



MEDIA ADVISORY

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Former Polish president Aleksander Kwaśniewski to lecture in University of Michigan undergraduate course

Ann Arbor, MI – Former President of the Republic of Poland Aleksander Kwaśniewski returns to the University of Michigan in October to lecture in an undergraduate course entitled “Eastern Europe between the Soviet Union and the European Union,” offered by the Center for Russian and East European Studies and the Slavic Department. Few are better qualified to lecture on the topic. Born in 1954, Aleksander Kwaśniewski first entered government in 1985 holding a number of posts before his election as Poland’s president in 1995. During his presidency, Kwaśniewski co-authored the constitution of the Third Republic of Poland, signing it into law in 1997. He piloted his country to membership in NATO and has been an active supporter of further alliance enlargement. Kwaśniewski campaigned for approval of the European Union accession treaty in 2003 and saw Poland become a member on May 1, 2004 before completing his term a year later.

Kwaśniewski is making his fourth visit to the University of Michigan; his first was in April 1999 when as the President of Poland, he participated in the conference “Communism’s Negotiated Collapse: The Polish Round Table, Ten Years Later.” In September 2008 he delivered the inaugural lecture for the Weiser Center for Emerging Democracies, entitled “Promoting Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe.” He is a member of the Board of Trustees of the International Crisis Group, Atlantic Council of the United States, Amicus Europae Foundation in Warsaw, International Center for Political Studies in Kiev, International Council on Tolerance and Reconciliation, and Board of Yalta European Strategy. He is also a member of the Advisory Council of the Weiser Center for Emerging Democracies at the University of Michigan.

President Kwaśniewski will be in residence for ten days, during which time he will also give a talk in Polish and meet with students. He will offer a public lecture titled “Where are Europe’s Borders?” in the Conversations on Europe series at 4:00 pm on Thursday, October 8 in 1636 International Institute, 1080 South University, Ann Arbor. The lecture is free and open to the public.

The visit is sponsored by U-M’s Weiser Center for Europe and Eurasia and its affiliate units, the Center for European Studies-European Union Center, Center for Russian and East European Studies, and Weiser Center for Emerging Democracies.

The Ronald and Eileen Weiser Center for Europe and Eurasia (WCEE) supports faculty and student research, teaching, collaboration, and public engagement in studying the institutions, cultures, and histories of these regions. WCEE is housed in the University of Michigan International Institute with the Center for European Studies-European Union Center (CES-EUC), the Center for Russian and East European Studies (CREES), and the Weiser Center for Emerging Democracies (WCED). Named in honor of Ronald and Eileen Weiser and inspired by their time in Slovakia during Ambassador Weiser's service as U.S. ambassador from 2001-04, WCEE began operations in September 2008. For more information, visit <http://www.ii.umich.edu/wcee>.

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