

**Remarks by Mr. Maciej Piasarcki, minister-counselor, deputy chief of mission
Embassy of Poland, Washington, DC
The Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe
Expert briefing “NATO’s Warsaw Summit and the Future of European Security”**

Thank you very much for the opportunity to participate in this timely briefing on the upcoming North Atlantic Alliance summit in Warsaw. It is my great pleasure to share with you Poland’s priorities in its double role both as a host nation and as one of the 28 allies.

This year’s NATO summit will constitute a key event for the transatlantic alliance, serving as an occasion to take decisions important for the security of alliance members and their partners. Today we face a number of parallel, negative challenges for Euro-Atlantic security, that shape our threat perception and overall evaluation of the security environment. It’s difficult not to admit that the security environment has undergone dynamic changes. Extremism and instability in the Middle East and North Africa have led to the worst the humanitarian crisis in years, notably in Syria and Iraq. Terrorists attack homelands of NATO allies. Russia maintains an aggressive attitude, continuing to occupy the territories of Ukraine and Georgia. It is still actively involved in fighting in Ukraine and supports separatists. Russia's actions in Syria support the Assad regime, in harsh contradiction to the objectives of the global coalition against Daesh. Hybrid and cyber challenges have also become an constitutive element of the security picture.

The threats that we face differ in scope and nature. Yet, despite these differences, allies should be ready to assist each other. The strength of the Alliance lies in unity, solidarity, values and freedoms we are determined to defend. NATO security is indivisible. The NATO Summit in Warsaw will be held in the spirit of allied solidarity. In addition to the key decisions on strengthening deterrence and defense policy of NATO in the context of the Eastern flank of the Alliance, it will also bring a comprehensive response of NATO to the challenges from the South.

Let me remind you that the previous Newport Summit prepared the first response to new developments in the security: an increase of the NATO Response Force and the creation of a brigade-sized high-readiness Spearhead Force at its core; setting up additional small headquarters in the eastern part of our Alliance, including in Poland, enhancing Multinational Corps North-East in Szczecin, Poland, and boosting exercises. Everything that was assumed in Newport as part of the Readiness Action Plan is gradually achieved. The RAP and the VJTF (Very High Readiness Joint Task Force) are valuable instruments for the East and South. Yet, the so called “Newport package” is just a first step in the right direction. The number and strategic complexity of threats demand from the North Atlantic Alliance a long-term military adaptation to the deteriorating security environment of today and tomorrow based upon enhanced defense and deterrence of the Alliance. A “Warsaw package” should

go further, taking into account, among others, a persistent forward presence of NATO in our region, including Poland. The enhanced forward presence shall be meaningful in a military sense (not only for exercises), broadly multinational, meet directly the challenges in the region, reinforced of course by appropriate logistic capacity and infrastructure. The idea is that there are always rotating units on Polish and Baltic States' territories, creating the effect of a continuous presence and enhanced deterrence.

Defense ministers of NATO countries agreed in principle to the strengthening of forward military presence on the Eastern flank at the February meeting and further decided in June that four multinational battalions will be deployed in the Baltic states and in Poland. Now the details, including framework nations and their particular locations, are being determined on the eve of the Summit. The forces exercising or stationing on the eastern flank should bring new military quality and be the initial answer to new challenges and threats in the region. NATO presence in the Eastern flank should be capable of deterring a potential threat and defending us at the early stage of a crisis. We hope that the head of states and governments in Warsaw will confirm this approach, send a strong political signal of commitment towards its implementation in the months and years to come and ensure that adequate resources and capabilities will be delivered for that purpose.

In this context it is important to underline the US leadership in the efforts to enhance the security of the Eastern and Central Europe. Quadrupled European Reassurance Initiative will allow to increase American military presence in our region, which is indeed an important contribution to NATO efforts related to defense and deterrence package. Poland is ready to host the Army Brigade Combat Team and its HQ as well as advanced combat equipment that is supposed to be deployed in Europe in the framework of the Army Prepositioned Stocks. We are ready and able to provide critical Host Nation Support.

During the summit we should also announce a progress in building NATO Ballistic Missile Defense system in Europe by declaration of the achievement of an Initial NATO BMD Operational Capability. Missile defense is an integral part of the Alliance's overall defense posture and contributes to the indivisible security of the Alliance. The aim of this capability is to provide full coverage and protection for all NATO European populations, territory, and forces against the increasing threats posed by the proliferation of ballistic missiles.

The NATO Summit in Warsaw must also bring a comprehensive response of NATO to the challenges and threats from the South. The support for Turkey is a very good example of the principle of allied solidarity. NATO is involved in international efforts related to the migration crisis aimed at combating people smuggling. At the Defense Ministers meeting in February 2016, it was agreed that NATO would send a maritime force to monitor the Aegean Sea, gather information on illegal migration and cooperate with the EU Frontex Agency. Yet, this is not enough. We need to look for more synergies in co-operation with different partners. The European Union is a unique and essential partner for NATO. The two organizations share

a majority of members, and all members of both organizations share common values. At the NATO Summit we should try to strengthen this cooperation. A Joint declaration on cooperation to be signed by the Presidents of the European Council and Commission as well as the Secretary General of NATO confirms the strategic nature of NATO-EU relations and aims at more relevant, daily, joint-up work on countering hybrid threats, increasing maritime situational awareness, synchronized crisis response backed by exercises and mutually supportive development of capabilities in the spirit of a more balanced burden sharing across the Atlantic.

Discussion about the Warsaw Summit is not possible without debating NATO-Russia relations. We hope our Heads of States and Governments will be able to set a clear political vision of such relations. Partnership we used to have is not possible unless Russia returns to full compliance with international law.

Dialogue with Moscow is inevitable, but the dialogue is not a policy, it is a tool for our policy. Therefore it should:

- be well prepared as to its goals, the level of ambition and messages we want to send,
- reflect our strong and united position on fundamental values and principles,
- not substitute (or impinge on) enhancement of our defense and deterrence

In our opinion in the current and foreseeable future the main goal of such a dialogue should be defined as lowering military tension and increasing military predictability. It is also crucial to ensure reciprocity in this endeavors. It cannot be only the West willing to engage on these issues in Brussels or in Vienna under the OSCE umbrella.

We hope that as a result of the Warsaw Summit all partners will be able to take advantage of enhanced forms of cooperation with NATO. The aim is to provide our partners with more effective capabilities when facing security challenges. We are sincerely willing to develop enhanced cooperation and infrastructure with eastern and northern partners as well as in the Middle East and North Africa, Central Asia, Caucasus and Asia-Pacific Region. We continue to engage in political – military dialogue to promote situational awareness and regional understanding as well as practical cooperation with partners in all existing frameworks. The most important is the practical dimension of the partnership policy. Interoperability and defense capacity building should be at the heart of our efforts to assist in building our partners' resilience and reduce vulnerability to crises. Both initiatives have proven to be useful tools aimed at projecting stability in our close neighborhood and beyond, when potential instability directly threatens our Alliance. We also devote special attention to cooperation with highly advanced partners: Australia, Finland, Sweden, Georgia, Jordan, based on their unique merits and ambitions. We should also pay more attention to our neighbors who are directly exposed to various threats. A more resilient neighborhood should be our priority.

Poland looks forward to Montenegro's membership in NATO. Podgorica has been a valuable partner and has made exemplary progress on its way to NATO accession. It now serves as a positive example to the rest of the region. The Warsaw Summit should stress the importance and validity of the open door policy and its contribution to the stability in the Euro-Atlantic region. In Warsaw we will reaffirm full and continuous support for NATO enlargement, including the membership aspirations of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, and Macedonia. The process of enlargement is aimed at extending the zone of security and stability.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to underline Poland's contribution to the North Atlantic Alliance and development of our own capabilities. Poland takes an active part in NATO operations (Resolute Support, KFOR), assigns forces for actions of the Baltic Air Policing, contributes to assurance measures in the Baltic states as well as provides Air Policing capabilities to Romania and Bulgaria. We are also one of the framework countries of the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force. We have hosted on our territory the largest and the most important exercises of the Alliance, such as "Noble Jump 2015," "Brilliant Jump 2016" or earlier "Steadfast Jazz 2013," and every two years we organize "Anaconda" – the largest exercise in the region. Anaconda exercises 2016 have just finished. I would like to thank the United States for their considerable contribution to this exercise. Poland regularly assigns commands and subunits to the NATO Response Force, where in 2015 it commanded a component of special forces, and in 2016 commands the forces of defense against weapons of mass destruction. Poland also fulfils art. 3 of the Washington Treaty according to which Allies are obliged to constantly develop their national armed forces. Poland is investing substantially in its own defense with a contribution of 2% GDP, including over 20% on technical modernization. Additionally, in the spirit of solidarity with those Allies who feel threatened at the southern flank, we have decided to participate in the operation *Inherent Resolve* constituting part of a larger effort of the Global Coalition against the Daesh. We will send 4 F-16s and 150 support crew to Kuwait to provide additional reconnaissance capabilities as well as 60 soldiers to train Iraqi forces. This contribution, even if it is not implemented within NATO framework, underlines Poland's practical commitment to the 360 degrees approach and indivisibility of security.

My remarks only mention a part of the NATO adaptation process and expected summit outcomes. I am ready to discuss the rest in the Q&A session.

Thank you very much.