

Poland National Day Special

Celebrating the constitution of the republic

ANDRZEJ DUDA
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND



Filled with the joy of spring, we are celebrating a great Polish holiday whose origins date back to the 18th century. It marks the anniversary of the Polish Constitution signed on

May 3, 1791. It was Europe's first and the world's second modern act of this type and a truly momentous piece of legislation. The legacy of the constitution, the idea of the political system it contains as well as its liberating and democratic message all make an important contribution to European heritage.

Indeed, the 230th anniversary of the enactment of the constitution should be an inspiring holiday.

Today's anniversary is a good opportunity to recount the long and glorious political tradition of the old republic, a tradition of the rule of law, democracy and parliamentarianism that represents an important part of our identity. It is worth pointing out that the rich republican traditions inspired by the achievements of ancient Rome and Greece were present in Poland as early as the 14th century.

Granted in 1430, the Polish privilege of the nobility, "*Neminem captivabimus*" ("We shall not arrest anyone without

a court verdict"), preceded by far the English Habeas Corpus Act of 1679. The act "*Nihil novi sine communi consensu*" ("Nothing new without common consent") — prohibiting the monarch from passing any laws that were not approved by the parliament — comes from 1505.

From 1573, kings were elected in free, universal elections by all members of the nobility, who made up about 10% of the population. The Warsaw Confederation of 1573 is believed to this day to be a paragon of religious tolerance.

Finally, the very founding of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth — a common state of Poles and Lithuanians established as a voluntary, equal union — in 1569 was an extraordinary phenomenon in the Europe of that time,

which may be considered an archetype of today's European Union.

And so the constitution of 3 May — changing the 18th century republic into a constitutional monarchy based on the separation of powers and guaranteeing legal protection to citizens — was a logical continuation of our traditions. Notably, this seminal and innovative constitutional reform was the result of a political process rather than an armed revolution and bloody repressions of entire social classes.

This historic act is a source of great pride for us.

Enemies of freedom decided that the modern, liberal constitution of May 3 posed a threat to their interests. Nonetheless, the work accomplished by the

constitution lived on. Future generations carried the memory of the groundbreaking reform of the political system, this great upsurge of thought and spirit aimed at a much-needed modernization based on the most noble, universal values.

I want to share with you this great pride and joy on the 230th anniversary of the constitution of May 3. It is a great holiday for Poles, Lithuanians and all the nations of Central and Eastern Europe that contributed to the achievements of the former republic.

The text was published simultaneously with the Polish monthly "Wszystko co Najważniejsze" in cooperation with the Polish Institute of National Remembrance and KGHM.



Market Square in Krakow



Lake Morskie Oko in the Tatra Mountains

Congratulations
to the People of
the Republic of Poland
on Their National Day



WADIM
PLAST

<http://www.wadim.com.pl/>



THE JAPAN STEEL WORKS, LTD.

Gate City Ohsaki West Tower, 11-1, Osaki 1-chome,
Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo 141-0032, Japan
TEL: +81-3-5745-2081 <http://www.jsw.co.jp/>

Congratulations
to the People of
the Republic of Poland
on Their National Day



Mitsubishi Corporation

Congratulations
to the People of
the Republic of Poland
on Their National Day



Port of Humanity Tsuruga Museum
The museum preserves documents of Polish orphans that came to Tsuruga.

<https://tsuruga-museum.jp/>

City of Tsuruga

Congratulations

to the People of the Republic of Poland
on Their National Day

Aiming for health and comfort, with consideration for the environment

KANEYO Co., Ltd.

Tel. 06-6243-6500 Fax. 06-6243-6630 4-1-3, Kyutaromachi, Chuo-ku, Osaka 541-0056

This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.