

May 11, 1988

**Speech by Mr. Józef Czyrek at a founding meeting of
the Polish Club of International Relations**

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Summary:

A speech by Mr. Józef Czyrek at a founding meeting of the Polish Club of International Relations discussing the objectives of the Club – social support, dialogue and public evaluation

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Polish

Contents:

Translation - English

1. Together with our host, Professor Aleksander Gieysztor,[1] we have envisioned the founding of a Polish Club of International Relations.[2] The talks conducted on this matter and today's meeting confirm a positive response to this initiative. I am convinced that outstanding representatives of different circles and orientations will join in the activities of the Club, which we want to base on the recognition of pluralism and understanding.

2. We have stated in a joint letter with Prof. Gieysztor that Poland's position among the nations of the world demands broad social support, dialogue and public evaluation. This would be the major objective of the Polish Club of International Relations. I want to repeat: social support, dialogue and public evaluation. This is the essence of how we see the activity of the Club.

3. This assumes a wide representation of points of view and opinions, lively and unrestrained discourse on all questions of Polish foreign policy, relations in Europe and the world, aiming at a consensus through dialogue. We assume that the Club will act on the basis of the Constitution of the Polish People's Republic and will be led by the Polish *raison d'état*. However, within the framework of the Constitution and the principles of *raison d'état* there is a wide area for an exchange of views and the drawing of conclusions. I want to express conviction that in the Club's activities we should strive toward the broadest understanding and consensus. After all, there is no doubt that we are led—above all differences of views—by the good of Poland, the good of our nation, of our motherland.

4. Proposals to create this kind of social body have been suggested by different circles for some time. We are now taking this initiative not without reason. We look at the creation of the Club and its activity as one of the important elements building national understanding. Poland needs it as much as [it needs] air. Recent developments not only do not undermine such a need, quite to the contrary—they fully emphasize its importance.

5. We are holding our meeting on a day of very important Sejm deliberations. They fully confirm the will for the implementation of the II [second] stage of economic reform, and very important resolutions are being taken, which are intended to speed up its introduction and increase its impact. The Sejm also confirms its unwavering will to continue and expand political reforms. I think personally that from the process of renewal we will come to a deep reconstruction, to a significant widening of the Polish model of socialism in economic, social and political life. Led by this desire is Chairman of the Council of State Wojciech Jaruzelski, and—contrary to various opinions—he has broad backing, both within the ruling coalition and various patriotic forces, as well as from within our party.

6. In various discussions, including those held within our party, the idea of building some kind of pro-reform coalition or anti-crisis pact is being put forward. There is no doubt that Poland needs this kind of coalition very badly. I am personally convinced that we should strive towards it, build it not for a distant future, but rather for the near one.

7. I am stressing this basic objective because we see, together with Professors Gieysztor and other co-authors of that initiative [discussed above in number 6], such activity as a basic task of the Club. Consensus on the questions of foreign policy, to which the Club should contribute, is as important as consensus on the questions of internal economic, social and political reforms. In fact there can be no deeper national understanding without a harmony of positions on key international questions for the country. It is important in all countries and in ours in particular.

Foreign policy is certainly the area, which is evoking, relatively, the smallest [number of] controversies. There is a broad understanding of the correctness of the alliance

with the USSR and other socialist states as the basis for the territorial integrity and security of Poland. There is also broad support for the unambiguously peaceful purposes of our foreign policy, and particularly [for] active participation in building joint security in Europe and constructively shaping East-West relations, including the need for positive developments in relations with Western countries. We fully appreciate the significance of international law, including human rights, the weight of regional and global problems in the natural environment, the necessity of expanding cultural exchanges and the elimination of all barriers to economic cooperation.

There is no doubt that the purposes of Polish foreign policy are consistent with the national interests of Poland. However, there is also no doubt, that both within the area of objectives and of the ways of their realization, a broad social dialogue is needed. We would like the Club that we are about to set up to serve well such a dialogue, an elaboration—as I have already pointed out—of mutual understanding and consensus on these matters.

8. In our times the significance of the phenomenon which is being called public diplomacy, is growing. This form of diplomacy, engaging various social forces and affecting the shape of foreign opinion on one's country, is one of the great platforms of international contacts. It's even more important, the more representative and the more socially and morally authoritative the persons are participating in it. We are convinced that we can gather many such personalities in the proposed Club. And today's meeting also confirms it.

Based on an idea of national understanding, we would like to see the proposed Club gather people of practically all patriotic orientations. We see it as place for people who, as a result of their present or past activity, have contributed significantly to the development of Polish relations with the abroad. We see in it people, who, from different philosophical or political outlooks, participate or want to participate in expanding contacts with abroad. People from very different circles, of divergent opinions, but ready to get involved in building national understanding.

9. It is our conviction [that] the Club, in addition to its other purposes, should also serve in shaping political culture. It should act on its principles and at the same time make a significant contribution in the deepening of society. We think that this understanding will gain support, because one cannot build a national understanding without political culture.

10. Together with Prof. Gieysztor and other co-authors of the initiative we are deeply convinced that the Club should have a social character. Thus, we do not want to tie it to any state institution, nor to any existing social organization. We see it as an autonomous social body set up on the basis of the law on associations and self-governing principles of activity. We think that this formula is the best one and will gain support of both the personalities gathered here, as well as many other persons to whom we have appealed for participation. The draft statute of the Club is based on such principles, with a significant contribution by Prof. Manfred Lachs, for which I thank him wholeheartedly. This draft will be submitted here for discussion. We also want to submit for discussion a draft list of people, to whom we have turned for participation in the Club's activities.

11. In the end I want to thank wholeheartedly Prof. Aleksander Gieysztor for his co-participation in this initiative and for hosting today's meeting. I hope that the beautiful Castle of which Prof. Gieysztor is so admirably in charge, will be the Club's headquarters.

[1]. Aleksander Gieysztor, a distinguished historian-medievalist, director of the Royal Castle in Warsaw, in 1988-1989 participated in a number of meetings between government representatives and opposition circles.

[2]. The Polish Club of International Relations did not play any important role in subsequent events, but its creation—and particularly the speech by J. Czyrek—was one of the stages in seeking an understanding between government and opposition circles.