

Presidential Election in Poland

20th June and 4th July 2010

ANALYSIS

1 month before
the poll

On 10th April Bronislaw Komorowski, President of the Sejm, the lower Chamber of the Parliament was appointed interim President of the Republic after the accidental death of the Head of State Lech Kaczynski (Law and Justice, PiS). The latter was elected on 23rd October 2005 as head of Poland beating present Prime Minister Donald Tusk (Civic Platform, PO) with 54.47% against 45.53% of the vote. Lech Kaczynski would undoubtedly have stood for election again in the next presidential election which was planned for the autumn of this year.

During the morning of 10th April the latter together with his wife, Maria, and 96 other people died when the plane in which they were travelling crashed in Petchorsk in the region of Smolensk (Russia) probably because of thick fog which made landing difficult. The presidential delegation was travelling to Katyn to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the execution of 22,000 Polish officers by the Soviet Secret Services – a crime that was attributed to the Nazis in the official history books before USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev acknowledged in 1990 that the crime was his country's responsibility. 70 years after this terrible crime Katyn has once more been set down in Polish history as a doomed place.

Within the space of an instant Poland was decapitated. Apart from its President it also lost its Deputy Foreign Minister, Andrzej Kremer, Culture Minister Tomasz Merta, Defence Minister, Jerzy Komorowski, the governor of the Polish Central Bank Slawomir Skrzepk, former Head of State in exile in London during the Communist era, Ryszard Kaczorowski, Vice-President of the Diet, Krzysztof Putra, Vice-President of the Senate, the Upper Chamber of Parliament Krystyna Bochenek, Chief of Staff Major Franciszek Gagar, Commander in Chief of Operational Forces, General Bronislaw Kwiatkowski, Commander in Chief of the Air Force General Andrzej Blasik, Commander in Chief of the Special Forces, General Wlodzimierz Potasinski, Commander in Chief of the Navy Vice-Admiral Andrzej Karweta, and finally former heroine of the naval shipyard strikes in Gdansk in 1980, Anna Walentynowicz. 18 MPs and several representatives of the church and various associations also perished in the catastrophe. The PiS was the most affected party, Przemyslaw Gosiewski and Aleksandra Natalli-Swiat, member of the party's policy committee were among the victims – and from the other end of the political scale – leftwing

candidate in the presidential election, Vice-President of the Sejm, Jerzy Szmajdzinski.

With his death Lech Kaczynski, who was a controversial, conservative, anti-liberal, euro-sceptic personality who had a difficult relationship with his Russian and German neighbours, became a martyr in just a few hours. The man who launched a real witch-hunt against all of those, who in his opinion "*collaborated*" with the Communist authorities or who did not resist enough, had managed to divide Poland when he was alive. Because of the circumstances surrounding his death he was buried in Wawel, the name of the crypt in the cathedral of Krakow in which the greatest personalities in Polish national history lie, such as poet Adam Mickiewicz (1798-1855) and Marshall Jozef Pilsudski, father of the country's independence in 1918.

A paradox of history: the death of Lech Kaczynski, the President who was more than mistrustful of the authorities in power in Russia certainly helped to bring Warsaw and Moscow closer together. Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin immediately travelled

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to the place of the dramatic accident and declared a national day of mourning – two days later Russian TV broadcast the film Katyn on prime time – a film made by Andrzej Wajda in 2007. Russian empathy which was conveyed both diplomatically and symbolically was exemplary. *“Poland experienced a major tragedy on 10th April last and Poles really appreciated the sympathy expressed by millions of Russians. We are grateful to you for every tear shed, each candle lit, for each sign of compassion,”* declared Jaroslaw Kaczynski, the deceased Head of State’s twin brother and leader of the PiS. *“There are times that can change the course of history. I hope and this is shared by millions of Poles that such a time is close – that a great and necessary change will occur for the good of all, for our children and our grand-children,”* he added. For his part Bronislaw Komorowski challenged the declarations made by his political adversary. *“In theory Jaroslaw Kaczynski may have rid himself of his xenophobia but in practice that is highly unlikely. The Poles have a long memory. We heard the words of the Law and Justice Party leader but his acts count much more than words,”* he stressed.

The Presidential Post in Poland

The role of the President of the Republic is officially honorary. In reality however he exercises significant influence. He is elected for five years and has the right to veto, which the Sejm, the Lower Chamber of Parliament, can reject but the majority of three fifths of the votes and the attendance of at least half of the MP’s is however required. The President of the Republic can also decide alone to hold a national referendum – but this measure is resorted to rarely due to the low turnout rates that are usually recorded; he is the head of the armed forces, ratifies international agreements, appoints, dismisses ambassadors and exercises and enjoys the right of reprieve by which he may annul decisions taken by the courts on appeal. The Polish Constitution stipulates that the President of the Republic can only undertake two terms in office.

Present Prime Minister Donald Tusk has said on several occasions that he wanted to reduce the Head of State’s powers, which according to political analyst Pawel Swieboda, *“would put an end to the country’s chronic political instability.”*

Any candidate standing for the Presidency of the Republic must be aged at least 35 and had to deliver at least 100,000 voters’ signatures to the Polish Electoral Commission by 26th April. They were only registered as candidates after the delivery of 100, 000 signatures before 6th May. If none of the candidates running manages to win an absolute majority in the first round of voting on 20th June a second round will be organised two weeks later on 4th July.

9 people are officially running for the supreme office:

- Bronislaw Komorowski (PO), Marshall (chair) of the Sejm, former Defence Minister (2000-2001), interim President of the Republic since the death of Lech Kaczynski;
- Jaroslaw Kaczynski (PiS), twin brother of the deceased President and former Prime Minister (2006-2007) ;
- Waldemar Pawlak (Polish Peasants’ Party, PSL), present Deputy Prime Minister and Economy Minister in Donald Tusk’s government;
- Grzegorz Napieralski (Democratic Left Alliance, SLD), leader of the main leftwing party and the youngest of all of the candidates (36 years old);
- Marek Jurek (Law of the Republic of Poland, PR), former chair of the Diet (2005-2007);
- Boguslaw Zietek (Labour Party, PPP), chairman of the Union Confederation WZZ Sierpien 80 lying to the left of the political scale;
- Kornel Morawiecki, historic leader of the union Fighting Solidarnosc;
- Janusz Korwin-Mikke (Freedom and Rule of Law, WiP), former leader of the Political Union and supporter of the monarchy;
- Andrzej Olechowski, independent candidate supported by the Democratic Party (SD), former member of Civic Platform (PO) which he left in 2009 ; he was also the co-founder of this party with Donald Tusk and Maciej Plazynski (who died in the plane crash on 10th April last) and former Finance and Foreign Minister.

Former Prime Minister Andrzej Lepper (Self-Defence of Poland-Samoobrona, S) convicted of blackmail and accusations of corruption against members of Civic Platform and the Democratic Left Alliance, was not allowed to stand in this election.

A very special electoral campaign

Once the funeral of President Lech Kaczynski had taken place one issue was at the forefront of everyone's mind in Poland: what was to be done with his brother Jaroslaw? Would he stand to succeed his brother?

"I am convinced that Jaroslaw Kaczynski will stand. On the one hand he will want to implement his brother's will and complete his work. On the other hand his party has no other candidate of that quality to compete against Bronislaw Komorowski," said Stanislaw Mocek, a political analyst at the Polish Science Academy. The latter was right since on 26th April the former Prime Minister declared, *"Poland is our great joint destiny. It demands that we overcome personal suffering and that duty be fulfilled in spite of personal tragedy. This is why I have decided to stand for the Presidency of the Republic of Poland,"* Jaroslaw Kaczynski obtained 1.65 million signatures in his support, Bronislaw Komorowski 769,000.

Running favourite in the presidential election Bronislaw Komorowski will however find matters difficult. Interim Head of State he cannot afford to make any mistakes but due to his position he enjoys a major advantage. He was appointed as the Civic Platform's candidate after the primary election in which he stood against Radoslaw Sikorski at the end of March 2010. During this election he won with 68.5% of the vote against 31.5% for his rival who was disadvantaged because he had been Foreign Minister in the government led by Jaroslaw Kaczynski and a member of Civic Platform for only a short time.

"I shall do everything possible to help Bronislaw Komorowski win the presidential election because he would make a perfect head of state," declared Prime Minister Donald Tusk. *"If we lose this election Poland will be destabilised. Economic stability has become Poland's brand image. But we must not forget that this is only a recent phenomenon,"* he added in an interview with the daily Gazeta Wyborcza. Poland is the only EU country not to have experienced recession in 2009 (a GDP rise of 1.8%). If Bronislaw Komorowski wins the PO will recover its position of strength just one year before the general elections planned for the

autumn of 2011 – a position that no party has experienced in Poland since the fall of Communism in 1989.

"It's a special electoral campaign. Until now Civic Platform seemed able to win the presidential election with promises of stability and good governance. Today, this is no longer the case," indicated Pawel Swieboda, director of the think tank Demos Europa. *"Civic Platform seems to be in a defensive position,"* adds Jacek Raciborski, political expert at the University of Warsaw who adds, *"I still think that Bronislaw Komorowski will win the election but Jaroslaw Kaczynski can still increase his number of votes." "Voters on the radical right have no other choice but to support Jaroslaw Kaczynski, it would therefore be wise for him to try and attract voters from the centre,"* says Radoslaw Markowski at the Polish Science Academy.

The electoral campaign will necessarily be short. *"The campaign will be calm and silent, without conflict,"* stressed MEP Lena Kolarska Bobinska some days after the accident on 10th April. Jaroslaw Kaczynski's participation in this election may however prove this forecast wrong – the former Prime Minister's party which may benefit from a rise in popularity after the tragic death of the outgoing Head of State wants to defend its chances in the face of Bronislaw Komorowski. In addition to this no-one can foretell the way the emotion caused by the outgoing President's death and the period of national mourning will emerge in the urns. According to the latest poll Bronislaw Komorowski is due to win 43.7% of the vote in the first round on 20th June and Jaroslaw Kaczynski, 33.9%. The other seven candidates are not due to have much influence.

I have been watching Polish political life since 1989 and I have learnt that we should never use words such as 'Certainly' and 'Never' when we talk of the future. However today it seems unlikely that a candidate will be the source of surprise in the face of the two main candidates, Bronislaw Komorowski and Jaroslaw Kaczynski, indicated Tomasz Zukowski, sociologist and advisor to the deceased President.

Reminder of the Presidential Election 9th and 23rd October 2005 in Poland

Turnout: 49.7% in the 1st round and 50.5% in the second round

Candidates	N° of votes won in 1 st round	% of votes won in 1 st round	N° of votes won in 2 nd round	% of votes won in 2 nd round
Lech Kaczynski (Law & Justice, PiS)	4947 927	33.1	8 257 468	54.04
Donald Tusk (Civic Platform, PO)	5 429 666	36.3	7 022 319	45.96
Andrzej Lepper (Selfdefence of Poland-Samoobrona, S)	2 259 094	15.1		
Marek Borowski (Social Democratic Party, SDPL)	1 544 642	10.3		
Jaroslaw Kalinowski (Polish Peasants' Party, PSL)	269 316	1.8		
Janusz Korwin-Mikke (Political Union)	214 116	1.4		
Henryka Bochniarz (Democratic Party, SD)	188 598	1.3		
Liwiusz Ilasz	31 691	0.2		
Stanislaw Tyminski (Polish Citizens' Coalition)	23 545	0.2		
Leszek Bubel (Polish National Party)	18 828	0.1		
Jan Pyszko (Polish Nation Organisation –Polish League)	10 371	0.1		
Adam Slomka (Polish Confederation –Freedom and Work)	8 895	0.1		

Source : Gazeta Wyborcza

D-7

7 days before
the poll

Presidential Election in Poland, a round up one week before the election

30 million Poles are being called to vote on 20th June next for the first round of the presidential election – an election that has come four months earlier than planned due to the accidental death of outgoing Head of State, Lech Kaczynski on 10th April last. The latter died with his wife and 94 other people in a plane crash in Petchorsk, a town in Russia near Smolensk. The presidential delegation was on its way to Katyn to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the execution of 22,000 Polish officers by the Soviet secret services.

The interim of the Polish presidency has been ensured by Diet leader, Bronislaw Komorowski (PO), who is also standing for Civic Platform in this Presidential election.

Poles living abroad are allowed to vote in this presidential election. In the UK that has a Polish population of 750,000 (half of whom live in London) 45 polling stations will be open (the most outside of Poland), 8

of which are in London. During the parliamentary elections on 21st October 2007, 48,000 Poles in the UK registered on the electoral rolls so that they could fulfil their civic duty.

This year given the date chosen for the possible 2nd round (4th July) the authorities decided to open polling stations in the Poles' favourite holiday resorts (Egypt,

Turkey and Spain). This measure involves PO voters above all, who are more likely to spend their holidays abroad. Low turnout in the 2nd round would be a factor that would favour Law and Justice (PiS) whose electorate are often less motivated.

Civic Platform candidate, Bronislaw Komorowski has travelled to the UK where he met the Polish community. On 23rd October 2005, during the second round of the presidential election Donald Tusk (PO) won 75% of the votes of Poles living in the UK, against 46% in Poland. *"If the Polish economy continues to grow at the present rate many Poles will come home,"* declared Bronislaw Komorowski on the Polish radio in London. The leftwing candidate Grzegorz Napieralski (Democratic Left Alliance, SLD), also made the trip to the UK for the campaign and encouraged the Poles to return to live in their country.

Officially there are 10 candidates:

- Bronislaw Komorowski (PO), Marshall (chair) of the Diet, former Defence Minister (2000-2001) and Interim President of the Republic since the death of Lech Kaczynski;
- Jaroslaw Kaczynski (PiS), twin brother of the President of the deceased President of the Republic Lech Kaczynski and former Prime Minister (2006-2007);
- Waldemar Pawlak (Polish Farmers' Party, PSL), present Deputy Prime minister and Economy Minister in the government led by Donald Tusk;
- Grzegorz Napieralski (Democratic Left Alliance, SLD), leader of the main leftwing party and the youngest of all the candidates (36);
- Marek Jurek (Law of the Republic of Poland, PR), former leader of the Diet (2005-2007);
- Boguslaw Zietek (Labour Party, PPP), chair of the union confederation WZZ Sierpien 80, which lies to the left on the political scale;
- Kornel Morawiecki, historic leader of the union Fighting Solidarity;
- Janusz Korwin-Mikke (Freedom and Rule of Law, WiP), former leader of Political Union and supporter of the monarchy;
- Andrzej Olechowski, independent candidate supported by the Democratic Party (SD), former member of Civic Platform (PO) which he left in 2009 and of which

he was the founder with Donald Tusk and Maciej Plazynski (who died in the plane crash on 10th April last) and former Finance and Foreign Minister;

- Andrzej Lepper (Self-Defence of Poland-Samoobrona, S), former Deputy Minister and Agriculture Minister (2006-2007).

Jaroslaw Kaczynski (PiS) held his first major campaign meeting in Zakopane at the heart of the Catholic territory in the south of Poland. Over the last weeks, the PiS leader's approach has changed. The former Prime Minister is less aggressive and is keen to position himself in the centre of the political scale. He is being more tolerant with regard to his German and Russian neighbours. *"Poland's economic success is strongly associated with that of Germany and Poland must maintain good relations with its neighbour in the West,"* he declared in Slubice, a town that lies on the Oder, on the Polish-German border. Just a few weeks ago Jaroslaw Kaczynski thanked the Russians for their attitude when his brother was killed. *"Poland suffered a major tragedy on 10th April last and the Poles are grateful for every tear spilled, each candle that has been lit, and each gesture of compassion"* he stressed. *"These words were appreciated by the Russians, the speech on Germany may have had a similar effect,"* analyses historian Bogdan Musial.

Jaroslaw Kaczynski, whose party has often played on the divisions within the Polish population, called for *"the end of the Polish-Polish war, the cause of discord and suffering which does the country no good."* However many analysts doubt the former Prime Minister's sincerity.

He insisted on declaring his support to Prime Minister Donald Tusk (PO) in his fight to overcome the major flooding that devastated and is still devastating Poland, notably in the south-east of the country; this has led to the death of around 20 people and has forced many people to leave their houses. But the former Prime Minister also criticised the government for the lack of organisation of the emergency services. Jaroslaw Kaczynski declared that if there were any more floods he would not be against the government declaring a state of natural disaster, a measure that is expected by 58%

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of the Poles according to the polls. He also turned some of his pre-electoral meetings into charity concerts held for the benefit of the flood victims.

This electoral campaign that is taking place in a country in mourning is really specific: the accident on 10th April and the floods are weighing heavy on the two main candidates - Bronislaw Komorowski and Jaroslaw Kaczynski – likewise on all Poles. *“The chiefs of staff of both teams in the campaign are holding back. The party that attacks the first knows that it may also lose everything,”* indicated Eryk Mistewicz, a political marketing expert.

Running favourite in the presidential election Bronislaw Komorowski is not having an easy time. Enjoying a certain advantage since he has been ensuring the interim as head of State, he cannot however afford to make a mistake. *“The Presidency of the Republic is a major challenge and the goal for Poland is to catch up with the countries of the old European Union,”* indicated Bronislaw Komorowski who said he supported his country’s accession to the euro area *“as quickly as possible”*, by 2014-2016. *“All of the State institutions, the future President of the Republic and the present Parliament must support the government’s determination*

to adopt the euro within this time limit,” Jaroslaw Kaczynski believes that Poland would be better advised to adopt the single currency once adopting the euro is to the *“advantage”* of the country’s economy. In spite of the differences between the two brothers and the political circumstances the former Prime Minister should, if elected, follow the work that his deceased brother started and counter the privatisations that Donald Tusk’s government has introduced and fight to increase State spending.

According to the latest poll by GfK Polonia, published on 12th June last Bronislaw Komorowski is due to win the 1st round of the presidential election with 42% of the vote against 29% for Jaroslaw Kaczynski. Grzegorz Napieralski is due to come 3rd with 7% of the vote and Deputy Prime Minister and Economy Minister Waldemar Pawlak, 2%. The six other candidates will be below the 1% threshold of votes.

In the 2nd round the interim President is due to beat the PiS candidate with 58% of the vote – the latter is due to win 34% of the vote.

The real question in this presidential election is the following: do the Poles want cohabitation again? The answer will start to emerge on 20th June.

RESULTS of the 1st round

Bronislaw Komorowski and Jaroslaw Kaczynski will face each other in the 2nd round on 4th July

On 4th July the Poles will have to decide between the two candidates that came out ahead on 20th June during the 1st round of the presidential election: Bronislaw Komorowski (Civic Platform, PO), Marshall (leader) of the Diet, the Lower Chamber in Parliament and present interim Head of State won 41.2% of the vote; Jaroslaw Kaczynski (Law and Justice, PiS), twin brother of the outgoing President Lech Kaczynski who died in the plane crash on 10th April, won 36.7% of the vote.

The leader of the main leftwing party (Democratic Left Alliance, SLD), Grzegorz Napieralski, came third with 13.7% of the vote. *“Grzegorz Napieralski’s result shows that the electorate on the left is waking up in Poland,”* said political expert Kazimierz Kik.

The former leader of the Political Union and supporter of the monarchy Janusz Korwin-Mikke (Freedom

and Rule of Law, WiP), won 2.5%, Waldemar Pawlak (Polish Farmers’ Party, PSL), present deputy Prime Minister and Economy Minister in the government led by Donald Tusk (PO) 1.8%, Andrzej Olechowski, an independent candidate supported by the Democratic Party (SD) 1.4%, Andrzej Lepper (Self-Defence-Samoobrona, S) 1.3%, and Marek Jurek (Republic Right Party, PR) 1%. Finally two other candidates, Boguslaw

Zietek and Kornel Morawiecki, came below the 1% mark (0.2 and 0.1%).

Turnout was higher than in the last presidential election on 9th and 23rd October 2005 and rose to 52% i.e. +2.3 points.

"I am happy and satisfied with the support and the confidence expressed by millions of Polish voters. In life as in football and in all sporting disciplines it is the injury time which is the hardest. We should be aware of this, let's mobilise our forces and all of our energy for this final in the presidential race," declared Bronislaw Komorowski.

A priori, the Civic Platform candidate in power has a greater number of votes at his disposal than his adversary in the 2nd round. The Democratic Left Alliance and the Polish Farmers' Party allied to the Civic Platform in office should, like the independent candi-

date Andrzej Olechowski, call for a vote in support of Bronislaw Komorowski. According to a poll by CBOS at the beginning of June 52% of people who lie to the left of the political scale said they were ready to grant their vote to the PO candidate in the 1st round (only 23% said they would vote for Grzegorz Napieralski) with aim of barring the way to Jaroslaw Kaczynski.

"The key to victory is faith and the belief that it is possible and necessary to win. We have to win for our country, for Poland," indicated Jaroslaw Kaczynski. The Law and Justice candidate, who started his campaign late, has however succeeded in reducing the gap that separated him from Bronislaw Komorowski. He campaigned on the theme of solidarity, holding a new discourse with regard to his historic Russian and German enemies (thanking the Russians for their show of sympathy after the death of his twin brother and saying that he was ready to cooperate with Chancellor Angela Merkel) trying to attract voters that

Results of the 1st Round of the Presidential Election (20th June 2010) in Poland

Turnout: 52%

Candidates	% of votes won
Bronislaw Komorowski (Civic Platform, PO)	41.2
Jaroslaw Kaczynski (Law and justice, PiS)	36.7
Grzegorz Napieralski (Democratic Left Alliance, SLD)	13.7
Janusz Korwin-Mikke (Freedom and Rule of Law, WiP)	2.5
Waldemar Pawlak (Polish Farmers' Party, PSL)	1.8
Andrzej Olechowski (Independent)	1.4
Andrzej Lepper (Self-Defence of Poland-Samoobrona, S)	1.3
Marek Jurek (Republic Right Party, PR)	1
Boguslaw Zietek (Labour Party, PPP)	0.2
Kornel Morawiecki	0.1
Jan Pyszko (Organisation de la nation polonaise-Ligue polonaise)	10 371
Adam Slomka (Confédération polonaise-liberté et travail)	8 895

Source: <http://wybory2010.pl>

RESULTS

of the 2nd round**Bronislaw Komorowski is elected President of the Republic of Poland**

On Bronislaw Komorowski (Civic Platform, PO) was elected President of the Republic of Poland after the second round of the presidential election on 4th July. The leader of the Diet, the lower chamber in Parliament and in virtue of this also interim Head of State since the accidental death of the outgoing Head of State Lech Kaczynski on 10th April last, won 53.01% of the vote and drew ahead of his rival Lech Kaczynski (Law and Justice PiS), the twin brother of the outgoing President and former Prime Minister (2006-2007), who won 46.99% of the vote. Turnout rose to 55.29% i.e. 1.3 points more in comparison with the 1st round on 20th June last.

"Today democracy won, our Polish democracy," declared Bronislaw Komorowski. "Division is an inseparable part of democracy. But I feel that these differences, these divisions, the pain of division are too great. There is a lot of work to do so that this does not prevent us from cooperating, that it does not prevent the creation of a new national entente". It is important not to foster division but to build a sense of unity," he added in a speech insisting on the need for dialogue and cooperation. "We thank everyone especially because it was an unusual campaign, organised in the wake of a catastrophe," concluded the election winner.

Jaroslaw Kaczynski acknowledged defeat quite quickly. *"I have to do what politesse dictates. I congratulate Bronislaw Komorowski,"* he declared on the announcement of the first results. *"It is a paradox that this presidential election has a winner but not a loser. Just a few months ago, Jaroslaw Kaczynski and Law and Justice could not have hoped for support such as this,"* analyses Jacek Wasilewski, professor at the School for Higher Studies in Social Psychology in Warsaw. Indeed, although he was beaten, Jaroslaw Kaczynski did however succeed in making an impressive comeback, threatening the election favourite and achieving an honorable result, after adopting a new moderate, tolerant approach in a bid to rally centrist voters.

Bronislaw Komorowski, whose slogan was *"entente is constructive"* played the card of rallying the population in this election and repeated that his election would put an end to cohabitation between the government of Prime Minister Donald Tusk (PO) and the conservative opposition. He called on the Poles to *"choose a 21st cen-*

ture Poland and not one that turns its back on the future and focuses on history."

The election of Bronislaw Komorowski is important for the Polish economy. The new Head of State has promised to continue the liberalisation of the economy and to work with the government to launch the necessary reforms. Donald Tusk's government also plans to take Poland into the euro area within the next five years. Debate between the two rounds mainly focused on social, public health issues and the means to withdraw Polish troops from Afghanistan. On this last point Bronislaw Komorowski promised to repatriate the 2,600 Polish troop stationed in Afghanistan by 2012.

"It is quite easy to forecast what will happen under the Presidency of Bronislaw Komorowski. He will cooperate with the government and they will start reforms – not straight away perhaps but the direction has been established," analyses political expert at the University of Warsaw, Olgierd Annusewicz.

In Poland the government undertakes the national policy, the President of the Republic has a right to veto which the Diet, the lower chamber in Parliament, can only reject with a 3/5 majority, by a vote that has to take place with at least half of the MPs in attendance. The Head of State can also decide alone with regard to the organisation of a referendum.

58 year-old Bronislaw Komorowski, a qualified historian, was an anti-communist militant in his youth. Committed to the democratic opposition forces he was imprisoned in 1981 for having organised a demonstration against the ruling powers. After the fall of communism he was elected to Parliament under the Democratic Union label

in 1991 and 1993. Five years later he was re-elected under the label of Electoral Solidarity Action (AWS). Appointed National Defence Minister in 2000 in the government led by Jerzy Buzek he occupied this post one year before quitting the People's Conservative Party (SKL) of which he had become a member; he then joined Civic Platform (PO). Bronislaw Komorowski again became an MP in Warsaw and Deputy leader of the Diet, the lower Chamber of Parliament after the general elections on 25th September 2005. He was finally appointed leader of the Diet after the election on 21st October 2007. It was in this capacity that he became interim President of the Republic on 10th April after the accidental death of

the Head of State, Lech Kaczynski.

A regional election is planned in Poland in a few months time (autumn 2010) and the next general elections will take place in October 2011. Platform Civic (PO) therefore has little time to set in place the vital reforms so badly needed in Poland and which affect public finance, taxation, retirement pensions and even the healthcare system. If we look to Jerzy Borowczak who was one of the organisers of the strike on 14th August 1980 in the shipyards of Gdansk and which led to the legalisation of the Solidarity union the election of Bronislaw Komorowski makes Poland "a normal State that no longer looks backwards".

Presidential Election Results on 20th June and 4th July 2010 in Poland.

Turnout: 54% (1st round) and 55.29% (2nd round)

Candidates	N° of votes won (1 st round)	% of votes won (1 st round)	% of votes won (2 nd round)
Bronislaw Komorowski (Civic Platform, PO)	6 981 319	41.54	53,01
Jaroslaw Kaczynski (Law and Justice, PiS)	6 128 255	36.46	46.99
Grzegorz Napieralski (Democratic Left Alliance, SLD)	2 299 870	13.68	
Janusz Korwin-Mikke (Freedom and Rule of Law, WiP)	416 898	2.48	
Waldemar Pawlak (Polish Farmers' Party, PSL)	294 273	1.75	
Andrzej Olechowski (Independent)	242 439	1.44	
Andrzej Lepper (Selfdefence of Poland-Samoobrona, S)	214 657	1.28	
Marek Jurek (Law of the Republic of Poland, PR)	177 315	1.06	
Boguslaw Zietek (Labour Party, PPP)	29 548	0.18	
Kornel Morawiecki	21 596	0.13	
Marek Jurek (Law of the Republic of Poland, PR)	177 315	1.06	
Boguslaw Zietek (Labour Party, PPP)	29 548	0.18	
Kornel Morawiecki	21 596	0.13	

Source : Internet Site of the Polish Electoral Commission (<http://wybory2010.pl>)

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