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09.04.2024, 06:34

10.12.2015

President meets British PM David Cameron

Poland and Britain support the extension of sanctions against Russia in connection with the Ukraine conflict, and agree that the NATO summit should raise the Alliance's presence in Central-East Europe, presidential aide Krzysztof Szczerski informed Thursday.

Earlier on Thursday President Andrzej Duda received visiting British PM David Cameron. The talks among others concerned security in the context of the situation in Syria and the refugee crisis in Europe. Szczerski said the talks on the refugee situation "laid emphasis on the need to resolve the crisis by aiding people close to their homes to give them hope of returning there".

Szczerski said that the main weight should be laid on humanitarian aid to refugee camps and "special forms of cooperation" with countries in the Middle East which take in refugees.

In their talks on the Ukraine crisis both politicians agreed that sanctions against Russia should be upheld in face of the incomplete fulfilment of the Minsk ceasefire agreements, Szczerski said. He added that Duda and Cameron also agreed that next year's NATO summit in Warsaw should effect in raised and lasting NATO presence in Central-East Europe.

Krzysztof Szczerski stressed that Poland and Britain also agreed that the EU needed reforming and should remain "a union of equal states and free nations". In this context he said that the EU needed more adjustment to the needs of the member states, and that a good idea in this respect was a "flexible Union" concept allowing each member state to fully exploit its economic potential. Szczerski added that in this respect Duda especially mentioned Poland's energy potential. Both politicians also agreed on the need for reforms that would raise the role of national parliaments.

In the talks about EU reforms Poland laid special emphasis on non-discrimination with regard to free person flow, equal rights and respect for acquired rights. Issues related to the British labour market are still an open issue, Szczerski said.

Asked if Duda openly stated disagreement with Cameron's plans to curb social benefits for immigrants, Szczerski said that the president "stated clearly, that the Polish state had obligations towards its citizens wherever they lived and that these obligations, the rights held by Poles, were under the protection of the Polish state".

Asked if Britain's threats to leave the EU were not a sign of arrogance, Szczerski said that "today, with the EU torn by numerous internal crises, it would be a good thing if another crisis connected with the departure of one of the (member - PAP) states did not take place".

Relating Duda's and Cameron's economic talks, Szczerski informed that both politicians agreed that their countries has a large common investment potential which should be developed, but it was important for this to take place on the common European market.

Source: president.pl; PAP

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