RESOLVING THREATS AND CHALLENGES IN THE SECURITY POLICY OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND

Keywords: Armed forces, security policy, Polish Army, NATO, threats, challenges.

ABSTRACT: The political transformation in Poland resulted in the reorientation of Polish policy in the field of understanding security. It found its reflection in newly defined policy directions, which were manifested in the search for new guarantees of security, development opportunities and giving a new character to Polish politics. The problem of ensuring state security in new geopolitical conditions is expressed in the adopted hierarchy of priorities for the implementation of the Polish raison d’etat. The implementation of the policy priorities means that Poland has a solid foundation for security. The Polish Army carries out many key tasks in it. The armed forces of the Republic of Poland became an element of the broad NATO security system. Building faith in defensive self-sufficiency, Poland distances itself more and more from Europe. Both threats and challenges require decision-making in matters of security and go beyond the traditionally understood security. As a consequence, Poland responds to both threats and challenges in the security policy of the Republic of Poland to a small extent.

POLISH ARMY IN SECURITY POLICY

The currently implemented state security policy is based on calculations related to the recognition of the Atlantic option as the basic foundation of military security for Poland. NATO was recognized as the most
important security institution, and the European Union, the OSCE, the Council of Europe, subregional groups are intended to play a complementary role and support the political, economic and other strengthening of security (Zięba, 2011). In the current political situation, the Polish authorities do not hide their skepticism towards all European plans to “become independent” from NATO and the USA. This attitude is nothing new (Zięba, 2007, p. 387). In order to pursue vital interests, in consequence, they were in favor of cooperation with the US because in a close alliance with this country, it sees itself as a guarantee of military security. In the current and strategic perspective, NATO and the alliance with the US are to constitute a guarantee of military security. According to the politicians of the ruling party in Poland, NATO Alliance is currently the only functioning and effective security system in the world. According to these politicians, Poland has a specific structure, means and experience to be present in the structures and seek the ability to strengthen its position. These activities are aimed at minimizing threats, preventing conflicts, developing cooperation, and thus stabilizing the international environment of Poland both in the regional and global dimensions. A derivative of the outlined vision for the development of Poland’s future relations on the international arena are the formulated priorities of Poland’s foreign and security policy. This dimension is understood by the current team governing the implementation of tasks within the NATO alliance mainly through deepening Polish-American cooperation in the field of defense system (Strategia Bezpieczeństwa…).

In spite of defining the role of various measures of security policy implementation for the current policy, the weight of one has been quite unequivocally assessed. The main position for Poland today is to have its armed forces. For the above political choices, the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland are undoubtedly one of the determinants of the strength and position of the state in the international environment. According to the governing authorities, the army invariably determines the possibilities of implementing state policy (Balcerowicz, 1999, p. 21).

Under these conditions, the Polish Army became not only an elementary element of the Polish defense system’s image. It is not surprising that
currently the armed forces have received a wide range of security tasks – both internal and external.

Their main task is to refute any military aggression using all available means. The main role was attributed to the operational forces, while they are to be actively supported by the territorial defense forces. If it is not possible for the Polish Army to conduct regular operations, it is to move to other forms of combat, including partisan activities in the areas occupied by the enemy. It is also possible to use the army in the event of natural disasters and catastrophes.

Due to the nature of the planned activities and the organizational structure, the Polish Armed Forces are divided into operational and territorial defense forces. Due to the environment in which activities are conducted, types of armed forces include: land forces – approx. 57 thousand soldiers (2017), air force – approx. 17.5 thousand soldiers (2017), navy – about 8.5 thousand soldiers (2017) and special forces – about 2.5 thousand soldiers (Dochody budżetowe resortu obrony narodowej…). There are also the Territorial Defense Forces being formed, which are to be a separate type of Armed Forces. It is planned that they will count about 53 thousand soldiers (Structure and tasks). The place and role of the Polish Armed Forces in the architecture of state security arise from the needs of national defense, allied commitments and participation in activities for international peace and stability. The armed forces should ensure: protection of independence and indivisibility of the territory of Poland; security and inviolability of borders; support for foreign policy and vital national interests on the international arena; assistance to public administration authorities in responding to non-military threats; support for anti-terrorist and rescue operations. For this purpose, the Polish Armed Forces should keep ready the necessary potential of military means to counteract or eliminate the causes and effects of external and internal threats to the security of the state. The Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland must also have the ability to separate a given potential into NATO’s integrated military structure. Currently, also designated elements of the Armed Forces are involved in crisis operations, also referred to as military operations other than war outside the country. These activities are in line with the political declarations of the state. Currently, the Polish Army
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carries out these activities through: Polish Contingent in the INHER-ENT RESOLVE operation in the State of Kuwait, the Republic of Iraq and the State of Qatar (Polish Contingent OIR Kuwait) (Order of the President of the Republic of Poland of June 28, 2017); Polish Contingent in the activities of the Global Coalition in the Republic of Iraq, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the State of Kuwait (Polish Contingent Iraq) (Order of the President of the Republic of Poland of 30 June 2017); Polish Contingent in the RESOLUTE SUPPORT mission of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (Resolute Support) (Order of the President of the Republic of Poland of June 28, 2017); Polish Contingent in the International Forces in the Republic of Kosovo and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Polish Contingent Kosovo) (Order of the President of the Republic of Poland of June 28, 2017); Polish Contingent in the European Union military operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Polish Contingent EUFOR ALTHEA) (Order of the President of the Republic of Poland of November 10, 2016); Polish Contingent in the EU military training mission in the Central African Republic (Polish Contingent EUTM RCA) (Order of the President of the Republic of Poland of June 28, 2017); Polish Contingent in the composition of the battalion group of forces reinforced by the Preceding Presence of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in the Republic of Latvia and the Republic of Estonia and the Republic of Lithuania (Polish Contingent Latvia) (Order of the President of the Republic of Poland of April 27, 2017); Polish Contingent in the composition of the multinational brigade of adapted forces of the Advanced Presence of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in Romania (Polish Contingent Romania) (Order of the President of the Republic of Poland of 27 April 2017).

2018: THE YEAR OF MANY THREATS FOR POLAND

According to the politicians of the ruling party, Poland cannot move away from NATO. In their opinion, the world map pulsates
from military threats for Poland (Macierewicz w Kanadzie…). What may happen? Do we stand at the beginning of the war? Formally, everything is in perfect order. The Polish army is growing in strength, the soldiers are getting more and more prosperous, and the Polish arms industry will soon be equal to the world powers (Polska Grupa Zbrojeniowa …). The propaganda slogans of the government, of course, do not reflect all the complicated reality, but propaganda – this time the failure, not success – is also done by the opposition. The army and state security structures are undergoing dynamic changes, but are they all going in the wrong direction? Is territorial defense really a “private army”? Will the construction of shooting ranges endanger shootings? Will the tanks in the east of the country not deter the enemy? One should ask for discussion on arguments, not slogans. It is indisputable that NATO and the US finally have rooted in Poland, and 2018 will be the beginning of functioning of the most important allied defense investment – the anti-missile system base in Redzikowo (Dzień otwarty…). Several last governments fought for this installation. President Duda and the government of Law and Justice proudly show the 2 percent spent of GDP for defense and even higher target, the farthest in 2030. However, this does not create a perspective that would allow the optimism. We should not be deluding ourselves that distancing ourselves from European structures and ignoring the vision of defensive self-sufficiency will increase our security. The governing authorities do not see geopolitical turmoil, which may threaten Poland left without allies at its own wish.

From the perspective of global problems, it does not matter if one or the other party is in power. However, it does matter how this party uses power.

In the policy of Poland’s security no importance is attached to the effects resulting from a possible North Korean “suicidal” attack. Nuclear war would also have incalculable consequences for Poland. Not only the military order but also the economic order would be shaken. Do we have to disregard the threats coming from other parts of the modern world less that defending ourselves against Russia?
The unrest in the Middle East, at the junction of Europe, Asia and Africa, result in several ongoing conflicts. They have an indirect impact on Europe that Poland turns away from and on Polish politics. The ongoing wars and a few potential conflicts that can break out at any moment – much closer to our borders – may endanger our interests, for example, the energy security. Poland does not seem to notice that migratory movements affect many areas of security. The Middle East is still boiling. The open war of two regional powers Iran and Saudi Arabia is getting more serious. After the recent US decision to move the embassy to Jerusalem, insurgent moods revived among Palestinians. In Syria, the last months are the apparent “peace of the cemetery” – the Russians defended Assad against the overthrow of the armed uprising, but the political future of the country is a mystery. The African Sahel is uneasy, where the largest European Union war is currently underway (Macron: francuscy żołnierze...). From there, refugees continue to come to Europe. The shortcomings of the Polish security policy do not only result from the lack of a global perspective. It is not better in Poland’s immediate surroundings. For the last two years Poland has not noticed the consequences of its lack of activity towards Ukraine. The Russian intervention to Ukraine has only launched a deepening of Russophobia. Previously it was the reluctance to Germans, French, and hostility to everyone and everything that Polish people do not “accept”. As a result, the problems of the world around Poland are almost irrelevant to the rulers and a large part of society. In the media, correctly political environment, the view prevails that if we are in NATO, we are safe. However, is there nothing threatening us? Are we not losing the ability to assess the importance of international security in our national security policy? Only politicians with a limited horizon can claim that there is no connection between the strategic position of the country and its policy and external relations. The weakening of Poland’s position in the EU in an obvious, but not always immediately visible way, translates into the strength of our voice in NATO or the perception of foreign partners, not always favorable to us.

Building faith in defensive self-sufficiency, Poland distances itself more and more from Europe. As a consequence, its mistakes can cost a lot. No need to look far for evidence. Without looking at the strategic conse-
quences, a “war for the army” was started between the two constitutional centers of power. In the army itself, there is an exchange of personnel, called by many a purge, which affects the most critical decision centers. For the first time in decades the defense of the state has become a field of political struggle, where regardless of the consequences pseudo patriots play their roles for pseudo-ideological purity.

Armament policy so important from the point of view of this “self-sufficiency” was brought to the accusations of lobbying, corruption, cheating. The politicians forgot that the priorities of purchasing should be determined by the military officials. They are supposed to define their needs, which should be in accordance with the rationality and professionalism of the armed forces. Meanwhile, not only do we not pay attention to our own needs, but also to the current policy. We create innovative concepts that cause us to wander in dilemma (Wiceminister MON…). For the current policy, we not only create “abstract” visions of needs, but also offend our partners and still allies.

**CHALLENGES FOR SECURITY POLICY**

The statements presented earlier only result in a limited list of threats. There are more of them and certainly their scale is underestimated (Beck, 2012, p. 33). It is also important for the article that the threats for contemporary countries come not only from its external environment, but also from internal conditions that allow the state to fulfill its basic functions as part of its security policy. Finally, threats call for the need to formulate responses and take appropriate action. The resulting phenomena pose a challenge to security policy. The challenges are, therefore, difficult tasks, new situations forcing the need to develop effective policies and actions (Fehler, Piątek, Podgórzańska, 2017, pp. 746–747). Let us review the challenges for Poland’s security policy, including the threats it has previously signaled. Analyzes must take into account the fact that in 2018, policy makers should include in a ruthless way several important challenges. Certainly their list may be incomplete. The ones that largely determine their effectiveness include: strengthening international cooperation, final-
izing billions of tenders, rebuilding the reserves of the Polish Army, implementing The Strategic Defence Review and structural changes for the modernization of the armed forces.

The ability to cooperate internationally shall greatly stimulate security policy and of course the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland within its framework. Against this background, it seems that the implementation of regulations adopted at NATO summits in Wales in 2014 and in Warsaw in 2016 shall be crucial. One cannot forget also about preparing for the summit of the Alliance in Brussels. There further decisions important for the security of the eastern flank and Poland shall be made. Next year readiness shall also reach the missile defense system in Redzikowo, which may be an opportunity to further expand cooperation with the US, no less important than the cooperation within the European Union. For the Polish Army this should be translated into a series of specific actions, and shall result primarily from the transfer from the level of the decision to the level of implementation. The implementation of joint exercises and the further involvement of NATO’s rapid reaction force, the so-called Very High Readiness Joint Task Force. The deepening of international cooperation shall also be associated with the preparation and subsequent deployment of militant Allied units in Poland. This will concern, among others, the NATO battalion battle group being part of the North Atlantic Treaty system as well as gradually reinforced (e.g. division command, moved to Poznań) US troops, directly subordinate to US Army Europe. We must also be ready to act for the benefit of others as part of the understanding of international cooperation. It is worth recalling Lithuania’s appeal to strengthen air defense in the Baltic Sea region (Baltic Air Policing). Polish soldiers also take part in foreign missions, including Latvia (within the “Canadian” NATO battalion group), Romania, Afghanistan and the Middle East. Finally, according to recent decisions, defense cooperation should be extended within the structures of the European Union.

Another aspect that can be used to strengthen international cooperation for the quality of security policy and the Polish Army are conclusions that we should draw from the Exercise Zapad. A novelty in Polish action is the proposal to transform the Multinational Corps Northeast into an army level command. However, the main task for the effectiveness of
international cooperation should be the ability to transfer it to the lowest levels of command and military action.

On the other hand, last year the Americans confirmed that the Army Prepositioned Stock equipment base will be built in Powidz. Preparations are also under way for the deployment of new US Army units in Europe, including artillery brigades and short-range counter-air defence subunits. Depending on the decision of the president and Congress regarding financing, further steps in this direction are not excluded, the more so that the law “authorizing” defense expenditures for fiscal year 2018 includes e.g. provisions on strengthening Europe’s defense against attack of maneuvering missiles.

The modernization process becomes another challenge for security policy and armed forces. Despite the plans of the Ministry of National Defense and media declarations, it was not possible to sign a contract for the implementation of the first stage of the Wisła program, Homar Rocket Artillery Programme or helicopters for Special Forces and Navy, nor was the partner for the ‘Orka’ submarine program selected. The media coverage says there is information that the USA is ready to sell Patriot batteries, but the final effect of this action cannot be predicted. It should be emphasized here that these batteries condition the implementation of the already delayed Wisła system. The current implementation of the Homar project is not better. The current minister is shocking the public with propaganda declarations (Macierewicz: Polska...), while feeding people with illusion. It is high time for modernization projects to come out of the utopia phase. In addition, agreements should be signed for example for unmanned Orlik or Rosomak BMS system, integration of these transporters with Spike missiles, and finally Mustang off-road vehicles, previously planned for signing in 2017 and significant for operational troops (Nowy przetarg na samochody...). It is also urgent to solve the problems that arise around the Narew, Orka, or even the Kruk assault helicopter programs, as well as the implementation of anti-tank weapons purchase projects recently included in the Technical Modernization Plan. Taking into account the dynamics of the modernization process and the possibility of delays, it is not possible to say with certainty which of these programs will be finalized (Modernizacja Sił Zbrojnych RP...).
Equally important for the security policy of the Republic of Poland is taking steps to restore the system of reserves, neglected after moving to a professional army. It is worth remembering that currently the army relies heavily on reservists trained in the times of universal conscription. Training volunteers as part of the preparatory service allows only to partially supplement the shortage. Such training is to take approximately 10 to 12 thousand soldiers per year. The army needs to train 30 35 thousand reservists annually. The challenge for the Ministry of National Defense is to implement and combine these resources into one coherent system, as well as to develop mechanisms for cooperation of the Territorial Defense Forces with operational forces. The next steps in this direction may be the creation of the Academic Legia, under which volunteer training will eventually be able to pass even more than 20,000 students annually, as well as training uniformed classes, which can give another few thousand trained. Will the defense department meet these challenges?

Another important task in the area of state security for the Ministry of Defense and the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland is the implementation of The Strategic Defence Review guidelines. It is assumed to be the first planning document to develop the Polish Armed Forces in a comprehensive manner. Its implementation, however, shall require a lot of effort not only from the military, civilian political leadership, but also from the entire state. It assumes, firstly, an increase in defense spending, secondly, the introduction of a reform of the command system of the Polish Armed Forces, and finally the introduction of a number of structural changes in the Polish Armed Forces. This is not only about forming a new, additional division, but also (and perhaps above all) strengthening existing structures, including logistic, recognition and engineering units. Therefore, the armed forces have to face the necessity of creating new units at the same time. How will this affect an operational rivalry between the different types of troops? This is a big challenge in terms of logistics and organization requiring the coordination of undertaken activities.

The challenge is also to reform the system of purchasing equipment for the Polish army. In this respect, it seems necessary to establish an Armament Agency. It shall be a strong institution that coordinates the entire process of obtaining equipment from defining requirements and conducting analyzes,
through the implementation of purchase procedures and putting equipment into operation. And these are the assumptions. For today there is a lack of a holistic approach and coordination, and some conditions make it difficult to implement programs or, paradoxically, introduce equipment that does not meet the operational requirements required from the point of view of operational capabilities. As a consequence, the purchasing system is inefficient and the institutions that implement it function despite the lack of effects of their activities. Can this be changed? The involvement of politicians and industry in the real rather than apparent effects related to state security shall be of key importance in that matter.

**CONCLUSION**

The state should not ignore the existing challenges and threats. In the long-term perspective, Poland’s security is largely dependent on the state’s ability to face threats and challenges. They are a consequence of the related political, economic and social, demographic and ecological processes of a range that often go far beyond the borders of Poland. Certainly many situations require the necessity to develop effective policies and actions in the field of security. The factors associated with the challenges are constantly expanding the set of values that are defended by the security policy. The challenge for the security policy implemented with the enormous involvement of the Polish Army are to strengthen international cooperation, finalize billions of tenders, rebuild the reserves of the Polish Army, implement the Strategic Defense Review and structural changes for the modernization of the armed forces. Challenges that will be ignored shall cause difficulty and as a consequence may become threats.

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