

**Remarks by Ambassador Ole Egberg Mikkelsen
at the Constitution Day event at the residence, 9th June 2018**

I am very happy to welcome you all to this year's constitution day event. It takes place at the embassy residence, but the embassy is co-hosting together with three of our close partners.

- The Danish Section of the Scandinavian Polish Chamber of Commerce
- The Danish Cultural Institute
- Danes Worldwide

I see the co-hosting of today's event as a strong symbol of the partnership that we have with you in furthering Danish interests in Poland and strengthening Danish-Polish relations. We have different mandates and different roles to perform, but we work well together and we are always pulling in the same direction. Normally we meet in a formal setting, at conferences, meetings etc. I am happy that we can meet in this informal setting, without a tie and with our families.

This year we have a very prominent speaker, Ms. Anne Marie Dalgaard, who is the Secretary General of Danes Worldwide. I am very honored that you would join us today. Some of you met Anne Marie last year at the meeting at the embassy.

Danes Worldwide is really doing a sterling job in articulating the interests of Danes abroad. It is not least due to the tireless efforts of Danes Worldwide that it is now possible to have dual citizenship as a Danish national. It is a huge achievement, but there are other issues facing Danes abroad that Danes Worldwide is addressing. Conversion of grades for IB-students for the Danish scale for instance.

So Anne Marie will be doing the real speech today. But before giving you the floor, I want to give you a very brief update on Polish-Danish relations. What are the big issues, and what is in the pipeline?

The big issue seen from Poland is the Baltic Pipe project that will connect the Norwegian gas-fields with Poland via Denmark.

It is a major investment and the Danish government will decide on this later this year. So far, things look good. If constructed, for the first time ever there will be a physical connection from Denmark to Poland. We have suggested to our Polish friends that we should take this opportunity to develop a broader Danish-Polish energy partnership that would also include renewable energy and energy efficiency.

The pipeline is not the only thing that will connect Denmark and Poland. Just two weeks from now a new flight connection will open between Warsaw and Billund. It is yet another sign that both people-to-people contacts and business contacts are booming between Denmark and Poland.

There is another big issue coming up. Next year we will celebrate 100 years of the diplomatic relations between Denmark and Poland. We resumed our diplomatic relations in 1919, so we need to mark this next year. If not, we will have to wait another 100 years. Ideas and suggestions are welcome.

These are just the main points. Much more is happening. If you want to follow what we are doing and what is going on in DK-PL relations, follow us on Twitter and on Facebook.

Before I conclude, I wish to thank our sponsors wholeheartedly. The event today is possible thanks to the generous support of:

Carlsberg, Radisson BLU, Amka, Schulstad-Lantmännen, Goodvalley, Danske Bank, DSV, Velux and LEGO, who has made an in-kind contribution.

I also wish to thank my colleagues at the embassy, the residence staff and my wife for their hard work. Without you, it would not have been possible.

Finally: I will be leaving you at 14:45, because – just as last year - today is the day of the annual Equality Parade in Warsaw. Like many other ambassadors, I have signed a letter of support and I will also take part in the parade that starts at 15:00.

An important element in any constitution is to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms – also for minorities. So, I find it very appropriate to mark our Constitution Day by taking part in the Equality Parade. It is not only words, but also deed.

If anyone of you wishes to join me, you are most welcome. I will of course understand, if you prefer to stay here.