

**COMMISSION ON  
SECURITY AND COOPERATION  
IN EUROPE**

234 FORD HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6460  
(202) 225-1901  
FAX: (202) 226-4199  
[www.csce.gov](http://www.csce.gov)

December 15, 2005

H.E. Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz  
Prime Minister  
Republic of Poland  
Al. Ujazdowskie 1/3  
00-583 Warszawa, Polska

Dear Minister Marcinkiewicz:

As you may know, Members of the U.S. Helsinki Commission have followed with great interest the path various European nations have taken to ensure that some measure of justice is granted to past victims of Nazi- and Communist-era property confiscations. We welcome Polish initiatives with regard to communal property returns. We also recognize the complexities and sensitivities surrounding this subject. For most victims of wrongful property confiscation, the seizure of their homes or other real property was inextricably part of the religious or political persecution they suffered.

We have been deeply troubled by Poland's lack of progress in passing and implementing a law providing restitution of, or compensation for, private property seized by the Nazi or Communist regimes. Many of us were heartened when, during his July 2002 visit to Washington, President Kwasniewski told congressional leaders that a non-discriminatory law would be ready by the beginning of 2003. We are equally disappointed that, nearly three years later – and more than 15 years since the fall of communism in Poland – a general private property compensation law has not been passed.

The adoption of a law earlier this year compensating individuals who suffered confiscations east of the Bug River (that is, formerly Polish land that became part of the Soviet Union after World War II) at 20 percent of the value of the property is a notable step and should pave the way for redressing other private property confiscations in Poland.

For elderly survivors, every day of delay matters. We understand and sympathize with the frustration they have felt as the years have passed without any progress toward a law that would provide some measure of justice for the suffering they have experienced.

H.E. Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz  
December 15, 2005  
Page 2

We hope that your new government will lead the way toward passage of a fair and non-discriminatory law.

Sincerely,



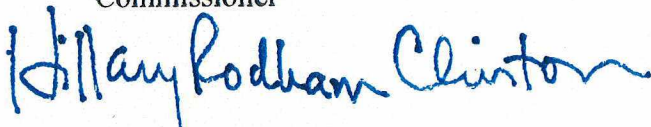
Sam Brownback, U.S.S.  
Chairman



Christopher J. Dodd, U.S.S.  
Ranking Member



Gordon H. Smith, U.S.S.  
Commissioner



Hillary Rodham Clinton  
Commissioner



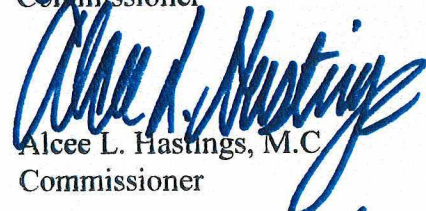
Christopher H. Smith, M.C.  
Co-Chairman



Benjamin L. Cardin, M.C.  
Ranking Member



Joseph R. Pitts, M.C.  
Commissioner



Alcee L. Hastings, M.C.  
Commissioner



Mike McIntyre, M.C.  
Commissioner

cc: President Lech Kaczynski  
Minister for Foreign Affairs Stefan Meller