

Warsaw, 17 November 2020

## **Conference of Ambassadors of the Republic of Poland\***

### **Veto against Poland**

After five years of ineffectual and harmful European policy, the Law and Justice government has found itself in blind alley. Instead of backing down, it is heading for disaster. Like a bankrupt gambler, it pawns the interests of Polish citizens, antagonizing the other Member States of the European Union against itself and marginalizing its influence in this voluntary union of states.

In the history of the European Union one could count on the fingers of one hand the instances when a Member State threatened using the veto. This always took place in situations where the most vital, fundamental interests of a state were at stake. The use of this instrument has always been proportional to the entirety of matters being negotiated and understandable to other partners.

The threat that the Law and Justice government has advanced in recent days, signalling its readiness to block the final EU legal acts on the long-term budget and the Reconstruction Fund, does not meet any of these conditions.

The Law and Justice government is threatening the veto to force its partners to break the relationship between compliance with the rule of law and the use of European taxpayers' money. In demanding that the words "rule of law" be deleted from the draft law establishing such a relationship, it finds itself almost completely alone. 25 out of 27 EU countries, the European Parliament, and the vast majority of EU citizens, including over 70% of Poles polled on this matter, support the link between respect for the rule of law and payments from the EU budget. Unlike the current Polish authorities, they all respect European values and European laws.

Preventing the implementation of the EU budget and obstructing the Reconstruction Fund, as a consequence of a veto, would be a blow consciously inflicted on the societies of all EU countries, struggling with the impact of the pandemic and urgently needing support from both of these instruments. It would be particularly painful for the citizens of our own country. They would irretrievably lose nearly EUR 60 billion foreseen for Poland in the form of subsidies and loans from the Reconstruction Fund.

The Law and Justice government must surely be aware of these consequences and costs. So why does it embark on this suicidal course? Why does it jeopardize the vital interests of Poland and its citizens? Why is it showing partners that it is prepared to do massive harm to their efforts to mitigate the losses associated with the pandemic? Simply to be able to further dismantle the Constitution, the division of powers and bring everything under the control of one Party?

It is still not too late. We call on the Law and Justice government to come to its senses. They have driven to the brink of the abyss. Will they have the common sense to step back? Or will they jump, taking the whole country with them?

*Signed:*

Jan Barcz	Michał Klinger	Anna Niewiadomska
Iwo Byczewski	Jacek Kluczkowski	Jerzy Maria Nowak
Maria Krzysztof Byrski	Tomasz Knothe	Piotr Nowina-Konopka
Tadeusz Diem	Maciej Kozłowski	Agnieszka Magdziak-Miszewska
Paweł Dobrowolski	Maciej Koźmiński	Piotr Ogrodziński
Grzegorz Dziemidowicz	Jerzy Kranz	Ryszard Schnepf
Stefan Frankiewicz	Andrzej Krawczyk	Grażyna Sikorska
Urszula Gacek	Andrzej Krzeczunowicz	Katarzyna Skórzyńska
Marek Grela	Henryk Lipszyc	Tadeusz Szumowski
Andrzej Jaroszyński	Bogumił Luft	Andrzej Towpik
Adam W. Jelonek	Piotr Łukasiewicz	Wojciech Tomaszewski
Maciej Klimczak	Jacek Najder	Jan Truszczyński

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\*The Conference of Ambassadors of the Republic of Poland was established by former representatives of Poland. Its purpose is to analyse foreign policy, point out emerging threats to Poland, and make recommendations. We aim to bring these issues to the attention of the general public. We share common professional experience in shaping Poland's position as a modern European State and a significant member of the Transatlantic community. We firmly believe that foreign policy is an expression of the interests of the State and not of the interests of the ruling party.