

**REMARKS AT THE POLISH SENATE
FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

(as prepared)

Ambassador Lee Feinstein

March 24, 2010

Polish Senate

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for inviting me today. I'm very pleased that my first meeting with a committee of the Polish parliament is with the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee. Your group plays an important role in providing parliamentary oversight, and in strengthening the U.S.-Polish partnership. I look forward to having a candid discussion today, and to working with all of you to intensify that relationship.

Eleven years after joining NATO and six years after becoming an EU member, Poland is a true leader in the trans-Atlantic community, working with us as close partners in building a more secure, democratic, and prosperous world. In my first four months in Warsaw, I have been impressed by the broad and dynamic partnership that we share in a whole range of areas.

I can cite numerous examples of our cooperation. Our soldiers stand shoulder-to-shoulder as allies in the NATO mission in Afghanistan, as they have done earlier in the Balkans and Iraq. We have worked closely with you on nuclear security issues and will host Prime Minister Tusk in Washington for the Nuclear Security Summit on April 12-13. We also look forward to celebrating with you in Krakow this summer the 10th anniversary of the Warsaw Declaration and the establishment of the Community of Democracies.

I believe Vice President Biden's successful visit to Poland in October has given new momentum to our bilateral strategic relationship. We have signed the SOFA agreement, launched a series of strategic consultations at the deputy minister level, and made significant headway on the new MD system, which more and more Poles believe is a better one for Poland. It is better than the earlier version because it is embedded in NATO, and it protects Poland.

We are also working together to promote energy security, enhance our bilateral economic relationship, and to extend stability and prosperity to Europe's East. For example, U.S. investment in Poland continues to grow, and we are striving to bring the very latest in U.S. innovation and technology. To that end, we will host an April 8 gas technology conference here in Warsaw with Minister Sikorski and the Warsaw Polytechnic. We are expecting over twenty U.S. government officials to participate along with leaders from major U.S. energy and technology companies. This technology has so far only been extensively deployed in North America, where it has allowed the United States to go from one of the world's largest gas importers to where we are today, on the verge of becoming a net exporter. We want to bring this technology and know-how to Poland.

Regarding your Eastern neighbors, we have already begun consultations with your Ministry of Foreign Affairs on how the U.S. can work together with Poland and the EU to better target our assistance efforts towards Eastern Partnership countries. We recognize that Poland fills a niche that the United States cannot: you are in a unique position to share your democratic and market transition experience with your Eastern neighbors.

The United States understands the crucial role that you, as Senators, play in representing the Polish people. In fact, this year we are celebrating the 20th anniversary of the so-called “Frost Commission Task Force” which provided assistance from the U.S. House of Representatives to the Polish Senate and Sejm. As legislators, I’d like to solicit your thoughts on how we can further enhance the U.S.-Polish partnership, not just in the realm of security, but also in other areas.

On that note, I’d like to turn the floor back to you, Mr. Chairman.