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MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER

It is with great pleasure that I send my warmest greetings to the Australian-Polish Historical Society and all Polish Victorians as they celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the Solidarity movement.

For Poles around the world, this serves as an important occasion to take pride in and reflect upon Poland's key role in the fall of Eastern European communism. For those like myself who viewed from afar the sweeping changes brought about by the Solidarity movement, the extraordinary sense of resilience and common purpose of that time is still a source of inspiration.

Yet it is the smaller human stories encapsulated in the Historical Society's various exhibitions and community events that promise to be most moving. Aided by original artefacts and images, first-hand accounts of personal hardships and persecution provide a timely insight into what life is like when fundamental social and political freedoms are denied, and the remarkable courage exhibited by the people of Poland to demand these rights be restored.

I congratulate the Australian-Polish Historical Society for their vision and energy in staging these special anniversary celebrations and encourage all Polish Victorians to take this opportunity to share their experiences to ensure they are preserved for future generations.

A quarter of a century after the Solidarity movement reminded the world about the power of the people, each of us has a role to play in upholding the democratic ideals we hold so precious and advancing our common goal of a better and fairer Victoria.

My best wishes once again on this special occasion.



HON STEVE BRACKS MP
Premier of Victoria