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Wywiad z szefem BBN ministrem Stanisławem Koziejem dla Central Europe Digest, wydawanego przez Center for European Policy Analysis - amerykańskiej pozarządowej instytucji analitycznej badającej sprawy Europy Centralnej. Podczas rozmowy poruszono m.in. tematy modernizacji polskich sił zbrojnych, a także stosunków ze Stanami Zjednoczonymi oraz NATO.



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Insider View - Head of the Polish National Security Bureau Stanisław Koziej on Poland's Defense Modernization

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by Central Europe Digest

Central Europe Digest sits down with Head of the Polish National Security Bureau (BBN), Stanisław Koziej, for an exclusive interview, discussing Poland's ongoing defense modernization effort and its strategic importance for the transatlantic relationship and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

CED: In your role as Head of BBN, you have to continually evaluate Poland's changing security landscape and respond to pockets of instability on the horizon. What are the kinds of challenges that North-Central European members of NATO are likely to face over the next 5-10 year period?

Gen. Koziej: This opening question is the starting point for all strategic analyses, because the definition of threats and challenges that we come up with will determine our actions. The definition of threats and challenges will also determine our necessary preparations and capacity building, which are indispensable for ensuring the security of the state. It was precisely this type of analyses that constituted the subject of the work of the Committee for Strategic National Security Review — a body appointed by the President of Poland and led by me. The Committee's work was carried out in the period of December 2010 to September 2012.

Based on the conducted analyses, we concluded that the center of Europe (i.e. the European part of NATO and the European Union (EU)) is an area characterized by a high level of stability, brought about by a number of integration-related linkages in different areas (political, economic, social and military). They have minimized the threat of a large-scale aggression aimed against Poland or other EU member states. Nevertheless, the possibility of selective military actions, in particular blackmail and political and strategic pressure to launch such attacks against Poland or other EU member states, should be deemed as somewhat more probable.

At the same time, we found that the peripheries of Europe remain unstable. That instability spills over and is reflected in such phenomena as illegal migration or transnational organized crime. This presents us with a serious challenge and we have to be prepared for it.

One can also list a plethora of other challenges that our people face. We will see growing problems resulting from demographic and climate changes, and increased competition for access to shrinking energy resources. The global financial crisis has also left its imprint on our systems.

An analysis of trans-sectoral challenges was an important feature of the agenda of the above mentioned Committee. What I am referring to is, first and foremost, cyber threats and international terrorism. The susceptibility of states to cyber threats is increasing and it will keep doing so every year. Such attacks may be ideologically, politically and economically motivated. Today, and most probably in the future as well, terrorists, criminal organizations and, under specific circumstances, sovereign states will seek to use the virtual space to achieve their strategic goals by means of "cyber-violence."

Terrorism motivated by various factors will continue to be one of the major global threats. It will present a danger to the lives of populations, and the stability of democratic institutions and national infrastructure. It is up to us, up to all NATO and EU member states, to use opportunities, stand up to challenges, limit risks and counteract threats.

CED: Even as security challenges evolve, defense cutbacks are taking their toll on NATO's future capabilities. Yet, Poland represents a counter-trend in defense spending and has pledged \$45 billion over the next ten years to upgrade its defense posture. What are Poland's priorities for this modernization program; and how does that fit into Poland's long-term concept for national defense?

Gen. Koziej: Adapting the volume of defense spending to the needs and possibilities of individual states is understandable and logical. In Poland, we have developed and implemented a legislative mechanism which has proved to be effective in practice — it pegs defense spending to the economic situation of the state. A fixed defense spending rate has been set at the level of 1.95 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). We believe such a mechanism to be an optimal solution. In case radical changes occur in the security environment or with regard to economic potential, it is always possible to adjust the value while maintaining in effect the principle of the fixed rate.

As far as modernization priorities are concerned, it should be stressed that in 2011, President Bronisław Komorowski, as the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland, issued a decision on determining "Main directions for the development of Polish Armed Forces as well as their preparation for defense of the state in the period 2013-2022." The President specified three major priorities in that document. These are as follows: improving air defense (which includes launching the construction of missile defense); strengthening the mobility, broadly understood, of land forces (especially helicopter mobility); and developing IT battle and support systems (UAVs, precision-guided munitions, radio electronic combat systems etc.). Now, the Ministry of National Defense is developing plans and programs for the improvement of the Polish Armed Forces, which means that the above mentioned directions are being crystallized.

An area that is acquiring equal importance to that of military security is cyber-security. Sooner or later, we will need to learn not only how to live in cyberspace, but also how to defend ourselves and how to fight with enemies who use cyberspace as a platform for hostile actions. Threats in cyberspace make us realize the huge strategic importance of IT systems, both today and in the future. We assume that in the next planning cycle, the development of cyber-defense capabilities will become a key priority.

CED: Just as Poland is embarking on a top-to-bottom modernization program, the U.S. Administration is crafting a set of foreign and security objectives for the early phase of President Obama's second term. How would you assess the prospects for deepening U.S.-Polish ties through closer defense cooperation?

Gen. Koziej: It is worth emphasizing that allied relations with the United States constitute one of the key external

pillars of Poland's national security. Future defense cooperation will focus on three issues: 1) Joint development of NATO defense capabilities, which entails, first and foremost, the construction of an allied missile defense program, with American contribution in the form of the European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA) that includes plans to construct an SM-3 base on the territory of Poland in 2018; 2) Cooperation between Polish and American armed forces; and 3) Cooperation between Polish and American special forces.

Let us bear in mind the fact that despite the crisis, the United States remains the largest global military superpower with a defense budget bigger than those of the next 13 countries. Moreover, Americans have at their disposal leading technologies in areas such as missile defense, mobility of armed forces and reconnaissance resources. It is also worthwhile to note that the F-16 fleet forms the core of the Polish Air Force, which is naturally conducive to fostering cooperation between the air forces of the two states.

Defense cooperation will be further supplemented by broader collaborative efforts such as democracy promotion — the European Endowment Fund (EED), an idea initiated by Poland, should be mentioned in this context — as well as cooperation on energy security (shale gas in particular) and cyber-security.

American assistance, especially in training our military personnel and providing the technical modernization of equipment that helped bring about the systemic transformation of the Polish Armed Forces, played a major role in the initial period of gaining strategic independence in the 1990s. We should be, and indeed are grateful to the Americans for that.

Poland in turn, given its political and emotional identification with and support for the United States, became involved both in Iraq and Afghanistan. One could even say that the last decade of Polish-American defense cooperation has developed under the banner of the Polish Armed Forces in the operations carried out in those countries. We are also jointly undertaking a number of defense projects such as the missile defense program and the deployment of a U.S. Air Force Unit in Łask. Further, the program aimed at providing Polish Air Forces with F-16 aircraft turned out to be hugely successful and prospective. We also highly appreciate U.S. assistance in human capital investments, which is vitally important in the context of Poland's decision to professionalize its Armed Forces and establish a fully voluntary, professional army. One notable outcome of the deepening of military cooperation is the change in the very nature of Polish-American relations: moving from a relationship where the United States provided assistance to Poland, to an equal partnership.

As military cooperation between our countries continues to deepen, new potential areas for collaboration, such as exchange of experiences and implementation of common strategic goals, have emerged. Cooperation among our special forces looks promising as well, and Poland has achieved a high degree of interoperability in this regard. We learn from the experiences gathered in joint operations, which allows us to identify those defense capabilities that still need to be improved. I can see an immense potential for joint high-tech projects, in particular with regard to threats, challenges and opportunities created by cyberspace. Finally, being members of NATO, several military cooperation projects between Poland and the United States naturally have an allied character.

Poland has been and will be interested in maintaining close ties with the United States. Americans have so many different global interests and objectives that they will always need partners to support their implementation. I believe that due to our geostrategic location and the role that we play in international organizations of import to the United States (especially NATO and the EU), we will continue to be a key partner for Americans in many matters which they deem critical.

CED: Poland's commitment to a modern, capable defense posture signals a strategic vision missing in other quarters. How can Poland use this opportunity to assume a greater leadership role within the NATO Alliance?

Gen. Koziej: I believe that already today Poland is an important member state of NATO. Our involvement in the most

significant mission of the Alliance — the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan — puts us in the position of a tested and reliable partner and ally.

Now, along with all other Alliance member states, we are thinking about what NATO should look like when the ISAF mission is completed. In this discussion, Poland has indicated the need for reconsolidating the Alliance around its core mission — that of collective defense. It is vital, especially now when the United States is shifting its strategic focus to Asia and the Pacific. Poland has confirmed its commitment to the defense function of the Alliance, among others through its fixed rate of defense spending (amounting to 1.95 percent of GDP). It is a level close to what NATO demands, and defense spending has not been cut despite the financial crisis.

Consolidating NATO around tasks pertaining to collective defense is indispensable in order to create the conditions which would allow the Alliance to fulfill all its core tasks, including strengthening its capacity to respond to crises unfolding far from its territory. In an era of globalization, the Alliance will have to surmount such challenges. And it will be capable of doing that effectively only if all its members feel equally secure and safe in their own territories. The function of collective defense plays a particularly critical role for NATO's border states, which include Poland and other Central European countries. We are also making an effort to ensure that political declarations concerning the defense function of NATO are accompanied by concrete practical projects. I am thinking, among others, about joint exercises with the participation of troops that take into account scenarios based on Article 5 of the Washington Treaty; the extension and even distribution of allied infrastructure in member states; and a permanent update of contingency plans.

CED: When NATO members convened in Chicago last year, they reiterated their commitment to protecting Europe against the threat of ballistic missile proliferation. How has Poland responded to that pledge; and where do you see Poland contributing to NATO's Ballistic Missile Defense capability?

Gen. Koziej: Let me remind you that the 2011 decision issued by the President of Poland on the main directions for the development of the Polish Armed Forces in the coming decade indicated missile defense as a key modernization priority. As a consequence, in order to support the attainment of such capabilities, the President proposed to introduce a legislative mechanism which would enable the financing of the missile defense system over the next ten years. On February 22, 2013 the law was adopted by the Polish Parliament.

This will allow Poland to become a shareholder in the construction of the allied missile defense system. The Polish system will be our contribution to the NATO project and it will act as its indispensable supplement. Due to its geostrategic location as a border state of the Alliance, Poland has a particularly strong interest in the completion of the NATO missile defense system according to the adopted schedule. This is also the reason why Poland must be a member of the group of states and be a participant in the projects that will promote the fastest possible construction of the allied system.

Among the requirements that we would like the new missile defense system to meet, we stress in particular compatibility with the allied system, or to formulate it even more broadly: compatibility with the systems of our allies. We also believe that the American EPAA project constitutes an important building block of the allied missile defense system, and within the framework of this project, in 2018, Poland will host on its territory an anti-aircraft missile launcher. We want these projects, by virtue of being complementary, to exert significant influence on the development of missile defense capabilities in Europe.

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