



Deklaracja Zygmunta Augusta w sprawie unii polsko-litewskiej - Tekst angielski

At the Sejm (Parliament) in Warsaw – March 13, 1564 Zygmunt August¹, King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania, cedes the Grand Duchy of Lithuania's hereditary succession to the Polish Crown and defines the character of the two states' merger (The Declaration of Lithuanian Union), at the Sejm in Warsaw – March 13, 1564. Zygmunt August, by the grace of God the King of Poland, Grand Duke of Lithuania, Ruthenia, Prussia, Masovia, Samogitia, etc., lord and heir – to all subjects of the realm and to everyone individually, whomever it befits being known, that we do pronounce by this letter of ours that when between our subject Crown Estates and the deputies from the Grand Duchy of Lithuania treaties and joint deliberations have been [held] at this Warsaw Sejm concerning the union and joining of the two nations, Polish and Lithuanian, for which [purpose] we have in part composed this Sejm and afforded to both parties time for these deliberations, then there has arisen a certain difference concerning whether – in regard to the union and association into one body and one people of both these nations, Polish and Lithuanian, as it appears from the letters and privileges that each side affords – there should be, out of these two states, a single Rzeczpospolita [Commonwealth] under one lord, which both nations, as men of the Crown, would use commonly, sharing her in equal part, particularly that the Polish nation and lands ancient of the Crown have always enjoyed, and do enjoy, the free electing of the lord, whilst the estates of Lithuania would hold the Duchy as being our patrimonial heritage and state.

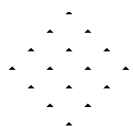
We, therefore, in our will to settle these differences concerning the union between them, and to clear from the path any and all [differences] that might convey² this matter so sacred, and so needed, and also so glorious, and in this our measure, as much as is within us, to resolve firstly what touches the succession unto the land of Lithuania, since this has quite much impeded our joint unification, we have in this respect declared ourselves before all the estates of both nation [sic] openly, as we do presently declare by means of this present letter of ours, that, although the Lord God has given us no progeny³, in His sacred providence, until this day, nevertheless, were He to give such to us well and most abundantly, by His grace and kindness, these⁴ would we prefer, over the good and the benefit of the Commonwealth, no temporal consideration of, or provision for, our blood and progeny, neither would we hold anything more pleasant for ourselves than the need and glory of our states, and to this end, on the sworn duty and obligation of ours, knowing that progeny not always and not to each be ordained, but service unto the Commonwealth and fulfillment of duty must shine always and everywhere.

¹ Zygmunt II August (1520–72) was King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania. It was the lot of this only son of Zygmunt I the Old and his queen consort Bona Sforza to become the last of the Jagiellons to reign in Poland. Zygmunt II had been made king when his father was still alive – a *vivente rege* election. It was during his reign, with the Union of Lublin in 1569, that Poland and Lithuania were merged into one state, referred to ever after as the Commonwealth of the Two Nations, or Poland-Lithuania. Zygmunt II never had any children, despite his three marriages – to Elizabeth of Austria (of the House of Habsburg), Barbara Radziwiłł, and Catherine of Austria (Habsburg), respectively.

² Misspelling in the Polish original; the actual meaning is: hinder.

³ None of Zygmunt August's three wives issued a male heir for the throne.

⁴ Error in the Polish original; actual meaning: then.



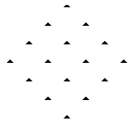
For this reason, therefore, having shunned any omnifarious hereditary succession unto the Lithuanian land, if any such be due to ourselves as to our progeny, we voluntarily surrender [it] to the Commonwealth and to this glorious Polish Crown and renounce for time eternal, not doubting in this and stipulating this to ourselves that through this we divest not our very self or our own progeny, should the Lord God have given us any such, but that it may have a provision from the Commonwealth, one decent and befitting its condition, lest it detract from the kingdom, indeed, committing no dismemberment¹ of the crown, such provision is only to be resolved when the Polish and Lithuanian estates be present at a joint Sejm.

And thus, having thereby thrown this obstructing trunk from the path toward the succession, then also these differences that has [sic] existed between both the nations concerning one Commonwealth, we so enact in the name of God that we understand not and cannot understand this otherwise, upon God, than that both these states, since times ancient, and still in the time of our forefathers, have been conjugated into one, this oneness [flowing] not only into one animus² or one thought, into one concord, into one love, into one common friendship, though all this is so, but also into one body to this end, and that the body be not differing, but inseparable, for as the old shared privileges describe, they are jointly shared.

Hence, the very matter reveals that into one Commonwealth of one people, which has through the union and conjoining of two nations into a unitary and inseparable oneness have so merged and joined that, as these states are not two bodies any longer, then there cannot be two Commonwealths but one Commonwealth instead, conjoined of these nations, and consequently they are to have common Sejms and councils always, under one king and under one head.

¹ Dismemberment' [Polish, dysmembracja] stands here for curtailment or depletion.

² Animus – 'soul' (Latin).



This only being excepted, that as in one not differing and inseparable body, every part and every member has, however, its own duty and purpose, so in this one Commonwealth has the Polish and Lithuanian nation certain of its customs, judiciary rights, and privileges, and courts-of-law separately of its own, which however do not, nor will they ever, hinder this oneness or this union. Which declaration of ours, for memory everlasting as well as more fitting testimony, as described in these words on this present letter, we hereby do strengthen and confirm for time eternal, and in our own hand have signed and sealed it with our own seal. Done in Warsaw at the General Sejm of the Crown on the thirteenth day of March, in the year of our Lord one thousand five hundred sixty-four, the thirty-fifth of our reign.

Translated © by Tristan Korecki, Philip Earl Steele