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"Poland not alone in pressing for joint defence"

Poland is not alone in pressing for joint defence as a basic Alliance function, President Bronislaw Komorowski said at the Sunday-opened NATO summit in Chicago. He added that an anti-missile shield was among the priorities in this respect.

Bronislaw Komorowski also said that there was a "general belief" that NATO's ISAF mission in Afghanistan should wind up by the end of 2014.

"Poland was not alone in supporting the view that the defence of the member states is a basic Alliance function. Neither was it alone when it stressed that this should find reflection in concrete steps and decisions, starting from training, through eventuality plans, to an anti-missile shield system and developing the capacity for participation in larger operations demanding involvement by more than one corps", Bronislaw Komorowski told reporters summing up the summit's first sitting.

Referring to the Afghanistan mission, Komorowski remarked that its conclusion should comply with decisions made at NATO's Lisbon summit.

"There is a rather general belief - one which I personally very much have and do support - that the decisions which fell at Lisbon should be understood unambiguously, not as a designation to change the end of 2014 as the mission's conclusion date", the Polish president declared.

Bronislaw Komorowski added that post-2014 aid to Afghanistan will be regulated by "completely new decisions, a new mandate and a new concept which all (NATO members - PAP), including Poland, will relate to in decisions regarding their involvement level".

Asked about the NATO members' financial contributions to the ISAF operation, Komorowski said there were currently no decisions on the matter and none expected in the near future.

"There are no decisions on this matter and I don't believe any will fall in the nearest time. This will be undertaken in debates concerning the Alliance's position as a whole", he said.

Bronislaw Komorowski also voiced optimism about the announced initial readiness of NATO's missile defence system. "Today we are engaged in the construction of a NATO missile defence programme", Bronislaw Komorowski declared and said he was sure Poland will back the project.



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Commenting his talks with German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Bronislaw Komorowski said they focused on Ukraine and the European Football Championship organised jointly by Ukraine and Poland. Commenting recent political turbulencies around the tournament, Bronislaw Komorowski stressed that Merkel and he "shared the view that sporting events should be shielded from (...) strictly political situations to a maximum degree".

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