

Speech of the Ambassador Artur Lompart in Peta, 10.07.2022

Dear Madam Mayor Rozina Vavetsi,
Dear Governors and Mayors of Greek regions and municipalities
Dear excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour for me to be here tonight and to pay tribute to the brave warriors of the Battle of Peta, one of the most dramatic moments of the Greek Revolution.

A year ago I mentioned that the Greek Revolution was the spark, which ignited the desire of nations for freedom, and the success of Greeks – the fight of biblical David against Goliath gave hope to other peoples of Europe, including Poles, who at the time were also under foreign rule.

We honour tonight the heroes, brave men and women, who decided to sacrifice their lives for the most precious thing in the lives of nations – freedom. Derived from the ancient Greek culture and traditions. Based on our common roots built on ancient traditions and Christian faith, the Greek insurgents decided that they want to live – or die – as free people.

They were ready to sacrifice their lives because in their opinion they deserved the right to build a modern, democratic country where all human beings will be equal and may live in peaceful coexistence, without the terror of suppression of their opinions, faith or social conditions.

Many people from around the world joined them following the Greek dream for freedom. The Greek revolution and its battles provided the seed for European unification. Indeed, on the battlefield of Peta, for the first time after the Napoleonic wars, all the peoples of Europe, inspired by the Greek civilisation, united under the same flag and fought against barbarism and tyranny, for their common values: freedom, democracy, justice, human rights.

The idea of freedom illuminated also the path of many Poles who arrived in Greece to help the revolutionaries. Names of almost fifty of them have been discovered by historians, including Polish “magnificent twelve” who died heroically in the Battle of Peta led by Captain Franciszek Mierzejewski and soaked this soil with their blood along with other foreign and Greek fighters. Their names are embossed at the monument here. Today we honour also their memory.

200 years after the Battle of Peta, we can see that the fight for freedom never ends. As a small Greek nation that time decided to throw off the shackles and started the unequal fight against the Ottomans, so do we see today the struggle of another smaller nation against the larger evil Empire. Today Ukraine is defending its freedom, sovereignty and sacrosanct territorial integrity against Russia which implements its “Russian world” – Russkiy Mir with looting, rapes, genocide and mass murders.

Once again David is struggling with Goliath to preserve its pursuit for happiness and its own choice of the future. Once again its fight is supported by the international community of those for whom the freedom and liberties, democracy and human rights are still the core values of humankind. Poland, Greece along with other nations support this struggle because we all in the free world believe that words “Freedom or death” still matter.

This year, the 200th anniversary of the Greek battle of Peta reminds us of the value of freedom, especially to the nations who have experienced the bitterness of slavery and shed a lot of blood to gain their sovereignty. Thanks to the heroic attitude of brave men and women of the past, the current generations may enjoy in our common European home their freedom and liberties, knowing that freedom is not granted for free and – as Ukraine’s example shows – we must be ready to defend it when the time of testing will come.