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Refugees/migrants and border security in the annual address of Poland's foreign ministers in the years 2014–2016

Abstract: The article presents the attitudes of Poland's foreign ministers towards refugees/migrants and border security in the years 2014–2016 expressed in their annual address. The research problem is to determine whether the ministers presented in their address generally accepted long-term strategies for all directions of foreign policy, or whether their activities in the analysed area were merely adaptive, adjusted to the current political situation in the world. The temporal scope is to determine the response after the annexation of Crimea by Russia in late February 2014 of the ministers of the Civic Platform – Polish People's Party (PO-PSL) government in 2011–2015, and the Law and Justice (PiS) government, that came into power on 16 November 2015. The content of the address and transcripts of the proceedings of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Polish Parliament during which the ministers discussed the theses of their speeches are the primary sources.

Key words: annual address, refugees, foreign minister of Poland, security, foreign policy of Poland

1. Introduction

The inherent responsibility of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland is to present to the Parliament the annual Information of the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the tasks of Polish foreign policy – called the address of the foreign minister, usually in the first quarter of the year.¹ The speech is followed by a debate, after which a vote of confidence for the minister is held. In the analysed period, a number of conditions affected the content of subsequent annual speeches. Four speeches were made by three foreign ministries representing three governments: Radosław Sikorski, the foreign minister in Donald Tusk's government, Grzegorz Schetyna, the foreign minister in Ewa Kopacz's government, making his annual speech twice, and Witold Waszczykowski, the minister in Beata Szydło's government. This is an important aspect, because after 2007 we were accustomed to the fact that the foreign minister's office was held by one person for a longer time and to the continuity of Radosław Sikorski's work in Donald Tusk's two governments. No other minister in any Polish government after 1989 has held their office longer than Mr Sikorski.

Over the period of twenty months (8 May 2014–29 January 2016) four annual speeches on Poland's foreign policy were given. It should be explained that the first speech of minister Grzegorz Schetyna, made on 6 November 2014, was formally called the In-

¹ Witold Waszczykowski said: "I am in a difficult situation, because in previous years the information of the minister of foreign affairs was presented a little later during the year, but Prime Minister Beata Szydło wants to be a top student and wants the government to be a top student, therefore, she asked us to present the information as soon as possible, even in the first month of the year," see. *Pełny zapis przebiegu posiedzenia Komisji Spraw Zagranicznych (no 10) 28 January 2016*, p. 3.

formation of the Council of Ministers due to the fact that the information of the foreign minister cannot be presented twice in one year. It was related to the formation of a new government by Prime Minister Ewa Kopacz after Donald Tusk had become the President of the European Council and Radosław Sikorski had become the Speaker of the Parliament. The new minister Grzegorz Schetyna said: "It had never happened before that a few months after the address of the foreign minister the government presented information about the tasks of Poland's foreign policy" (Schetyna, 2014). Giving his speech in a turbulent time for the Civic Platform he marked his position and presented the directions of foreign policy. Due to a change in power two comprehensive annual speeches were given in a short period of time between 6 November 2014 and 23 April 2015 by the same minister. The speech made by minister Waszczykowski (Waszczykowski, 2016) is also noteworthy because as a member of the new government, formed after 2015 parliamentary election, he had to present the outlines of his foreign policy for the next four years, which made his speech different from his predecessors' speeches analysed in this paper.²

The last important context is the normal political competition, which should be taken into account in relation to the time a speech was made – in 2014 Radosław Sikorski gave his speech on Victory in Europe Day and at the time of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. Another aspect was the ongoing campaign for the European Parliament (the election was held on 25 May 2014) in the context of which the fight between the main Polish parties concerning foreign policy took place. Then in 2015 Grzegorz Schetyna summed up four years of the Civic Platform rule, and his speech was also a prelude to the upcoming parliamentary campaign.

2. Causes of the crisis

Along with the process of democratic transition initiated by Solidarity and the fall of the Berlin Wall one could expect that the international situation would stabilize and the Cold War rivalry would end or, that the history we had known would end, as Francis Fukuyama predicted. First of all, the "end of history" meant the victory for the spirit of liberalism over the Soviet bloc. In the 1990s a number of independent states were formed, primarily in Europe (including Ukraine), the Caucasus and Central Asia. Some believed in the idea of universal democratization – Samuel Huntington described the third wave of democratization (Huntington, 2009), which was supposed to make the world safer, and potential crises more predictable. That did not happen.

The scale of changes in international politics in the twenty-first century calls for in-depth analysis. In terms of the topic of this publication the following events should be considered:

- the reaction of the United States and its allies, including Poland, after the attacks on the WTC in the form of the invasion in Afghanistan and Iraq, which turned into

² Grzegorz Schetyna was discouraged during the meeting of the Commission by Witold Waszczykowski, his successor, who claimed that Schetyna presented the assumptions of very ambitious policy and he would be the minister only for the next 4–5 months, see. *Pełny zapis przebiegu posiedzenia Komisji Spraw Zagranicznych (No 174) of 22 April 2015*, p. 7.

- a long-term occupation of these countries and cruel internal conflicts with regional and transregional implications (including militants coming to Europe);
- “Arab Spring”, which resulted in the destabilization of the EU border areas. The civil war in Syria broke out. The existing political orders in Libya, Tunisia, or temporarily in Egypt were rejected. This process also accelerated the actual disintegration of Iraq. The so-called Islamic State emerged, but some reforms (improvement of the situation of women, help for the poorest) were introduced in Saudi Arabia and the Arab states of the Persian Gulf – the fear of revolution had mobilized their governments to introduce changes;
 - increased power and importance of Boko Haram Islamic extremists after 2010; they have been terrorizing the civilian population in Africa and forcing them to flee to the north, also towards Europe;
 - a slowdown in the European integration process after the accession of several Central-East European countries to the EU after 2004; this resulted in structural overload of the Community and “entering” the traditional Russian sphere of influence – its “near abroad”. This, in turn, caused the reaction of Russia, which increased its control over the Caucasus after the war with Georgia in 2008, annexed Crimea in 2014 and initiated the process of destabilization in the south-east of Ukraine – the step which also affected the political situation in Moldova, Armenia and the Baltic states.

One of the consequences of the economic crisis in the first decade of the twenty-first century, is the “refugee crisis” also called the “migration of peoples”. In recent years Africa has been the source of mass migration to Europe. Despite what is commonly thought the migrants do not come only from North Africa or Near East. At the peak of the “migration of peoples” the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Hungary registered migrants from 104 countries, which means that a mass migration was triggered. Migrants took advantage of the time of wars in the world to improve their living conditions and there were much fewer true refugees from areas affected by wars than it had been assumed. The media collectively depicted them as “refugees” without differentiating them from economic migrants, random groups of people, or members of terrorist organisations or mafia, who simply took advantage of political turmoil to come easily to the EU. The civil war in Syria and the weakness of the central government in Iraq created a political vacuum, which was skilfully used by the creators of the idea of the so-called Islamic State. The scale of their atrocities and rapid military successes took observers and politicians by surprise, who in a short time were forced to react to their mass executions of Christians and Yazidis, and public promotion of female slavery. The reaction of the western world and major countries in the region was not adequate to the needs, and was too weak. Obama’s administration lacked determination. Turkey became the main player in the region, which on the one hand tolerated/supported the existence of the Islamic State, and on the other received a possibility to affect the EU by about one and a half million refugees, who Turkey may keep in its territory for billions of euros received from the EU or help them get to the territory of the Union and create crises there.

Another factor that generated migration to Europe, especially migration to Poland, was the internal conflict in Ukraine and its regional consequences. Ukraine was the country that suffered the most in Eastern Europe during the crisis at the beginning of the 21st century – for example, in the first quarter of 2009 production in Ukraine decreased by

31.9% (Kryzys, 2016). The severity of the crisis resulted from the structural weaknesses of Ukraine and its low levels of wealth. Being outside the EU, having oligarchic economy, corruption and weak institutions, and being under the multiple influence of Russian, Ukrainians were not able to organize an effective and efficient state, which would correspond to the needs of its citizens. The historical election of Viktor Yanukovich – full association with the EU with the prospect of becoming a member state – in short, undergoing the transformation into a member of the West or remaining in the post-Soviet zone with the guarantee of tolerance for its sovereignty for the price of a hereditary lease of the military base in Sevastopol and certain dependence in foreign policy led to the protests on the Maidan, and the president's escape. From Moscow's point of view the best solution would be the announcement of full neutrality of Ukraine and the historical denial of Ukraine's aspirations to join any alliances (NATO, the EU or regional alliances such as the Visegrad Group). This proposal was presented in Western intellectual circles, in the context of the offer for Vladimir Putin to accept the status of Ukraine similar to the status of Austria in 1945 (Mearsheimer, 2014). Incidentally, annexing Crimea, the Russians made Ukraine the state which would permanently have limited options in foreign policy. Maintaining tension in the south-east of Ukraine – either in the form of a continuous armed conflict of low or medium intensity in a limited area, or even an official end to the fighting and acceptance of some autonomy, that is a federal or confederal model of future Ukraine – gives the Russians instruments for permanent and effective intervention in the internal politics of Ukraine, and for control, even without pro-Russian forces in power in Kiev.

3. Poland's stance on refugees / migrants and border security

Polish governments also had to face the above outlined problems between 2014–2016. In their annual speeches the foreign ministers frequently referred to refugees/migrants and border security issues, paying a lot of attention to them, and sometimes making the reactions to them one of the most important elements of Polish foreign policy. For example, minister Waszczykowski developed his speech around three crises in Europe: the crisis of the continent's security, the crisis of neighbourhood and the crisis of the European project itself, which are closely connected with this article (Waszczykowski..., 2016). In a letter published in several newspapers around the world he also declared his willingness to develop a common foreign and defence policy of the EU and solve the problem of migrants (Waszczykowski, *What*).

At the beginning of his address Radosław Sikorski stated that “[...] international situation in our neighbourhood deteriorated. Before our very eyes history has accelerated” (Sikorski, 2014). Since 2014 successive foreign ministers of Poland have been operating in this increasingly “uncertain world”, a phrase used by former foreign minister Adam Daniel Rotfeld a decade ago in the title of his book (Rotfeld, 2006), and this period of “uncertainty” seems endless. As G. Schetyna stated: “Today diplomacy often means managing instability” (Schetyna..., 2014).

It should be emphasized that while spreading democracy, promoting good political changes in neighbouring states, especially Ukraine, the politicians of which minister

Sikorski repeatedly admonished (Sikorski, 2011; Sikorski, 2012), were the priorities of Poland's foreign policy. However, engaging in the Middle East (migration from the region to Europe since 2015) was generally incidental and apart from support for the peace process between Palestine and Israel it was random and limited in time (dominated by invasion in Iraq in 2003 and its occupation in subsequent years) (Pochyły, 2016). In fact, the region has not been and is not considered a priority by Poland. Contacts with some countries of the region, mostly the richest and most stable ones, particularly in the Persian Gulf, intensified a few years ago and was connected with acquiring investors (Euro 2012, Qatari gas to the LNG terminal in Świnoujście), and markets for Polish products, especially food after Russia had introduced sanctions on Polish products in 2014. However, migrants coming to the EU since 2015 do not generally come from Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. It is noticeable that the perception of directions in Polish foreign policy has changed and the need for all-party consensus appeared, which was signalled by Grzegorz Schetyna at a meeting of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Parliament: "In Poland it is not right that everything that was earlier is treated as bad and policy is created from the very beginning. It is not like this and we all know it. We are talking without journalists, so we can say it. I wish that this belief was in all of us. Asia, Far East. After 2020 the EU funds will run out. We need to build a strategy for Poland for the next years, decades. We must create this vision now. This is the right time" (Pelny, 2015).

Africa is another area of secondary level of interest. Despite "Go Africa" programme Poland has only 10 diplomatic posts (there are 53 African states) (*Polskie*, 2016), which is particularly important in "recognizing" problems and potential threats and coordinating actions if any refugees/migrants are accepted. The only positive element is that Poland has embassies in countries lying close to the EU, that is in Morocco, Algeria, Libya, Tunisia and Egypt. It is of particular importance that there are Polish embassies in Tunisia and Egypt due to increased tourist traffic from Poland to these two countries. In the author's opinion, it is less important that Poland is not the target destination and therefore consequences of mass migration are not a big "threat" as for Germany, Sweden and the United Kingdom. However, one must be aware that sooner or later the problems of others will become ours, directly or indirectly. We will not be "a lonely island".

In the context of the analysis of the speeches, the refugees/migrants aspect should be divided into two parts. On the one hand, there is preparing, assuming that Poland will need to accept civilians trying to get there from Ukraine (not only in an emergency situation), but the creation of conditions for a long-term controlled process of Ukrainian arrivals in Poland for various reasons, which in turn will require regulated relations with Kiev. On the other hand, there is a reaction to the influx of refugees/migrants to EU countries since 2015 and support for internal refugees in the Middle Eastern countries (mainly Kurds and Yazidis), especially in Iraq and in Syria.

As for the part concerning Ukraine, Polish ministers did not discuss the issue directly, but focused on the implementation of all opportunities that could strengthen Ukraine in a complex way, from the development of civil society to developmental support. As G. Schetyna said in 2015, Ukraine was a priority area for the Polish development and humanitarian policy, and he widely discussed assistance for Ukraine (Schetyna, 2015). The attention was also drawn to the EU financial resources given to Ukraine (exten-

sive excerpt: Sikorski..., 2014; Schetyna..., 2015) as well as the political aspect – pro-democratic changes. These changes are permanently expected and supported in Polish foreign policy. In 2014 minister Sikorski was pleased that for several years the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had been expanding the network of diplomatic posts in Ukraine locating consulates in Donbas and Sevastopol, which, in his opinion, would help Poland avoid being surprised by events in Ukraine in contrast to the West (Sikorski..., 2014). This gives rise to the conclusion that the Ministry and the Minister was getting ready to various challenges in Ukraine, especially concerning support for Polish citizens (e.g. the rebirth of Polish culture in Vinnytsa).³ During the discussion at the Committee of Foreign Affairs the minister was criticized for the visa process in Ukraine carried out by a private operator (*Pelny*, 2014).

As G. Schetyna said: “Poland is greatly interested in transforming our neighbour into a modern and stable state, based on the rule of law, which will participate in European cooperation” (Schetyna..., 2014). It should be borne in mind that Ukraine is a country of a considerable size (the official area is more than 603 thousand square kilometres, but since 2014 Ukraine has not had a real control over 47.8 thousand square kilometres, that is less than 13%), therefore it has been quite easy to locate the population in safe areas of the country as the area involved in the conflict is still limited. However, internal migration can be observed there. In May 2016 Radosław Sikorski, already the ex-foreign minister, gave an interview for the Swedish newspaper “Svenska Dagbladet” in which he claimed that Ukraine should accept the loss of the disputed territories, as it would be economically beneficial and focus on the development of the areas remaining under its control (*R. Sikorski*, 2016).

The relations between Poland and Ukraine – despite the act that Ukraine signed the political part of the Association Agreement with the EU, have not been very good, due to the differences in the perception of historical policy, the perception of “Volhynian massacre” or the cult of Stepan Bandera in Ukraine, which was publicly presented by Jarosław Kaczyński, the leader of Law and Justice, when he said “the president of Ukraine must realize that Poland cannot accept the situation when torturers, mass murderers and predators are heroes in Ukraine, that the promotion of such behaviour is unacceptable in the civilized world” (*Kaczyński*, 2017).

Importantly, the migration of Ukrainians to Poland has been and still is almost “invisible” in the media because it has been taking place continuously and for several years, and as Ukrainians cross the border legally having visas to Schengen area states, usually issued by Poland, they find jobs. So far they have not been a major problem for law enforcement agencies and aid organizations. Additionally, there is a significant proportion of students from Ukraine, which has helped some universities to survive during the period of demographic decline. During the debate on Poland in the European Parliament in January 2016 Prime Minister Beata Szydło claimed that Poland had already accepted a million refugees from Ukraine – against which Andrii Deshchytisia, ambassador of

³ He said: “We have adapted the network of Polish diplomatic posts to the needs. They must be in places where Poland has its interests, where Poles invest, work and have a holiday, visit families and friends. Elimination of some institutions was followed by the formation of new posts in Sevastopol, and Vinnytsa, and soon in Donetsk [...]”, see. R. Sikorski, *Informacja Ministra spraw zagranicznych o założeniach polskiej polityki zagranicznej w 2012 roku*, 29 March 2012.

Ukraine, protested saying that they were economic migrants, not refugees (*Ambassador*, 2016), and this number was given as a lower estimate – no one is able to give the exact number of Ukrainians residing in Poland, including the ambassador of Ukraine (*Ambassador Ukrainy*, 2016).

It is not surprising that the ambassador defines the newcomers as economic migrants. Firstly, these people come to Poland to work – their employment is usually legal and prepared beforehand, they earn money and return to Ukraine or settle and transfer the money to their homeland. Secondly, the promotion of this concept for a state that is involved in a war would be unfavourable for its image. Additionally, Ukrainians hardly seek asylum in Poland (in recent years there have been only a few thousand applications) – the first EU country to which they come, therefore, from a legal point of view, they are not refugees and Prime Minister Szydło used the wrong term – over ninety percent of them are economic migrants. However, Poland's government needed that kind of narration (that followed the adopted tactics: we have already accepted a significant number of "our" refugees, comparable to that accepted by wealthy Germany) to control the requests of the EU officials and Member States politicians to change Poland's stance on accepting refugees from the Middle East within the EU's solidarity.

In the annual speech of Minister Sikorski in 2014 a significant emphasis was put on the political situation in Eastern Europe, primarily Ukraine and the relations between Ukraine and Russia, as well as Poland's relations with those countries. It can be said that the whole speech, given almost in the middle of the year on 8 May, was marked by the rhetoric of threat, the reaction to the return of tensions in Poland's immediate neighbourhood, which in the opinion of the minister resulted in a very difficult situation for Poland. He said emotionally that "the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe are the foundation of the diplomacy of free Poland. And in the name of these principles we will defend peace in Europe. Because no country in our continent knows its value as we do" (Sikorski..., 2014). During the meeting of the Foreign Affairs Committee before the Parliament debate Sikorski said that "[...] the crisis in the territory of the eastern neighbour is a kind of 'stress test' for all Europe, including our foreign policy [...]. This has been the most serious crisis in Europe since the end of the Cold War and Russia's actions in Ukraine violate the principle of the peaceful coexistence of nations. This is a signal to the world that in the post-Soviet area there are no longer secure borders, and it is a warning to us that our sense of security can easily erode" (*Pelny...*, 2014). At the same meeting the minister discussed the main theme of his annual speech. He admitted that every year he chose one theme to which he referred Poland's policy – in the text analysed in the article the main theme was the 10th anniversary of Poland's accession to the EU in connection with the Ukrainian crisis (in 2011 the minister focused on the Polish vision of the European Union, in 2012 he concentrated on what to do to make "us be regarded a serious country, that is, one whose foreign policy stems from its growing potential", and in 2013 on the fiscal strength of the state as one of the measures of its sovereignty and importance) (*ibid.*, p. 3). This declaration allows a different look on the analysed speeches – at least the speeches of Mr Sikorski, because it means that the main theme of the speech was chosen intentionally in relation to specific events and problems, which, in turn, suggests an adaptive

nature of the annual Information on Polish foreign policy, but also demonstrates the minister's confidence in his position in the government.

Another interesting aspect appeared at the meeting when Sikorski said: "Mr Chairman Iwiński is asking about the vision of the European Union. I am not going to refer to this issue in this annual speech. I talked about this in previous speeches and our vision does not change from year to year" (ibid., p. 10). This shows the minister's long-term plan to systematize Poland's foreign policy and select the speech theme in relation to current political needs on the one hand, and on the other predictable principles of Poland's foreign policy as a whole. Minister Sikorski gave one of his most popular speeches during his career in diplomacy on 28 November 2011 in Berlin at the Forum of the German Association of Foreign Policy "about Poland and the future of the European Union," widely commented and well received in the world, in which he claimed that in the context of contemporary security Poland feared German power less than German inactivity (*Sikorski, Polska*, 2016).

The analysis of the content of the minister's meetings with the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Parliament concerning the theses of the minister's annual speech – the Committee's members are customarily familiarised with the main theses the day before the debate in the Parliament – is not directly related to the subject of this publication, but it is an essential aspect that complements the main analysis.

Radosław Sikorski also referred to the message of the Constitution of 3 May saying that "the nation has the right to protect itself against attacks and guard its integrity."⁴ He stressed that "only an internally stable country that rebuilds its power can count on allies" (Sikorski..., 2014). This thought should be seen as a need for (economic, military) self-sufficiency, as only a self-sufficient country could resist future problems (economic crisis, conflicts of local character), but also count on help from others. The minister's frequent references to the economic position of the state should also be understood in this way. In his opinion, the economic position of the country was not to increase funds in diplomacy, but to meet a wide range of needs related to security (military, economic, energy and food security).

As for the border security, Minister Sikorski paid a lot of attention to the idea of the Eastern Partnership (supporting networks of buffer states separating Poland from Russia) and presented it as an interesting project that despite many opinions met the expectations. He said that "not everyone in Poland supported the Partnership project. It was criticized as a 'German project'. Some imagined that the quick EU membership of the states in Central and Eastern Europe as well as the Caucasus should be an alternative. However, **the real alternative was to strengthen the European border on the Bug River**" (*Pelny...*, 2014, p. 4) [bolded by the author]. According to this concept, the Eastern Partnership was invented to attract countries from Eastern Europe and the Caucasus, but it could not be categorically assumed as an element of future EU accession of these countries – Sikorski said these words to Law and Justice politicians. In this way he also criticised the concept of former President Lech Kaczyński and his environments that supported it (*Polityka*, 2016; Świątłowski, 2016; Dziubek, 2016). A year later MP Krzysztof Szczerski from Law and Justice came back to it during a debate on

⁴ It is the beginning of chapter 11 – "National Armed Force".

G. Schetyna's annual speech: "Over the past years the hateful Polish-Polish war with late Lech Kaczyński was more important to you than listening to his voice – the voice that was right" (*Szczerski*, 2017). These words, however, referred to a much greater extent to R. Sikorski as a long-time creator of eastern policy. Interestingly, the day before his annual address, in a closed circle of the Foreign Affairs Committee Minister Sikorski noticed that in relation to the Eastern policy, there was a consensus in Poland – fidelity to the ideas and values of Jerzy Giedroyc, and politicians differed only in terms of tactics and implementation of the concept (*Pelny*, 2014).

The "limes on the Bug river" means determining for the next decades the eastern border of Poland and also the EU, leaving Belarus or Ukraine on "the other side", not mentioning other entities. Apart from all political aspects it is difficult to imagine that a state could be involved into a real integration project without the physical territorial border with any of the member states (Georgia, Armenia?), therefore only the accession of the countries in Western Balkans seems realistic (*Wroński*, 2016), though it does not cause much enthusiasm. In this context, Poland was located as a bulwark, a border state of the EU, affecting the immediate surroundings in terms of attracting to the EU, though the minister stated that "[...] we can finally say that we live in an ordinary country – not on the ramparts or bulwarks, but just in an ordinary country" (*Sikorski...*, 2014). Talking about the limes seemed to contradict the declaration of the "ordinary country" because, after all, Poland as a border state of the EU is exactly in the same place as the "limes of Europe on the Bug River".

Grzegorz Schetyna fully supported Sikorski when he referred to the criticism of the Partnership, intensified after the invasion of Crimea. He stressed that most of the development aid funds went to countries covered by this programme, mainly to Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova. In his opinion, Russia made a mistake when instead of accepting the offer of cooperation from the EU it adopted a confrontational attitude with shaping international relations by force. However, "East European nations have the right to choose the path of their development. Poland is ready to support them in this, both within the EU and bilateral relations" (*Schetyna...*, 2015). Witold Waszczykowski also declared that he would use the positive aspects of the Eastern Partnership to build a new instrument of influence on the EU's eastern neighbours in his annual speech and at a meeting of the Foreign Affairs Committee (Cf. *Pelny*, 2016, p. 4; *Waszczykowski...*, 2016).

During the meeting of Foreign Affairs Committee of the Parliament in 2014 MP Iwiński accused Sikorski that he did not present any principles of migration policy in his address (*Pelny...*, 2014, p. 6). However, both in his reply and the next day in his speech before the Parliament the minister referred to the act on foreigners, the possibility of obtaining the residence right by people of Polish origin and granting the Polish Card. Attracting young people of Polish origin living in other countries and attempting to "capture" African students, who used to study at Ukrainian universities (until 2014), mainly through the organization of the reunion for the African graduates of Polish universities and the popularization of Poland in that region, were the foundation of the migration policy presented by Sikorski.

His successor Grzegorz Schetyna supported Ukraine publicly in 2015 and did not exclude a stronger support for Ukraine, including the defence sector, if there was a re-escalation of the conflict. He diagnosed two major tasks for the foreign policy of Poland:

addressing the issue of Ukraine and the so-called Islamic State, because there was a “destruction of the political order, which had provided peace and stability to Eastern Europe, the Middle East and North Africa over the past decades, and thousands had been killed, tens of thousands injured, there are millions of refugees” (Schetyna..., 2015). In his previous speech he even called for “an ambitious European security strategy” (Schetyna..., 2014), which would be a reaction to the crisis in Ukraine, because it would be important for Poland to establish security in its neighbourhood.

As for Witold Waszczykowski, he linked the development of Poland’s security directly with increasing the cooperation with NATO partner countries, one of which is Ukraine, and offering help in enhancing their sense of security. He even assumed offering help to Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq. He presented the intensified economic cooperation between the EU and Ukraine, also owing to the introduction of visa-free traffic, as the basis for success and a chance to stop the destabilization process. He declared that in the implementation of reforms in Ukraine Poland was supported by the US, Canada, Japan, Australia and New Zealand (Waszczykowski..., 2016). An apparent disadvantage of this group of countries was their non-European location, which reduced their political capabilities in direct interaction.

Another element that traditionally secured the interests of Poland was NATO, which was always presented as the guarantor of Poland’s sovereignty. Radosław Sikorski called it “simply the best defence treaty that Poland had ever concluded in its history” (Sikorski..., 2014). Since joining the Treaty every foreign minister of Poland expected support from NATO, emphasized the importance of its existence, even if they happened to notice any irregularities and weaknesses in its functioning. In fact, apart from direct, usually “strategic” relations with the United States, NATO has been the primary formal and declarative guarantor of Polish existence, including the security of Polish borders. Therefore, the visit of Barack Obama in Warsaw (and Tallinn) in June 2014 was very important from a propaganda point of view, as well as his words: “We stand together for our freedom is yours, Poland will never stand alone, and other countries of Central Eastern Europe will not stand alone” (*Barack*, 2016).

The three foreign ministers, mentioned in this article, perceived the development of NATO, the development of defence systems and forces of rapid reaction located in Poland and in other Central European members as security guarantee for Poland and the guarantee of support. This would protect the territory of Poland from sudden attack and would involve all the allies, especially the US, into a guaranteed potential defence of the territory of Poland. The more permanent military infrastructure, equipment, and in the first place the higher possible number of troops permanently residing in Poland, the more chances to meet the guarantee.⁵

The ministers paid a lot of attention to the other aspect of the foreign policy of Poland that is migrants from the Middle East and Poland’s response to this phenomenon. As Grzegorz Schetyna said at the meeting of the Foreign Affairs Committee “the Islamic State was the cause of great humanitarian disaster” (*Pelny...*, 2015, p. 5). Waszczy-

⁵ This should be seen as the source of delight declared by Polish politicians after the arrival of American troops at the beginning of 2017 to bases in western Poland. Another thing is the fact that the outgoing US President Barack Obama hastened to send US troops into Poland. Probably he was afraid that his successor would block the decision.

kowski discussed the consequences of this disaster in his speech and the roots of the crises affecting the EU. When talking about the Islamic State he said that “Poland is a member of the global coalition fighting against that criminal group. We support our allies and partners in the fight against international terrorism. In this context we remind that religious minorities, especially Christians, need to be protected. We also participate in providing humanitarian aid to the victims of the terrorist war” (Waszczykowski..., 2016). Since the beginning of the “Islamic State” Poland has been supporting Christians, Kurds and Yazidis materially and demanded that their rights should be respected, and declarations of such assistance and its real effects can be found in the speeches of all three ministers.

By defining the three crises minister Waszczykowski was able to trace their sources largely in the emergence of the refugees from the Middle East, because the crises of safety, neighbourhood and European project became more severe, and by some were first noticed in 2015 (Cf. Pochyły, 2016, pp. 137–146). Suddenly, the importance and scope of the problem were noticed, when it turned out that after the economic crisis the EU had weak links such as Greece, it was politically struggling with Brexit, it was not far from wars and their consequences, and the paralysis of decision-making and a kind of infantilism among some elites led to a political turning point, the consequences of which would be difficult to predict. The minister diagnosed the problems as stemming largely from internal factors, the weaknesses and political divisions of the member states. The future actions of Poland seemed controversial – Poland wanted to remain in the EU, but the minister wished that the European policy should shift to “rooting foreign policy in the political will of sovereign states” (Waszczykowski..., 2016), based on strengthening the economic cooperation with some political loosening, that is, in the spirit of realism – the EU as an instrument to pursue interests, the idea of “first us” and the Polish national interest. Such statements generally meet the expectations of the citizens of each country, but shouldn’t governments be more circumspect than bystanders, involved in politics at random and perceiving it as slogans? Will this “loose” Union be able to face future challenges similar to the 2015 migration crisis, the growing rivalry between the greatest powers in the world, or a greater interference of Russia in Central Europe?

4. Conclusions

Did the annual speeches of three foreign minister of Poland have a common element? In the author’s opinion, apart from being members of different parties the ministers are noticeably different, but the differences are not big enough to put a thesis about a significant change in foreign policy after 2015, but rather about evolutionary movements in some sections, change of accents. There is a lot of media confusion, tension is created, there are sometimes unnecessary tirades, but the principles remain the same. Poland is active in the EU, NATO, and in the Visegrad Group, it is involved in Ukraine – Poland just has to do it. Even if Law and Justice and its voters have objections against the cult of Bandera this direction in foreign policy cannot be abandoned. After a momentary confusion Germany remains Poland’s most important European partner, because the economic dependence cannot be just cut. Pointing in Waszczykowski’s speech to the UK as a strate-

gic partner for Poland ended in the same way as the initiatives of Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz's government – in a short-term marriage, although due to the tension between Russia and the UK, Poles living in Great Britain and the common interests in NATO Poland will be interested in good relations with Great Britain despite Brexit.

Because of the crisis situation Sikorski's task was the most difficult as he had to react directly after the tensions in Ukraine, and it is not surprising that the analysis focused so much on its consequences. The speeches of the ministers were focused on the current security of Poland in the aspects which appeared dangerous, that is they were of intervention nature, adopted to the changing international situation, though they contained some creative elements (loans for Ukraine, an attempt to establish a new doctrine of European security, the construction of a political bloc on the basis of the Visegrad Group consisting of the southern states (Romania, Bulgaria) and northern states (Sweden, Finland)) and preventive measures in the form of opening Poland's diplomatic posts in Ukraine when Sikorski was the foreign minister. On the other hand, it is important that some policies are permanent, continuous, and have signs of predictability, all-party consensus, which must be seen as beneficial and desirable (e.g. the development of the economic context of foreign policy, growing importance of non-European countries).

Our greatest interest and financial expenditures are directed to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the Caucasus, and this is due to the geography of immediate danger. The problem of refugees and migrants, which appeared in the public debate in 2014 forced the foreign ministers to respond and correct the directions and instruments of the foreign policy. It also contributed to the change in the perception of Russia by Warsaw – the illusions ended.

The analysis shows that in relation to the issues specified in the title of the article the foreign ministers of Poland adopted in the analysed period a generally adaptive attitude towards refugees and migrants, and a strategic, long-term attitude to border security (increased importance of NATO, regional cooperation). A common feature of all the speeches is striving to increase the role of Poland in the region as a political leader, strengthening the position of Poland in NATO and the EU – the ministers only differed in the choice of allies and the belief that Poland needed to support the existence of a group of countries in Central and Eastern Europe, which would have common interests with Poland, and some of them would directly separate Poland from Russia.

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Kwestia uchodźców/migrantów i bezpieczeństwa granic państwowych w exposé ministrów spraw zagranicznych Polski w latach 2014–2016

Streszczenie

Od 2014 roku mieliśmy do czynienia w Europie z “gwałtownym przyspieszeniem”. Rosja zajęła Krym, wybuchł konflikt na Ukrainie. W roku następnym wystąpił kryzys uchodźczy. Cel artykułu to przedstawienie stosunku ministrów spraw zagranicznych Polski w latach 2014–2016 do uchodźców/migrantów i bezpieczeństwa granic państwowych w dorocznych exposé. Ministrowie spraw zagranicznych Polski realizowali w analizowanym okresie generalnie adaptacyjny charakter polityki w odniesieniu do kwestii uchodźców i migrantów, a strategiczny wobec zabezpieczenia granic (wzrost znaczenia NATO, współpraca regionalna).

Słowa kluczowe: exposé, uchodźcy, minister spraw zagranicznych Polski, bezpieczeństwo, polska polityka zagraniczna