

# All Change?

## Polish Foreign and Security Policy after the Elections

By Kerry Longhurst

*ABSTRACT : The balance sheet of the Kaczynski seems contestable: diplomatic service in shambles, strained relations with Germany and Russia, strong convergence with Washington, isolation in the European Union. The new government has already initiated a strong change in style, and some inflexions, for example in the relationship between Warsaw and Moscow, are already perceptible. But these inflexions do not necessarily suggest a radical shift in Polish diplomacy.*

The Polish parliamentary elections of October 2007 brought to an end the ruling Kaczynski 'twindom'. Victory for Donald Tusk and his Civic Platform Party (PO) and junior partner the Polish Popular Alliance (PSL),<sup>1</sup> signaled the departure of Prime Minister Jaroslaw Kaczynski and his 'Law and Justice party' (PiS). However, although one twin may have departed, Lech Kaczynski will remain President until 2010 and since Presidential power in foreign policy is considerable, Tusk's foreign and security policies will be subject to the constraints of cohabitation.

The election garnered high international interest. Poland's partners in Europe are hoping for something a little less abrasive and for Polish European policy to slip into the mainstream under Tusk. But there is also reason for the US to anticipate change, since it is far from certain that Poland's strong Atlanticism and adherence to US policy will be sustained in quite the same way.

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*Kerry Longhurst is a Visiting Fellow at IFRI. She is co-author of The New Atlanticist – Polands Foreign and Security Policy Priorities, London, Chatham House/Blackwells 2007.*

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<sup>1</sup> Known as the Peasants Party outside of Poland

## ***The Kaczynskis in Retrospect***

When Lech Kaczynski became President in December 2005, he was mandated with the task of cleaning up Polish politics. Two months earlier, in Poland's Parliamentary elections PiS had come to power with Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz as Prime Minister. However, not long after Lech's Presidential success, Marcinkiewicz was ousted, leaving Jaroslaw – the identical twin brother of the President to become Prime Minister.

On the domestic front 'moral renewal' and the restoration of national pride became buzzwords, this even went as far as a call for the creation of a Fourth Republic. Ridding public life of corruption led the Kaczynskis to target ex-communists. What might have appeared at first as a positive drive, went into melt-down when the twins extended the controversial lustration law.<sup>2</sup>

Just as the Prime Minister and President beat the nationalist drum at home they promoted the idea of a strong, nationally focused Poland in international affairs. As a result of the ways in which they did this, Polish foreign and security policy became ever more introverted, unsophisticated and paranoid. Essentially, the Kaczynskis believed that Poland should be a force to be reckoned with and should not be shy about articulating national interests. They also saw that as a major European player Poland should be allowed to play with the 'big boys' inside the EU.

### **The Kaczynski's International Relations**

Over the course of the 1990's Polish-German relations had hit a high point, when traditional enmity was overcome when Germany became one of Poland's chief advocates for NATO and European Union memberships. After October 2005 bilateral relations with Germany quickly crumbled. The German-Russian plan, conceived by Schroeder and Putin, to build a pipeline 'Nord Stream', under the Baltic Sea bypassing Poland helped fuel the twins Germanophobia, which became increasingly laced with xenophobic overtones. This was further exacerbated by heightened calls from some quarters in Germany to create a 'visible sign' to mark the suffering of Germans during and after the close of the Second World War and in particular the expulsion of Germans from Poland. Unsurprisingly, these ideas were vociferously rejected by the Kaczynski's (as indeed they were by the previous Polish government). But where the twins made such a radical impression was in their openly hostile and historically laden arguments. One of the most shocking illustrations of this was

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<sup>2</sup> The lustration law was originally intended for government ministers, lawmakers and judges - to root out former informers to the communist secret police. Under the Kaczynski's in March 2007 the law was extended to include academics, journalists, managers of state-owned firms, school principals, diplomats and lawyers.

Jaroslaw Kaczynski's claim that Poland should have the same voting rights in the European Union Council as Germany, as compensation for the huge number of Poles killed by the Nazis.<sup>3</sup> In a similar vein, Defense Minister Radek Sikorski likened the pipeline plan to the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact.

Polish-Russia bilateral relations also hit a post-Cold War low under the Kaczynskis - the Poles used their veto in the European Union to halt discussions towards a new Russia-European Union agreement, a move which came in response to a Russian ban on Polish food imports. As was the case even before PiS came to power, relations with Russia and questions of energy continued to be major bones of contention. One of the Kaczynski government's responses was a proposal to create an 'Organization of Collective Energy Security' within Europe, akin to North Atlantic Treaty Organization (thus excluding Russia).

In Europe the Kaczynski's made their mark in two main ways. First, they presented an image of Poland that was out of kilt with European values. Second, they presented Poland as a state unable to compromise. A prime example of this being their opposition to the French and German proposed changes to the 'Nice' voting system for the European Council, a plan which aimed to empower the larger member states. Briefly, whereas the Nice arrangement of 2003 put Poland's voting rights at almost the same level as Germany's (27 and 29 respectively), the new proposal disadvantaged medium sized states, namely Poland and Spain. To be fair, the twin's position was inherited from the previous administration, which was responsible for the famous 'Nice or Death' slogan, but the gusto with which the Kaczynski brothers took it up was so unyielding that it almost derailed the revised 'Reform' treaty in mid 2007.

Much of the Kaczynski's euroscepticism derived from their passion for the United States. Their awkwardness in Europe contrasted with a slave-like attitude towards the United States. On virtually every count Poland adhered to US policies - unwavering in support for Iraq and a willing participant in the missile defense system.<sup>4</sup>

A further legacy left by Lech Kaczynski is a diplomatic service in shambles. The twins were convinced that the diplomatic service was full of former communist spies, thus from the outset they got rid of numbers of career diplomats, but failed to replace them. Consequently, for long periods of time 25 Polish Embassies were without Ambassadors, even key Ambassadorial posts in France and the European Union lay vacant. The result was a managerial

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<sup>3</sup> Poland Blasted for Mentioning the War June 22 2007 <[www.spiegel.de/international/germany/0,1518,490178,00.html](http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/0,1518,490178,00.html)>

<sup>4</sup> Marcin Zaborowski and Kerry Longhurst, 'America's Protégé in the East' *International Affairs*, Vol. 79, No 5, October 2003

catastrophe – official visits were not adequately prepared for, even canceled and more importantly, foreign policy became amateurish and prone to knee-jerk reactions.

## ***Dispelling Some Myths About the Kaczynskis: the Twins in Context***

It is easy to criticize the Kaczynskis. Upon first inspection the balance sheet suggests that during the previous two years there been few foreign policy successes and that Polish foreign policy is in worse shape than before. Such assumptions arise because comment and analysis have tended to stress only the negative and sensational aspects of the Kaczynski period. What also leads to inaccurate conclusions is an assumption that the twin's foreign and security policies represented a clean break from what came before. Subsequently, a myth has emerged that Tusk will reject the Kaczynski's foreign policies wholesale and that everything will 'change for the better'. Such claims, need to be challenged, to get a clearer idea of what to expect from Donald Tusk.

It is the case that the Kaczynskis did not necessarily create all foreign policy problems, many tensions were long standing and inherited from previous governments. Second, there were a number of accomplishments made by the Kaczynski's in foreign policy and thus there is also a positive legacy that will be taken up by the new government. Finally, it must be remembered that when in opposition it was often the case that when Tusk's party criticized the Kaczynski's foreign policies it was not over 'substance', but rather over 'style'.<sup>5</sup>

### **Inheriting, Not Just Creating Problems**

Poland's history has always been marked by strained relations with Germany and Russia. It should have come as no surprise therefore, that the bilateral pipeline plan between Moscow and Berlin was viewed in Warsaw through 'historically-laden' lenses. The pipe-line was seen as just another example of West Europe taking a 'Russia-first' policy and of Russia and Germany acting over Poland's head.<sup>6</sup> On the issue of voting rights within the EU, again, the twins inherited a position from the PO, which was staunchly against the Nice formula. As already mentioned, it should not be forgotten that 'Nice or Death' was a PO slogan.

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<sup>5</sup> Olaf Osica 'Continuity with New Accents: Poland's Foreign Policy after the Parliamentary Elections' 31 October 2007 <[www.cepa.org](http://www.cepa.org)>

<sup>6</sup> Kerry Longhurst and Marcin Zaborowski, *The New Atlanticist: Poland's Foreign and Security Policy Priorities*, London, Blackwells/Chatham House, 2007, p. 61, 81

## **Accomplishments of the Kaczynskis**

Despite a very confrontational and conservative style, Poland, under the Kaczynski's made some constructive contributions; whilst the Kaczynski's assertiveness may have annoyed European partners, it did ensure that Poland became a force to be reckoned with. This put Poland head and shoulders above other East Central European states, which paid some dividends.

In Europe the story of the Kaczynski's is not one purely of destruction. The Kaczynski's became key actors when it came to agreeing on the EU's budget 2007-13. After protracted debate between member states, Polish diplomacy helped to bring about a financial solution. Despite strong Atlanticism, the Kaczynski's also made considerable commitments to CFSP and ESDP, by sending troops to various EU missions, moreover last year the Prime Minister proposed that a European Army be created. The twins also carried on the previous administration's efforts at developing the EU's eastern policies, to bring Ukraine closer to the EU's orbit and to construct a more coherent EU Russia strategy. In this respect Poland emerged as a respected champion of Eastern Europe.

Finally, Poland's profile in the US became elevated. To be sure there had been a close bond between Polish and US administrations since the end of the Cold War. This relationship was further cemented by Iraq and given an additional boost by Poland's support for the missile defense system, developments which prompted Bush to consider Poland a 'regional leader'.

## ***The Emerging Contours of Tusk's Foreign and Security Policy***

What do we know about Tusk? First, he is a Europhile. He is generally supportive of European integration and sees a positive role for Poland in the EU. Economically Tusk is a liberal, who wants to exchange the Zloty for the Euro as soon as possible<sup>7</sup> and to introduce a flat rate of income tax in Poland. He is set on boosting Foreign Direct Investment into Poland, by cutting red-tape and bureaucracy and by breaking down the national economic protectionism that his predecessor pursued. Tusk seems keen to improve relations between Poland and Germany and he is likely to be less stubborn and emotional, though no less resolute, when it comes to Russia. His government will also appear less conservative vis-à-vis other European states. When it comes to Transatlantic Relations, whilst Tusk's Poland will remain Atlanticist there will be a strong drive to be less subservient towards Washington.

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<sup>7</sup> « La Pologne n'est pas l'enfant terrible de l'UE », Le Monde, 7/12/2007

## The Foreign Policy Team

Tusk's foreign policy team has international experience and shares his pro-European outlook. Defense Minister Bogdan Klich is a former Polish Member of the European Parliament. Tusk's choice of Foreign Minister, Radek Sikorski was a controversial one, not least because he was PiS Defense Minister for Jaroslaw Kaczynski.<sup>8</sup> Sikorski is perhaps best known as being a neo-con-buddy, from when he was based in the American Enterprise Initiative. Although he is an instinctive Atlanticist, he was bruised by his dealings with the US administration over Iraq and thus can be expected to be less yielding towards what Washington. The third leg of the Tusk foreign policy team is Wladislaw Bartoszewski, a dissident during the Cold War and one of Poland's first post-communist Foreign Ministers. He has been given a place in Tusk's Cabinet on 'extraordinary affairs'. As a foreign policy heavy weight he will bring credibility to Tusk's foreign policies and can be expected to play a central role in Polish-German relations.

## A Manifesto for Change?

How much change and how much continuity can be expected from the new government? What are the constraints and opportunities confronting Tusk and his team? Will there be a change in substance or just in style?

## Poland's Atlanticism

Indicators suggest that there will be a shift in thinking in this sphere. Essentially, Poland's new government will become more circumspect towards the US and will seek to overcome its status as a subservient partner. Tusk heavily criticized the twins for 'kneeling in front of the US' and Radek Sikorski's line is that the United States has to learn that it should not expect as much from Warsaw as it has done hitherto. Sikorski's article in the Washington Post in March 2007 'Don't Take Poland for Granted' provides a good indication of what might be expected. Sikorski stated that the US's influence in East Central Europe in general has changed by virtue of EU enlargement. Furthermore, trust between Poland and the US was damaged by Iraq, an adventure, he says, Poland entered as a firm 'act of friendship' towards the US, but for which there was little in return.<sup>9</sup>

Tusk is firmly in favor of pulling Polish troops out of Iraq. This is an about-turn from the previous government's pledge to remain until the US leaves, indeed this is the position still maintained by President Kaczynski. As already mentioned, Tusk's policy reflects the general feeling amongst the population that it is no longer desirable to

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<sup>8</sup> Between October 2005 and February 2007.

<sup>9</sup> See Radek Sikorski 'Don't Take Poland for Granted,' Washington Post, March 21 2007.

support the United States in Iraq. Polish dissatisfaction over Iraq has also been fueled by Washington's refusal to budge on the issue of visas for Poles going to the US, as well as a strong sense of disappointment when Polish firms failed to get contracts for the reconstruction of Iraq, the lion's share of which went to American companies.

Afghanistan is a different matter - Tusk has declared that Poland's 1200 troops will stay. However, domestic criticism is on the up, especially as seven Polish soldiers stand accused of killing Afghan civilians. This incident has become a test of the Polish public's 'stomach for sending soldiers into faraway battle in support of allies', and has subsequently led to questions about whether it really is in Poland's interests to remain.<sup>10</sup>

It is on the issue of Missile Defense that changes in the Polish approach to the US will probably be most visible. Whether Poland decides to host part of the system, and on what terms, will become a litmus test for Poland's new take on Transatlantic Relations.<sup>11</sup> The call for more 'compensation', and not to be 'taken for granted' will be the leitmotifs of the new Polish approach to the Missile Defense system. Sikorski, in particular will want a better balance between Poland's obligations and the US's commitments.<sup>12</sup> The original plan, negotiated under the Kaczynski's, was for Poland to host ten interceptor missiles,<sup>13</sup> in turn, the Polish request was to be afforded Patriot missiles as a form of compensation for its participation. Tusk and Defense Minister Klich are not certain that the deal, as it stands, is in Poland's interests, especially in light of how the missile shield will affect relations with Russia and how it might render Poland more vulnerable. Consequently, Tusk and his team will be weighing up the costs and benefits. Tusk has pledged to discuss the issue further with NATO and with Poland's neighbors before going back to the negotiating table with the US.<sup>14</sup>

## Europe

On relations in the European Union, Tusk has stated that there would be a change of 'form' and style rather than of substance. Tusk cautioned 'I don't want to inflate anyone's expectations that Poland will suddenly become a problem-free member',<sup>15</sup> but at the same time he has insisted that Poland will not be '*L'enfant terrible de l'UE*'.<sup>16</sup> As

<sup>10</sup> Nicholas Kulish 'An Afghanistan war-crimes case tests Poland's commitment to foreign missions,' The New York Times, 29 November 2007

<sup>11</sup> Olaf Osica, op. cit. [5].

<sup>12</sup> See Radek Sikorski 'Don't Take Poland for Granted,' Washington Post, March 21 2007.

<sup>13</sup> The plan is also for the Czech Republic to host an observation 'Radar' site.

<sup>14</sup> Europe Diplomacy and Defence, No.73, 26 October 2007.

<sup>15</sup> Donald Tusk, interview in the Financial Times, October 2007

<sup>16</sup> « La Pologne n'est pas l'enfant terrible de l'UE », Le Monde, 7/12/2007

already mentioned, Tusk and his PO party held out strong positions on EU issues, which the Kaczynski's then inherited. The Kaczynski's bullishness on the Nice voting system was supported by Tusk and his shadow government, in fact he scolded the twin's weakness when they were seen to back down on certain issues.

It is in Tusk's favor and to his advantage that there are no major obstacles for the foreseeable future at the EU level which might cause serious ructions between the EU and Poland. The ratification process of the Lisbon reform treaty is unlikely to be controversial, the budget for the period 2007-13 has been sealed and the dispute over voting weights within the Council has been delayed until 2013. Tusk's EU options will also be backed by a robust consensus at home, since despite how it might have seemed over the past two years, Poland is a pro-EU country, moreover the smaller euroskeptical political parties such as Samoobrona have been squeezed from the political scene.

Tusk's priorities within the EU will be to pursue a liberal economic agenda, which will see Poland teaming up with like-minded states such as the UK and the Netherlands. But because of Poland's large agricultural sector, and its relative economic weakness, Warsaw may well find friends amongst the smaller EU member states and also with France. Relations with Ukraine, the development of a common EU approach to Russia and energy security will remain key objectives of Tusk's European policy.

## **Relations with Russia and Germany Big Gestures, As Well as Action?**

Tusk has declared that the betterment of relations with Russia will be one of his key foreign policy priorities.<sup>17</sup> Signaling this, Foreign Minister Sikorski has already made a trip to Russia and Tusk is scheduled to meet his Russian counterpart in Russia early next year. Soon after coming to power Tusk set up a 'Commission for Difficult Issues' (*Komisja Spraw Trudnych*) as a forum for Polish and Russian parliamentarians to discuss bilateral relations.<sup>18</sup> The top items on the agenda will be the Missile defense shield and energy. This overture signals a willingness on the part of Poland and Russia to start communicating about those issues that dog bilateral relations. The commission may also prove instrumental to unblocking Russia's relations with the European Union, which were halted by Poland's veto in early 2007. But Russia should not count on this being an easy process, for one, Moscow may not be able to rely on France and Germany as key bilateral allies as had often been the case before, especially during the Gerhard Schroeder/Jacques Chirac years. At the end of the day, the European Union in its entirety came to support

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<sup>17</sup> "Stosunki Polski z Rosja: nie Słodko, ale normalnie", *Gazeta wyborcza*, 7 December 2007

<sup>18</sup> W sprawach trudnych najważniejsza jest dyskrekcja RP, 8 December 2007

Poland's position and its veto vis-à-vis Russia, thus this EU-solidarity behind Poland will be a source of strength for Tusk in his dialogue with Moscow.

There will be a number of sizable roadblocks standing in the way of the normalization of Polish-Russian relations. The fact that Russia never acknowledged or accepted any wrongdoings during the period of communist rule in Poland remains a key point of discord between Poles and Russians. It is perhaps worth noting that whilst Radek Sikorski's off-hand comment comparing the German-Russian pipe-line plan to the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact caused shockwaves across Western Europe, few eyebrows were raised in Poland or in other East Central European states. For the most part, Polish elites and society at large passionately hold the view that Russia never really fully let go of Poland after the end of communism and still begrudges it its sovereignty. It is these structural discrepancies that will continue to reside at the heart of bilateral relations and will thus shape any new Polish-Russian dialogue.

There is a clash of agendas between Russia and Poland when it comes to Eastern Europe. Since gaining its own sovereignty in 1989 Poland has supported the democratization and westernization of Ukraine as well as Belarus and Moldova. Polish endeavors in this respect and its continued support for EU and NATO enlargement hit hard against Russia's own neighborhood designs.

When it comes to energy the Poles will continue to promote diversification and the creation of a common EU energy policy, with the aim of reducing Poland's (and Europe's) oil and gas dependency on Russia.<sup>19</sup> Subsequently, the Russian-German Nord Stream pipeline project will remain a thorn for both Russian-Polish and German-Polish relations.

The situation with regards to German-Polish relations is not dissimilar to the Polish-Russian relationship. There have been lots of positive overtures and gestures, but at the same time serious points of discord remain.

Bilateral relations will no doubt profit from having Wladislaw Bartoczewski at the helm, an appointment that the German government found particularly encouraging. And since Radek Sikorski and his German counterpart Franck Steinmeier apparently 'get on well', notions of 'mutual trust' and 'partnership' have reappeared in the vocabulary of Polish-German relations.<sup>20</sup> Already, discussions have begun to reignite the Polish-German inter-ministerial institution,

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<sup>19</sup> 96% of Poland's oil and 63% of its gas imports currently come from Russia.

<sup>20</sup> "Pokoj z Niemcami," *Gazeta wyborcza*, 7 December 2007

which was frozen during the Kaczynski period,<sup>21</sup> as well as reactivating the 'Weimar Triangle'.<sup>22</sup>

Problems will of course continue – two particular points come to mind. As noted above, the Russian-German pipeline project is a major block in relations; Tusk and Sikorski will remain highly skeptical of this, but at the same time there is a willingness to talk with the Germans (and Russians) about the project, which is already a major change from the previous policy.<sup>23</sup> The second major roadblock in this bilateral relationship is the call for some kind of 'visible sign' to mark the suffering of the German expellees after the Second World War. Again, there is at least now a willingness on the part of Poland to talk about this, which was not the case before. Tusk has, in fact, proposed the creation of a joint Polish-German museum in Gdansk on this theme.

## ***The Constraints of Cohabitation***

As already mentioned, Donald Tusk's PO is in coalition with the Polish Peasants Party (PSL), this gives the coalition 240 out of 460 in the Polish Parliament (the Sejm). This is a fairly strong majority in relative terms, but the government's room for manoeuvre in foreign and security policy will remain subject to both the PiS faction within the Sejm and the will of the remaining twin, Lech Kaczynski, who will remain President until 2010.

Donald Tusk and Lech Kaczynski have known each other for years and claim to have drunk several bottles of wine together. Their relations might have been good in the past but they soured during the 2005 Presidential election campaign. Tusk's campaign routinely referred to the 'Kaczynski brothers' rather than to Lech Kaczynski himself, whilst the latter's campaign claimed to have discovered that Tusk's grandfather volunteered to serve in the Nazi army (an allegation that turned out to be false). The brutality of the campaign was subsequently seen as one of the main reasons why PiS and PO failed to form a coalition government, which they had promised to do. Now they have to work together in a condition where the Constitution does not clearly define the division of competences between the President and the government in absolute terms.

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<sup>21</sup> This format of annual inter-ministerial meetings between Polish and German counterparts is based on the Franco-German model.

<sup>22</sup> The Weimar Triangle provides for regular tri-lateral meetings between Heads of State, Foreign Ministers and Defence Ministers of France, Germany and Poland. After 2005 the Weimar Triangle ran aground, the last meeting of Heads of State was in May 2005

<sup>23</sup> Donald Tusk, interview in the Financial Times

According to the constitution the President is Commander in Chief and is Poland's highest representative in external relations. Tusk interprets these Constitutional provisions as meaning that it is his government who should run the country's foreign and defense policies, whilst the President's role is to travel and represent Poland overseas. Lech Kaczynski, meanwhile, sees that as President, he must be consulted on all major decisions. The conflict between these different interpretations was apparent even before Tusk became Prime Minister whilst he was assembling his government. The President's office claimed that Foreign Affairs and defense nominations had to be consulted with Lech Kaczynski. However, Tusk not only rejected this claim but also, against Kaczynski's opposition, chose Radek Sikorski as Foreign Minister. After losing his battle over Sikorski's nomination, Lech Kaczynski hired the outgoing Foreign Minister Anna Fotyga as his Chief of Staff and spokesperson on foreign affairs, a sign that the President is prepared to do further battle with the Prime Minister. It is likely that the President's bitter attitude to Radek Sikorski will manifest itself as the latter tries to renegotiate Poland's relations with the United States, Russia and Germany.

A further contestation between President and Prime Minister occurred over the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, which Poland had previously opted out of. Tusk's initial desire to sign up to the Charter, had to be subsequently toned down after President Kaczynski opposed the idea and PiS threatened to block Poland's parliamentary ratification of the Lisbon Reform Treaty.

## ***Changes in Style, Rather Than Substance***

This survey of Polish foreign and security policy under Donald Tusk strongly suggests that change 'is in the air', but that this change will be less than revolutionary.

Since coming to power Tusk and his team have been on a foreign policy charm offensive, which has already reaped benefits in terms of lightening the mood in Poland's foreign relations. Warsaw's relations with Berlin and Moscow seem set to improve not least by the fact that Tusk is committed to having proper bilateral dialogues and conversations with Poland's neighbors.

Poland's European diplomacy will alter under Tusk, change in this direction is already underway. Tusk's approach to the EU will be more predictable and consensual, than was the case over the past two years. This will, of course, be aided by the fact that there are no major battles to be fought within the EU in the near future and second, that Poland's European partners are very positively disposed to the new administration. This outwardly more open approach to the EU may well contrast with a harder, more skeptical attitude to the United States. Tusk's decision on Iraq, coupled with his foreign policy

team's position on the US Missile Defense Shield and Poland's role in it, provide potent indicators suggesting that Polish Atlanticism is 'on the move'.

Notwithstanding the above, the principal conclusion of this paper is that change in Polish foreign and security policy after the October parliamentary elections will be more in the form of *style* as opposed to *substance* - a change which could nevertheless be of considerable consequence. Poland's post-1989 diplomacy was feisty and often awkward well before the Kaczynski's came to power. Relations with the rest of the EU during the accession process were periodically strained owing to high Polish expectations and stubborn red-lines. Similarly, it was not the PiS government that set Polish policy on such an anti-Russian and pro-US course. The crucial thing about the Kaczynski government was the *style* and *manner* in which foreign relations were pursued that gave Poland such a bad name. In sum, it was the PiS government's style and not so much the substance of its policies, that got Polish obstructionism noticed.

Tusk and his foreign policy team know that style matters. If Polish interests are going to be met then a new style has to be had. In stark contrast to the previous government, Tusk is manifestly aware that the manner in which diplomacy is carried out is crucial for the way in which Poland is viewed from the outside. In line with this, the new Government's initiatives have been an attempt to prise-off the 'anti-German', 'anti-Russian' and 'Euro-skeptic' labels, that adorned the Kaczynski's foreign policies.

Tusk's policy agenda may be just as demanding in substance as that of Lech Kaczynski, but it will be accompanied by a radically different style. Overtime, however, this new style may affect a change in substance.