



U.S. and Polish Presidents Meet in Washington

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On June 24, Polish President Andrzej Duda met with President Donald Trump at the White House. The visit concerned Polish-American defence and energy cooperation, as well as new technology and the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. Although the joint statement by the presidents included no new decisions, it confirms the will of both states to further deepen strategic cooperation, including on issues related to nuclear energy. It also criticized the false vision of the history of World War II Russia has been promoting strongly in recent years.

Is further strengthening of the U.S. military presence in Poland under consideration?

At the press conference, the presidents indicated the possibility of strengthening the U.S. military presence in Poland above the level agreed in 2019. This means broadening the ongoing talks on implementation of the June 2019 declaration. Based on it, the U.S. is to increase the continuous rotation of forces to Poland by around 1,000 troops (up from 4,500) and Poland is to cover the costs of preparing the infrastructure for stationing and training these forces and for receiving additional reinforcements in a crisis. In September 2019, the sides agreed the locations for most of the new deployments and facilities. In line with the 2019 decisions, the U.S. will deploy additional logisticians, special forces, and reconnaissance drones to Poland. In October, the U.S. Army mission-command element in Poland was transformed into a division headquarters (forward).

Will Poland host some of the units to be withdrawn from Germany?

It would be optimal for Polish security to increase the U.S. military presence in the country through the deployment of additional American forces to Europe. Trump, however, has decided to [withdraw around 9,500 troops from Germany](#) and noted during the meeting that some of them might be redeployed to Poland and other countries. Following consultations with the NATO secretary general prior to visiting the White House, Duda urged Trump not to withdraw U.S. forces from Europe. Such a reduction would weaken the

U.S. ability to reinforce its NATO allies. Poland had not sought the relocation of U.S. troops from Germany, but after Trump's decision, it has expressed readiness to host them. Apart from strengthening the NATO Eastern Flank, it would limit the consequences of Trump's drawdown. The Pentagon is working on implementation of the withdrawal but it is not certain, given opposition in Congress and the possible change of administration after the November U.S. presidential elections.

How is energy cooperation between Poland and the U.S. developing?

The joint presidential statement announced a new initiative—Polish-American cooperation for the development of civil nuclear energy in Poland. This is an extension of declarations and cooperation agreements signed in November 2018 and June 2019 between the U.S. Department of Energy and the Polish Ministry of Energy. During the joint press conference, Trump announced that an agreement is being finalised that will allow Poland to acquire civil nuclear energy technology from one of the leading American producers (probably GE Hitachi Nuclear Energy, Duke Energy, or Westinghouse Electric Company), which will enable the construction of a nuclear power plant in Poland. American LNG supplies also remain an unchanged element of the states' cooperation, which will not only allow for energy diversification in Poland but also in other Central and Eastern European countries.

PISM SPOTLIGHT

How can Poland and the U.S. strengthen cooperation on new technology?

The presidents referenced a bilateral declaration of September 2019 regarding 5G technology, underlining the commitment to cooperate in this area and to use services and equipment only from trusted suppliers. This in effect excludes Chinese companies, as there are concerns that they fail to comply with ICT security standards and intellectual property protection. As part of the cooperation on new technology, American tech giants Google and Microsoft are investing in Poland, including in the construction of data centres for cloud services. The expected investments are \$2 billion and \$1 billion dollars, respectively. They will contribute to the development of the “National Cloud” infrastructure in Poland, a project seen as a digital hub for Central and Eastern Europe. In the joint declaration, the presidents underlined the importance of diversifying the supply chain of these enterprises, which could open the way

for Polish companies to develop business connections with them.

What are the prospects for cooperation between Poland and the U.S. towards the Three Seas Initiative (3SI) and in the fight against COVID-19?

The U.S. involvement in the Three Seas Initiative was emphasized in the context of the region's energy security and development of infrastructure, as well as technological cooperation (in February, the U.S. committed to provide \$1 billion for infrastructure projects in countries participating in 3SI). Medical cooperation was also part of the talks. Poland sent a military medical mission to the U.S. in April 2020 to exchange knowledge and experience in the treatment of patients with COVID-19. The presidents outlined the prospect of cooperation between Poland and the U.S. on research into a drug and vaccine against the SARS-CoV-2 virus.