we also have a good opportunity to look in the future and identify our common interests.

Lech Kaczynski was a true friend of Lithuania. I agree with the idea of the well-known Polish politician, honored to Poland and Europe Wladyslaw Bartoszewski – “history can not be in the hands of irresponsible people and politicians – they could do a lot of bad things.”

Therefore, the Lithuanians and Poles together should look to our common historical and cultural heritage, which is unique in Europe and around the world. The most important is to find the positive and united elements. And Lech Kaczynski saw them. “For your and our freedom” – these words were always in his heart.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Poland and Lithuania are bound by common history. What can we learn from our common history?

Our common cultural and historical heritage have a special place in Europe. We should better use this heritage while constructing our positive present agenda. Solidarity our counties showed during the long common history must be inspiration for our generation. As I have said at the Warsaw university in year 2000: “In the crucial historical moments Lithuania was able to rely on Poland, like Poland have often had support of Lithuania. First the Union of Krėva and later the Union of Lublin has helped us to preserve the autonomy of the geo-political tensions in the field”.

The Žalgiris (Grünwald) battle, the Union of Lublin, the Constitution of May 3rd in 1791, Lithuanian and Polish uprisings of 1831 and 1863. The slogan “For your and our freedom” was revived in the late twentieth century to support each other in battles for the freedom, independence and democracy.

Today we have a very extensive strategic partnership in many different fields. But we should not stop and work together in order further deepening our relations.

It is obvious that Lithuania and Poland have many common interests and goals. At the same time, we are facing very similar challenges and threats. Geopolitical situation in the region and all over the world is becoming very hot. It seems that relatively calm period, which started after the Cold War is over. I even don't know how to call the situation we have today – “Cold Peace” or “Cold War 2”. Today we need common stand and unity in our

region as never before. We are on the same boat and it seems that the waves from the East are becoming higher and higher.

This year was the year of elections in Poland. In Spring Poland elected its new President. Recently new Parliament had gathered and new Government was appointed. This is a good opportunity to look at our relations with a fresh view.

Poland was, is and will remain the strategic partner of Lithuania in the region as well as an important ally in the European Union, NATO and other multilateral international organizations. We have very clear-shared goals such as enhancement of regional security, deterring potential aggression, promoting Europe whole and free, strengthening of energy security and transport connectivity as well as increasing prosperity of our respective nations.

Today in our neighborhood we are facing aggressive Russian actions in Ukraine, annexation of Crimea, increasing flows of propaganda. At the same time we have unprecedented crisis of migrants in Europe. Energy security remains on the top of the agenda of our region. In order to effectively cope with these challenges we need common efforts and close coordination of our policies. Speaking in one voice as the region, we will be better heard by others.

Our interests converge on broader security agenda, as well as goals for the next NATO Summit in Warsaw. The summit will mark the implementation of the Readiness Action Plan and the switch to Warsaw agenda – the long term NATO adaptation to the new security challenges. We should move from assurance measures to a credible and sustainable deterrence. Using this opportunity I would like to thank Poland for its active participation in NATO Air Policing mission in Lithuania. Poland is among the leaders in this regard.

Lithuania and Poland share the vision for the Eastern Partnership initiative. Poland together with Sweden was the mothers of Eastern Partnership initiative. Lithuania also always supported this idea and was in the front lines. Now it is extremely important to be vocal in promoting Eastern Partnership initiative and help our Eastern friends to help to achieve their goals related to European aspirations. Our countries should work together and lead on these policies in the EU with the view to making them stronger, visible and more efficient. We should further support European perspective for Ukraine, Georgia and the Moldova.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Lithuania has many common interests in different forms of practical cooperation with Poland. Poland is important trade partner and investor. Together or in coordination with Poland we are implementing many important infrastructure projects.

Cooperation with Poland in the fields of energy and transport is essential for energy security and connectivity of the whole region. Poland is our gateway to European electricity market and transport networks.

One week ago, we have celebrated one of the biggest achievements in our energy cooperation. Lithuanian-Polish electricity interconnection project – LitPolLink – was successfully completed. This project, together with Lithuanian-Swedish interconnection NordBalt allowed us to diminish the status of “energy island” in the field of electricity. For unacceptable long time Lithuania and other Baltic states were outside European energy map, despite the fact that more than decade we are full-fledged member of the EU.

It is important to note that implementation of this project got additional impetus during the Presidency of Lech Kaczynski. After LitPolLink launch, it is extremely important to speed up synchronization of the Baltic States electricity system with Continental Europe.

Recent agreement reached by Governments of Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and the European Commission regarding financial support for GIPL is a major success. It will allow to implement the project by December 2019.

This project together with LNG terminals in Klaipeda and Świnoujście, Estonian – Finnish gas interconnection, common usage of gas storage in Latvia as well as stronger transmission network between Baltic States will allow us to create viable regional gas market. It will be for the benefit of our energy security as well as for our consumers.

We should also have a common interest to work together creating real EU Energy Union and functioning EU Energy Diplomacy. We attach great importance to the issues of the EU-Russia energy relations based on the principles of non-discrimination, fair competition, open access to markets and transparency, and to the nuclear safety in the neighbouring countries.

Transport sector is another strategic partnership area between Baltic States and Lithuania. The implementation of strategic interconnection projects of „Rail Baltica“ and „Via Baltica“ is viable with the full participation of all the partners, and here, the full involvement of our Polish counterparts is of utmost importance.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We share history, we share the traumatic experiences of transition, and we also share, I'm sure, optimism about the future. This is an important asset which makes us stronger in a united Europe – like it was planned by late Lech Kaczynski.

Thank you.