

<https://en.bbn.gov.pl/en/news/365,President-Warsaw-NATO-summit-good-occasion-for-new-strategy.html>

10.04.2024, 14:45

30.10.2014

President: Warsaw NATO summit good occasion for new strategy

The 2016 NATO summit in Warsaw could be a good occasion to launch work on a new Alliance strategy, President Bronislaw Komorowski said on Thursday during a lecture at the NATO Defense College in Rome.

Bronislaw Komorowski, on a three-day visit in Italy, said NATO needed a long-term strategy to cope with the crisis in East Europe.

"What is needed is a long-term strategic adjustment of NATO as a whole to lasting challenges", the president said, pointing out that "the crisis on the (NATO) eastern flank will have a lasting character".

Komorowski admitted that decisions made at the September NATO summit in Wales were "an important step", but noted that "a full adjustment by the Alliance will have to express itself in a new strategic concept".

In this context president Komorowski stressed that the main element of a new NATO strategy should be raised presence in the Alliance's fringe states to cut response times to threats.

According to Bronislaw Komorowski the changes brought about by the Ukraine crisis were so grave that they marked the "end of the post-Cold War era in international relations".

Today NATO and the entire West are facing a strategic change in Europe", the president said. In this connection Komorowski remarked that the conflict between Ukraine and Russia was new in that it was a hybrid war, and suggested that NATO prepare its forces "for possible negative scenarios".

President also reminded about the rise of the Islamic State in the south and warned that it was a threat not only to the Middle East but also the EU and NATO countries.

In Komorowski's opinion NATO should retain "an open character" and demonstrate readiness to defend the values on which the Alliance was founded. He also advocated raised military spending by the NATO members.

The NATO Defense College was founded in 1951 on an initiative by general and later US President Dwight Eisenhower. As of September its commander is Polish general Janusz Bojarski.

From Rome Komorowski departed to Palermo, where he was scheduled to give a lecture to students of the city's university on Friday.

Source: president.pl; PAP

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