

Remarks

by

Ambassador Rajiv K. Bhatia

Director General, ICWA

at

Panel Discussion on the book:

**“India-Poland Relations in the 21st Century:
Vistas for Future Cooperation”**

(Edited by Dr. Vijay Sakhuja, Dr. Dinoj K. Upadhyay and Mr. Patryk Kugiel)

Sapru House, New Delhi

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H.E.(Prof.) Piotr Klodkowski, Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to India; Dr. Boguslaw Zaleski, Former Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland; Mr. Rahul Chhabra, Joint Secretary (Central Europe), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India; Dr. Jakub Zajackowski, Warsaw University, Poland; Excellencies, Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen,



(L-R) Mr. Piotr Opalinski, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of the Republic of Poland; H.E.(Prof.) Piotr Klodkowski, Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to India; Ms. Anna Tryc-Bromley, Director, Polish Institute; Dr. Boguslaw Zaleski, Former Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland and Ambassador Rajiv K . Bhatia, Director General, ICWA.

On behalf of the two hosts -- Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) and the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in New Delhi, I am pleased to extend a warm welcome to all of you. This Panel Discussion is organized to analyze changing dynamics of India-Poland relations as well as to evaluate our academic and research collaboration with the Polish Institute of International Affairs (PISM), Warsaw, a premier institute of international relations in Europe. The book entitled, **“India-Poland Relations in the 21st Century: Vistas for Future Cooperation”** is the outcome of our previous academic interactions with the PISM. It examines

various aspects of India-Poland relations. While taking the history of these relations into account, the book has adopted a holistic and futuristic approach in order to explore vistas for future cooperation.

I am delighted to note that the ICWA has been engaged regularly in academic interactions with the PISM. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the ICWA and the PISM was signed in 2006. Both the institutions have already organized three conferences. We look forward to host a Polish delegation later this year for our fourth conference.

As both India and Europe have witnessed political changes in the recent past, this dialogue has assumed enhanced importance. After a long electoral process, a new government in India, with a clear majority in the lower house of the Parliament, is now at the helm of affairs. The new government has amply indicated that a robust partnership with Europe would remain one of its top priorities. In his address to the Parliament, Honorable President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, stated, “India also values its broad-based cooperation with Europe. The government will make concerted efforts to achieve progress in key areas with the European Union as well as its leading members.”

Victory of Eurosceptic and far-right parties in the recently held European Parliament election reflects that demands for reforming the EU are constantly growing in Europe. Consequently, the European integration process might slow down. It also seems that the voice for a common foreign and security policy for the EU might be marginalized. Bilateral efforts by the Member-States may gain prominence in the strategic engagement with the outside world. India’s engagement will expand with the Member-States at the bilateral level, but New Delhi will try to deepen its cooperation with the EU as well.

Historically, India and Poland have had centuries old interactions in the realm of culture, art and literature. Their relationships have expanded in the areas of trade, defence, science and technology since the establishment of formal diplomatic relations in 1954. Both the countries have been enhancing their engagement at the bilateral and multilateral levels in the contemporary world order.

Poland is the largest economy in Central Europe. It is a crucial economic partner of India in this region. As the gateway to the EU market, Poland has the potential to enhance its economic and commercial ties with the EU. India and Poland can also play an important role in facilitating reform of the institutions of global governance. New Delhi recognizes Warsaw's contribution to global peace and security.

A vibrant intellectual interaction is a valuable asset for India-Poland relations. We admire the interest of Polish academicians, researchers, scholars and people in general in India's culture, languages, democratic values, science and literature. Although academic and research activities between two countries are constantly increasing, I do believe that more needs to be done to widen our intellectual discourse.

I sincerely hope that our dialogue today would generate new ideas for further research and academic interactions in both countries to deepen India-Poland relations.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.
