

National Security Bureau

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President receives supreme command of armed forces

A ceremony was held on Thursday afternoon at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier on Warsaw's Pilsudskiego Square to bestow upon President Andrzej Duda the supreme command of Poland's armed forces.

The president appeared accompanied by the Presidential Horse Guard Mounted Ceremonial Squadron of the Polish Army.

The symbolic ceremony – Andrzej Duda is supreme commander of the armed forces from the moment he is sworn in – is conducted in the presence of the military, which provides an honorary company, the pennant of the President of the Republic of Poland and a military orchestra.

The speakers of the Sejm (lower house) and Senate, Elzbieta Witek and Tomasz Grodzki, were in attendance along with Defence Minister Mariusz Blaszczak, the chief of the general staff, General Rajmund Andrzejczak, the general commander of the branches of the armed forces, General Jaroslaw Mika, Operational Commander General Tomasz Piotrowski, the commander of the Territorial Defence Force (WOT) General Wieslaw Kukula and the commander of the Warsaw Garrison, General Robert Glab.

All branches of the armed forces were represented on Pilsudskiego Square along with the Military Police.

In his speech, Andrzej Duda repeated an appeal to opposition politicians for unity in military matters and the achievement of spending 2.5 percent of GDP on defence. He also promised to support Polish troops for the duration of his second term, so that they could serve "peacefully, safely, having the best equipment."

"I thank you for every day that I have been supreme commander of the armed forces, and when I have striven to support your service for the Republic," Andrzej Duda said.

The president promised to continue the programme of modernisation, even in face of the coronavirus pandemic, and to raise defence spending to 2.5 percent of GDP before the 2030 legal deadline. "We are going to carry out the programmes already started," Andrzej Duda said. "Your modernisation - I believe in it deeply - the Navy will also receive it," he continued, referring to a bill prepared by his office in July aimed at guaranteeing a regular percentage share of defence budget expenses for the navy.

Andrzej Duda pointed out that August 6 is a historic date for Polish soldiers as it was on this day in 1914 that the Krakow Oleanders mobilised the First Cadre Company "which was the beginning of the rebirth of the independent army, of a

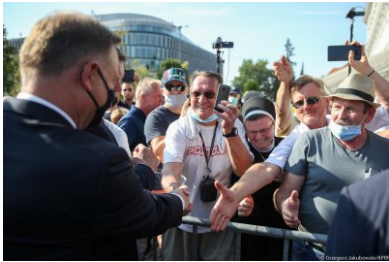


sovereign Poland." He added that on August 6, 1920, Marshal Jozef Pilsudski approved the operational plan that led to victory for Poland in the Battle of Warsaw.

Source: PAP







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