

## BOGDAN KLICH

Senator in the Polish Parliament, Chairman of the Foreign and EU Affairs Committee in the Polish Senate

**Terry Martin, Journalist, TV news anchor**

Let us move on to the next speaker, Bogdan Klich.

**Bogdan Klich, Senator in the Polish Parliament, Chairman of the Foreign and EU Affairs Committee in the Polish Senate**

Thank you very much for giving this chance to talk about the Ukrainian challenge for all of us. Again, I remember our conversation last year when we were talking about the first conclusions after the first phase of this Ukrainian resistance to Russia's second invasion of its territory. There is not that much good news on the Russian-Ukrainian front, but there is at least one good piece of news from the Ukrainian neighborhood. I would like to underline that because it refers to my country: I would like you to know that "Poland is back". Poland is back after the recent elections where 74% of Poles decided to return to the community of values that for many years we held and were proud of. I mean this community consisting of democracy, liberal values, political freedoms, the rule of law and the rights of minorities. The government that was responsible for undermining this understanding of the West in Polish eyes and also in international public opinion will soon be removed from power. Our full integration with the European Union will continue, our cooperation with our main partners and good relationship with our neighbors will be recovered and, of course, we will continue our contribution to supporting the Ukrainians, who are fighting for those values.

After this important declaration from my national point of view I can move to the topic of this discussion. I once described at this conference the situation after 2014 and the first invasion of Ukraine by Russian troops, together with the creation of the Islamic State, as a crescent of fire surrounding Europe from the East and the South. Unfortunately, it now exists and the scale of this fire is much greater and the challenge is much harder for us, meaning the European and Euro-Atlantic community. The responses to that should be much wiser than after 2014 and 2015. From that point of view, I would say that the results of the NATO Summit in Vilnius recently were a good sign for implementing the decisions that were taken a year ago during the Madrid Summit. We should go this way to implement the new model of forces responsible for reinforcing those countries that could be attacked in the future that was established after the Madrid Summit. The eastern flank of the Alliance belongs to this group of countries. Second, the level of forces – with a huge increase from 40 000 to 300 000 response forces that would be responsible for this reinforcement – should be achieved as quickly as possible. The new model of deterrence, with a shift from punishment to denial, should also be implemented as quickly as possible. Fourth, the decision concerning regional defense plans, responsible not for reinforcing a country or group of countries under attack but for the defense of every inch of NATO territory, should also be implemented. Those four major decisions of the Madrid Summit, repeated at the Vilnius Summit and implemented to some extent this year, are of major importance for the security of the Euro-Atlantic community.



As for the European Union, I believe that the Russian invasion of Ukraine created a completely new space for the EU. The latter carried out a kind of Copernican revolution, in the sense that for the first time it was engaged in the military support of a country that was not a member of the European Community. Second, it decided to allocate such a huge amount of money for macroeconomic injections into this country's budget. If I remember correctly, it was EUR 11.6 billion alone last year and we estimate it will be around EUR 18 billion for this year. For military purposes we allocated EUR 5.6 billion last year, not counting the financial support from individual member states of the European Union. This is a huge change in the activities of the European Union and they should be continued.

**Terry Martin**

Great, thank you very much. Those are important points being made there, both in relation to the European Union and NATO. I am also sure that many people will be glad to hear that Poland is back, and I am certain that Ukraine is glad to hear what you just said regarding the pledge of continued support for Ukraine because Poland has played a crucial role in strengthening Ukraine as it seeks to repel Russia's ongoing invasion.