

Letter

## Polish transition offers road map for Venezuela

From Professor Grzegorz Kolodko, Kozminski University, Warsaw, Poland

10 HOURS AGO

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At the end of the 1980s, the economic situation of Poland was deplorable. Rampant inflation, stagnation, unpaid foreign debt, devastating shortages of consumer goods, increasing emigration. As a result, the society grew tired of such mess and undemocratic political system. Yet, there were people who were ready to defend the previous regime. Just like today in Venezuela ([February 5](#)).

The Poles showed great wisdom at that time. Exactly 30 years ago, on February 6 1989, they sat down at the Round Table, where I also had my own seat. The negotiations resulted in agreements that not only successfully directed Poland to the path of the market economy and liberal democracy, but launched a process of post-communist transformation from central Europe to the ends of Asia.

The Polish Round Table should be a role model for Venezuela. The bloodshed still can be avoided by following the path of a wise bargain. Foreign countries should not be a party to the escalating conflict, but must support a reasonable compromise. Venezuela may be the second Poland, but it may also become the second Syria. Time to choose.

### **Professor Grzegorz Kolodko**

*Kozminski University, Warsaw, Poland*

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