

# National Security Bureau

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## Head of BBN visits Latvia

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**On December 7 and 8, 2017, the Head of the National Security Bureau paid a visit to Latvia, where he took part in the “Baltic Meeting” bringing together presidential security advisers from the Baltic States and Poland. Minister Paweł Soloch also met with Raimonds Bergamanis, Minister of Defence of Latvia, and visited soldiers of the Polish Military Contingent in Latvia, which constitutes part of NATO BBG.**

The Baltic Meeting opened by the President of Latvia, Raimonds Vejonis, was another in a series of consultations launched in this format back in 2013. The talks were aimed among others at discussing security situation in the region as well as consulting positions ahead of next year`s NATO Summit in Brussels.



Participants have agreed that the Brussels Summit should constitute further adaptation of the Alliance to new challenges and contribute to stronger allied presence in the eastern flank. An important item on the agenda of the upcoming Summit will be the reform of NATO`s Command Structure, including the establishment of new command HQs. Taking into account the interests of the region as well as the operational requirements, it is important to ensure that one the commands is set-up in our region.



Another topic which was raised concerned the recently established EU permanent structural cooperation in the area of security policy (PESCO). The participants of the meeting stressed that the above-mentioned initiative has to be complementary, not competitive, to NATO.

Following the decisions taken at the Warsaw NATO Summit, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia are hosting in their territories NATO Battalion Battle Groups in the framework of the enhanced Forward Presence (eFP). Poland is part of the Canadian-led battle group deployed in Adazi, Latvia. Following the decision of the President, the contingent is composed of up to 200 troops, which makes it third largest contributor to the unit.



The Head of BBN met with soldiers of the Polish Military Contingent and discussed with NATO`s BBG commanders allied activities in Latvia. It should be pointed out that 2017 is the first year of eFP`s functioning. It is therefore important to gather experiences which may streamline coordination procedures among the Allies.

At the meeting with Latvia`s Minister of Defence, the question of bilateral military cooperation was addressed, as well as cooperation in the framework of NATO and the European Union. Minister Paweł Soloch expressed his

satisfaction with the fact that starting from 2018 Latvia will join the group of NATO members allocating at least 2% of GDP for defence.

It should be underlined that strengthening bonds in cooperation with the Baltic States is one of the security policy priorities of President Duda, who strives to build coherence of the entire region. Therefore BBN remains to be active in such formats as the Visegrad Group, the Bucharest Format, which covers 9 NATO Eastern-flank states, and in the framework of the broad cooperation among the 3 Sea Initiative states. The goal of these projects is not only the development of regional cooperation but also strengthening the EU and NATO as well as boosting the transatlantic bond.

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