

Preface

Dear Readers,

The processes that are taking place today, domestically and internationally, are not dying down; on the contrary, not rarely they go in quite unexpected directions and display surprising contents. In the first quarter of 2012, along with the long-standing security-related issues, new events and associated challenges and threats have come to the fore. Among the vast array of the major international problems that directly or indirectly affect the interests and the essence of Poland's security, the financial crisis in Europe and concerns about the future of the euro-zone make themselves visible. In the Euro-Atlantic area, the erosion of the US-Russian reset is progressing, particularly in the context of controversies around missile defense. Furthermore, in February 2012 the critical turn in US military strategy that has been reaffirmed for several years was yet again confirmed. Globally, it predetermines the shifting of the centre of gravity of American military presence and activity from Europe toward Asia and Pacific, while regionally it will cause an early withdrawal of US forces from Afghanistan, with all, both military and political, implications. In the realm of non-proliferation, the Iranian nuclear program has resulted in international sanctions against Tehran and at the same time it triggered increasing fears about the conflict escalation, including Israeli armed reaction. In view of withdrawal of the international forces from Afghanistan, the search continues for a compromise deal with the Taliban in this country. The humanitarian tragedy in Syria is being perpetuated by two powers – Russia and China – objecting to possible international intervention. In the non-military fields we witness another phase of the evolution of issues concerning the (lack of) energy security on the European continent as well as the grappling with challenges and threats in the cyberspace, along with attempts to inject some order into this domain.

Faced with those changes and other problems, Poland's international and security policies remain consistent. Poland is still engaged in the stabilization missions in Afghanistan and the Balkans. Despite the tragedy that took lives of several Polish soldiers in Afghanistan just before Christmas, the Polish authorities emphasized their determination to continue transforming the character of the Polish mission in this country, as planned. In the immediate

neighborhood of Poland, in the Kaliningrad oblast, modernization of the Russian army and the deployment of new weapons raise concerns, particularly in the context of President Dmitry Medvedev's militant announcement of 23 November 2011 and Prime Minister Vladimir Putin's comments during this year's presidential campaign. Poland keeps following the path regarding the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP), which it had promoted during its EU presidency. In early February, at the 48th Security Conference in Munich, President Bronisław Komorowski proposed to amend the European Security Strategy of 2003 as the latter no longer fits in with the current international situation. At the same time, the Polish authorities are watching with concern the tendency to renationalize security policies among the allies (*vide* further tightening of the military cooperation between France and the UK, the kind of "St. Malô 2"). The British-French particularism, on the one hand, results from their will to jointly optimize the highly advanced military potentials of both powers, which exemplify the permanent structural cooperation, as envisaged in the Lisbon Treaty, and on the other hand, draws a lesson from the Libyan conflict, where the allied and European solidarity were subjected to a test, the outcome of which turned out ambiguous. Consequently, Poland needs to be more active in counteracting the growing national egoisms among its allies and partners.

Among the issues related to Poland's direct security, the problems that drew attention during the past few months include: dismantling of the Silesian and Pomeranian military districts; planned improvement of the recruitment process for the National Reserve Forces; visits paid by the President of Poland to the Polish military contingent in Afghanistan and to the special forces at home, which emphasized the special statuses and tasks of both, and preparations for the coming soccer championship EURO 2012. The National Security Bureau (NSB) has helped contribute to the debates on other important themes, such as the on-going Strategic Review of National Security, higher military education, the system of managing and commanding the Armed Forces or the future of the Polish Navy. Those issues are part of a wider spectrum of security questions analyzed by the Bureau, including in the NSB weekly (<http://www.bbn.gov.pl/>).

This issue of the "National Security" quarterly starts with a historical piece. By joining NATO and the European Union, Poland strengthened its strategic position. However, it was preceded by a decade of efforts on its own, during which the country faced both the legacy of an *ancien régime* and the qualitatively new problems of building a coherent defence system.

Although in the 90's Poland spared no effort to complete the task, still some of the issues concerning adjusting defences to the Western standards failed to be resolved satisfactorily.

The political and military situation in Europe and elsewhere underwent a radical change during the post-cold war period. Therefore, the areas, concepts and tools of strengthening the security also changed. In part, conventional arms control fell victim of its own success in the OSCE domain. Its usefulness, albeit recognized, is no longer perceived as urgent. The advanced system of arms control created during the block confrontation is driven by inertia rather than by new solutions. It is a bad forecast for building trust and security between the countries and security organizations in Europe.

Building and developing cooperation between the European Union and Russia is not an easy task. For a long time, Moscow regarded the European Community/Union as an alternative to relations with the suspected of aggressive intentions NATO. Apart from the economic, trade, technological and – generally – modernization cooperation, the parties developed also so-called “common spaces” relating more or less directly to security between the two entities. Stronger emphasis put by Brussels on the aspects of democratization and human rights led to a cooling in relations. The challenge for the Union is to overcome the current impasse in relations with Russia within the aforesaid areas. In view of the differences dividing both actors, one should expect a tortuous path, beset with the existing and prospective obstacles and difficulties rather than a spectacular breakthrough.

The situation in the Middle East has entered a new phase, with vital shifts in the policies of individual states and in the balance of power. A critical element of the region is the role and place of Turkey. The basic principles of its policy – “strategic depth” and “zero problem with the neighbors” – are dramatically verified by the dynamic events there. What kind of policy Turkey will carry out in the key security issues – regionally, *vis-à-vis* Israel, Iran, Russia, the EU, NATO and USA – will determine the main trends and pace of development of the situation.

The issues addressed in the coming NATO summit that will take place in May 2012 will cover a wide array of themes of critical significance for the future of the Alliance, the policy of security and defence of its members and relations with other actors on the international stage. It does not seem that the “open door” policy will become a priority on the agenda in Chicago. Although some “enlargement fatigue” and other difficulties are perceptible, nevertheless in Poland's interest is to consistently support the aspirations of

its eastern neighbors so they are able to join the group of democratic participants of that body and mechanism of collective defence.

Terrorism is a particularly negative phenomenon characterized by the lack of discrimination between “legitimate” participants of the fight (army, state’s security system, etc.) and innocent civilian victims. A margin of this activity includes the terribly cynical, cruel and immoral use of children in attacks carried out by Islamist terrorist organizations. This type of tactics, while not rarely effective, brings about incommensurable losses to Islam itself, as the blame for such attacks perpetrated by the extreme groups “in the name of Allah” extends – at least partially – to the whole Islamic world.

The problem of shale gas in Poland makes a comeback to this quarterly, this time in the legal and institutional dimension. Expectations for freeing Poland from dependency on the quasi-monopolistic supplier of conventional gas are high. If the deposits are as rich as the current estimations predict, this will make it possible to provide the state with high revenues and create a strategic reserve (fund) for the future, with investors having their profits guaranteed. The prerequisite is to create a proper legislation and institutional (motivating) system in this regard.

It is for the first time that we introduce in our quarterly a documentary section, where we aim to publish select, security- and defence-related documents of strategic importance. We launch it by including a Polish translation of the US strategic defence guidance published in January 2012, which details the national security strategy of that power.

Taking the opportunity, we would like to inform our Readers that the editorial team has made an application to the Ministry of Science and Higher Education for the status of a scientific periodical. Therefore the criteria and rules governing the evaluation impose on the quarterly’s authors and editors an even stricter requirement to maintain a high level of competence.

We present this issue of the quarterly hoping that it will be received with a similar acceptance and trust as the previous ones.

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