



National Commission on the Future of the Army

2530 Crystal Drive, Zachary Taylor Building, Suite 5000
Arlington, VA 22202

SUBJECT: Minutes for the National Commission on the Future of the Army (NCFA), Operational Subcommittee Engagement with Poland's Attaché

Date: 03 September 2015

Time: 0900-1000 Hours

Location: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1616 Rhode Island Ave, NW, Washington, DC 20036

Format: Roundtable discussion with senior allied official

Attendees:

NCFA PARTICIPANTS:

HON Dr. Kathleen Hicks, Commissioner

Staff: Mr. Kerry Schindler, NCFA staff

Mr. Scott Sharp, NCFA staff

MAJ Vinson Morris, Operational Subcommittee Designated Federal Officer (DFO)

EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND PARTICIPANT: Brigadier General Jarosław Stróżyk, Defense Attaché, Embassy of Poland

Documents Submitted to Commission: None

Meeting Summary

The Commission continues to meet with allied and partner nations to capture their perspectives as the United States balances the size and mix of the Army and resources. The Commission is cognizant of United States security interests, and those of its partners and allies are inextricably linked. Engaging key allies to understand their perspectives in balancing national security risk in light of declining defense is an important element of the Commission's deliberative effort.

Dr. Hicks explained the Commission's responsibilities. The DFO explained the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) provisions that govern the Commission. The following topics were then discussed:

1. Russian Threat: Brigadier Stróżyk noted Russia demonstrated a new kind of behavior in Georgia (2008). Poland views Russia as a long term (10-12 years) threat. Russians are steadily and consistently building their forces and capabilities. Russia will likely test NATO's resolve in the future. The Baltics are viewed as directly threatened

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by Russia, but you cannot discount a possible attack against Poland. Russian President Putin is stubborn and assertive and will likely push into other areas.

2. Reliance on Russia for Energy: Poland gets more than 50% of its energy (oil/gas) from Russia. Poland can survive without Russian energy, but economy/industry would sustain severe damage. Impact of winter and disrupted economy could create a situation where Russia would be willing to stabilize the situation on their terms.

3. U.S. force presence in Poland: Poland welcomes persistent US military presence. More than 50% of the Polish population is supportive of US and NATO forces. In Poland's view, NATO is synonymous with US; however, Germany and France are key players. The preferred size of a persistent, to include permanently forward stationed, US formation would be a Battalion or larger. Poland defines permanent as troops with housing for families. Poland views reductions of even 1,000 US troops from Europe as devastating.

4. U.S. capabilities of particular interest to Poland include: Air Defense Artillery, Missile Defense, Field Artillery, Infantry/Armor, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) (Mid-Range/high-altitude). Poland is currently involved in joint UAV development with Israeli and US companies. The key is intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assets and the ability to integrate these under a single command and control umbrella.

5. US National Guard State Partnership Program: State Partnership Program is a huge success. Poland is looking to build its own National Guard. Conscription ended in 2008 and reserves are approximately 30,000 troops.

6. Poland is committed to its defense. New President for Poland elected three weeks ago; parliamentary elections are coming in October. President is interested in expeditionary assets as part of Poland continuing to do its part for the UN/NATO. In the parliamentary election, one of the parties is campaigning to increase the Polish Army from 100,000 to 120,000 and increase defense spending from 2% of their Gross Domestic Product to 2.5%. Brigadier Stróżyk explained all NATO countries should meet the 2% GDP mark for defense funding. Poland is buying attack and utility helicopters. He also noted that the Polish President recently issued a new cyber security directive.

Brigadier Stróżyk is open to subsequent discussions to ensure the Commission has any information required. The meeting adjourned at 1000hrs.