

*Lech Wałęsa*

Gdańsk, 12 June 2014

His Excellency George H.W. Bush  
41<sup>st</sup> President of the United States of America

Dear Mr. President, Dear Friend,

On this very special day I wish you happy birthday, all the best in good health and strength to achieve more and more for your country and all of us, who are congratulating you on this splendid occasion. Let me also express my deepest gratitude to you for your public service and great activism in so many fields you have been committed to.

Your wise and courageous leadership, rooted in dialogue and responsibility, led to a peaceful shift of forces in the world. Although living far away, you have always been close to us, to Poles. You did not forget about Poland in the hard period of international turbulences and fundamental transformation in the 1980s. While celebrating 25 years of the democratic transition in my country, we do remember your personal contribution to that challenging political breakthrough. Better than anyone, you could understand the true difficulties we were going to face while entering the new way of freedom. When back in 1989, during your visit to Gdansk, you spoke with admiration of Solidarity, we were certain that the lofty wording would be followed by specific declarations and decisions, which did take place. Had it not been for solidarity – international solidarity and American solidarity, we would not have won freedom!

I also cherish the recollections of the many meetings we held, as well as of the warm and friendly welcome I received from Barbara and you when you hosted me both in the White House and in your unique Maine and Texas homes. I am hopeful that despite the distance between Gdansk and Houston we will have an opportunity to meet again, recall the past, yet also share our insights into today's world and the challenges it faces.

May you long continue enjoying wonderful moments amidst your loved ones and friends who have so much respect for and gratitude to you.

Faithfully yours,

