

**21<sup>st</sup> National Congress of Delegates of NSZZ “Solidarnosc”  
Legnica, 29-30.08.2007**

**Program Declaration**

**PREAMBLE**

The mass social protest in July and August 1980 in defence of the dignity and workers' rights lead to establishing of the Independent and Self-governing Trade Union “Solidarnosc”. There would have been no “Solidarnosc” without the struggle of preceding generations for freedom, without the workers' fight against enslavement and disregard for their rights in Poznan in 1956, on the Coast in 1970, in Radom, Ursus, Plock and other cities in 1976, without – illegal in the People's Republic – free trade unions, and especially without the electing of cardinal Karol Wojtyla for the Pope, his pilgrimages to Poland and spiritual support.

On the basis of those historic experiences and the social teachings of the Catholic Church the program of NSZZ “Solidarnosc” was built. In the core of the program there is a worker with guaranteed human and social rights, among which the right to freedom and dignity are dominant. A special place among these rights is reserved for the right to work that ensures worker's aspirations be fulfilled and his and his family existence secured. Taking advantage of these rights puts obligations on us to act for the common good and to be guided by the principle of solidarity to ensure full participation in the social life for all, especially for the poor and disabled.

**1. THE RIGHT TO WORK - SAFE AND FAIRLY PAID**

The most important goal of NSZZ „Solidarnosc” is effective defence of the workers' rights, including the freedom of association and act for the dignity of a man. Lack of jobs is a contemporary civilization threat. Therefore full employment should be the goal of economic policy and social public authorities. Supporting these deeds NSZ “Solidarnosc” defends at the same time the right of each individual worker to fair remuneration for the work performed in safe conditions, in the legally defined time with respecting the right to leisure, especially on holidays and Sundays.

**2. SOLIDARITY WITH THE UNEMPLOYED**

A man without a job feels excluded and unwanted; he has no chance for securing the basic needs of himself and his family, therefore working people must be in solidarity with the unemployed. NSZZ “Solidarnosc” supports the activities aimed at jobs creation and general system of insurance against unemployment. For those who remain jobless the state must ensure basic social care, right to benefits and opportunity for change of qualifications.

**3. IMPROVING WORKERS' SKILLS**

Constant improvement of the workers' qualifications is a necessity stemming from changes taking place on the labour market due to migration of businesses, flow of workers and development of modern technologies. Improvement of skills – supported not only by the state, but also by the employers – reduces unemployment, economic migration and in the long run it increases the competitiveness of the entire economy. The legal foundations and principles of financing the change of qualifications should inspire the workers to activity in this area regardless of their material capabilities.

**4. ENSURING GENERAL ACCESS TO PUBLIC SERVICES**

The protection of the dignity of a worker and his family demands more than only protection of his workers' rights at work, but also demands activities securing his material and cultural needs as well as health care and education. Therefore NSZZ “Solidarnosc” is in favour of the general access to public

services, especially health protection, education and culture also for the poorest families and those with many children.

## 5. DIALOGUE AS THE BASIS FOR BALANCED DEVELOPMENT

The social dialogue is the foundations of a democratic state. NSZZ “Solidarnosc” is in favour of a dialogue with the government and employers in partnership in order to make the man and his dignity become the norm and basis of social relations. The Union is in favour of collective bargaining at the company and sector level and welcomes concluding social agreements acknowledged as the source of the law. A growing trend of unpunished violation of the workers’ right to organise trade unions is a great challenge for NSZZ “Solidarnosc”. The Union must do everything to change this.

## 6. FOR THE SOCIAL MARKET ECONOMY

The market economy gives opportunities for securing individual and social needs; however the free market deepens imbalance and demands establishing of principles that would ensure just distribution of goods and services necessary for harmonic economic and social growth. NSZZ “Solidarnosc” influences the shape of social and economic policy in order to create economy based on fair competition and creating quality jobs. The Union is not a political party struggling for power, but being an independent representation of workers it regards the politics as prudent concern for the common good. For a more effective pursue of its goals the Union is open to co-operation with political parties and will solicit the presence in parliament of people sharing the Union’s program.

## 7. IN DEFENSE OF DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Democracy, like freedom, is not given once for eternity. They must be valued and nursed. The possibility of free elections, freedom of speech and religion, freedom of association and freedom of independent civil organizations, right to life and work, independent courts of law – these are the key values of democracy. NSZZ “Solidarnosc” remains faithful to them since its very beginning and declares respect for them in the organization and in social life. NSZZ “Solidarnosc” acts for a state of law based on the principle of subsidiarity with as broadest participation of citizens in the social life as possible. Freedom of association is a fundamental human right. Violation of it is a threat of democracy that we will fight against. We expect the legal system to be our ally in this fight.

## 8. PATRIOTISM FOR THE FUTURE

Fatherland is a big common duty. Patriotism is not only an attitude of the time of fight for freedom. Patriotism allows wisely use the time of peace and building, it is a precondition of the development of the nation and state. The activities for the Fatherland were and are the foundations of NSZZ “Solidarnosc”, on which our Union based the concern about the proper place of a man in the independent and free Poland. NSZZ “Solidarnosc” encourages the promotion of patriotic attitude in the education system, public media and in everyday life. Respecting the national tradition and remembering heroic people who gave the testimony of the truth is an important element of patriotism.

## 9. TAKING CARE OF THE WEAKEST

NSZZ „Solidarnosc” encourages the state to take special care for the disabled people and those, who in the process of transformation could not find their place in the new reality. It is necessary to support those groups, ensure their equal access to rights and work, education, housing and social services.

## 10. FOR THE FAMILY

NSZZ “Solidarnosc” supports all activities for strengthening the family as a union of a man and a woman, and for protection of the family life which is the basis of the development of the society and the nation.

NSZZ “Solidarnosc” is in favour of the family-friendly policy of the state based on family-friendly tax system, proper housing policy leading to securing a flat for each family and social benefits for the poorest families. Actions for increase of remuneration and improvement of labour conditions help reduce the economic migration that weakens the family bonds. The activities of public authorities and employers should make it easier to reconcile the family life with work. NSZZ “Solidarnosc” considers the Charter of Family Rights issued by the Vatican in 1983 as the basis for activities strengthening the families and protecting the family life.

#### 11. FOR THE GLOBALISATION OF SOLIDARITY

Economic globalization must be accompanied by globalization of solidarity. This means work for a change of the process of globalisation in a way that eliminates injustice and ensures that more and more people can take advantage of it. Economic globalization must be accompanied by social development, general respect for workers’ and trade union rights, dignified employment, economic growth and fair distribution and protection of environment. The process of globalization must guarantee general access to basic services such as water, health care, education or public transport.

#### 12. PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SCIENCE

Education, culture, art and science helped our nation to survive the time of totalitarian and inhuman system of communism. Ethical patterns, national symbols and feeling of identity carried by generations in the art helped to maintain the national identity. Today, in the independent Poland, they demand the funding and support of the state and authorities of all levels in order to ensure their development and general accessibility. Also, generally accessible modern education and science, at all levels, is a precondition of development of a society living in solidarity and competitive economy. It also gives the chance for equal opportunities for the young people on the contemporary labour market.

#### 13. PROTECTION OF ENVIRONMENT

Activities protecting the natural environment are an expression of solidarity with the generations to come. The Union adopts such attitudes through ecologic education of the society, participation in projects devoted to protection of environment and activities for safe and friendly work place. NSZZ “Solidarnosc” aims at balancing the economy, labour market and protection of environment.

#### 14. PROTECTION OF INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE ON THE INTERNATIONAL AND EUROPEAN FORUM

The Union, in solidarity, participates in the international co-operation of independent and democratic trade union organizations for the protection of the workers’ interests all over the world. In order to prevent exploitation and dishonest competition destroying quality jobs, NSZZ “Solidarnosc” is soliciting that all goods and services in international trade are made and sold in full compliance with basic labour standards defined by the ILO and the international law.

NSZZ “Solidarnosc”, participating in workers’ representation bodies on the European level, implements the principle of building peace and welfare based on solidarity and democracy. Our goals we will achieve by actively participating in dialogue and social partnership – an indispensable element of the integration process. We will improve the European social model, including effective mechanisms of information and consultation along with the right to co-decide on the European, national and company level.