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## President: London NATO summit a success for Alliance and Poland

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**The NATO summit in London was a success for the North Atlantic Alliance and for Poland, President Andrzej Duda said on Wednesday after the close of the conference, called to mark the 70th anniversary of NATO.**



At the summit, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg stated that the leaders of the Alliance's member states had managed to reach agreement on upgrading collective defence plans for Poland and the Baltic countries. Stoltenberg said that the compromise was reached despite Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's earlier threats to block the defence plans if Turkey did not receive NATO support against Kurdish YPG militia groups in Syria.

On Tuesday, Stoltenberg said it was uncertain whether the conflict with Turkey could be resolved at the London summit.



Commenting on the summit, Duda said it had proved a success for NATO, as well as Poland and its region, and belied earlier rumours that NATO stood in a crisis and could even be facing dissolution.

"In light of what some sources wrote before the summit, what could be found in commentaries, and what various observers said about the crisis in the North Atlantic Alliance, where some even predicted that this could even mean its dissolution, it can be safely said that this summit was a success for the North Atlantic Alliance," Duda said. He added that the conference had also brought "a victory" for Poland and East-Central Europe regarding security, as the NATO states had agreed on upgrading defense plans for Poland.

"It can be said without hesitation that this summit was also a victory for Poland. (...) A very important element for us was the full agreement to upgrade collective defense plans for Poland. This was very crucial for us," the president said.

Andrzej Duda stated that Poland was strongly involved in the summit negotiations around the defence plans, and that he had personally explained the importance of the issue for Poland and the Baltic states in a telephone conversation with Erdogan.

The summit, Duda said, also discussed potential threats from Russia and possible terrorist threats from North Africa and the Middle East. He stressed that the summit laid strong emphasis on the so-called 360 degrees principle whereby the Alliance had to exercise allround watchfulness to ensure the security of its members.



Asked about rumours of closer integration between Russia and Belarus, Duda said every independent country was entitled to pick its own alliances at will, but stressed that Poland was monitoring its neighbourhood closely, including Russia's relations with Ukraine and Belarus. He added that he saw no problems with closer ties between Belarus and Russia, as long as they were based on a common consensus.

"As long as everything is based on a consensus between states and nations, I see no problem at all. The problems begin when one country begins to display aggression towards another, forcing it into certain behaviour or concessions," Duda said.

Commenting on Russia's aggression against Georgia and Ukraine, Duda said Poland expected the non-violation of the post-World War II order and the changes after 1989. "We do not agree for this order to be changed by force," he stressed, adding that in recent years Russia had "unfortunately taken such a course."

Andrzej Duda stressed however, that although Russia was a neighbour with whom Poland disagreed on a number of issues, and some of whose moves it found unacceptable, openings for improving relations had to be sought, as no country should be absolutely isolated.

Recounting his summit talks with French President Emmanuel Macron and US President Donald Trump, Duda said they revolved around the future of the North Atlantic Alliance, the building of a security zone and the fulfilment of alliance obligations.

President Duda spoke with Trump and Macron at a reception for the leaders of countries whose defence spending stood at 2 or more percent of their GDP.

*Source: PAP*

