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Tomasz Kośmider, Andrzej Soboń

POLISH REGIONAL SECURITY IN THE CONTEXT OF NATO SUMMIT IN WARSAW

Abstract:
Polish membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is a key element of Poland security as intrinsically one of the three pillars of the external security of Poland alongside the European Union and the strategic partnership with the United States. Poland is so constantly and keenly interested in its strengthening, so each NATO summit is an opportunity to hold discussions on the condition of the Alliance. Differences in the assessment of the overall situation and the perception of security priorities had an impact on the decisions which were made during the last NATO Summit in Warsaw. Summit took place not only in the shadow of the threat posed by the self-proclaimed Islamic State of Iraq and Syria but before all the events in Ukraine.

Key words: NATO, summit in Warsaw, defence capabilities, strategic defence review

Background
Obtaining in 1999 NATO membership by Poland changed the conditions of implementation of the Polish security policy[1]. The Alliance, constitutes the institutional backbone of the defense readiness of the West, has boosted the efficiency of country's defense potential. Polish Armed Forces participation in international stabilization missions and peacekeeping operations raised the level of equipment and training of Polish soldiers as well strengthened interoperability with NATO forces. Poland is in favor of the primacy of collective defense and is a leader of regional defense cooperation, especially within the Visegrad Group[2]. Therefore, NATO membership is an important element of Polish security in an emergency state, although some doubt raise the effectiveness of potential allied response in case of a limited conflict. In 2007 against Estonia was applied first such situation where in the unrest on a grand scale with the participation of the local Russian youth, supported by the groups arrived directly from Russia applied a classic example of a sub-threshold conflict. When the Estonian authorities suppressed the riots, there was a massive attack on Estonian IT infrastructure, leading to several weeks of paralysis of the IT system across the country. The above-presented facts revealed the weakness of NATO to respond to sub-threshold situations of limited conflict, when the real aggressor does not officially exist. Means which can be used by attackers are limited and they will avoid conflict as long as possible in order not to deal with all the allied
coalition. Estonia holds Alliance guarantees but had to herself deal with sub-threshold threats.

The countries of the region in the last few years had to deal with situations in which an assailant takes sub-threshold actions seeks to destabilize the country undermining his authority and introducing chaos in its functioning through the systematic violation of the borders, taking in its territory arbitrary actions or without asking for permission local authorities, provoking demonstrations and riots, or acts of terror. An extreme case is the conflict in Ukraine, where the state was deprived of control over part of the territory and taken over by local forces.

Obtaining NATO's ability to respond effectively to threats target at allies countries is interesting for countries directly bordering with Russia: Poland, the Baltic States but also Romania threatened by existence of not recognized the Republic of Transnistria controlled by Russia. We can not also ignore threats posed by the activities of the Islamic State, which through social acceptance has industrialised terrorism. Therefore, uncontrolled influx of foreigners into Europe may cause further sub-threshold situations[3]. If a country would not prove to provide organized assistance, it can lead to crises on areas occupied by refugees. Lack of control over the refugees could lead to provocation, criminal acts and other activities inspired by the aggressor. Therefore, it would be an important factor supporting sub-threshold actions. Hence the importance that NATO has developed effective tools to work towards collective defense of each of the allied countries in emergency situations.

Polish position from a regional security point of view is obviously not comparable to Ukraine, despite significant restrictions on the possibility of the Alliance in the situation of a occurrence of sub-threshold aggression directed at any Member State. Extremely favorable factor is the lack of Polish real threat of national minorities, which represent less than 3% of the total population. Additionally, Poland is guarantees by supplies the soft security of membership in the European Union. For comparison, in Estonia almost 25% of the population are Russians which is comparable in terms of ethnicity to the Crimea. Separatist tendencies in Poland (Silesian Autonomy Movement, ed. aut.) are in incomparably smaller scale than in the case of pro-Russian separatism in Ukraine, moreover they have a different nature. This does not mean the absence of potential threats: cyber attack, ethnic conflicts and undermining the authority of the state and its destabilization. Naturally the most vulnerable is the eastern Polish border, especially the north-eastern border of the Kaliningrad region[4].

The conflict in Ukraine showed a possible scenario of limited aggression, which can not be excluded also in the countries bordering Russia, NATO and the European Union. First of all, the threats concern the Baltic states, also Poland and although it can not be ruled against states throughout the eastern border of NATO.
Each of them can be in an unspecified future the victim of such aggression eg. separatists backed by Russia, the troops without national distinctions or unwanted humanitarian aid. Not defined and hybrid nature of the activities allows the international community to adopt a passive attitude and provide arguments against any criticism from own site. Victim of aggression will stay left alone and without significant help from outside. Lost military, join with snowballing economic problems may lead to the weakening or collapse of authority, which in the terminology of international relations would lead to a failed state. Changing the conditions of security in Eastern Europe, especially since the outbreak of protests on Kiev's Maidan in November and December 2013 has led to reevaluate the safety environment on the eastern borders of NATO.

Eastern flank of NATO has become a signal indicating the growth of the revisionist attitude of Russia[5] and the intensification of actions taken by the Kremlin to deploy additional forces in the area. The issue was of particular interest to participants in the NATO Summit in New Port (2014) and Warsaw (2016). The Baltic states officially declaimed in favor of increasing efforts to collective security and to ensure the continued presence of NATO in the region. Also they expressed a support for strengthening the Air Policing Mission, participation NATO troops in regional military exercises, the inclusion of the Baltic Battalion to the NATO Response Force (NRF) and the development of cooperation in planning and commanding operations (Baltic Combined Joint Staff Element)[6].

The impact of threats of European security on NATO decisions

Strategic directions of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization are setting takes on meetings of the Heads of State and Government of the Member States. At key moments in the history, during summit meetings were accepted the most important documents of the Alliance. There held a debate on the strategy, goals and objectives. Then taken decisions were the main signs for transformation of organization in the coming years. Initially, NATO summits not held regularly – the first was held in 1957 and the second in 1974 only. Greater frequency of later meetings had been defined by the dynamic changes in the international area. These strategies were quickly put to the test of time – the war in the Balkans forced to re-defined the strategic concept of 1991. Terrorist attacks of 2001 caused a significant shift in the policy of NATO, leading to outdated strategic concept adopted at the Summit in Washington in 1999.

Partial decisions only in the context of the security of Poland and the region taken during recent NATO Summits: in Lisbon 19–20 November 2010; Chicago 20–21 May 2012; Newport 4–5 September 2014 and Warsaw 8–9 July 2016 will be prominence in this article.

Groundbreaking NATO Summit for the first decade of the XXI century was a meeting in Lisbon in 2010. NATO adopted the Strategic Concept of the Alliance
closing process of adapting the Alliance to changed international situation after the Cold War. Concept has set for NATO three major tasks: 1) treaty – collective defense; (2) overcome crises and (3) security based on cooperation. The Lisbon Summit also proclaimed a new opening in relations between NATO and Russia. NATO's Strategic Concept 2010 required its later operationability both in practical and as response to the dynamic development of the international situation, including the strengthening of relations with Russia. Additionally were taken decisions regarding the duration and nature of the mission of the International Security Assistance Force – ISAF, structural reform of the Alliance, the ability of NATO missile defense system and cooperation with foreign partners. Implementation of the Lisbon objectives has been limited mainly by the financial crisis and the associated cuts in the defense budgets of NATO countries. The Alliance recommended the defense budgets at least level 2% of GDP. Poland half reached this level by earlier established act with 1.95% Polish GDP[7].

The above-mentioned factors had a significant influence on the deliberations of the Chicago Summit in 2012. The overall situation led to different summit expectations and was particulary present during discussion about issues concerning with the international involvement of the Alliance. Part countries, especially Poland, pointed to the need to strengthen collective defense as indigenous Alliance missions, others – led by Britain – suggested the need for capacity building aimed at new threats and resignation of expenditures on heavy military capabilities for the defense of the territory. The Polish assessments pointed to the necessary effort to design smart defense, not to led to a deterioration in the ability of NATO with regard to the defense of allied territory[8]. The leaders of Alliance adopted the Declaration on Defence Capabilities: Toward NATO Forces 2020 as constituting a signpost for the activities of the Alliance[9]. It lists the most important projects in area: ballistic missile defence, a highly sophisticated Alliance Ground Surveillance – AGS, Air Policing Mission in the Baltic states which are to be implemented in the spirit of smart defense. For the Polish regional security were essential: (1) collective defense and the obligations arising from Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, such as the constant update contingency plans and their verification during exercises with the troops; (2) allied defense planning and taking into account needs and declared the size of forces to conduct combat operations with high intensity and scale – Minimum Capability Requirements; (3) smart defense and the duty of Polish jet fighters in the mission "Air Policing"; (4) maintain defense spending at a level 2% GDP corresponding to the needs eg. Poland remains at a fixed rate of 2% GDP; (5) missile defense that Poland is ready to develop on its own territory.

In react to the changing security conditions in Europe during the NATO summit in Newport has taken a number of decisions aimed at strengthening deterrence and credibility of the Alliance. The most important was the Readiness
Action Plan – RAP as a response to Russian aggression in Ukraine[10]. The plan includes two main elements and should respond to the specific risks associated with the hybrid war, led by various means. The first of these measures were reassuring – to increase quickly the security of allies on the eastern flank (assurance measures). The second – range of measures relating to the broader adaptation of the Alliance to the changed security conditions (adaptation measures). The most important decisions in this area included: a) the continuous presence of allied forces in the region, based on rotating rules, b) to establish command centers at the eastern flank, with supporting elements and security, c) the strengthening of the NATO Response Force e.g. by creating in the structure the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force – VJTF, so called spikehead; d) increasing the intensity military exercises conducted on the eastern flank of the Alliance; e) development of the Alliance’s infrastructure and position of warehouses of weapons and military equipment on the eastern flank of NATO (prepositioning) [11]. For Poland important arrangement was the increase to High Readiness Forces – HRF headquarter of the Multinational Corps Northeast - MNC NE and the commitment to collective defense in the case of attacks on cyber systems that could have dangerous consequences than a conventional attack. Such decisions are a compromise between demands of Poland and Baltic states demanding the deployment of Permanent Alliance Military Presence.

The reaction of NATO to the most dangerous security risk: (1) the aggression of Russia to Ukraine prompted NATO countries to allocate approx. 15 million euros to support Ukraine and also Poland additionally pledged to support the modernization of the Ukrainian armed forces; (2) participation in the coalition against the fighters of the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) organized by the US, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Denmark, Turkey, Canada and Australia, which at the same time excludes sending land forces [12].

Re-defining of NATO’s plans had taken during 27th Summit in Warsaw

The conflict in eastern Ukraine, which erupted shortly after the annexation of the Crimea, and in which the so-called action separatists supported by Russia shows the intentions of the country. Supply of arms and military equipment to support the command and control, participating in the battles of the Russian Federation armed forces is still the unchanging goal of Russian policy towards Ukraine [13]. To keep potential power of deterrence and political significance of NATO had to take measures adapting the Alliance to new challenges related to the aggressive policy of the Russian Federation. The provisions of the NATO Summit in Newport are a positive expression of the will of Member States to achieve this objective. However still it seems that a number of countries allied wishfully indicates the possibility of a return to cooperation with Russia in the time of suspension of its aggressive actions eastern Ukraine [14].
Therefore, it is necessary to make a realistic assessment of Russia's actions and its long-range plans by the Alliance. The basis for this adaptation should be a significant further increase in deterrence on the eastern flank of the Alliance, based on the constant presence of allied forces in the region. The strength and credibility of NATO is based on licenses held by the Member States of defensive abilities.

NATO Summit was held in Warsaw on 8-9 July 2016[15]. The event was attended by delegations from 28 delegations of NATO member states, 26 delegations of the partner countries, delegations of the European Union, the United Nations and the World Bank. In total, the Warsaw Summit was attended by 61 delegations, including 18 presidents and 21 prime ministers. During the summit was adopted the Warsaw declaration on Transatlantic Security, and with it, decided to establish four allied multinational battalions – sized battle groups composed of soldiers of NATO countries. They can operate in concert with national forces, present at all times in these countries, underpinned by a viable reinforcement strategy. They will be stationed (on a rotational basis) in the Baltic countries and Poland. Command over them include: the United States (in Poland), United Kingdom (in Estonia), Canada (Latvia), Germany (Lithuania). In Poland outside the Americans will stationed the British and Romanians troops. In the region will be deployed armored brigade of the US Army. Command and most of the units will be in Poland. NATO decided to extend the Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan after 2016. (up to till 2020.) As well as $5 billion a year to support the authorities in Kabul. Further decisions are:

- The North Atlantic Treaty will train and build capacity in Iraq;
- Support of NATO will be given to the armed forces of Tunisia and Jordan;
- NATO Boeing E-3 Sentry AWACS surveillance planes to provide information and intelligence to the Global Coalition to counter ISIL from Turkish and international airspace;
- Signed a Joint Declaration to take partnership between NATO and the European Union sets out areas where NATO and the EU will step up cooperation - including maritime security and countering hybrid threats posed by a more aggressive Russia;
- Declared Initial Operational Capability of NATO's Ballistic Missile Defence to counter threats posed by Iran and further afield, North Korea, to the European continent;
- Decided to start eight funds with the Comprehensive Assistance Package for Ukraine;
- The start of the mission of Sea Guardian to an expanded maritime presence in the Mediterranean and the Aegean Sea[16] to cope with the European migrant crisis, human trafficking and smuggling of weapons for the support of the EU mission "Sophia"[17];
- Announced the initial operational readiness of Ballistic Missile Defence in Romania, where installed a battery of missiles the SM-3 version of the land (Aegis Ashore) coverage of Southern Europe;
- NATO – Ukraine Commission reviewed the security situation in Ukraine, support Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity and condemned the annexation of the Crimea by Russia, as well as a called to stop supporting separatists to eastern Ukraine;
- Support Georgia's aspirations for membership in NATO and Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as called Russia to withdraw its forces from South Ossetia and Abkhazia;
- Assurance of NATO's commitment to caring for the potential of conventional and nuclear weapons;
- The establishment in Romania, the NATO multinational division, which will be built from the transformation of one of the Romanian division – one of the countries that have reported readiness to contribute was Poland;
- Development of the Romanian-Bulgarian brigade;
- Pledged to strengthen individual nations' and collective cyber defences, and recognise cyberspace as a new operational domain.

United Kingdom announced a vote on the renewal of the British nuclear deterrent system "Trident", which has been operating since 1994. On the basis four submarines were equipped with missiles and nuclear warheads constantly patrolling the marine space.

**National challenges of Poland in building own defense capabilities**

Reaction against potential security threats requires an integrated national security system that guarantees rapid and efficient operation in all conditions as well as in response to all types of threats and crises. Present security environment is characterized by the blurring of the borders between the internal and external dimensions but also military and non-military. Globalization and the increasing interdependence frequently have unpredictability of events, whose scope is no longer limited by geographical barriers, political and economic systems[18]. This is a qualitatively new situation, which requires changes in the approach to state security matters.

Taking place at the turn of the century changes in the international security environment necessitates the transformation of defense systems. Appropriate and necessary to ensure sustainable and effective deterrence, protect and defend Polish, NATO defense tasks, immediate support of the authorities and the public in situations of particular danger is a defensive military system. It consists of two closely interacting with another component, namely:

a) operational troops – mobile with a capacity of maneuvering and strike, like other armies of NATO with which they interact (interoperability), but limited in
number (systems disarmament and the possibilities economic) formation, prepared to conduct operations independently defence – attack in defense of Poland in cooperation of territorial defense, and also to participate in the operations of the combined forces of NATO;

b) Territorial Defense – universal, high reserve in peacetime military organization at the territorial level, whose main elements are the territorial command authorities (central, state and county) and the military territorial defense. Organisation is prepared to perform in peacetime universal education and training provisions, immediate support military authorities and the public in emergency situations and needs. During the war and eventual occupation to pursue the protection and defense of important objects and areas throughout the territory, support operations troops operating and conducting irregular actions in a mass scale.

The process of enhancing the defence capabilities of the state requires a close cooperation with non-governmental organizations and other social partners. It should serve to activate the society in the area of defence and build a social power base for the Armed Forces. NGOs’ civic activity is often regarded to be the greatest success of contemporary Polish political and economic transformations.

Summary:

NATO Summit in Warsaw significantly contributed to improving the safety of Member States, including Poland. During summit succeed in diagnose the potential risks and to take appropriate measures to counteract them. There is no doubt that the Alliance has strengthened activity focused on issues related to collective defense. An important achievement of the summit, especially from the Polish point of view has become a decision on the strengthening of the eastern flank of the Alliance through the deployment of four battalions counting about 1,000 soldiers in Poland and the Baltic countries. From NATO point of view is a serious reorientation of the existing structure and the current effort of Alliance. Poland emerged from this Summit not only strengthened, but emerged with real capabilities of defense and deterrence. USA will command battalion in Poland, but in addition US Army will locate brigade in the composition of which will be an additional 4000 soldiers.

The Summit in Warsaw pointed out that most of the NATO countries do not allocate 2% GDP on defense except the UK, Poland, Greece and Estonia, which met the obligations relating to defense spending. Poland does not limit in own security policy to a guarantee of NATO only but also take intensive actions towards building an integrated national security system that guarantees rapid and efficient operation in all conditions and in response to all types of threats and crises. This process is accompanied by activities for the activation of society in the field of defense and build of social facilities for the Armed Forces. NATO confirmed support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. It was also decided that the Alliance
will provide AWACS reconnaissance for combat ISIL. NATO also decided to extend the mission "Resolute Support" in Afghanistan after 2016 and start a new mission in the Mediterranean. The Alliance as the guarantor of peace is becoming more and more priceless.

To sum up, the world that is rapidly transforming and NATO has to creatively adapt to this situation. This can be achieved only by coherent and united actions, firm deterrence and defence posture, determination, as well as elaborating new doctrines and concepts. Actions of NATO have defensive character as the determination to defend their territory which do not announce any offensive actions against Russia. The Alliance has to remember about Ukraine, the Russian aggression of Crimea and Donbas, and earlier Georgia, questioned the existing international order in Europe. Without coming to the status quo ante, including full, integral and sovereign control of Georgia and Ukraine over their territories, the return to peaceful international relations in Europe will not be possible[19].

References:

COL Tomasz Kośmider, Assoc. Prof.
Professor of the National Defence University in Warsaw
Director of the State Security Institute
al. gen. Chrusciela 103, 00-910 Warsaw, Poland,
phone: +48 695 582 246 email: t.kosmider@aon.edu.pl

LTC Andrzej Soboń, PhD
Adiunct of State Defense Preparation Chair, National Security Faculty
National Defence University in Warsaw
al. gen. Chrusciela 103, 00-910 Warsaw, Poland,
phone: +48 606 663 202 email: a.sobon@aon.edu.pl