

Remarks by Ambassador Lee Feinstein in Morag, Poland – As prepared for delivery

May 26, 2010

Distinguished officials of the Polish government, members of the media, men and women of the Polish and American armed forces.

It is a privilege to welcome the arrival of the Alpha battery of the 5th battalion, 7th Air Defense Artillery Regiment -- the "Rough Riders" -- stationed since 1998 in Germany. As you can see from the speed with which they've unloaded 37 train cars, they are among America's very best, even in their own grief.

Sadly, as members of the battery were arriving in Poland last week, one of their own, Specialist Joshua Tomlinson, on his first deployment in Afghanistan, was killed.

In his memory, and in the memory of the Rough Riders who have come before them, these soldiers stand ready to support air and missile defense missions in and around Europe.

This is an important day.

Important, not just because it is long anticipated, but important because of what we see here today-- a battery of U.S. soldiers working alongside their Polish counterparts on Polish soil, cooperating as established allies.

Today is an important day, because U.S. and Polish cooperation represents the promise of a more secure world. It is the promise of allies who have fought for their own freedom, and who have fought together for the freedom of others.

Today is an important day for our Patriots -- Polish and American patriots -- men, women, and machines, who are here today together in Morag, as they are together at this very moment in Afghanistan and in other missions.

We are together now as we were in Kosovo, Haiti, Iraq, and dating back to the fight for America's independence.

Today is an important day because it is a marker of how much our nations have achieved individually. And a marker of how much we have achieved together.

Today we mark how much we have accomplished as NATO allies in just over a decade. And we mark our common cause to accomplish more in the years ahead.

As magnificent as this military equipment is, it is from our principles and partnership that we draw inspiration. And today we are here on the basis of the principles to which we are committed by treaty: a shared commitment to democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law.

On behalf of President Obama, Secretary Clinton, and Secretary Gates, and all Americans, let me extend my deep appreciation to the Mayor of Morag and the people of your beautiful town for the warm welcome and famous Polish hospitality you have extended to our troops.

Thank you.