

Opening remarks – GAZTERM 2019 Conference

Ministers, members of parliament, ladies and gentlemen

I am honoured to address you this morning at the opening of the Baltic Gas Summit as the only foreign ambassador. I take this as a symbol and a recognition of the close Danish-Polish energy partnership that is evolving across the Baltic Sea.

The main component in this partnership is of course the Baltic Pipe project. It is now well underway. The investment decision has been made and the intergovernmental agreement has been signed.

We have even managed to delineate the maritime border in the Baltic Sea after 40 years. So, all the obstacles and challenges have been removed one after the other at an impressive speed and with an amazing efficiency over the last two years.

This is an example to the world of how close friends and neighbors cooperate and tackle common challenges. Let me take this opportunity express my thanks to our Polish friends, not least minister Naimski and all involved ministries as well as GAZ-system for their hard and dedicated work. I am equally grateful to your Danish partners. It is indeed a common effort.

Later on this year, in November, we are going to celebrate, that Denmark and Poland resumed diplomatic relations 100 years ago, when Poland regained its independence. I cannot think of a more appropriate symbol of the close ties between our countries than this new physical connection in the form of the Baltic Pipe.

It is a win-win for Denmark and Poland. It provides Denmark with an additional source of supply. It will have a stabilizing effect on tariffs paid by Danish gas consumers. It will also help towards making more eco-friendly biogas competitive in the Danish system, and thereby spur the green transition. Now 11 percent of our gas supply is green, but the ambition is to decarbonize our gas system 100 percent.

The Baltic Pipe will diversify Poland's gas supply but it will also help Poland towards a more climate friendly energy mix by replacing coal. Gas is also a very good back up for fluctuating renewable energy.

Thus, gas and wind turbines go hand in hand. The upcoming Power-to-gas technology will stimulate this development even further

We hope that the Baltic Pipe will stimulate and boost the development of wind power in Poland, not least in the Baltic Sea. The wind is there. Denmark's biggest wind farm is being built on a reef in the Baltic Sea. It will supply 600.000 households. Conditions are just as good on your side of the maritime border. There is no reason to believe that the wind is dropping once it crosses the border. We hope that legislation will be passed soon, so Poland can start benefitting from wind power at sea. Our companies are ready.

So, we see the Baltic Pipe as only the beginning of a broad and comprehensive Danish-Polish energy partnership covering also renewable energy and energy efficiency. We are not starting from scratch. Poland is already part of the part of the global Danish success in wind power. The foundations for wind turbines are made in Szczecin, the towers in Gdansk, the blades in Goleniow and the cables are made in Katowice. Poland is the biggest producer of thermal insulation in Europe thanks to the Danish manufacturer Rockwool in Malkinia.

This did not happen because some politicians or diplomats said so. It happened because of the market: Poland is extremely competitive in steel and engineering and with a rapidly growing global demand for renewables, there is a huge potential that Poland can tap into.

Let me conclude by thanking the organizers of this conference for inviting me. I hope that our discussions can be yet another step in the Danish—Polish energy partnership. We are ready.