

Security Politics Transformation in Poland after 1989

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Wojciech GIZICKI,
Institute of Political Science,
Faculty of Social Sciences,
Lublin, Poland

Internal and External Conditions

A necessary condition for changes in the direction of Poland's security policy and basing it on the Euro-Atlantic structures was the undertaking of democratic transformations. Poland, due to activity in the area of system changes particularly related with the social resistance in the 70's and 80's of the twentieth century, was regarded as a natural partner and a candidate for Euro-Atlantic integration, both in the case of NATO and the EU. The issue was actually clearly positively assessed by all political forces after 1989. It must be emphasized, however, that membership in NATO, although voluntary and based on its own sovereign decision, should be regarded as necessary for Poland! It is impossible to imagine that Poland would shape

its security policy without participation in this important military block. After 1989, this could only mean the North Atlantic Pact. The road to NATO required a great commitment and fulfilling a number of conditions. At that time, Poland was in a particularly specific situation.

Formally speaking, in the second place, Poland still remained a member of the Warsaw Pact. Poland's first President after the fall of communism was Wojciech Jaruzelski, an army general, who in 1981 introduced martial law in Poland. The first government of the Third Republic of Poland in 1989 had representatives of the Communist Party (Unified Workers Poland's Party). Some of them stood at the head of the internal affairs and armed forces ministries. The Minister of National Defense was General Florian Siwicki and the Interior Minister General Czeslaw Kiszczak. Both were Jaruzelski's closest associates. Until 1993, Soviet troops were stationed in Poland. Fundamental change took place in Poland's geopolitical situation. In 1990, Poland had three neighbors: the German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. Over the next three years there were seven countries in Poland's

Анотація
Польща – велика країна, розташована в самому центрі Європи. Вона є важливим партнером і «рушійною силою» в процесах демократизації, інтеграції та безпеки в регіоні. Таким чином, регіональне значення Польщі поза сумнівами. Усе частіше лунають думки про законні амбіції РП стати важливим гравцем у сфері глобальної безпеки. Досягненню цих цілей може допомогти та обставина, що після 1989 р. польська політика в безпековій сфері залишилася в основному за межами розбіжностей і суперечок між основними політиками та політичними партіями. Ця робота є спробою показати кроки, які робить Польща у сфері міжнародної безпеки. Автор аналізує формальні та правові механізми внутрішньої та зовнішньої діяльності Республіки Польща в цьому напрямі.
Ключові слова: Польща, політика безпеки, НАТО.

neighborhood: Germany, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania and Russia. All this meant that shaping the actual security policy was done on the one hand in an evolutionary way, and on the other hand it had a revolutionary character (Gizicki, 2011).

Formal Legal Principles Creating Poland's Security

In 1989, there was a change in the political system and the national system policies. Unfortunately, we failed to prepare the text for a new constitution in this short period of time, which governs all areas of the functioning of a democratic state. Thus, from a formal point of view of Poland's constitutional basis, after 1989, we were still regulated by the Act of 1952. The substitute for the necessary changes resulting from the new geopolitical reality was the so-called Small Constitution of 1992. Within its framework, there is primarily a departure from

the socialist system and an indication of the competence of state bodies, including the president, the highest representative of the Republic of Poland, guarding sovereignty and security.

A full, fundamental and modern bill was adopted only in 1997¹. The Constitution of the Republic of Poland in the first sentence of the preamble clearly indicates that the nation of Poland regained full sovereignty and democratic self-determination in 1989. For this reason, this introduces a new chapter in the development of the state, including in the area of security. Basic principles and obligations of the state in this field are written in Article 5. It refers to such values as independence, guaranteed territory, freedom, human rights, and safety for citizens. In the area of armed forces, the Constitution points to their defensive character and civilian control. In Article 89, the Constitution also states the
¹ <http://www.sejm.gov.pl/prawo/konst/angielski/kon1.htm> [10.10.2012]



detailed principles for making international agreements, in particular in the area of international cooperation. In article 90, it allows for the possible transfer of some powers from internal organs to other international entities. In several articles (including 126, 134, 136 and 229) it points out the powers and authority of the President, the head of the armed forces, in the area of security. All of this illustrates the diversity and specific solutions in this area, characteristic of a democratic state. In many cases, these regulations are applied in modern Poland's security policy, including in the framework of NATO.

«The doctrine of the defense of Poland» adopted in 1990 contained a general indication of Poland's defense policy. Responsibility for this area referred to all subjects: political, economic and social. It also stressed the universality of security and the associated with it need to assume the respon-

sibilities of defense by the entire society. The doctrine states that the primary objective of Poland is for the state and nation to survive. The security policy was to be implemented on the basis of full sovereignty and territorial integrity. However, at the same time, it clearly indicated that Poland's security is closely related to the external situation. importance of building mutual trust and carrying out anti-war politics.

An important part concerned the legitimacy of using the army outside of Poland's borders. In reality, this option was only ascribed to sending soldiers on peacekeeping missions under UN auspices. It is significant that the doctrine did not include any place with wording related to the Euro-Atlantic direction, i.e. basing Poland's security directly on NATO. However, it emphasized that an important part of Poland's security policy is Warsaw Pact membership! We must

remember that in 1990, the Pact still existed in Poland, Soviet troops were stationed here and the President of the Republic of Poland was General Wojciech Jaruzelski. For this reason, the document was constructed quite conservatively. However, it contained a new approach towards the security policy, necessary in the new geopolitical reality.

In 1992, a «Strategy for Poland's security» was accepted, the first document setting out the objectives and principles in the field of Poland's security in the new international conditions. The entire document clearly questioned the period of cooperation within the Warsaw Pact. It directly stated that Poland's goal is full membership in NATO. It was stressed that Poland does not have a defined enemy and a clear plan of military operations associated with it. Very important and of crucial significance were the indications contained in the document related to

the new non-military approach to security. This was to take account of a whole range of conditions, including geo-political, social and economic. It pointed to the need for disarmament, modernization of the armed forces, international partnerships and cooperation, including both on the neighboring and regional levels. It became necessary to respect human rights, freedom, democracy, the rule of law and international solidarity. The conviction that we need to join together in building a comprehensive system of international security was also essential.

Poland's membership in NATO required revising principle formal and legal arrangements. The consequence of this was, among others, preparation and adoption of a new strategic concept. The Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland from the year 2000 specified Poland's security policy objectives. They can be combined into two main categories. First, a focus on ensuring the basic values within the framework of internal functions, among others: independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity of the state and the state of democracy and the protection of civil rights, as well as social, economic and cultural development (national identity). Second, involvement, through the implementation of external functions, in addressing regional and global challenges, among others: building lasting peace, promoting democracy and human rights. The document also pointed out a number of principles, which are essential for the

implementation of the above mentioned goals. An analysis of these leads to the conclusion that Poland clearly recognizes the need to base its own safety on international cooperation related to the multidimensionality and complexity of modern security. The goal of activity in the area of security is the peaceful settlement of disputes. In the event of the need for military involvement in any part of the world, we should strive to act in accord with the formal and legal regulations, particularly for the United Nations and other international organizations. Such intervention cannot threaten and question human rights (Ciupiski, Legucka, 2003; Kulczycki, 2003).

The next version of the Strategy was accepted in 2003. The world was struggling with new challenges, which the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington became symbols of. The main objectives and principles remained the same. However, this version of the document was the result of a reaction to the new international reality. In addition to indicating problems related with combating terrorism, there was a focus on the dangers of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, non-democratic, authoritarian regimes and fallen nations. Poland decidedly joined the global offensive against these threats.

Contemporary Poland's security policies were set forth in «The Republic of Poland's Security Strategy» in 2007². This document provides strategic interests, objectives and ² <http://merln.ndu.edu/whitepapers/Poland-2007-eng.pdf> [10.10.2012].



principles for the development of this policy. The first words of the document confirmed that Poland is currently a safe country. In presenting the national interests of the state, it was stated that they have not changed as of several years. These are grouped into three categories: vital, important and other essentials. The framework of vital interests is primarily to ensure the survival of the state and its citizens. Important interests are related with activities which guarantee civilization and economic development. The other major area of essential interests pointed to the need to build and promote a sustainable, strong international position for Poland. In connection with accomplishing the above mentioned interests, it clearly highlights the close correlation of external and internal activities. When performing Poland's strategic objectives, it was stressed that they are linked to the international environment and the obligations arising from it, especially in the framework of NATO and the EU.

Poland's Practical Activity as Part of NATO

After the system changes in 1989, Poland clearly shifted its strategic objectives (Zięba, 2010; Koziej, 2003). Since then, these have become membership in NATO (1999) and the EU (2004). Poland had entered into cooperation in order to bring these structures into the nation immediately after the democratic changes. In the area of security, priority was given to cooperation with NATO, so Poland entered into formal dialogue with the Alliance and began the development of new strategic documents in the field of security. This happened especially after Lech Wałęsa took office as President.

In 1990, Krzysztof Skubiszewski, at that time Poland's foreign minister, began the process of membership in NATO (Skubiszewski, 1999). The consequence of this was the opportunity to have regular diplomatic and political meetings at various levels, associated with developing the sphere of mutual cooperation. On July 6, 1990, during a NATO summit in London,

the London Declaration was accepted. Based on this, dialogue and political and military cooperation began between the Alliance and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe in the new geopolitical reality (Gizicki, 2008). An important project for adaptation to the Alliance's standards was the so-called Partnership for Peace, which NATO formally adopted in 1994. The Partnership for Peace contained a number of possibilities for cooperation, taking into account, among others, preventing potential crises and threats to security, participation in peacekeeping and humanitarian operations, and preparing and conducting joint military maneuvers. Poland for a certain period of time treated this project quite skeptically, as a kind of "replacement product" instead of full membership. It was emphasized that potential membership should be considered in light of the actual activity of a state candidate, rather than the perspective of subjective assessments of membership by the United States or Russia (Krzeczułowicz, 1999). Poland's

attitude eventually led to satisfactory decisions, which are found in an official document adopted in Brussels in 1994.

As a consequence, Poland was the first country that negotiated the Individual Partnership Program with NATO. It took into account the most important assumptions and formed the basis for bilateral relations between Poland and NATO in the area of political and military cooperation. An extremely important event concerning among others the date of Poland's accession to NATO was the summit in Madrid in July of 1997. The leaders of the member states decided to undertake accession dialogues with Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary (Solak, 1999). At that time, they adopted the «Declaration on Euro-Atlantic Security and Cooperation», which determined that the accession process should be conducted in such a way that the official NATO enlargement would occur in 1999. These plans were implemented on March 12, 1999 and the solemn, symbolic admission of Poland, along with the Czech Republic and Hungary to NATO, took place from the 23-25 of April, 1999 during the 50th anniversary of the Alliance. This event was the end of the official, formal path of Poland to NATO (Asmus, 2002; Ajnenkiel, 1999; Balcerowicz, 1999).

The issue of Poland's position in NATO's security system is complex (Longhurst, Zaborowski, 2007; Simon, 2004; Zaborowski, Dunn, 2003). Poland is one of 28 member states in the Pact involved in coopera-

tion based, in principle, on partnership. The international situation is not determined by the bipolar division. There is no clearly defined enemy. The purpose of the Pact is to ensure the safety of all Member States. Poland's position in the security system of NATO and her current activities in this area are primarily determined by the regulations contained in the strategic documents of the Alliance. Pre-membership co-operation and then functioning as a full-fledged Member State are based on two NATO strategies: the Strategic Concept of 1991, amended in 1999, and the 2010 strategy. In the first case, NATO stressed that after 1989, it virtually became the only real functioning organization in terms of security, which has to take the burden of conflict prevention. It is also important to respond to new challenges in the region (such as the war in the Balkans), the acquisition of the capacity to act outside of the mandatory zone, and restructuring and modernization of the armed forces of member states. The 2010 strategy points to new concepts in the area of security: terrorism, cyber and energy threats. The need to strengthen membership solidarity is also stressed according to Article 5.

Important issues are the construction of new defense systems (including missile defense) and strengthening cooperation with other subjects, including Russia, India, China, the UN and the EU. The strategy draws attention to nuclear problems, pointing to the need for entering into dialogue to reduce

and completely do away with nuclear weapons (Somerville, Kearns, Chalmers, 2012). Of course, presently this is a difficult topic and impossible to accomplish. Generally, it should be noted that from Poland's perspective, the most important is solidarity in defense expressed in article 5 of the Washington Treaty. Defense of the population and territory of member states are the main goals which NATO maintained and strengthened in the document. Yet, the effectiveness of this text will be proved by the eventual transition from the actual treatment of coalition support with real cooperation of all members. Otherwise, a significant number of nations will stick to the belief that it is reasonable to search for an equivalent security guarantee. In Poland's case, this is definitely evident in her alliance with the U.S.A.

Taking into account the above mentioned NATO priorities, it should be noted that Poland is actively involved in the practical implementation of these objectives. This activity also took place during the pre-accession period. Poland had already entered into political and military cooperation with NATO. This was necessary for a good preparation for future commitments with the Alliance, associated with much greater involvement in direct activity after the formal accession. A notable example of this was the participation of Poland's troops in the IFOR stabilization mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1995. These actions allowed the soldiers to become familiar

with the requirements and specific activities of NATO. In this way, the implementation of the political criteria for accession gained a military dimension. Achieving full membership was an important moment for making Poland's security policy effective. However, since that time, Poland bears full responsibility for NATO's political and military activities. The practical implementation of the commitments is primarily made in a number of military missions in different parts of the world. In 1999, Poland's military contingent with the strength of 800 soldiers was part of NATO's forces in Kosovo. As part of KFOR forces, they participated in activities related to the protection of civilians, patrolling borders, demilitarization activities, humanitarian assistance, controlling borders and maintaining boundary points. As time passed, there were changes in both the structure of forces (from Polish to international, with the participation of Ukraine and Lithuania), the size of the contingent and the nature of the mission. Currently, in 2012, approximately 230 Polish soldiers from the maneuvers company under the command of the Americans perform assignments in the field of rapid response to crisis situations.

March 17, 2002 saw the launch of Poland's military mission in Afghanistan. This was a direct response to the request of the United States and the threat posed by terrorists, initiated by the attacks of September 11, 2001 in New York and Washington. These actions had the man-

date of the international community, expressed in the UN resolution. Poland's Military Contingent (PKW), operating under ISAF forces was located in the vicinity of Bagram base north of Kabul. Poland's mission consisted of about 300 soldiers from sapper units, logistics, prevention and anti-chemical defense. Due to the composition of the contingent, assignments performed by Poland's soldiers focused on cleaning and de-mining activities on subordinate lands and the development of a technical infrastructure. In addition to the troops, Poland's Special Forces, especially GROM, were involved in actions in Afghanistan. Currently, in 2012, about 2,500 Polish soldiers are stationed in Afghanistan. The PKW controls the region of Ghazni, in eastern Afghanistan. It is one of the more numerous NATO contingents. Poland's soldiers work for the democratization of the state, take action against the Taliban, and in a direct way are engaged in ensuring the safety of the Afghan people.

On March 20, 2003, it was decided that Poland's troops be sent to Iraq³. Poland took an active part in the war, though the U.S.A.'s attack on that country was strongly criticized because of the lack of clear and positive consent from the UN. Participation and involvement in the coalition forces were also quite skeptically evaluated by the European partners,

³ This decision evoked critical comments and increased after the death of more Polish soldiers. In total, up to the year 2012, 37 Poles have died in Afghanistan and 28 in Iraq.

especially France and Germany. Poland's authorities, however, had no doubt as to the usefulness and validity of this war. The first unit taking part in the fighting was GROM. In addition, during the first days of the war in the Middle East, anti-chemical response troops were sent. About 200 Polish soldiers were directly involved in combat in Iraq. Their involvement has been very positively evaluated by American commanders and President George W. Bush. At the end of the war, Poland, under UN resolutions, entered into the stabilization and restoration of order processes in Iraq.

In June 2003, Poland's government accepted the decision concerning Poland's stabilization support. On September 3, Poland took command of the international south-central stabilization zone. The composition of Poland's contingent consisted of about 2,500 soldiers. In the initial period of stabilizing Iraq by Polish

troops, there were no significant attacks on the Polish zone. Later, especially in the years 2004-2005, there were several attacks in the region of the Polish zone. Poland's soldiers were active in the field of disarmament and monitoring the internal situation. They also provided significant help in the organization of humanitarian aid. Poland's military activities also focused on training issues. Poles participated in the creation of the Iraqi civil service, police and military. Since July 2005, there was a significant change in the nature and composition of Poland's contingent. It became a part of NTM-I. Many more specialists in the fields of training and consultancy were coming to Iraq. In the last phase of the stay, Poland's contingent consisted of about 900 soldiers. The final withdrawal of Poland's troops from Iraq took place on October 4, 2008. Poles, however, continued to participate in stabilization operations.

About 20 soldiers are involved in consulting projects and training for Iraqi security forces.

The implementation of the obligations of Poland's membership in NATO is going quite successfully. However, this process is not free from problems. Apart from the few challenges mentioned above, we ought to indicate the challenges which are a serious problem today. Some of these challenges particularly refer to two countries, Russia and the United States. Moreover, Poland, a member of the EU, is often seen as overly focused on cooperation within NATO and with the United States at the expense of initiatives within the EU. NATO's Strategy of 2010 clearly indicates the need to work together to build a missile defense shield in Europe. This project was associated with Poland by the United States. The proposed construction of a system based in Poland and the Czech Republic was stopped due to opposi-



tion from Russia, which stated that the shield threatens its interests and is detrimental to her security policy. Increasingly, Russia demands that the United States clearly state that this project is not aimed at Russia. It is hard to expect to be able to build a permanent air defense system without Russia's participation.

Yet the experiences of the past few years show that the negotiation of a common position, including where to locate the system, will not be easy. Another problem is the difference of opinion between Poland, a member of NATO and the EU and Russia on energy issues. Poland, on the one hand, is largely dependent on the supply of raw materials from this country. On the other hand, she is trying to get an additional source of energy supply independent of Russia. In addition, Poland clearly opposed the initiative of the construction of the Nord Stream gas pipeline, connecting Russia with Germany. Very interesting in the context of energy security, including freedom from Russian supplies, are the issues of possible shale gas deposits in Poland and the possibility of their exploitation. Poland would have to show high resistance in this regard, both towards Russian and Western European lobbies, who are unwilling to undertake this lead. Similar discrepancies are related with the institutional future, including within NATO and countries such as Georgia and Ukraine. Towards the Baltic States, Poland, as in the past, shows great understanding for the Euro-Atlantic aspirations

of these countries. The «open door» postulate included in NATO's strategy provides an opportunity to implement the idea of expansion by other states. But this is not a matter which is easy to predict in time or clearly evaluated both within NATO and the EU.

Conclusion

Contemporary international reality requires undertaking effective cooperation on global and regional levels. It is difficult to separate the goals and assignments associated with security implemented at the national and international levels. Poland's security policy in the last 20 year period has made a decided transition between the two confronting military blocs, the Warsaw Pact and NATO. However, full membership in NATO needed to clearly define and maintain the Euro-Atlantic direction of Poland's foreign and security policies. This was achieved thanks to the determination of all political forces. This was one of the few necessary and strategically important issues not awakening major disputes.

Achieving full membership in the Alliance, in just ten years after the change of our political system, eight years after closing the operation of the Warsaw Pact and six years after the departure of Soviet troops from Poland is certainly a success. However, using these possibilities to their full potential is determined by current Polish policies, both internal and external.

In addition, we must be aware of the overall chang-

es that have taken place in the proximate European and Polish neighborhood in the last twenty years. Comparing the picture of the continent in 1989 and 2012, we can clearly see that the changes are revolutionary. On the other hand, the road to this reality was often evolutionary in nature. The most important priority is to maintain the strategic interests that Poland wishes to pursue. But it is important that they not be aimed at other entities and systems of cooperation. We should therefore skillfully stabilize and maintain cooperation both on the basis of NATO and the EU. At the same time, we must cooperate effectively at the national level, taking into account the strategic partnership with the United States, not neglecting cooperation with European partners, notably France and Germany, the countries of the Visegrad Group and stabilizing relations with Russia.

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АННОТАЦИЯ

Польша – большая страна, расположенная в самом центре Европы. Она является важным партнером и «движущей силой» в процессах демократизации, интеграции и безопасности в регионе. Таким образом, региональное значение Польши не вызывает сомнений. Все чаще звучат мнения о законных амбициях РП стать важным игроком в сфере глобальной безопасности. Достижению этих целей может помочь то обстоятельство, что после 1989 г. польская политика в сфере безопасности осталась в основном за пределами разногласий и споров между основными политическими партиями. Данная работа представляет собой попытку показать те шаги, которые предпринимает Польша в области международной безопасности. Автор анализирует формальные и правовые механизмы внутренней и внешней деятельности Республики Польша в этом направлении.

Ключевые слова: Польша, политика безопасности, НАТО.

SUMMARY

Poland is a large country situated in the middle of Europe. It is regarded as an important partner and the «driving force» in the processes of democratization, integration and security in the region. Hence the regional importance of Poland is not questionable. Increasingly often, there appear also opinions about the legitimate ambitions of Poland to play an essential part in global security. Achieving these objectives has been helped by the fact that Polish security policy after 1989 remained basically outside the controversies and disagreements between major politicians and political parties. This paper is an attempt to present selected areas of Poland's activity in the field of international security. The analysis offered gives an account of formal and legal arrangements, and internal and external activities in this area.

Key words: Poland, security policy, NATO