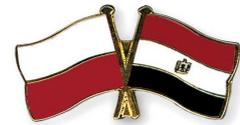


Newsletter



No. 4 (9)/2012

16th-29th February 2012

Belarus and EU in tit-for-tat diplomatic war

Ambassadors from individual EU member nations are to withdraw ambassadors from Minsk after the Polish and EU diplomats were expelled by the Lukashenko regime.

Belarus had asked the EU and Poland's ambassador to leave the country after new sanctions were imposed on the ex-Soviet state in protest against Minsk's worsening its human rights record.

The tit-for-tat decision to withdraw all EU member state diplomats from Belarus was taken following an emergency meeting in Brussels called by foreign policy chief Lady Ashton. "In a gesture of solidarity and unity we have decided that all ambassadors of EU countries in Minsk will be called back to their capitals for consultations," Ashton said.

President of the European

Parliament Martin Schulz called the decision to expel Polish and EU ambassadors from Minsk, "an act of hostility" by Belarusian authorities and "disproportionate and counterproductive".

Poland's Foreign Ministry spokesman issued a statement saying: "The MFA wishes to announce that it regards this as an unfriendly step taken by Belarus towards the whole European Union. The EU will respond to this measure."

"The Belarus authorities have long been aware of the terms on which a resumption of dialogue with the EU is possible: putting a stop to repressions against the civil society in Belarus and embarking on the path towards democratisation," the Foreign Ministry said.

Thumbs down for PM Tusk's first 100 days in power

100 days after the Civic Platform (PO)/Polish Peasant's Party (PSL) took office, a majority of Poles express their disappointment in the work of Prime Minister Donald Tusk's government.

Fifty five percent of respondents told the CBOS pollsters that the PO/PSL coalition had not lived up to expectations following the general election on

9th of October last year.

Just two percent said that Prime Minister Tusk and his cabinet were performing better than expected.

According to 77 percent of those polled the government has committed several blunders after three months in power. Among the biggest mistakes the respondents mentioned chaos in the health service, price hikes and

the signing last month of the ACTA anti-internet piracy agreement.



In this issue:

Belarus vs. EU	1
Tusk's 100 days in power	1
Industrial salt in food industry	2
New Wroclaw air terminal	2
KGHM takes over Canadian producer	3
FM selling off property	3
Poland in EU fiscal pact	4

Industrial salt used to cure Polish ham?

Five men have been charged in connection with the sale of industrial salt to meat processing plants.

The accused men, who have been forbidden from leaving the country and conducting further business transactions, are pleading innocent to the charges, claiming that the salt can indeed be used in food products.

However, investigators emphasize that this is

not the case.

“Evidence collected regarding this matter unequivocally shows that there is no such possibility [of using this salt in food],” said Magdalena Mazur-Prus, a spokesperson for the public prosecutors.

The revelations follow a secret investigation by Poland's Central Investigations Bureau (CBS) over the last few months.

As many as five meat

processing plants are at risk of closure, according to commercial radio station RMF FM. The radio has also suggested that the salt – commonly used on icy roads – may be carcinogenic.

Full tests are currently being carried out on the salt, so as to determine the precise nature of the risks. If serious health risks are confirmed, the suspects' charges will be adapted accordingly. According to RMF FM, three of the plants that purchased the inedible salt are in the north Polish town of Wloclawek.

The radio alleges that the plants used the salt for three years, and that supermarkets across the country have sold products from the factories.

Public prosecutors have thus far declined to name which plants purchased the salt.

New Wroclaw air terminal opens ahead of Euro 2012

A new terminal has been opened at the Copernicus Airport in Wrocław, south western Poland.

It can handle up to 3 million passengers a year, and following a planned expansion at the end of the decades – up to 7 million. The tarmac directly adjacent to the terminal can accommodate 16

aircraft, and the entire airport complex up to 30.

The facility is one of the major investments commissioned in time for the EURO 2012 football championships, co-hosted by Poland and Ukraine, which begin on 8 June.

Wrocław is one of the tournament's four venues in Poland,

alongside Warsaw, Poznań and Gdańsk.

Wrocław Airport is located in the south-west of the city, some 10 kilometers from the centre. Wrocław will serve as the European Capital of Culture in 2016.



Polish copper giant KGHM set to take over Canadian producer

Shareholders at Quadra FNX Mining have given the green light for the Canadian firm to be taken over by Polish copper miners KGHM.

The announcement about the go-ahead was made by both companies. Under the offer made to shareholders on 6 December 2011, KGHM is paying 15 Canadian dollars per share of Quadra FNX, a press release from KGHM states.

Almost 80 percent of Quadra's shareholders voted in favour of the take-over, surpassing the two-thirds majority required for the deal to be rubberstamped.

The take-over deal, valued at some 2.87 billion Canadian dollars (2.17 billion euro), is set to be finalised in the coming weeks pending a Supreme Court decision in the Canadian province of British Columbia as well as the country's Ministry of Industry.

"This transaction has strategic importance for KGHM, one which ensures future profits, builds shareholder value and ensures us a competitive position on the world's market," President of KGHM stated in a press release, adding that "it also strengthens the position of

the Polish economy as a strategic producer of raw materials and rare-earth metals."

The acquisition will see KGHM increase its production in 2012 by around 25 percent, or 100 thousand tonnes of mined copper, with that figure expected to rise to some 50 percent in the future.

Total mineral resources will increase to over 8.2 million tonnes of copper, making KGHM the fourth-largest copper producer globally, with the deal adding Quadra's Sierra Gorda project in Chile, along with other assets in Canada, Chile and the US to the company's portfolio.



Foreign Ministry selling off property abroad

Poland's Foreign Ministry hopes to raise in the region of 38 million euros (158 million zloty) through the sale of over a dozen properties abroad.

The premises include former embassy buildings in Uruguay, Venezuela and Senegal, and consulates in Cologne and Lille.

General manager of Poland's foreign service Jaroslaw Czubinski told the

Polish Press Agency that the changes are partly due to the fact that in the modern world, large embassies and consulates are no longer needed.

"Some of the changes are due to technological advances," he said. "Owing to digitalisation, less space and less employees are needed," he explained. Furthermore, within the EU, some staff are eligible to work in foreign

premises. "We are taking full advantage of what is open to us in within the sphere of European Union cooperation," Czubinski said.

Meanwhile, Poland now has the so-called Permanent Representation to the European Union in Brussels, and thus there is no longer a need for a large embassy in Belgium as well.

Funds will also be used to open additional consulates in Ukraine and England, as well as to renovate the new Polish Embassy in Washington. Refurbishments have already been carried out at the Polish Embassy in Paris, and the Polish Consulate in New York.



Egyptian-Polish Businessmen Association

13, El-Bostan Street
Bab El-Louk, Downtown
11211 Cairo
Egypt

Tel.: +20 2 2396 09 82
Fax: +20 2 2396 09 82
E-mail: info@theepba.com,
warsaw@theepba.com

WE ARE IN THE WEB:

WWW.THEEPBA.COM

Poland signs up to EU fiscal pact

Prime Minister Donald Tusk has signed the EU fiscal pact alongside 24 other nations in Brussels. UK and the Czech Republic did not sign the pact today and Ireland will put the issue to voters in a referendum.

The pact gives powers to the European Court of Justice to impose fines on rule-breaking nations and enhances the European Commission's role in scrutinising national budgets. The final version of the pact commits member states to, "fiscal consolidation as an essential condition of higher growth and employment". The document also has a target of raising the employment rate to 75 percent on average across Europe by 2020.

Poland's Minister for European Affairs Mikolaj Dowgielewicz said that the government was making sure that all measures included in the final version of the Treaty, "in all languages", are consistent with the findings contained in the policy agreement at the European Council summit on 30 January. At the January meeting, it was agreed that countries outside the eurozone, including Poland, should participate, at least once a year, in summits attended by the 17 eurozone members.

Poland, along with 11 other countries including the UK, Netherlands, Italy – but not Germany and France - sent a letter to European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso and the head of the European Council Van Rompuy, in which they laid out a "Plan for Growth in Europe." The letter stated that the EU should concentrate on stimulating the economy and providing jobs for citizens, and should not only be about tightening belts and cutting state spending.

GDP growth 4.3 percent in Q4, says GUS

Fourth quarter GDP growth in Poland exceeded market expectations, according to new data.

Poland's economy grew at 4.3 percent in Q4, according to the Central Statistical Office (GUS) while many analysts expected 4.2 percent growth, year-on-year.

GUS economists say that the growth was mainly due to domestic demand.

According to Fitch forecast, GDP growth in Poland will fall to 2.8 percent in 2012, as the economies of Poland's main trade partners, including Germany, slow and as will domestic demand.

Poland's economy will still be one of the strongest in Europe, however, with general government deficit narrowing to 3.5 percent of GDP in 2012 from an estimated 5.4 percent in 2011.

ZLOTY EXCHANGE MID- RATES /16th-29th Feb 2012/

USD	3,10	+0,44%
EUR	4,11	-0,18%
CHF	3,41	-0,17%
GBP	4,94	+0,48%