

**REPUBLIC OF POLAND. MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.  
THE EASTERN POLICY OF THE EUROPEAN UNION IN THE RUN-UP TO  
THE EU'S ENLARGEMENT TO INCLUDE THE COUNTRIES OF CENTRAL  
AND EASTERN EUROPE  
(POLAND'S VIEWPOINT, WARSAW, 13 JUNE, 2001)**

The adoption by the Nice Council of the Enlargement Strategy, complete with a road map spelling out the timetable and scope of the accession negotiations with the candidate countries of Central and Eastern Europe, brings closer to us the prospect of an enlarged European Union. Its borders in the East will be those of Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, in addition to the existing Finnish-Russian border. The European Union will face the necessity to work out a coherent policy line vis-a-vis the successor states of the former Soviet Union it will be sharing its border with. Addressed to individual states, that policy should take into account the remnants of the Soviet political and economic system surviving there.

Poland reiterates its desire to contribute to the future Eastern policy of an enlarged European Union, first voiced in its opening statement made on the 31 March 1998 at the inauguration meeting of the accession negotiations.

**1. The premises underpinning the European Union's Eastern policy**

The EU strategy of enlargement features the requirement to elaborate a coherent Eastern policy. The strategy in question replaces the East-West conflict, typical of the cold war period, with a policy of enlargement, this being an element of a new order. In declaring its openness and readiness to receive into its fold new members from among Central and East European states, the European Union assumes responsibility for the creation of institutions which will go into the construction of a community founded upon democracy, the rule of law and prosperity.

The accession to the European Union is not a practical proposition for Russia or other countries which came into existence in the post-Soviet space, with the exception of the Baltic states. Mindful of this, in the mid-nineteen nineties the EU concluded a network of Cooperation and Partnership Agreements with countries sharing a border with a future enlarged Union, Russia and Ukraine included. They were supplemented by agreements with post-Soviet Central Asian and Transcaucasian nations. Originally, they were to have provided a general framework of cooperation, enabling bridging of the gap in political and economic development separating candidate states from their neighbours in the East.

The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with Russia was next supplemented and expanded into a Common Strategy of the European Union on Russia, adopted by the Cologne Council on 3 June 1999. On 10 December 1999 the European Council adopted a Common Strategy of the European Union on Ukraine. The EU also got off the ground the TACIS programme designed for all post-Soviet nations, as well as TRACECA and INNOGATE strategic infrastructure promotion programmes.

The multiplicity of forms and instruments of cooperation, as well as Common Strategies of the European Union on third countries are underlying the conclusion reached by the

Council of Ministers of the EU on enhancement of cohesion and coordination of the EU external policy with a view to improving its effectiveness both at bilateral as well as multilateral level. The decision also covers development of Common Strategies on specific questions and issues.

In Poland's opinion, given the prospect of EU enlargement to include countries of Central and Eastern Europe, there is every justification for enhancement of cohesion and coordination of EU external policy in respect of both the countries which will be sharing the EU's Eastern border, as well as other states in the post-Soviet space.

The enlargement of the European Union to include Central and East European states creates a new geopolitical situation whereby the Russian Federation, Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova will become the Union's direct neighbours. Therefore, the emergence across its Eastern border of a configuration of politically stable nations and reliable partners for economic cooperation, would be in the interest of the European Union.

The emergence - in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union - of a group of independent states enjoying legal personality and established in international law is an important element of the new European geopolitical configuration. The arrival at the scene of independent states after the collapse of the USSR constitutes a value in itself for the European order. The political and economic independence of those states would be enhanced by raising the levels of activity of European economic and financial institutions in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Transcaucasia.

A high degree of diversification is characteristic of the European Union's relations with states which came into being following the disintegration of the Soviet Union. In Poland's view, however, the future Eastern policy of the European Union, while taking account of the need to develop individual approaches to particular states, should nevertheless apply uniform criteria and identical standards to all states established in the post-Soviet space; it should further try to develop a model of cooperation giving all states equal access thereto, ensuring their equal participation therein and guaranteeing equal benefits to be derived therefrom.

The prospective objective of the EU's policy in that area should be pursuit of an alignment of friendly states displaying institutional stability, delivering democratic development, the rule of law, respect for human rights and protection of ethnic minorities. These states would be building free-market economies and cooperating with the Union on the basis of diversified institutional arrangements.

Whatever the economic and demographic differences between CIS member states, they all face the need to transform their economic systems, durably re-orient their respective economies towards the free market and meet the competitive challenge from the single market of the European Union to be able to participate in the exchange of goods and services with EU member states.

An enlarged European Union will face a historical challenge consisting in persuading the political elites and societies of CIS member states about the benefits to be derived from orienting their policies towards cooperation with the European Union, complete with adoption of European political and legal standards. On the other hand, EU policies vis-a-vis the CIS member states should be underpinned by a sense of reality and take cognizance of the range and scope of both changes taking place in individual states and

the latter's expenditure of effort to get their systems adjusted to the requirements of partnership with the European Union.

## **2. Objectives and goals of the European Union's Eastern policy**

The strategic Eastern policy objectives of the European Union must provide for development of good-neighbourly relations with CIS member states and their integration into a common European economic and social area, and building of security and cooperation community. They also must help generate friendly attitudes towards the EU in countries which either do not aspire to EU membership or are not eligible for it. Furthermore, it is essential that they provide for support to be given to the said countries' efforts focused on getting their systems adjusted to the requirements of partnership with the European Union.

The Eastern policy of an enlarged EU must take account of the implications of the process of enlargement both for the Union's new members and its Eastern neighbours. One of the most essential problems in the pipeline for Poland and other states whose borders, following the enlargement of the European Union, will mark the external border of the EU, is the asymmetry of economic and administrative development and of the actual condition of the infrastructure on both sides of the border, which can possibly fuel the widening of developmental disproportions between the nations concerned and endanger the area's fragile economic and social equilibrium. These countries will be the first to bear the brunt of all the unfavourable phenomena attending these processes. In the countries which will remain outside the Union following the accession thereto of the present Eastern and Central European candidate countries, the Eastern policy of the EU should, above all, counter the growth of a public sense of exclusion and erecting new barriers their Western borders.

In Poland's opinion, European Union's policy objectives vis-a-vis the post-Soviet-space nations continue to be:

- extension of the zone of peace and stability in Europe;
- supporting both the on-going changes and processes of transformation of the CIS member states' political and economic systems;
- promoting political and socio-economic stability in CIS member states by marshalling support for their economic advancement and democratic reforms;
- assisting both the creation of legal infrastructures in those states and their efforts to meet membership criteria of international economic organisations which would enable them to join international economic processes;
- promotion of democratic values and enhancing democratic institutions and political systems in the countries in question by way of developing contacts with organisations operating in EU member states, with non-governmental organisations first and foremost;
- cooperation in combating organised crime and corruption;
- reduction of ecological and civilisational threats.

The EU's Eastern policy objectives should further include furnishing the states which emerged following the disintegration of the USSR with alternative prospects for development and construction of new economic relationships, as well as making it realistically possible for them to choose their respective geopolitical orientations.

Being situated in the most Eastern part of an enlarged European Union, Poland is particularly interested in developing a coherent EU policy in respect of the entire post-Soviet space, taking in East European states, Transcaucasia and Central Asia. It is in the interest of Poland that the European Union should become an attractive partner for post-Soviet states, ready to offer them cooperation at all possible levels.

Such policy should focus on foreign policy and security-related issues, economic cooperation, trade, transport and energy, environmental protection, cultural exchange, information and the media, as well as questions regulated by the Schengen acquis. A very important place within the framework of a policy thus conceived should go to cooperation in pursuit of civil security; non-governmental organisations have an important role to play in this field of endeavour. What is more, the CIS member states should by all means adopt legislation to bring their internal regulations up to European Union standards, in order to enable them to meet competition from the single market of the EU and to ensure proper legal and institutional guarantees which would generate a climate helping attract foreign investments.

In practical terms, direct neighbourhood policy is predicated on the assumption that it is necessary to surmount barriers resulting from both the asymmetry of socio-economic development and conspicuous differences in administration and infrastructure on both sides of the EU border. Partnership and Cooperation Agreements spelling out the objectives and principles governing cooperation of partners must be supplemented with direct neighbourhood strategies geared to solving specific problems. And the smaller are the actual asymmetries between states involved in immediate neighbourhood relationships, the more will Partnership and Cooperation Agreements be able to widen the scope of their operations over long periods of time.

### **3. Evaluation of political processes in the CIS area**

Being neither a state, nor a supranational structure, the Community of Independent States requires no formal recognition.

As a political space coterminous with the territory of the former Soviet Union (except the Baltic states), the CIS is sustained by the political and economic realities holding together its member states. These include cooperation of their respective defence industries, wear-resistance and lack of alternative to the inherited transport, power generation and telecommunications infrastructure; common information space, open frontiers between CIS states or no frontiers whatsoever, and Russia's involvement in local conflicts. One must add to that a common language and the bonds forged by the politico-economic elites in the days of the now-defunct political system.

As a geopolitical space, the CIS lacks uniformity. From the very beginning of its existence Russia has been playing a decisive role within the CIS on account of its economic capacity and military capability. However, the attempts at geopolitical unity under Russian

management which have been made over the past several years, to mention the 1992 Tashkent Agreement, have failed to produce the expected results. Undeterred, Russia has been trying to adapt the Tashkent Treaty to its political pursuits in the CIS area, proposing that the member states expanded their cooperation and set it on three directions: Southern, Caucasian and Western.

As far as regional security is concerned, the CIS area has over the past few years witnessed the emergence of structures and initiatives reflecting aspirations and interests of individual states and groups thereof, offering an alternative to the Tashkent Treaty. These include:

- an Atom-Free Zone in Central Asia;
- Conference on Confidence-Building Measures in Central Asia;
- GUUAM - Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Moldova Cooperation Agreement;
- the Union of Belarus and Russia.

The list of sub-regional economic associations set up across the CIS in the early 1990s includes:

- the Customs Union (Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan), subsequently transformed into the Euro-Asian Economic Community;
- the Central Asian Economic Community (Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan).

A proposal to set up a free trade zone in the territory of post-Soviet states seemed to furnish an opportunity of renewal of their economic bonds. An agreement to this effect was signed by the CIS states on 15 April 1994. It named 1 January 2000 as the inauguration date for a CIS Free Trade Zone. However, this like most other integration-oriented initiatives embarked upon within the framework of the Community of Independent States ended up in failure.

Given the lack of achievements in the political, military and economic fields, the common visa-free system introduced under the 1992 Bishkek agreement had become emblematic of the CIS's existence. However, CIS member states quietly renounced it one by one. Turkmenistan was the first to drop it: on 9 June 1999 it reintroduced visas for citizens of all CIS member states. On 1 September 2000 Tadjikistan and Uzbekistan reintroduced visas on a reciprocal basis. Russia's decision to renounce the Bishkek agreement and reintroduce visas for citizens of Georgia, with effect from 5 December 2000, scuppered the common visa-free system.

Processes taking place within the CIS point to the operation of forces there actually pulling in the opposite directions. On the one hand, the collapse of the USSR enabled the emergence in the post-Soviet space of positive phenomena, such as elements of the market economy, independent political thought and media and opening itself up to the world. On the other hand the CIS member states witnessed social disintegration at many levels, evidenced by broken social bonds and the loss of the public sense of social

security. Crime and corruption are now rife. The governments have become alienated from the governed while democracy and the rule of law are now the issues to be addressed some time in the future.

The presidential exercise of power is the hallmark of the CIS member states' systems of government which not infrequently develop individual authoritarian traits. Presidential administrations are the principal power houses in those states, while the role of governments has been marginalised. Small impact of both parliamentary and non-parliamentary opposition is typical of such systems.

While accepting that the prevailing tendency to strengthen presidential power does not impact upon the foreign policy lines of individual CIS member states, one must at once stress, with justice, that it does debilitate democratisation and pro-market economic transformation processes unfolding inside the CIS.

Given the circumstances, the sustained development of the EU's cooperation with the states of the area in question and the success of the Eastern policy of the European Union are contingent on both efficient and effective transformations of CIS member states' economies and democratisation of their political systems. Therefore, bringing effective influence to bear upon the transformation processes taking place in CIS states with a view to their acceleration, becomes a very important task indeed.

#### **4. Prospects for expansion of the EU's relations with neighbours in the East**

##### ***4.1. An outline of the Union's future relations with states of the CIS space***

In Poland's opinion, the European Union should unveil prospects for further development of relations before the countries-parties to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements, including Russia and Ukraine, which are targeted in its Common Strategies of the EU. These should neither rule out any options nor draw a priori any borders in an anticipated geopolitical map of Europe. One should not eliminate the possibility of the conclusion in the future of a customs union, or new generation association agreements or, closer to our times, establishing free trade zones with selected countries ready to accept relevant solutions and meet the conditions required. This concerns Russia and Ukraine in particular, for which such a possibility is actually anticipated in Partnership and Cooperation Agreements. The remaining countries should be offered increased aid within the framework of TACIS programmes, given the new financial outlook of the EU going beyond the year 2006.

Particular prominence among aid programmes should be given to those supportive of projects designed for all CIS states, or a major group thereof, to mention Interstate Oil and Gas Transport to Europe (INOGATE), as well as to those assisting the development of transport and telecommunication infrastructures. It is important that the European Union's fuel imports come not only from Russia but from other Caspian Sea countries as well. That would increase the energy security and safety of fuel deliveries to Europe and strengthen economically the oil-rich countries concerned.

Without overrating the significance of institutional solutions, the European Union should involve states situated in the CIS space in political dialogue focused on the integration

process and the consequences of EU enlargement, as well as on the construction of a European architecture of security and cooperation.

#### ***4.2. Foreign policy and security cooperation***

The security dimension is linked with political, social and economic problems endemic in the Eastern area. Lack of stability caused by the persistence of crisis-prone situations, ethnic or religious conflicts, territorial disputes and violations of human rights pose the gravest security threats for Europe. These are compounded by organised crime, illegal immigration and trafficking in arms. That is why in its future foreign policy the European Union should focus on correlating political and economic instruments. Actions taken in the area should provide for secure development of all states of the region, by letting them choose their own political orientation included. The development of political dialogue with the CIS nations will serve the implementation of this objective.

Set in the context of the Common European Security and Defence Policy, the Eastern policy of the European Union should rest on the foundation of effective solutions involving in political dialogue all states East of the future border of the EU. That would help strengthen security in Europe, and not just shore up the ambitions of selected countries.

The development of security policy-related dialogue between the European Union and Russia within the framework of their strategic partnership should not affect negatively the intensity of the Union's cooperation with other countries in this field of endeavour. The proposed consultations concerning arms control, disarmament, confidence and security-building measures and mass destruction weapons must take into account the fact that this set of issues has actually been taken up by the OSCE and is also being worked on within the framework of the Russia-NATO dialogue. It would, therefore, be necessary to coordinate the relevant undertakings of the Union with the aforesaid organisations, taking into consideration the results they have achieved so far.

Although not a superpower any longer, the Russian Federation still carries so much weight in the European continent that one cannot afford to disregard while contemplating comprehensive European security. Russia's continued substantial military capability which includes nuclear arsenals, its economic capacity, the considerable influence it commands across the region, in the CIS space first and foremost, make it a factor to be reckoned with.

The process of defining doctrinally Russia's role and place in the world is yet to be concluded by the Russians themselves. However, the Kremlin leadership gives priority treatment to the tightening up of cooperation with the EU today and will probably continue to do so for a long time to come. The Russian Federation wants to benefit from the European Union's eastward enlargement. It is interested in both closer integration with the EU and in being included in the common European economic space, while security-related issues will help to extend considerably the thematic spectrum of cooperation, this being in the interest of both sides.

An invitation extended to Russia to take part in a dialogue on European security may be appreciatively received by Russia as a token of recognition of its European identity in the context of its global political aspirations.

A security-related political dialogue with Ukraine, given that country's geopolitical importance and direct neighbourhood, should become one of the EU's Eastern policy priorities. Ukraine's independence is a stabilising factor which exerts a beneficial influence upon the countries of the region (notably upon the GUUAM, but also upon Russia and Belarus).

Involvement of smaller states established in the CIS space in European security dialogue would, on the one hand, improve their self-esteem and, on the other, reposition them vis-a-vis Russia by setting in train their progress away from dependence to partnership, and would serve to strengthen their pro-European orientations in the process. The range and scope of security-related cooperation with these states will vary depending on their size and military capability.

NATO's efforts within the framework of Partnership for Peace and Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council make very important contributions to developing the region's new security image. The Eastern policy of the EU must, therefore, take account of these strivings, put them to good use and enhance their consequences. All this might take the form of support lent by the EU to the process of creation of the respective defence strategies of individual states - amidst observance of the principles of sovereignty and cooperative security. This would be followed by reform of the armed forces, extension of civilian control to them and the launching of economic and senior staff conversion processes.

Given the specific nature of the region, particular importance should be attached to cooperation geared to crisis-prevention and response. Such cooperation should be inaugurated - with due account taken of efforts expended within the framework of Partnership for Peace and Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council - and continued in the context of broader-based actions promoting stability and improvement of the economic situation. Such cooperation should, in effect, help forge stable links between the European Union and countries beyond its future Eastern border, at once laying the groundwork for future cooperation therewith should a crisis actually erupt.

When discussing security, one cannot miss the situation in the Kaliningrad Region which merits particular attention. When contemplating contacts with it, one must consider the need to approach it as a region beset by diverse problems requiring comprehensive action, with due account taken of evolving departure from its position of an enclave of special military significance.

### ***4.3. Economic cooperation and trade***

Enlargement of the European Union to include the nations of Central and Eastern Europe will have important implications for the latter's economic and trade relations with countries of the post-Soviet space. This will be the consequence of both a change of the candidate countries' trade status following the accession, and their compliance with EU energy security requirements. In its on-going dialogue with CIS states, the European Union should discuss implications of its enlargement to include Central and East European nations.

CIS states have been traditional markets for the Polish economy and Poland's entry into the EU should in no way impact negatively upon Poland's economic relations with them. A message should be addressed to the CIS states to the effect that they, too, stand to derive increased benefits from EU enlargement, including from prospective cooperation. That

would be the consequence of, among other things, improved access of goods originating in the said states to the markets of new EU member states following reductions of most tariff rates, and in the wake of a rising demand for CIS-space goods triggered by the new EU members' strong economic growth.

Injecting by the European Union of new dynamism into its Eastern policy, exemplified by, inter alia, growing economic involvement of the EU in the said region, would certainly be in Poland's interest.

Economic and political enhancement of the CIS states is in the interest of the European Union as it offers the European market expansion opportunities which would in turn boost the political transformation of the states of the region. The CIS nations must be helped with their strivings to meet membership criteria of international economic organisations, such as the WTO, OECD and the International Monetary Fund. Meeting these criteria is the pre-condition for promotion of closer cooperation with the European Union.

As to the claims advanced by Russia and other future neighbours of the EU in the East concerning compensation for anticipated trade losses resulting from enlargement, we are of the same opinion with the EU that only those states' membership of the WTO may give them legal entitlements to compensation.

Energy security and fuel deliveries from Russia and other states of the region should be viewed by the EU as important areas of its economic activity in the East. The Interstate Oil and Gas Transport to Europe (INOGATE) plays a very special role in this field of endeavour.

Poland, as a transit country, has adopted an open position as concerns transport of oil and natural gas from the East to the West and South of Europe. Poland is interested in the expansion of the system of oil and gas pipelines from the Caspian Sea region across the Caucasus (Turkmenistan-Azerbaijan-Georgia-Ukraine). Consideration is being given to construction of an Odessa-Brody-Gdańsk oil pipeline, which would constitute an extension of the planned transit routes for Caspian oil. Poland is also interested in a gas pipeline which is to be laid from the Yamal fields in Russia to Western and Southern Europe.

As a future member of the EU, Poland wishes to participate in all discussions on energy security, including those at the forum of INOGATE, in order to have influence over the future energy policy of Europe. Poland is also ready to participate in international negotiations of interested countries concerning transit routes for gas and oil from the East to the West and South of Europe.

Being a country strategically located on what will be the Eastern border of an enlarged EU, and having accumulated considerable experience and expertise to draw on, Poland could play a role of coordinator in territorial development planning on the European continent. The related problems of environmental protection and ecological hazards should attract the attention of the EU conducive to cooperation with the countries of the region.

#### ***4.4. III pillar - internal affairs and justice, system of education, cultural exchange, media and information, man-to-man contacts***

Enlargement of the EU eastwards will have significant implications for the relations of the EU - its new members in particular - with neighbouring countries on the Eastern side of the

Union's border, as regards matters covered by the Schengen acquis, including border control and visa requirements. High importance will have to be attached to cooperation in combatting organised crime, illegal migration and drugs trafficking, having in mind that those negative phenomena figure prominently in CIS territory and that the transit routes for drugs trafficking and illegal migration pass through it.

The openness of the EU to contacts with citizens of countries beyond the Eastern border of the EU will have a crucial bearing on transformation processes in those countries and their adjustment to the neighbourhood of the Union. That is a profound political problem, with far-reaching social implications. While ensuring effective protection of the country's borders, the adoption by Poland of the Schengen acquis and introduction of visa requirements for citizens of the CIS states should also enable our Eastern neighbours to develop better contacts with the European standards of freedom, democracy and market economy. Poland intends to simplify its visa-issuing procedures, expand its network of consular missions and introduce multiple-entry visas and low visa charges.

In its policy vis-a-vis the CIS states, the EU should attach considerable importance to influencing the educational systems of those countries, their culture and mass media, in order to shape a new mentality and democratic attitudes, to promote human rights and the building of civil societies.

Keeping the aforesaid in mind, it is necessary to sustain actions conducive to surmounting barriers to the free flow of people and ideas within individual CIS states and between them. A very important role in these efforts goes to contacts between organisations and institutions existing in the said countries and their counterparts in the European Union. Particular stress in this context must be laid on the activities of non-governmental organisations and extension of the European information space to the CIS states.

#### ***4.5. The Northern Dimension***

Poland attaches considerable importance to the European Union's involvement in cooperation with the countries of Northern Europe within the framework of the Northern Dimension. Such cooperation would be viewed as the EU's support to countries of the Baltic Sea basin in their pursuit of integration into Europe. Such cooperation is essential from the viewpoint of the EU enlargement. It is also an important factor of the Union's policy vis-a-vis Russia. All the circumstances mentioned above prompt a suggestion that the Northern Dimension be recognised as an autonomous, regional initiative of the European Union, as has been the case with the Mediterranean Sea basin and the Western Balkans.

While giving content to the Action Plan, one must focus on the following problems:

- nuclear security, including cooperation with Russia to resolve the problem of stockpiling nuclear waste;
- environmental protection and combatting pollution in the Baltic Sea region;
- economic cooperation and development of the region's infrastructure;
- combatting organised crime;

- promotion of democratic values and strengthening civil society.

The range and importance of the set of issues suggested for inclusion in the Northern Dimension Action Plan furnish the rationale for allocation of separate resources from the Union's budget to finance its implementation.

#### ***4.6. The Kaliningrad Region***

Poland has welcomed the initiative of the European Commission concerning the Kaliningrad Region, expressed in the form of the „Kaliningrad and the European Union“ communique. It is ever more important since Poland, a future European Union member state, is supportive of a deepened Russia-EU partnership. Poland regards cooperation with the Kaliningrad Region as an instrument serving the dismantling of economic and civilisational barriers in the European continent.

The Kaliningrad Region is beset with an immensity of problems, including organised crime, environmental pollution, the condition of the health service and drugs trafficking. The Kaliningrad Region's social situation is another cause for concern, its per capita income being a far cry from the incomes and living standards obtaining in neighbouring countries and, indeed, in Russia itself. Particularly conspicuous in the Kaliningrad Region will be the asymmetry of both economic development and infrastructure on both sides of the border, which can be pregnant with considerable economic and social hazards.

EU enlargement calls for improvements to both transport links and border controls. These questions impact considerably on the neighbouring countries including Poland. In this connection it will be necessary to successively modernise the border-crossings along the Polish-Kaliningrad Region border (as well as on Poland's border with Ukraine and Belarus) while at the same time to tighten up the borders in question. It will also be necessary to implement the important transport infrastructure-related projects which are to facilitate goods shipments and passenger transport. Union resources will also have to be committed to implementation of those important projects.

In its position paper on the European Commission Communique „Kaliningrad and the European Union“, handed over in Warsaw on 19 March 2001 to representatives of the Swedish Presidency and the European Commission, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland says the Communique is a manifestation of the European Union's preparedness to comprehensively handle problems arising from its eastward enlargement for states which will remain outside an enlarged Union.

As a country which neighbours with the Kaliningrad Region, Poland is interested in developing cooperation with it, including economic cooperation, and solving problems arising both within the Region and around its points of contact with EU member states. Poland is supportive of all undertakings designed to pull down economic and civilisational barriers existing between the Region and the present and future members of the EU.

As regards economic cooperation, more precisely in the energy sector, Poland is interested in making electric power deliveries to the Kaliningrad Region and, in the event of conclusion of long-term agreements, also in related investment in power transmission lines.

#### **4.7. Regional and cross-border cooperation**

Poland attaches considerable importance to cross-border and interregional cooperation as an effective instrument of building good neighbourhood in the interest of social, cultural and scientific contacts underpinned by economic cooperation. Expansion of contacts at grass-roots level helps enhance mutual trust. While disseminating European standards of democracy, human rights and the idea of civil society, it also promotes a common value system.

In implementing the policy of endorsement of cross-border and interregional cooperation with East European partners and other states further East, Poland has concluded a number of intergovernmental agreements, including those with Belarus (1992), the Russian Federation (1992), Ukraine (1993), Georgia (1993), Kyrgyzstan (1993), Uzbekistan (1994) and Moldova (1998). In addition to the aforesaid, the Polish government concluded with the government of the Russian Federation Agreements on Cooperation of Polish Voivodships (Provinces) with the Kaliningrad Region and with the Sankt Petersburg region (both in 1992).

Comissions or Intergovernmental Councils have been established to coordinate the necessary activities, namely, the Polish-Russian Council for Cooperation between Polish Regions and the Kaliningrad Region of the Russian Federation (1994); the Polish-Russian Council for Cooperation of Polish Regions with the Sankt Petersburg Region (1996); the Polish-Ukrainian Intergovernmental Council for Interregional Cooperation (1996); the Polish-Belarussian Intergovernmental Coordination Commission for Cross-Border Cooperation (1996); the Polish-Russian Council for Cooperation between Polish Regions and the St Petersburg Region of the Russian Federation (1996). Under the terms of the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Poland and the Government of the Russian Federation on Cross-Border Cooperation, concluded in Warsaw on 2 October 1992, the parties should establish an Intergovernmental Commission for Interregional Cooperation.

Euroregions established along Poland's borders are an institutionalised form of cross-border cooperation involving regional and local authorities. Four Euroregions have been called into being along the Eastern and part of the Southern border of the Republic of Poland, namely: the Polish-Ukrainian-Hungarian-Romanian-Slovak Carpathian Euroregion (1993); the Polish-Belarussian-Ukrainian Bug-River Euroregion (1995); the Polish-Belarussian-Lithuanian Niemen-River Euroregion (1997) inviting participation of the Kaliningrad Region, and the Polish-Russian-Danish-Lithuanian-Latvian-Swedish Baltic Euroregion (1998).

The Polish Government administration, as well as regional and local government authorities welcome the development of cross-border contacts as a necessary element of policy helping to mitigate the divisive impact of state frontiers, uphold the cultural cohesion and promote the economic development of the areas and regions involved. The said authorities are confident that also in the context of the EU's eastward enlargement cross-border and regional cooperation has a very important role to play in dispelling the impression of a new division taking hold of the continent, and are ready to line up policies against such a division.

To enhance the effectiveness of the existing diversity of forms of cooperation along the future Eastern and South-Eastern border of the European Union - complete with the North-

Western fringes of Russia, the areas of the Baltic States adjoining the Russian Federation, the Kaliningrad Region and the Polish-Ukrainian-Belarusian borderland - it is necessary to get under way a broad exchange of experiences and expertise. Initiatives launched by Poland within the framework of Baltic cooperation, or by the Central European Initiative, to mention only some of them, are broadly supportive of such ventures.

Poland hopes that also EU financial instruments deployed to support such cooperation, namely, INTERREG, PHARE CBC and TACIS programmes, will be perfected to more effectively help expand the infrastructure of the areas in question, sustain their economic development, environmental protection and interhuman contacts.

## **5. Poland's contribution to the development and implementation of the Eastern Policy of the European Union**

Poland has been developing good neighbour relations with all its neighbours in the East. Poland will be entering into the European Union unencumbered with legal or border disputes or, for that matter, ethnic minority problems. Poland has been developing close cooperation with the Visegrád Group and Baltic States, all aspiring to EU membership.

Poland has accumulated a wealth of experience in the realm of transformation of its economic and political system, building of democracy, the rule of law and the market economy as well as adjustment of its economy, and political and legal systems to European Union standards.

Poland has been sharing these experiences with states situated across the future Eastern border of the European Union to help them to get adjusted to their prospective neighbourhood with the Union. Poland is ready to expand cooperation and develop good-neighbourly relations with states and regions adjoining an enlarged EU, that is to say, Russia (the Kaliningrad Region and the North-Western regions of the Russian Federation), Ukraine and Belarus. Keeping in mind the positive experiences gained during its pursuit of contacts within the framework of the Standing Polish-Ukrainian Conference on European Integration, this being an element of the implementation of the Common EU Strategy vis-a-vis Ukraine, Poland is ready to continue this form of cooperation. While sharing with Ukraine its own experience gained in the process of preparation for EU membership, Poland takes care to avoid assuming vis-a-vis Ukraine any obligations whatsoever in respect of its future institutional links with the EU. Positively responding to the Union's invitation extended to states involved in the accession negotiations, Poland is ready to participate in the implementation of projects contained in the EU Action Plan for Russia and Ukraine.

Poland enjoys extensive economic contacts with the Kaliningrad Region and commands a wealth of cross-border cooperation-related experience which can effectively help overcome the sense of isolation in Kaliningrad inhabitants. Of great importance in this regard is cooperation between Poland's North-Eastern voivodships (such as Pomeranian and Warmia-Mazurian voivodships) and the Kaliningrad Region. It takes different forms, such as youth exchange schemes, joint organisation of artistic and sports events, cooperation between local government bodies and promotion of tourism. Poland is ready to share with its EU partners its experience related to cross-border cooperation, as well as border control and management.

Despite Belarus's self-imposed isolation, this being the consequence of its current leadership's policy, the European Union should not lose sight of a country that will be living next to an enlarged Union. One must take particular care to include Belarus in EU information programmes and keep up the flow of the Union's information to that country.

Poland's intellectual and staff resources could be deployed to help with the implementation of EU programmes designed to provide training to the administrative personnel of CIS states involved in direct cooperation with the European Union, especially of those states which will be in the immediate neighbourhood of the Union following enlargement. Training programmes could also benefit managers and proprietors of small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as farmers.

A very good example of such cooperation is the tripartite Polish-Lithuanian-Russian proposal, voiced with the Kaliningrad Region in mind, to launch an educational programme meant for the Region's public administration officials, border guards and customs officers, with particular emphasis laid on the provision of training to operators of small and medium-sized enterprises. The above programme's objective would be to bring closer to administration organs and representatives of the Region's business community regulations and principles governing the management of the EU's external borders. The above project has been declared as a contribution of the Council of Baltic Sea States to the Northern Dimension Action Plan.

It would be in order to consider organising in Polish institutions, in cooperation with the Union and using its financial resources, within the framework of twinning agreements, hands-on training courses for CIS personnel responsible for cooperation with the Union. One must further unlock the potential of twinning partnerships established by local government bodies directly involved in cross-border cooperation.

Poland would be very much in favour of setting up in a Polish city - be it in Gdansk or Olsztyn - an international centre for coordination of cross-border cooperation with and European assistance to the Kaliningrad Region.

In conclusion, in Poland's opinion, EU initiatives targetted at countries of CIS area with a view to drafting a future Eastern policy of the Union should be consulted regularly with candidate countries. Poland is interested in taking part in such consultations.

[Quelle: [http://www.msz.gov.pl/english/unia/polityka\\_wsch\\_en.html](http://www.msz.gov.pl/english/unia/polityka_wsch_en.html)]