

<https://en.bbn.gov.pl/en/news/500,President-wants-more-NATO-presence-in-region.html>

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President wants more NATO presence in region

In the run-up to the NATO summit in Warsaw in July, Poland will make efforts to increase the presence of forces from the United States and other NATO members, as well as of NATO infrastructure, President Andrzej Duda said in Washington on Friday.

President Duda came to Washington to attend the Nuclear Security Summit, alongside leaders of more than 50 countries.

"As regards the NATO summit, we need to remember that the North Atlantic Alliance is not only the United States and Poland. We will talk about a broader participation of allied troops in strengthening (NATO's regional presence) and exercises, in intensifying common activities in Central and Eastern Europe, including Poland, of course," the president told Polish media.

President Duda stressed that Poland counted on more NATO infrastructure in the region. "We would like to host the North Atlantic Alliance's military infrastructure on our territory so that it could serve the Alliance's exercises, or our joint exercises, but on the other hand so that it could be used by the Polish army."

Whether this presence will be permanent or rotational is of secondary importance, according to Duda. "What I do care about is that this presence is real because to a large extent it guarantees our security and shows the Alliance's unity and strength."

Poland's view that NATO needs strengthening is shared by presidents of Turkey, Finland, Georgia and Ukraine, Duda said following his meetings with the presidents in Washington. The point is "to demonstrate that the Alliance is alive and in the case of a significant threat or an act of aggression will be able to protect the security of its members, and other countries if such a need arises."

"I believe that our proposal for the NATO summit to be decision-oriented will be fully implemented," Andrzej Duda said.

The president noted that Poland was satisfied with the United States' recent decision to send an armoured brigade to Central and Eastern Europe.

On March 30, the United States announced plans to strengthen their land forces in Europe by continuous rotational presence of armoured brigades, which will increase the total US Army presence in Europe to three brigades. The army also decided to start stocking weapons in the so-called Army Prepositioning Stocks in Europe for the needs of potential current operations.

Referring to the summit's main focus, President Duda said that Poland was at the forefront of nuclear and radiological security and reminded that Poland "practically got rid of highly-enriched uranium" in collaboration with the United States. "As part of our cooperation, we handed over this uranium and our research reactor in Swierk (..) was transformed and today uses low-enriched fuel."

Andrzej Duda also reiterated that Poland was an important producer of radiological material used in medicine. "We cover a significant part of global demand for radioactive materials used for medical purposes. Therefore this type of civil security in our country is of global significance."

Source: PAP; president.pl

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