

Mr Minister, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished guests,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you here at the Harpa to our celebratory concert on the occasion of Poland's National Day, the day in honor of our first Constitution passed on May, 1791 – exactly 230 years ago.

The Constitution of 3 May was the first written constitution in Europe and the second in the world, after the U.S. Constitution. It was passed at critical moment when the independence of our country was threatened by neighboring empires. It introduced reforms of the state and government which strengthened and modernized our state. The Constitution also guaranteed civil liberties, such as personal security and the right to property.

When celebrating the anniversary of the Constitution of 3 May here in Iceland, it is easy to notice the commonalities between our two nations. For Iceland, as a state with one of the world's oldest parliaments, just like for Poland, sovereignty is closely related to parliamentarism.

The Polish National Day of 3 May is therefore much more than the commemoration of our first constitution. It is the celebration of the values most important to us: the sovereignty and independence of the state and the freedom of its citizens, including religious freedom, and the cultivation of a national identity, language and culture.

I cannot think of more adequate way of celebrating this special day together than through music, which we Poles and Icelanders share our love for.

I would like very warmly to express my gratitude to the management of the Harpa for hosting our event and to the musicians for their work.

Pragnę również złożyć najlepsze życzenia Rodakom w całej Islandii z okazji tego ważnego dla wszystkich Polaków Święta.

Now I would like to give the floor to His Excellency Minister of Foreign Affairs Guðlaugur Þór Þórdarson.