



Committee Members

Committee Chair



Leon Kieres (PO)

Committee Deputy Chair



Dorota Arciszewska-Mielewczyk (PiS)

Committee Deputy Chair



Marek Rocki (PO)



Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz (N)



Maciej Grubski (PO)



Paweł Klimowicz (N)



Janusz Rachoń (PO)



Alicja Zając (PiS)

The Committee considers issues related to state foreign policy, inter-parliamentary relations, and international economic relations.

Similarly to other Senate committees, the Foreign Affairs Committee examines the Budget Act within its remit and gives its opinion to the Budget and Public Finance Committee, which is the only committee to present a budget report at a Senate plenary session.

The Foreign Affairs Committee is one of 16 standing committees in the 7th Senate (2007-2011).

The Foreign Affairs Committee is a successor of the bodies which functioned in the Senate of the Second Polish Republic (1922-1939). In that period, the Senate entrusted the Foreign and Military Affairs Committee and the Foreign Affairs Committee with issues related to foreign affairs. After the Second World War, the Senate did not resume its activity, as it was abolished by the Communist government following the rigged national referendum in 1946. The Foreign Affairs Committee was one of the first standing committees to be established by the restored Senate in 1989. In 1995, the Senate expanded the Committee's competences and entrusted it with economic issues, and in 1997, in connection with the planned commencement of negotiations with the European Union, with European affairs. The Committee performed its duties as the Committee for Foreign Affairs and European Integration until 2004. Since the appointment of the standing European Union Affairs Committee, the Committee has functioned under the name "Foreign Affairs Committee".

The Committee in the First Six Terms

of the Restored Senate

(1989-2007)

In the first years of its existence, the realm of the Committee's activity was defined by state foreign policy priorities connected with the shaping of the new international order and the speeding up of the European integration process. One of the crucial tasks of the Committee was to consider issues related to amending the main foreign policy goals oriented towards the Euro-Atlantic area and regarding integration with international structures of Western Europe (the European Communities and the Council of Europe).

From the commencement of the first Senate term to Poland's accession to the European Union in 2004, the Committee performed tasks related mainly to the prospect of Polish membership in the EU, taking into account the economic dimension of integration. In the period preceding

Poland's accession to the EU, the Committee concentrated chiefly on adapting Polish laws to EU legislation. In addition, the Committee looked into regional cooperation in Central Europe and in euroregions at the borders of Poland. Since the appointment of the Committee, the establishment of good neighbourly relations with Poland's neighbours was an important factor influencing its activities. Polish-German relations became particularly significant between 1997 and 2001, when the Committee was chaired by Władysław Bartoszewski, former Minister of Foreign Affairs and well-known Polish politician, deserving much respect for his contribution to furthering Polish-German dialogue.

Committee members participated in the public debate pertaining to Poland's accession to NATO and in legislative works regarding the ratification of the Accession Protocols signed by Poland. Ministers of Foreign Affairs provided Committee members with information about current international issues and the evolution of Polish foreign policy. The Committee meetings were attended by, among others, Vice President of the United States Al Gore, Secretaries General of NATO – Javier Solana and Lord George Robertson, and President of the European Parliament Pat Cox.

After Poland's accession to the European Union, the Senate established the European Union Affairs Committee, which took over competences related to Poland's membership in the EU. As a result, since 2004 the focus of Committee meetings shifted to issues beyond EU-related topics. These included, e.g. Poland's participation in international stabilisation and peacekeeping missions, Polish development policy, and security, energy security in particular.

The Committee in the 7th Senate

(2007-2011)

Since 2007, the Committee has concentrated on the priorities of Polish foreign policy in regard to EU and NATO membership. The Committee examined European policy in the context of the changes introduced by the Treaty of Lisbon, which consisted in establishing the European External Action Service (EEAS). The Eastern

Partnership initiative put forward by Poland and Sweden was also analysed by the Committee. Committee members discussed regional cooperation in connection with the Polish Presidency of the Visegrad Group (Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland), as well as the new formula for the Weimar Triangle (France, Germany, Poland), following the completion of the transformation processes in Central and Eastern Europe. The situation in the Middle East and Southern Caucasus was also the subject of Committee debates. Moreover, special sessions were organised to commemorate the 10th anniversary of Poland's accession to NATO and the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the Council of Europe. In the 7th Senate, the Committee introduced *in camera* meetings, during which newly appointed Polish Ambassadors present the main objectives of their diplomatic missions.

The Committee's International

Contacts and Cooperation

The Committee Chair takes part in the Conference of Foreign Affairs Committee Chairs (COFACC), meets with foreign delegations and members of the diplomatic corps accredited in Poland. Committee members participate in the activities of a large number of inter-parliamentary bodies, such as the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference. The Committee maintains contacts with foreign affairs committees of parliaments of EU member states and of other countries.