

19.XI.2018

Bases of US troops in Poland are the benefit to NATO

- NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg admitted that the increased presence of American troops in Poland, on the eastern flank strengthens the defense capabilities of the North Atlantic Alliance - said in Brussels Mariusz Błaszczak, the minister of national defense.



The head of the Defense Ministry paid a visit on November 20th in the NATO Headquarters in Brussels, where he met the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Alliance Jens Stoltenberg.

The conversation with the Secretary General of NATO concerned, inter alia, the inclusion of the "Fort Trump" initiative in defense plans coordinated by the North Atlantic Alliance and strengthening the Alliance's defense capabilities on its eastern flank.

- I told about our bilateral talks with the US as about a very good formula for strengthening NATO's defense capabilities in Europe on the eastern flank. This is how it was accepted by the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Alliance - said Błaszczak.

The minister expressed his conviction that Polish-American talks would end with the reinforced presence of US soldiers in Poland:

- Fort Trump will be realized and it will not be in doubt, so we do not talk 'if' but 'how'. We are not talking about whether the American forces in Poland will be reinforced, but how it will run, what troops would come - said Minister Mariusz Błaszczak in Brussels.

The Minister informed the Secretary General of NATO about the negotiations between Poland and the US, about the work of the Polish-American working group in this area and about his talks in the US Congress.

- Negotiations are indeed ongoing, they concern the formula. We are wondering together how the increased presence of the United States Army will be organized and how this process should be carried out - Minister Mariusz Błaszczak reminded.

In addition, the conversation with the head of NATO concerned the strengthening of relations within the Alliance, the activities of the Polish army as part of the NATO missions around the world, especially on the eastern flank and activity of Poland in Latvia, Romania, Afghanistan, Iraq and Kosovo.

The head of the Ministry of National Defense also participated in the meeting of the Steering Board of the European Defense Agency (EDA) in Brussels as well as in the EU Defense Ministers' working session with the participation of NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg.

- The Council is about defense. Of course, we are dealing with threats in the eastern flank of NATO, but also the south is at risk. It is about a migration crisis, especially about the situation in the Mediterranean (...). The Polish stance is unequivocal in that EU initiatives should support this defense framework, which is formed by the North Atlantic Alliance. So they can not compete with each other - the minister stressed and explained that Poland declared participation in 10 out of 17 new PESCO projects.

- We hope for the third edition of PESCO, which will include the design of a new generation tank - the head of the Defense Ministry pointed out and added that he also talked about the project on Tuesday with the defense minister of France.

Minister Błaszczak during his stay in Brussels held bilateral meetings with the defense ministers of France and Hungary. The meetings concerned bilateral and EU defense programs and initiatives.

[>> PHOTO GALLERY <<](#)

During the working session of EU defense ministers with the participation of Jens Stoltenberg, Secretary General of NATO, Minister Błaszczak took part in the discussion of the current defense cooperation between the European Union and the North Atlantic Alliance.

Also on that day, Minister Mariusz Błaszczak chaired the ceremony of signing the memorandum of understanding of Croatia's accession to the Visegrad Battle Group, which will be on duty in 2019.

- Joining of Croatia to the EU Battle Group formed by the Visegrad Group countries will strengthen our mutual defense relations and create new opportunities for the European Union's defense initiatives - underlined the head of the Defense Ministry.

The Pentagon produces a report on the evaluation of the initiative to establish permanent US bases in Poland. Congress obliged the US Department of Defense to present a report on this matter by March next year.