



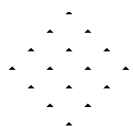
Unia w Mielniku – przywilej Wielkiego Księcia Aleksandra - Tekst angielski

In the name of the Lord, amen. The primary duty of good kings and princes is: to support the hesitant, console the saddened, assuage the outraged, and draw everything into unity and tranquility; for things small rise through concord, whilst the largest are cast down through discord. For among all forms of human evil none is more noxious and adverse than discord. Such dissent is all the more wretched in both human and divine reckoning whenever considerable effort is made, with considerable labour and peril, so that those savage and bloodthirsty nations inimical toward the true faith be repulsed from the temples and altars, and from our necks and throats. Therefore, we have learnt from experience that the union of the most illustrious Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania is not only of utility for us, but is very much necessary. About such a union itself, which is much sought-after in kingdoms and dominions, the most relevant principle is one, rather than many. Therefore, the most sagacious interpreter of things natural, when he sought the most enduring, the best, and the most beautiful principle for ruling and governing universally, thus exclaims in Homeric words: “may the king be one and only!”, thereby making it abundantly clear that everything else may prove easy to unite, insofar as there be one king although peoples sundry. For in this manner diverse nations, diverse dominions, and estates of diverse condition may easily be led to mutual understanding of one-another, to a common weal of laws, and to wedding themselves into a single indivisible body.

Accordingly, we Aleksander¹, the Grand Duke of Lithuania, Samogitia, Ruthenia, Kiev, etc., lord and heir by the favour of Divine grace, measuring with mature consideration the times past when the glorious Kingdom of Poland was unified with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania under Kazimierz (Casimir IV Jagiellon)², of blessed godly remembrance, our begetter, do see with clarity that in the fortunate union of this kind both dominions flourished with tranquility and were administered in accord with prosperity, and have extended their name to the most distant nations of the world, and this in the manner that they were formidable and struck fear not only among the neighbouring foes of the Christian Commonwealth, but also among those separated by the greatest distance.

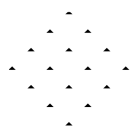
¹ Aleksander Jagiellończyk – Aleksander I Jagiellończyk/Alexander I Jagiellon (1461–1506) was King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania. Son of Kazimierz IV Jagiellończyk, he ruled the Grand Duchy of Lithuania from his father's death in 1492, whereas his brother Jan Olbracht (John Albert) in that same year ascended the throne of Poland. This marked a severance of the union between the Crown and Lithuania. Alexander was eventually made King of Poland after Jan Olbracht's death in 1501, who died childless. Contrary to what had been agreed in the Union of Mielnik (1501), Alexander in his testament named his brother Zygmunt/Sigismund his successor for the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

² Kazimierz IV Jagiellończyk/Casimir IV Jagiellon (1427–92) was the King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania. The third son of Władysław II Jagiełło and Sophia of Halshany (Sonka Olshanskaya), he ascended the throne following the death of his brother Władysław (1444). In 1454, Casimir declared war on the Teutonic Order. The fighting was concluded with the signing of a peace treaty in 1466 in Toruń (Thorn), whereby Poland regained Gdańsk Pomerania and Warmia, with the Teutonic state becoming subject to Poland as a fiefdom.

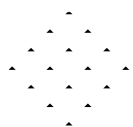


Therefore, following mature deliberations in this matter with our prelates, dukes, and barons, we have deemed that the unification of the Kingdom of Poland with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania shall not only be useful, but also necessary for the felicitous state of both, and therefore we have wished and mandated that our lords, counsels, and orators – the reverend father in Christ lord Wojciech, the bishop of Wilno; the honourable Aleksander Juriewicz, castellan of Wilno and sub-prefect of Grodno; Jan of Zabrzezie, the palatine of Troki and the marshal of our Grand Duchy of Lithuania; Mikołaj Mikołajowicz, the cup-bearer of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, sub-prefect of Bielsk; and Piotr Olechnowicz, the master of our cookeries, following the express consent of ours and of our prelates, dukes, barons, and the magnates of our Grand Duchy of Lithuania, with the admirable dukes, barons, counsels, and the magnates of the Kingdom of Poland in its universality – render them concluded by mutual exchange of letters and affirmed by oath, through the articles written below, whose tenor follows in the following words: Although there have been old records of amity and alliances¹, ones advancing the prosperity and improvement of the Commonwealth, both of the Kingdom of Poland as well as the Grand Duchy of Lithuania; nonetheless, since there be things somewhat discrepant therein with regard to perfect and sincere brotherhood, in order to strengthen our mutual and shared brotherly love, along with the eternal shared defence of the dominions, the everlasting and resolute loyalty to our brotherhood, and above all to the glory of our God and Saviour, and for the spread of immense and perpetual honour, splendour, ornament, might, honour, and renown unto our dominions of the most serene royal family of Poland and of both the aforesaid dominions and the most noble nations of Poland and Lithuania, and everlasting grandeur of the mutual Majesty, we have decided to renew and amend those old confederations with the articles written below:

¹ Alliances – Namely, the unions of Krewo (1385) and Horodło (1413).



1. The first is that the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania shall unite and wed into one inseparable and undifferentiated body, so that there be one tribe, one people, one brotherhood, and common councils, for which body there be forever one head, one king, and one lord who, at the time and venue assigned by those present and convened at the election, be chosen by common votes. And no obstruction from those absent shall hamper the election and the decree of the election, for the kingdom shall always be drawn up according to the customs preserved from ancient times with respect to the same.
2. Thus, anyone who is distinguished with an episcopal, palatine, or castellan dignity in this same Duchy shall, according to his place as assigned in the election of the king for time perpetual, give his voice and counsel in the mode and order as do the councils of the Kingdom.
3. Thus, since every body conserves itself, wherever, with salutary remedies, whilst it destroys itself with the contrary things, hence, everything that concerns the whole of the body and everything therein contained shall be ordained through a common council on both parts and, similarly, exercised by common support in things both adverse and prosperous.
4. Thus, in all successes and adversities, we, the prelates and barons of both of the dominions, are to aide one another with reciprocal remedies, with all our forces and faculties, as according the common council.
5. Thus, there is to be instituted a uniform coinage, of equal weight, in both countries, as with all other things, following from common counsel and assent.
6. Thus, all of the alliances whatsoever, also those confirmed by oath and formerly entered into with whomever, shall be observed by both of the two parties for as long as there be naught therein that infringes on the laws and amenities of the Kingdom and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.



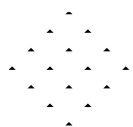
7. Thus, everybody whosoever is promoted anew as a councilor or dignitary, spiritual as well as secular, shall be obliged to swear their allegiance to the crowned King of Poland and that they shall heed the mutual written accords of the two countries.

8. Thus, everybody whoever has received a sub-prefecture or a burg-castell from his lord for administration, shall be obliged to swear to the king with respect to what he will receive – namely, that he will cede the same to no-one unless to the king, elected and crowned.

9. Thus, all the pacts as are now concluded shall be observed for time perpetual firmly and inviolably, and affirmed by the oaths and written records by each single Councilor of the Duchy as well as by the barons and the pre-eminent of the nobility; such an oath is to be required whenever expedient. 10. Thus, whosoever has attained the age of discretion, and if he be admonished by the name of the councilors for the oath, he shall be obliged to perform the very same. 11. Thus, the most-honourable lords, the orators, and the councilors here present of the Grand Lord of the Duchy of Lithuania shall pledge and promise and oblige themselves to preserve all the pacts on faith and honour, and shall attach the letters with the appended seals to these present pacts, that at the appropriate time they be confirmed by the entirety of the prelates, barons, nobles, and boyars of Lithuania with letters, seals, and oaths stipulating that the most illustrious prince and lord, Aleksander, by grace of God the Grand Duke of Lithuania, etc., shall confirm as certain and acceptable everything that is ordained herein, sworn, written, and promised. 12. Thus, let each of the parts be of counsel and aide to the other, so that the royal majesty may preserve the laws, liberties, dignitaries, and offices of both of the dominions inviolate; whilst the generality of the laws, judgements, habituations, prerogatives, and singular liberties and judiciary constitutions of the both dominions, of the old time and kept hitherto, be unharmed and preserved as such.



13. Thus, whenever it falls to the new king to confirm the Kingdom's laws upon their election as king, thereupon, under one context all the laws of the Duchy of Lithuania are together to be confirmed. 14. Thus, with regard to all the oaths to be made by the present as well as future councilors, and also the sub-prefects and those of the nobility whosoever may approach to offer the oath, observation of the things aforesaid shall be affirmed on faith and honour. 15. Thus, as has been expressed, written and confirmed by oath, let not any occasion be sought by either party to severe or contravene the present pacts nor to dismember this very one renowned body as now presently united, compacted, and conjoined. We, therefore, Alexander, by the grace of God Grand Duke of Lithuania, considering the union into one indivisible and undifferentiated body of the renowned Kingdom of Poland and our Grand Duchy of Lithuania, eternally united, do state that should a vacancy occur in either of the dominions for this indivisible body, then one head, one king, and one lord is to be elected by the councilors of both dominions, that he govern and rule, and bring about the manifold and laudable things of utility and commodiousness for the two dominions, as described in the present articles, not solely for the future of themselves, but verily for the greatest preservation and increase of the Christian Commonwealth in profitability, thereby imitating, as appropriate and equitable, the most salubrious examples of our godly progenitors and ancestors who, for the greater defence and subsistence of these same dominions, endeavoured to bring to effect this same union and connection, as it appears evident from their histories and things done. Thus, these very same articles, as being in accord with our shared dignity and highly conducive to both our prosperity and that of our dominions, with respect to all of their clauses, chapters, and points do we commend, accept, approve, and ratify; in these very same, out of our certain knowledge and well-deliberated spirit, with the counsel and acceded assent of the prelates, dukes, barons, nobles of our Grand Duchy of Lithuania, we do consent and commend, accept, approve, ratify, and accord, decreeing that these obtain the strength of everlasting endurance.



We vow in our good Christian faith, with our ducal word and under the obligation made through us with the present oaths, we and our successors, notwithstanding the multiplication of the our progeny and that of our successors, that the union and federation of the prefaced dominions, be kept under one lord governing in future times in perpetuity; and we do subject and oblige, with no adulteration or fraud whatsoever, to inviolably keep and observe and fulfill, as to the effect, all the things and everything singular as is put forth and also contained, declared, and expressed in the present articles. And we do furthermore vow that all the prelates, dukes, barons, nobles, magnates, and the notable communities of our Duchy of Lithuania shall we conduct so that they accept, approve, ratify, and confirm all that is contained in these present letters of ours and in the afore-inserted; and these shall they, themselves and their successors, carry out and maintain under the faith, honour, and obligation of the presently provided oaths, which they shall individually offer and make and shall be bound by them, as well as shall they issue perpetual letters from the above relevant letters, fortified with their seals, and they shall also pledge and promise for the other prelates, dukes, barons, nobles, magnates, and the notable communities of our Grand Duchy of Lithuania, now absent, that these same and their successors, the sooner the better and as soon as it might be required from them, shall preserve all the things proposed afore upon the faith and honour and obligation of the oaths offered by them, which they ought thereupon to offer, and that the necessary letters according to this order, as were fortified by their seals, shall be given and conceded, this to be performed and observed.

As testified by these letters [i.e., this present document] whereto our seal is presently appended. Done and given in Mielnik on the Saturday preceding the blessed Simone and Jude the apostles [October 230, in the year of Our Lord one-thousand five-hundred and one, with the prelates present thereat and assenting to the afore-proposed: the reverend father in Christ Lord Wojciech Tabor¹ the bishop of Wilno and likewise the magnanimous, and noble barons, our counsels [...], our dignitaries and officials, similarly present and witnessing the afore-proposed and thereto assenting.

Translated © by Tristan Korecki, Philip Earl Steele

¹ Wojciech Tabor –Wojciech Tabor (c.1453–1507), Bishop of Wilno.