

Warsaw, 25 November 2019

FOR Communication 34/2019: Morawiecki's policy speech: a review of statements and announcements

- In his policy speech Mateusz Morawiecki largely repeated his standard narrative about the messianic role of Law and Justice in the history of the Third Republic of Poland. The opportunity ("historical moment") faced by Poland in 1989 was "only partially seized". What is worse, "neoliberalism caused a conceptual confusion and a mess in the value system". And although the country developed a bit, and "we even managed to overcome many problems of the People's Republic of Poland", by the way "we sold our family jewels", lost industry and became dependent on foreign countries. Millions of Poles left the country – it was "a great tribute, which Poland paid to the rich countries of the West". We implemented a "development model based on the belief that Poland is to provide cheap labour" – a model that "suited others, but undercut us". However, in 2015 there was a breakthrough: Law and Justice gained undivided power, we "sailed the wind of history" and "pierced the developmental glass ceiling". The government under the leadership of Morawiecki "repairs Polish affairs like no one has ever done after 1989". Now the Prime Minister moves on to the next stage of creating "A Poland of great projects, which will mean a real civilizational leap for our country", creating "a potential that can be compared with the largest pre-war development programs".
- The interpretation of Polish history after 1989 presented by Morawiecki is false. Poland is the leader of economic growth among all the countries of transformation and despite the legacy inherited from the Polish People's Republic, it quickly started to catch up with the development backlog in relation to the richest countries without encountering any "developmental glass ceiling" along the way.
- After 2015, the economic policy of the Law and Justice party did not give any impetus to the development of the allegedly stagnant Poland. In fact, Law and Justice activities undermined the market foundations of the previous growth. However, thanks to the good economic situation in the world economy, Poles could continue to enjoy an improvement in their standard of living (which continued over the past 25 years).
- Staying on the current line chosen by the Law and Justice party in 2015 will eventually have a negative impact on the process of catching up with the West. Morawiecki's great projects do not mean "a real civilizational leap for our country". Poland made such a leap, replacing socialism with a market economy. The activities of the Law and Justice party are leading to the limitation of economic freedom, a decrease in professional activity and the politicization of the economy through the growth of the state sector. In the long run, this means a halt to the existing convergence.

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Forum Obywatelskiego Rozwoju [Civil Development Forum]

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