

National Security Bureau

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President: "Warsaw NATO summit is to strengthen Central European security and the alliance's southern flank"

The goal of the Warsaw NATO summit is to strengthen Central European security and the alliance's southern flank, President Andrzej Duda said after a meeting with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg in Brussels on Monday.

Speaking about the main goals of the NATO summit in Warsaw, the Polish president stressed it had to be universal, directed to the future and decision-making.

Andrzej Duda added that NATO's adjustment should mean a stronger NATO presence in Central-Eastern Europe.

This NATO presence "should be as permanent as possible. The point is for NATO soldiers to be visible in Poland and other CEE countries", Duda explained. Asked what minimal presence of international forces in Poland he would find satisfactory, the president said that it would have to be strong enough "to truly guarantee the security of NATO's eastern flank".

"Consequently, what is needed is a significant presence of infrastructure and troops ... and a well-designed system for supporting those units and defences in case of an act of aggression", Andrzej Duda remarked, adding that this would also have to involve joint military exercises and training in coordination.

The Polish president mentioned situations of reduced security on NATO's southern flank and said that measures to properly strengthen anti-terrorist security were needed there.

Strengthening NATO's defence potential is a natural consequence, among other things, of Russia's non-defensive actions. "Over the past few years Russia has carried out a number of operations that are hard not to call aggressive", Andrzej Duda said, adding that he hoped all the NATO countries were observing these actions, such as military potential being strengthened in the Kaliningrad district or near Russia's borders with Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania.

President Duda pointed out that dialogue with Russia should continue. "Today we cannot say that we have enemies anywhere but we have problems with the so-called architecture of security - and what is needed here is dialogue, especially with Russia. It cannot be given up, it must go on, but we cannot pretend that we do not see some issues," he told reporters.

"We need to make sure to send a clear signal that the door to NATO remains open", the Polish president also said. He added that participation in the July summit of countries cooperating with NATO should be considered, and mentioned Sweden, Finland, Australia, Jordan, Georgia as well as Moldova and Ukraine.

NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg said Poland was a strong NATO member and underlined its engagement in Afghanistan and Kosovo as well as the political support it offered to Ukraine.

Everyone needs to make sure that the Warsaw summit leaves NATO stronger and more flexible, and as always committed to the values on which it was founded, namely democracy, individual freedom and the rule of law, Stoltenberg remarked. He added that these values were a major source of NATO unity, and unity was the alliance's greatest strength.

NATO cannot afford the luxury of choosing between responding to challenges coming from the South and those coming from the East, according to Stoltenberg, but had to deal with both at the same time.

According to Stoltenberg, Poland's spending on defence at 2 percent of GDP is very significant.

Source: PAP; president.pl

Fot.: Andrzej Hrechorowicz, KPRP



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