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## Rector's Welcome

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## **Rector's Welcome**



**WAR STUDIES UNIVERSITY**

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09 March 2023, Warsaw

Ms. Lynn RHODES

**PRESIDENT  
INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE  
COMPARATIVE STUDY OF CIVILIZATIONS**

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Dear President Lynn Rhodes,

With immense pleasure, we welcome the beginning of cooperation of the War Studies University with the International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations (ISCSC). As an Organizing Partner of the 2023 ISCSC annual conference entitled "Civilizational Security", we will facilitate solutions to make the conference impactful, memorable and internationally fruitful.

The War Studies University is Poland's highest military academic institution with traditions dating back to the royal Corps of Cadets, an academic setting established in 1765 in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth for future soldiers, diplomats and public servants. Owing to this tradition and the school's successors, we educate both military and civilian students in the areas related to national defense and international security. We focus both on shaping the young generation and supporting experienced professionals. This is why among our students, you will find both secondary school graduates looking for the fulfillment of their vocation within the national security and experienced military personnel aiming to advance their professional knowledge.


Apart from education, the War Studies University also focuses on research on geopolitical, civilizational and technological trends to facilitate a stable global future and peace between civilizations. The university's Center for Security Studies is tasked with spotting and analyzing early signals potentially disruptive to global security to relay them to relevant public stakeholders. The center currently consists of three main units: the Asia Research Unit, Post-Soviet Regions Research Unit and Civilizational Challenges Research Unit.

We are pleased to join forces and partner with the International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations to organize the 2023 ISCSC Annual Conference, which aims to analyze the prospects of civilizational security, understood as security related to belonging to a cultural zone. In the last years, our Civilizational Challenges Research Unit has been developing and repeatedly applying the idea of civilizational security to unpack technological and cultural complexity and uncover new layers of understanding of international affairs.

Arnold Toynbee, a British philosopher of history and one of the founding fathers of your distinguished Society, believed that, in times of crisis, civilizational security frequently depends on the actions of nations that live at the borderlands of civilizations. He called these borderlands "marches." We are recalling the concept of "a march" about Toynbee's belief that Central and Eastern Europe, that is to say, a geopolitical region ranging from Lithuania through Poland to Bulgaria, is a march of Western civilization. On his map of the world from 1952, Toynbee marked this region as "debatable" in reference to the ideological battle between Stalinist Russia and the West. But even though we all thought such battles were over after 1989, when we fast forward to 2023, we find ourselves in a setting where an even worse military war is raging: an unprovoked Russian invasion in Ukraine has left Europe speechless, bringing back the horrible images of the past — civilians tortured, women raped, children kidnapped and relocated to unfamiliar areas deep in Russia.

It is bitter to say, but many in Poland, the Baltic states and the rest of the Three Seas region, outstretched between the Baltic, Adriatic and Black Seas, have seen this tragedy coming. Why? A definite answer cannot be given in a short letter. Still, perhaps an important fact to consider is that we have not ignored the insight provided by comparative civilizational frameworks. In other words, we have retained what Vytautas Kavolis, a Lithuanian social scientist and the President of your distinguished Society in 1977-83, termed "the centrality of the concept of 'civilization' in debates on postmodern global conditions".

We hope that during our conference entitled “Civilizational Security: Clashes of Civilizations, Clashes within Civilizations, and Stable Global Futures,” to be held on September 14, 15 & 16, 2023, we will explore those dimensions of civilizational security that will help us to make a more stable and peaceful world.

*Your Sincerely*  
**RECTOR-COMMANDANT**  
  
**BG Robert KOSOWSKI, PhD**