https://en.bbn.gov.pl/en/news/346,Polish-and-US-presidents-discuss-Ukraine-and-NATO.html
26.04.2024, 03:27
22.07.2014

Polish and U.S. presidents discuss Ukraine and NATO

Polish President Bronislaw Komorowski and U.S. President Barack Obama on Monday spoke about the situation in Ukraine, preparations for the upcoming NATO summit and the transatlantic community’s response to the recent downing of a Malaysian jetliner in Ukraine.

In a communique published late on Monday (local time) the White House informed that the two presidents had exchanged views over the phone before Tuesday's Warsaw meeting of nine NATO member states from Central and Eastern Europe.

"President Obama and President Komorowski agreed on the importance of raising defence spending among European members of NATO, as well as on the importance of alliance-wide and credible contributions to NATO’s reassurance efforts in Central and Eastern Europe," the White House informed in its statement.

"The two leaders also stressed the need for transatlantic solidarity in responding to the tragic shoot-down of Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 and Russia’s efforts to destabilise Ukraine," the communique also read.

Jaromir Sokolowski, minister at the President's Chancellery, told Polish Television Channel 1 on Tuesday that presidents Komorowski and Obama had discussed "strengthening the eastern flank (of NATO) and trying to find an answer to the question of how to strengthen NATO in the new international situation after Russia's aggression against Ukraine."

Speaking to President Komorowski, President Obama mentioned his declaration made in June in Warsaw about asking the U.S. Congress to assign USD 1 billion to support for the United States' allies, according to Sokolowski.

"President (Obama) said that he was optimistic about getting this White House project accepted by Congress," Sokolowski added.

The Tuesday meeting in Warsaw, organised by Poland, brings together the presidents of Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania. The main topic will be the September NATO summit in Wales.

In President Komorowski's view, "the fundamental challenge that NATO faces today" is strengthening the alliance's eastern flank.

Source: prezydent.pl; PAP

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