

We, the members of parliaments of the Republic of Lithuania and the Republic of Poland, jointly commemorate Tadeusz Kościuszko on the 275th anniversary of his birth.

Tadeusz Kościuszko was born on 4 February 1746 in Polesie, once part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, which now lies within the borders of Belarus, whose independence is extremely important to us. Kościuszko was an outstanding son of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, a brave defender of its freedom and rights, and a hero of the American War of Independence. He was committed to the ideals of liberty, fraternity, social justice and equality before the law. He expressed this by buying out slaves in America and enfranchising peasants on his estate.

The figure of Tadeusz Kościuszko is part of the common legacy of all the nations of the historic Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth as well as of the democratic traditions of the United States, our common ideals of freedom and independence, and the inalienable rights of our citizens to live in dignity and freedom.

We, the representatives of our peoples, elected freely and democratically, extend words of solidarity to the people of Belarus, who are seeking democratic changes in the country after yet another fraudulent election of August 9 organized by the illegitimate Lukashenko regime. We stand in solidarity with the people of Belarus, who have been, and still are, persecuted for demanding the right to fundamental civil liberties, including, above all, free and fair elections as soon as possible this year. We address these words especially to all those who have been imprisoned, arrested or detained for their courageous stand. We also support their families and loved ones. We remember those murdered in the struggle for a decent life.

We commemorate Tadeusz Kościuszko, who symbolises the idea of the unification of nations around important matters such as freedom and independence, and respect for national identity. We feel heirs to his legacy, and we know that he is extremely important to many Belarusians.

We recognise the efforts of our governments to help Belarusians, persecuted and forced to abandon their homeland, and we encourage the search for new and increasingly effective forms of support for the Belarusian people in their struggle for the democratic founding of their country, whose freedom and independence we consider to be of fundamental importance: not only for our regional stability and development, but also for the security of Europe and the transatlantic world.

Let this day always remind us of our common past, which commits us to mutual solidarity, to support for the independence of states, the freedom of nations, and for respect for human and civil rights.

We stand and will remain in solidarity with Belarus.