

National Security Bureau

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2018-02-23, 19:02

30.11.2017

Poland helps US build its presence in Europe - security head

The United States treats Poland as a partner in building its political and economic presence in Europe, PAP was told by the head of Poland's National Security Bureau (BBN), Pawel Soloch, at the end of his three-day visit to Washington.

The visit was dominated by collective security issues such as the implementation of arrangements made at a NATO summit in Warsaw last year, Pawel Soloch said.

While in Washington, Soloch talked to several high-ranking officials responsible for political, European, military and security issues at the US State Department.

"During the meetings, I thanked my US interlocutors on behalf of the Polish authorities and expressed satisfaction with the fast implementation pace of all the decisions - both those taken by NATO with reference to the 'forward presence' as well as those made by the US government", Soloch told PAP.

The US officials assured him, Soloch said, that the US government's position towards Russia had not changed, "primarily due to lack of change in Russia's policy, which, by its dynamics of expanding offensive, aggressive capabilities, remains a threat to security".

Other issues discussed in Washington included "a common Polish-US stance on planned reforms in NATO command structures and the prospects of a potential increase in US military presence in Poland".

Soloch also discussed Polish-US security cooperation with several US congressmen, including Trent Franks, a member of the influential House Armed Services Committee.

The 15-day period stipulated in the Arms Export Control Act during which Congress had the right to halt or modify the US offer for the sale of the Patriot anti-missile system to Poland, expired on Wednesday, which gives the US administration the green light to finalise the offer.

The Patriot system will cost Poland up to USD 10.5 billion.

"The offer presented to Poland and its conditions did not raise any concerns in Congress", Soloch said after the meetings.

"Now the point is to start detailed negotiations and, by the way, I have information that my colleagues from the Defence Ministry will be coming to Washington soon, with Deputy Minister Bartosz Kownacki's and Deputy Minister Tomasz Szatkowski's visit scheduled for the upcoming couple of days", the BBN head added.

Before his return flight to Poland, Soloch also met with representatives of Washington institutional opinion leaders, including the Heritage Foundation, German Marshall Fund of the United States, the Center for European Policy Analysis, the Atlantic Council and Rand Corporation.

Source: PAP

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