

National Security Bureau

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Head of BBN for Polish Market: "The EU and NATO should complement each other"

Head of BBN Stanisław Koziej commentary for Polish Market (nr 7-8 <203>/2013) economic magazine. S. Koziej writes about the security policy of the NATO and EU, and modernisation of the Polish Armed Forces.

The EU and NATO should complement each other

"When it comes to security, the most important challenges facing Poland are to encourage NATO and the EU to practice long-term strategic thinking, something about which we are trying to convince our allies, and - right after helicopters and missile defence that are given priority today- to tackle cyberdefence measures and military-oriented space technologies," says prof. Stanisław Koziej, Secretary of State, Head of the National Security Bureau (BBN).

It is important to consolidate NATO around its basic function - defence - that has been at its core since the Treaty was signed in 1949. It is especially vital given that NATO's operation in Afghanistan - in which the Alliance has been strongly involved for the last ten years conceptually, organizationally and military - will come to an end in 2014. Unfortunately, this was done at the expense of defence, and now we think that it is time for NATO to come back to its roots and begin paying more attention to its basic function.

Such a transformation will find its expression in "Steadfast Jazz", NATO's military exercises organized for the first time in many years. They will be held in November in Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and the Baltic Sea. It is the first time such important exercises will take place in new member states. The degree of individual countries' involvement in the exercises will be a kind of test that will show whether the allies take seriously the declaration contained in the strategic concept of NATO.

In the case of the European Union, Poland's second pillar of external security, the major challenge is to have a new security strategy adopted. The current one dates back to 2003, and since then much has changed in the security environment of the EU. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary to seriously reflect on the building blocks of the EU and to redefine them. It is highly advisable that the December EU summit, which will be devoted to the common security and defence policy, ends up with the conclusion that a strategic review of the security policy is needed. The result could be a White Paper of the European security, and consequently a new security strategy. Unfortunately, it is not easy, because the EU is concerned with other problems today.

I believe that the EU and NATO should complement each other. From the strategic point of view, it would be fantastic if we could work out systemic mechanisms of interaction between these two organizations in the field of security. Sadly, regular cooperation failed to be developed at the very beginning, that is when the EU common security policy was first created. It takes place on an ad hoc basis,

from operation to operation, as long as it is considered worth being carried out jointly. Thus, incidental solutions are adopted. Countries - as shown by the ongoing financial problems - cannot afford to function effectively in both these organizations. In fact, the same forces and resources are spent for the needs of NATO and EU, which confirms that some coordination is necessary. Cooperation with NATO should be one of the key issues on the political agenda as part of the new EU security strategy.

For the last ten years, Polish armed forces have been undergoing regular modernization. In the 1990s, it was a rather chaotic process, as ideas varied every year and it was not certain what resources will be available. Then, as of 2001, when Bronisław Komorowski, the then Minister of Defence, introduced a statutory, fixed ratio of defence spending (1.95% of GDP), the modernization of the armed forces has been pursued in a regular manner. The effects are already visible today, because in many ways we have modern armed forces. It is also thanks to the experience gained in Iraq and Afghanistan. Both these missions helped modernize the Polish army with such equipment as the F16, Wolverines or AP rockets.

It is important to continue the modernization, and provided that the investment ratio is not going to change in the foreseeable future - although the Ministry of Finance is looking for ways to break through the protective barrier around the defence budget-we can reasonably plan and launch in the upcoming years large-scale modernization projects, such as missile defence and helicopter programmes. We anticipate that the next tenyear programme, which, according to the NATO cycle, will be introduced in three or four years, will include two other promising programmes. These are cyberdefence systems, because that is the area facing the biggest challenges, and - although it still seems to some people a fantasy - the use of space in security systems, especially communication and reconnaissance. Without harnessing the potential of computerized combat systems, it will be difficult to imagine the effective functioning of the armed forces in ten or fifteen years' time.

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