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01.05.2024, 04:21

21.10.2016

Head of National Security Bureau: the role of JFTC in Bydgoszcz should grow

The role of Joint Force Training Centre (JFTC) in Bydgoszcz should increase in connection with the planned deployment of NATO forces in the region - remarked Paweł Soloch, Head of the National Security Bureau, on Friday, following his return from the USA, where he visited Allied Command Transformation to which JFTC is subordinated.

Head of the National Security Bureau reminded in his conversation with the Polish Press Agency (PAP) that next to Allied Command Operations, ACT is one of the two strategic commands which works on the military implementation of the political decisions.

“President Andrzej Duda, whom I represented, is fully aware of the fact that the political decisions agreed at the Summit, which are now supposed to be implemented, would not have been possible without a credible military assessment” Paweł Soloch remarked.



He stressed that the ACT in Norfolk, which has replaced NATO SACLANT after its dissolution in 2003, “is not accidentally placed on the premises of the largest naval base in the world, where 120 thousand members of the US military personnel are stationed”. “Such a placement allows for a direct contact with US forces structures, since ACT is working on the implementation of political decisions in the military sense, but it also participates in working out of the military parameters between the allies and the United States”, he added.

As Head of the National Security Bureau said, among the topics he raised with the ACT Commander, Denis Mercier – a French General, was JFTC in Bydgoszcz, which is subordinated to Allied Command Transformation.

“We assume that the role of the Bydgoszcz Centre should grow due to the planned presence in Poland of the NATO battalion, as part of the enhanced forward presence, as well as the American brigade”, Head of the National Security Bureau remarked.

He added that until recently JFTC was concentrated on tasks connected with NATO expeditionary missions, such as ISAF in Afghanistan, whereas nowadays the focus is shifting to collective defence, as a result of the Warsaw Summit.

“Allied Command Transformation plays a special role in working out Minimum Capability Requirements (MCRs), and in the context of this year`s NATO decisions, they refer mainly to collective defence”, P. Soloch said.

He also stressed that ACT is responsible for developing a plan of trainings which “also play a role in deterring a potential adversary”.

Following NATO decisions in Warsaw, the Eastern borders of the Alliance will be strengthened with four battalion-

size battle groups, which will be deployed on a rotational basis to Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

According to the announcement made by Lt. Gen Ben Hodges, Commander USAREUR, a US Motorized Battalion from the Armored Cavalry Regiment, along with 70 Stryker vehicles is scheduled to redeploy from Vilseck, Bavaria to Orzysz, as part of the enhanced forward presence. The more than 800-strong unit is scheduled to arrive in April and will report to the NATO Command. The NATO battalion in Orzysz will be commanded by Americans (the unit will also be composed of soldiers from other countries). The United Kingdom will act as the Framework Nation in Estonia, Canada will assume that role in Latvia, whereas Germany will be the lead nation in Lithuania.

In addition, an American Brigade Combat Team will be redeployed from Fort Carson, Colorado, through Germany, to NATO's Eastern flank, including to the Baltic States, Bulgaria, Romania and Poland, where its major forces will be stationed in locations indicated by the Polish Ministry of National Defence, among others in Drawsko Pomorskie and Żagań. One rotation will last 9 months. In September, Head of the National Security Bureau visited NATO Joint Force Training Centre in Bydgoszcz and the local NFIU – one of the units enabling the activity of the so called NATO spearhead force.

Source: PAP

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