

# THE LEGACY OF 1989: COURAGE TO BE FREE

## Key Quotes

“The biggest threat to freedom and liberty is each one of us forgetting how important it really is”. We have lost the spirit of 1989. We are now taking hard-fought freedoms and prosperity for granted. “It’s up to all of us to ensure that the spirit of 1989 lives on”. Democracy needs truth. We have to speak the truth, not for the sake of confrontation but for the sake of democracy.

“Democracy is hard, boisterous and contentious.” Secretary’s Pompeo words echo the famous line of Winston Churchill’s: “Democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the others.”

“For a decade and a half, too many in the West took a holiday” thinking that victory of democracy is irrevocable. But the job is not finished. There are geopolitical actors on the map of Europe who do not share our values and undermine efforts to build stable democracy and a free market economy. If the garden is not tended, the jungle will grow back. Democratic countries need to work together and support each other through formal commitments to maintain our values and to deliver for our people - more security, more prosperity, a better life.

“Every nation that raises it’s voice for liberty and democracy matters. Each time a country moves away from democracy the capacity for the world to continue to deliver freedom for human beings is diminished.”

“Those who are intent on undermining democracy will begin with smaller states. They’ll view them as easier to defeat. Smaller states are under more pressure and it is important that they are on the cutting edge of protecting freedom and democracy.” Slovakia and countries in the region are frontline states in the fight between democracy and authoritarianism. We will only succeed when all countries, big and small, stand up for democracy.

“Putin is intent on undermining democracy but this is nothing new. Russia has been attempting to influence elections for decades across the world, including the United States. Technology has changed, reducing the costs. But the effort to undermine democracy is ever present. We are dedicated to pushing back.” The U.S. is ready to work with Europe to help safeguard democratic processes and prevent external disruption from hostile powers.

Michael R. Pompeo

“The world is unpredictable and full of disruption. In politics, security, economy, technology. In this world, we need a strong America and a strong Europe shoulder to shoulder. That’s where the U.S. and EU make a difference. Working together. At the sharp end. Right where it counts.”

Róbert Vass

