

**Toast by Mr. Sylvestre Radegonde,
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Tourism,
On the occasion of Poland's National Independence Day Reception
14 October 2024
Savoy Seychelles Resort and Spa**

Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to the Republic of Seychelles, H.E. Mr.
Mirosław Gojdz

Ambassador of the European Union to the Republic of Seychelles, H.E. Mr. Oskar Benedikt

Leader of Government Business in the National Assembly, Hon. Bernard Georges

Members of the Diplomatic Corps

Chief of Defence Forces, Brigadier Michael Rosette

Members of the National Assembly

Secretary General of the Seychelles National Institute for Culture, Heritage and the Arts

Principal Secretaries

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a pleasure to join Ambassador Gojdz this evening to celebrate Poland's National Independence Day. On behalf of President Wavel Ramkalawan, the Government, and the people of Seychelles, I extend heartfelt congratulations to President Andrzej Duda, Prime Minister Donald Tusk, the Government and the people of Poland on this important occasion.

Earlier this evening, a diverse and enthusiastic audience enjoyed a performance featuring the expressive piano compositions and innovative works of Frédéric Chopin, one of Poland's most celebrated composers. I would like to thank Ambassador Gojdz and all those who have played a role in organising this classical music concert here in Seychelles.

From the renowned astronomer and mathematician Nicolaus Copernicus, to the physicist and chemist Marie Curie, the first woman to win two Nobel Prizes, to the poet Adam Mickiewicz, Poland's contributions throughout history to the advancement of science, arts, culture, music, literature and other fields have been vast and enduring.

Today's celebration is a vivid reminder of the extraordinary resilience, unity, and indomitable spirit of the Polish people throughout their turbulent history. From the partition and fall of the First Polish Republic in 1795, to the rebirth of the Second Republic in 1918, through the devastation and occupation during World War II, and the courageous Solidarity movement that led to the fall of communism, Poland has shown unwavering determination in reclaiming its sovereignty and rebuilding its nation. Key figures like Pope John Paul II, who inspired a

moral and spiritual resurgence; Józef Piłsudski, who played a pivotal role in securing Poland's independence; and Lech Wałęsa, a champion of freedom and democracy, have not only shaped the course of Polish history but have also made a profound impact on Europe and the world. Their legacies stand as testament to Poland's enduring strength and influence on the global stage.

As Poland prepares to assume the Presidency of the Council of the European Union on 1st January 2025, I am confident it will guide the EU with the same determination that has shaped its history, providing strong leadership in these critical times for Europe and the world.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Seychelles and Poland have enjoyed warm relations since establishing diplomatic ties on 12 February 1979. Our partnership has grown through cooperation in fields such as culture, education, and maritime security. This relationship was further strengthened on 21 February 2024 with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding for the twinning of Victoria and Grzegorz Benedykciński.

The strong and evolving partnership between Seychelles and Poland reflects our shared commitment to fostering cooperation across a range of important sectors, including regional security. Poland's contribution to EUNAVFOR Operation Atalanta, as part of the EU's efforts to ensure maritime security in our region, has been invaluable. We are deeply appreciative of Poland's assistance, especially as we face renewed challenges from maritime piracy. We will continue to look to the EU and Poland for support in this critical area.

In the tourism sector, we are pleased to see a steady increase in the number of Polish visitors choosing Seychelles as a destination, reflecting the growing interest in our islands. This is further testament to the strong and positive relations between our countries. As we approach the 46th anniversary of our diplomatic ties in February 2025, I am confident that we will explore new opportunities to deepen our cooperation, not only in tourism but across various sectors, further enhancing the bonds of friendship and collaboration between Seychelles and Poland.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we celebrate Poland's National Independence Day here in Seychelles this evening, we take a moment to reflect on the lasting friendship that binds our two nations. I would like to once again extend my congratulations to Ambassador Gojdz, his team and the small Polish community in Seychelles on this important occasion.

Please join me in a toast to the good health of President Andrzej Duda, and the long-lasting friendship between the Republic of Seychelles and the Republic of Poland.

Thank you.