



Weekly Briefing

**Poland external relations briefing:
Ukraine's active support in the war with Russia**
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Ukraine's active support in the war with Russia

Summary

The outbreak of war in Ukraine has changed the geopolitical situation in our regions, and the response to the new situation has shaped Polish foreign policy in 2022. From the very beginning of Russia's aggression, Poland has supported Ukraine, both militarily and economically and socially. Internationally, it is seeking the toughest possible sanctions on Russia and the isolation of the country, seeing this as both a strategy to weaken the aggressor, but also an opportunity to strategically weaken Russia in Europe, which strengthens the Polish position. The conflict also directly affected Poland militarily. In November, the village of Przewodów on the border with Ukraine was hit by a Ukrainian air defense missile, killing 2 people. The year 2022 also saw a strengthening of Polish-American ties related to the conflict in Ukraine, as demonstrated by President Joe Biden's visit to Poland and the Polish government's heightened rhetoric toward Germany, as demonstrated by a diplomatic note regarding Germany's reparations for Poland's losses during World War II.

Introduction

For Poland, Russia's aggression against Ukraine represents a high level of immediate security threat. Threat to the independence and integrity of Ukraine means a weakening of its security and an increased threat from Russia, which is why Poland has strongly condemned Russian aggression and is taking very active measures on the international arena to support Ukraine and impose possibly severe sanctions against Russia by the West.

President Joe Biden in Poland

The American President Joe Biden visited Poland in March. During the visit, he asserted, Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, which guarantees the security of member countries, "is a sacred commitment." He also announced further support for Ukraine.

In response to the Russian invasion, the number of U.S., British, and Canadian troops stationed in Poland has increased to approximately 10,000, as well as the amount of military

equipment of NATO allied countries. In response to the Russian actions against Ukraine, a trilateral Polish-British-Ukrainian alliance was formed in mid-February, with the aim of responding to the Russian threat. A joint declaration of solidarity in the face of Russian actions was also adopted by the governments of Ukraine, Poland and Lithuania.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has caused NATO to completely change its model of defense and deterrence, recognizing Russia as its enemy, not a partner. This is important for improving Poland's security and interests. At the Madrid summit, leaders of member countries decided to significantly increase the number of troops in the rapid reaction force and to send more troops to the Alliance's eastern flank. U.S. President Joe Biden, in turn, announced that the command of U.S. forces in Poland will already be located permanently, rather than on a rotating basis as before. The announced admission of Sweden and Finland to the Alliance is also a strengthening of Poland's security, as it creates from the Baltic Sea an “internal sea” of NATO.

Polish delegation first in Kiev after Russian aggression

In mid-March (as a first foreign delegation to Ukraine after beginning of the war), the Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki, leader of Poland's ruling Law and Justice (PiS) party, Jarosław Kaczyński, along with the prime ministers of Slovenia, Janez Janša, and the Czech Republic, Petr Fiala, met with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenski in Kiev. The Polish delegation proposed the idea of sending a NATO international peacekeeping mission to Ukraine. Prime Minister Morawiecki after the visit presented a 10-point plan by Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovenia to save Ukraine, in which the countries call for further tightening of sanctions on Russia and its complete isolation in the international arena.

In April The Polish President Andrzej Duda along with the presidents of the Baltic countries visited the Ukrainian liberated towns near Kyiv and met with President Volodymyr Zelensky. He called for war crimes committed by Russians in Ukraine to be tried by international courts, calling Russian crimes against civilians terrorism. President Duda also visited London, where he met with the Prime Minister Boris Johnson. During the visit, they agreed to deepen Polish-British military cooperation, especially in the context of supporting Ukraine. In turn, Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki met with his Ukrainian counterpart in

Krakow, where an agreement was signed on railroad cooperation between the two countries to facilitate the export of Ukrainian goods.

Rocket hit Polish territory, 2 people killed

On 15th of November, the Polish village Przewodów near the Ukrainian border was hit by a rocket, resulting in the death of 2 people. The S-300 missile was of Russian manufacture. At the time, Russian forces were carrying out a large-scale missile attack on Ukraine. Initial reports by the U.S. Associated Press Agency said the missile was launched by the Russians, but Polish and U.S. authorities later said that, based on information held by both countries, the missile was most likely launched by Ukrainian air defense. The case is currently under investigation by the Polish prosecutor's office with the participation of Polish and foreign experts. After the tragedy in Przewodów, Germany proposed that Poland deploy German Patriot launchers on Poland's eastern border and this proposal is implementing.

The President Andrzej Duda delivering a speech in the Ukrainian Parliament

In May the President Andrzej Duda became the first world leader to speak in the Ukrainian Parliament after Russia's aggression against Ukraine. In a special address, the President Duda emphasized the friendship linking the Polish and Ukrainian nations. It is an expression of very close relations between both countries. The Polish President assured that Poland will support Ukraine on its way to membership in the European Union. He admitted that he was also interested in Ukraine joining the Tree Seas Initiative. Andrzej Duda declared his active participation in rebuilding Ukraine from war damage. In his opinion today the time has come for a new Polish-Ukrainian treaty on good neighborhood.

In mid-June, Riga hosted the summit of the Three Seas Initiative, a group of European Union countries located on the Baltic, Black and Adriatic Seas, which was attended by the Polish President Andrzej Duda. During the meeting a special status of the Tree Seas Initiative partner state was created, which is to be an offer for Ukraine and other European countries aspiring to join the European Union.

In early June, a Polish-Ukrainian broad intergovernmental consultation was held in Kyiv under the chairmanship of Prime Ministers of both countries Mateusz Morawiecki and Denys Shmyhal and ministers of both governments. During the two-day meeting, eight Polish-Ukrainian memoranda were signed between the ministries, including on economic, energy, cultural, cross-border cooperation, pilot training, national memory, and cooperation in rebuilding Ukraine with the participation of Polish companies. The Polish government is the first since the beginning of the Russian invasion to meet with the Ukrainian government in this formula.

Poland ask Germany for satisfaction for World War II

On September 1st, the 83rd anniversary of Germany's aggression against Poland, which marked the beginning of World War II in Europe, Polish authorities announced a report on war losses caused by Germany in occupied Poland in 1939-1945ⁱ. They also delivered special diplomatic note to Germany on the payment of reparations. The report values Polish war losses at about 1.3 trillion euros. This is the first such report in Poland's post-war history. However, Germany considers the reparations issue closed. The topic of reparations to Germany comes against the backdrop of Poland's upcoming election campaign and the country's disputes with the European Commission over the allocation of funds to Poland from the EU Reconstruction Fund and differences in the Polish and German approaches to the war in Ukraine. However, the Polish government's demand enjoys strong public support among Poles, although most of them do not see any real chance of its implementation.

Development of cooperation with South Korea

In the context of the war in Ukraine, it is also worth noting the changes in Poland's relations with its former strategic ally Hungary and the emergence of a new - significant Polish partner in the military and energy areas - South Korea.

South Korea, along with the United States, is becoming an important Polish partner in matters of military and energy cooperation. In the context of the war in Ukraine, Poland is significantly increasing its defense spending. Minister of National Defense Mariusz Błaszczak has signed agreements for the purchase of armaments from South Korea. These include FA-50 light fighters, (48 units) K2 tanks (about 1,000) and K9 self-propelled howitzers (600). The

order is to be implemented in stages in phases. The cost of the deal may amount to 14 billion euros ⁱⁱ. Poland has signed a letter of intent for the construction of nuclear reactors by the South Korean consortium KHNP too. The Koreans promise Poland, among other things, nuclear technology transfer and a low price.ⁱⁱⁱ

Reevaluating the strategic partnership with Hungary

The war in Ukraine has also reevaluated Polish-Hungarian relations. Until the conflict broke out, the two countries were strategic allies on policy issues within the European Union, supporting each other. However, a different approach to the war in Ukraine has shattered this solidarity. The Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki assessed in September that the "attitude to the war" in Ukraine had severely divided the Visegrad Group (Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia). However, he announced that he wants to work out a formula in which "we can return both to cooperation within the V4 and to joint actions with Hungary in those areas where we share values and interests."^{iv}As recently as late July, the Head of the Polish government said that "the paths of Poland and Hungary have diverged." Morawiecki answered yes when asked if he confirmed the words of Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, who said on July that the war in Ukraine had shaken up Polish-Hungarian cooperation, the axis of the Visegrad Group. Orban also assessed that the goals of the two countries are the same, but "the problem is on the side of the heart," because while Hungarians look at the conflict as a war between two Slavic nations, Poles "feel that they themselves are also fighting in it." However, it seems that despite their differences in eastern politics, Poland and Hungary will continue to be united in their approach to the EU policy.

Conclusion

The year 2022 in Polish foreign policy was marked by Polish international activity aimed at supporting Ukraine and working to contain and isolate Russia. This year marked a deepening of Polish-Ukrainian relations, which in the future could result in a stronger partnership and integration of the two countries. It is also a year of strengthening Poland's relations behind the United States, the United Kingdom and the Baltics, which share a common approach to Russia. It is also a continuation of tensions in the Polish government's relations with Brussels in the context of the disbursement of funds from the EU Reconstruction Fund, a year of increasing tensions in relations with Germany over historical issues and approaches to the Ukrainian conflict, and a weakening of the traditional Polish-Hungarian friendship due to different approaches to the war in Ukraine. Economic and military relations with South Korea have strengthened.

i [The report on war losses https://straty-wojenne.pl/](https://straty-wojenne.pl/)

ii [The Economic portal Money.pl https://www.money.pl/gospodarka/mon-polska-kupi-czolgi-samoloty-i-armatohaubice-z-korei-poludniowej-6793175809588064a.html](https://www.money.pl/gospodarka/mon-polska-kupi-czolgi-samoloty-i-armatohaubice-z-korei-poludniowej-6793175809588064a.html)

iii [The Economic portal BusinessInsider.com.pl https://businessinsider.com.pl/gospodarka/umowy-o-atomie-najpierw-korea-potem-usa/db80dd5](https://businessinsider.com.pl/gospodarka/umowy-o-atomie-najpierw-korea-potem-usa/db80dd5)

iv [The TV TVN24 Portal https://tvn24.pl/polska/mateusz-morawiecki-o-stosunkach-polski-i-wegier-oraz-grupie-wyszehradzkiej-premier-chce-wrocic-do-wspolnych-dzialan-z-wegrami-6097258](https://tvn24.pl/polska/mateusz-morawiecki-o-stosunkach-polski-i-wegier-oraz-grupie-wyszehradzkiej-premier-chce-wrocic-do-wspolnych-dzialan-z-wegrami-6097258)