Polish Armed Forces after 1989 and cooperation with NATO

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ABSTRACT

The article describes the Polish Armed Forces after 1989, and the restructuring and modernization process, as well as cooperation with NATO. The Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland is presented as a basic element of the state defense system, guaranteeing state defense, countering aggression within the framework of allied obligations, protecting the independence of the state and indivisibility of its territory, and ensuring the security and inviolability of its borders. In addition, the Polish military participates in the process of stabilizing the international situation, as well as in crisis response operations, humanitarian missions and the promotion of internal security. The aim of the study is to try to identify the security system of Poland - Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland, and the changes taking place after 1989.

Keywords: Polish Armed Forces, NATO, security, modernization

1. INTRODUCTION

Safety [1] is a term covering various functional aspects of the state and social life and is constantly extended according to the changes in the state and in the surrounding, because it has to provide undisturbed and multidimensional development of the society [12]. Development recognized in such a way includes economic, institutional, social and administrative changes, as well as changes in social relationships and behavioural patterns, including the evolution of habits and beliefs [2]. This term constantly evolves, altogether with
development of the environment of international safety. The Republic of Poland’s Armed Forces, that are the general element of national defence system, participate in the execution of policies: safety and defence, they keep readiness for the performance of three types of mission: guaranteeing national defence and counteraction to aggression in the scope of allied duties (namely maintaining the capacities in the army for using it in defence and protection of inviolability of the Republic of Poland boarders, as well as in anti-terroristic actions and in solving local or regional armed conflicts, as well as in defence operation - nationally and abroad) [9]; participation in the stabilization of international cases and in the operations of emergency and humanitarian response (namely maintaining the strength and capabilities for participation in peacekeeping operations resulting from international agreements and in humanitarian operations conducted by international, governmental and other organizations); supporting the homeland security and providing aid. Following the changes after 1989, Polish Army passed thorough restructuring and modernization in the course of political changes, the obsolete military equipment was replaced and draft is suspended [16]. The Republic of Poland’s Armed Forces serve for the protection of national independence and indivisibility of its territory, as well as provide safety and inviolability of boarders. The Armed Forces keep neutrality in political affairs and are subject of civil and democratic control. Since 2016, expenditures on Polish army has been amounting to 2% of GDP, instead of 1.95% until such time, what means the increase of 800 million PLN. The assumption in long-term development strategy for transformation and modernization of Polish Armed Forces was its organizational consolidation [11]. Regarding the extent of transformations and its influence on the functioning of Armed Forces, such change was of systemic character. Not only that organizational structure on the supreme level of commandment undergone transformation (the number of commandments, its headcount and competences), but the functional idea for whole commandment system and strategic tasks for its particular parts were also transformed. In such a way, the cycle of reforms for functioning of Polish Armed Forces, started in 1989 altogether with changing the national political system, was finished [13]. When signing the Act on the Reformation of Army’s Management and Commandment System on July 22, 2013, the President of the Republic of Poland, Mr. Bronislaw Komorowski, outlined that he acted according to the required adaptation to real needs, capacities and tasks ahead of Armed Forces. The purpose of this papers is attempt for identification of Polish safety system - the Republic of Poland’s Armed Forces and changes after 1989 [3].

2. POLAND IN NATO

Prime Minister, Tadeusz Morawiecki, was the initiator of cooperation with NATO, whereas the will for joining to North Atlantic Treaty Organization was given by prime minister Hanna Suchocka [4] in 1992 year. The Sejm in 3rd term supported the integration with NATO, and in 1999 the North Atlantic Treaty was confirmed. Following the membership, Poland was obliged for compliance with criteria of modernization for our army, as well as for reconstruction of structures in the course of reforms and compliance with stipulated requirements generally presented for Armed Forces [10]. The allocation of greater financial resources for adaptation of our army to standards of other members and replacement of the obsolete and incompatible equipment was forced [17].

If the requirement for such standard did not exist, Polish government would not have made such expenditures on modernization of army [15]. The crowning moment of this programme was introducing into operation 48 pcs. of multirole aircrafts F-16 block 52 C/D, 14 pcs. of Casa C-295 transport planes, KTO-Rosomak in the number of 570 pcs., antitank guided missiles SPIKE, 252 launchers and 2110 pcs. of missiles, and 50 NSM missiles were delivered for Polish Navy. In order to bring Poland closer to NATO, there was a decision for Poland’s participation in “Desert Storm” operation [5]. Contingent comprising of units and auxiliary vessels was incorporated into the Operational Forces of Saudi Arabia [6]. The purpose of the Republic of Poland’s involvement in former Yugoslavia, in the number of 1 thousand soldiers in 1992, was making the cooperation with NATO closer. The participation of Poland was extended by IFOR mission (then SFOR), and in the final period contingent amounted to four hundred and twenty people. In March, 2003, Poland participated in the invasion on Iraq, in the rank of 56 GROM commandoes, Chemical Corps Platoon and ORP [8] „Kontradmiral Xawery Czernicki” ship with “Formoza” special corps aboard. In such operation, shortages in the equipment on battlefield emerged, because it was not a stabilisation mission. Poland’s participation in the “Enduring Freedom Operation” in Afghanistan after attacks on WTC in New York on September 11, 2001, lasted from 2002 to 2007, and contingent amounted to 1.200 soldiers [14]. The Republic of Poland’s Airforce performs tasks in NATO “Air Policing” mission in Baltic countries, where it provides safety in air space. In the years 2008-2009 Polish contingent was sent to Chad, where it performed tasks for the provision of humanitarian activities safety under UN auspices in the number of 2.500 soldiers. In the year 2014 the Readiness Action Plan was adopted in Wales and Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) was formed, [7] so called “Spearhead Force” with dislocation readiness in several days from giving respective orders, and its assumption is arrival of NATO army to territory in danger before the outbreak of potential conflict [8].

3. CONCLUSION

Transformation process for the Republic of Poland’s Armed Force is based on equipping the army with modern armament and increasing the military potential, as well as operational capabilities. Polish Army is of significant trust in the society, and it is particularly seen at time of natural disasters and various parades on the occasion of national holidays. The greatest danger for Polish territorial integrity may be military threat.

References


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