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Opening remarks

*Reception hosted by U.S. Ambassador to Poland Stephen D. Mull and U.S. Ambassador to the European Union Anthony L. Gardner in honor of the Polish Delegation to the European Parliament
16 June 2015, European Parliament, Brussels*

Your Excellencies
Dear Guests,

I am honored to be here this evening. It is a meeting of friends – which is something always to be appreciated. The Polish – American ties have always been strong. But, as in any real friendship, there is always a space to make the ties stronger and even more binding. In the unstable and unpredictable world democracies have to come together as never before. This is why we are upgrading our relations in the area of defense capabilities, among others.

In light of the Ukraine crisis, Polish government has expressed its wish that the U.S. should increase its military presence in Poland and in other NATO members in central and Eastern Europe.

Not so long ago we were witnessing as hundreds of Poles took to the streets to give a hero's welcome to a convoy of U.S. troops who were driving through Poland.

Children climbed on to Stryker armoured vehicles and even offered souvenirs to the troops, who stopped to pose for pictures.

People lined the roads and applauded as the troops from the 3rd Squadron of the 2nd Cavalry Regiment of the American Army passed by.

That shows the true sentiment in Poland for the American people. We still remember the role of the US in bringing peace to Europe after the II World War.

And this sentiment is worthy of supporting. Because shared values and personal histories form an essential background for good relations between states.

We live in a challenging time, when the values and of the Transatlantic community have to compete with those of the emerging Asian block and confront the re-emerging Russian threat.

Our values are no longer taken for granted by many. We have to convince people around the world that democracy, free market, free movement of people, freedom of thought and speech and personal liberty is something worth having and defending. In order to pursue it, we have to build mechanisms for greater cooperation and deeper engagement.

One of these mechanism is TTIP – a real expression of our belief in transatlantic partnership.

We have to do all we can to make it happen and serve the cause of making the Euroatlantic space an example for others.

And one more personal remark: we learned that His Excellency S. Mull is leaving his post in Warsaw.

It has to be said, that he will leave an indelible mark on the Polish-American relation. Great part of diplomacy is a public diplomacy. Ambassador Mull has engaged throughout his term with all the segments of Polish civil society. He was open for political dialogue but also for a very normal human conversation with average Poles. He set great standard for diplomatic communication.

Although we say to him “goodbye” for now, we very much hope that he will remain a very staunch friend of Poland. Until we see him again!

Thank you for your attention.