



Weekly Briefing

**Poland external relations briefing:
The South Korean President to visit Poland,
Poland to face NATO summit
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The South Korean President to visit Poland, Poland to face NATO summit

Summary

The President of the Republic of Korea Yoon Suk-Yeol has visited Poland. Among others, he met with President Andrzej Duda and Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki. Three cooperation agreements were signed in the fields of trade and investment promotion, transport infrastructure development and cooperation in the reconstruction of Ukraine. The presidents took part in the Poland-Korea Economic Forum. South Korea is one of the largest investors in Poland. Among other things, it is involved in the construction of the Pątnów nuclear power plant, the construction of the Central Transport Port, and is a key supplier of military equipment to Poland.

At the NATO Summit in Vilnius in July, important arrangements were made for Poland. The North Atlantic Alliance's new defense plans were approved for the first time since the Cold War, increasing security guarantees for NATO countries.

Introduction

The prospects for the development of economic cooperation between Poland and the Republic of Korea are excellent, as evidenced by the record results of 2022, when trade turnover between our countries exceeded \$10 billion, President Andrzej Duda said after talks with President of the Republic of Korea Yoon Suk-Yeol.¹ He pointed out that in the last two years there has been a "tremendous intensification of economic cooperation, both in terms of economic development and security." - We very much hope that we will not only buy modern defense equipment for our soldiers from the Republic of Korea, but also that this equipment will be produced in Poland. This is what we are striving for," the Polish president stressed after a meeting with his Korean counterpart.

Infrastructural cooperation

The President Duda said that one of the topics of the presidents' conversation was also cooperation in the field of infrastructure. Among the issues discussed were the construction of

the Central Communication Port, investment in Polish ports and the development of trade cooperation based on Polish ports, as well as the development of the rail network. Three cooperation agreements were signed in the areas of trade and investment promotion, development of transport infrastructure and cooperation in the reconstruction of Ukraine. Seoul and Warsaw are to cooperate on Ukrainian land, urban areas and infrastructure.ⁱⁱ

– I look forward to an even greater intensification of the presence of South Korean investors in Poland," noted President Andrzej Duda, during the Poland-Korea Economic Forum. He recalled that about 550 companies with Korean capital operate in Poland. And Poland is the third largest recipient of Korean exports in the European Union. In turn, South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol said that Poland is a base for Korean companies in the EU market and is an important partner for Korea in Central Europe. South Korea's delegation to Poland turned out to be exceptionally large - the country's president took as many as 89 companies to Poland.ⁱⁱⁱ

The South Korean President pointed out that about 350 Korean companies are currently doing business in Poland, including in the sectors of household appliances, electric car batteries and auto parts. He stressed that his country has the experience and technology that will be needed in rebuilding Ukraine after the war. He added that energy cooperation is also important for Poland and Korea.^{iv}

Economic turnover between Poland and South Korea exceeded 10 billion US dollars last year, but of that, about nine billion was the value of goods imported into Poland from Korea.^v President Andrzej Duda called for a greater opening of the Korean market to Polish pork and beef. - Procedures in Korea are underway at the moment and I hope they will end positively, he said.

The Korea-Poland Economic Forum was attended by more than 260 Polish companies and more than 120 Korean business representatives. More than 30 agreements were signed in such areas as advanced technologies, energy, including nuclear energy, industrial decarbonization, financing of infrastructure projects, renewable energy, the space industry and projects in the framework of the reconstruction of Ukraine.^{vi}

The energy, defense and technology

In 2021 The Republic of Korea was the largest non-European investor in Poland. Companies from this country invested \$4.5 billion in Poland. Investments are mainly focused on industries such as automotive, electromobility, electronics, electrical engineering, R&D in

software development and IoT (Internet of Things).^{vii} In June, the long-awaited production of polypropylene at the factory in Police began - one of the largest industrial investments in Poland and the largest investment of its kind in Central and Eastern Europe by Hyundai Engineering. The role of strategic advisor to the Central Communication Port is already being played by the Incheon Airport, which is also likely to become a strategic partner of the planned airport in Baranów. The Polish side is counting on the strategic partner to contribute capital.

Poland has also concluded several strategic agreements to purchase military equipment from South Korea. These include 1,000 K2 Black Panther tanks, most of which are to be produced in Poland starting in 2026, 648 K9 Thunder self-propelled cannon howitzers and 48 FA-50 Golden Eagle light fighters. Poland and South Korea are also cooperating on the construction of the Pątnów nuclear power plant.

Poland to the NATO Summit in Vilnius

Following the NATO Summit in Vilnius in July, a meeting of the Polish National Security Council (SNB), convened by President Andrzej Duda, was held to present the findings of the NATO Summit in Vilnius. President Andrzej Duda stressed that very important decisions for Poland were made there. - For the first time since the Cold War, NATO defense plans, which had been in preparation for more than a year, were approved, according to which there is a change in the philosophy of defending NATO territory from the famous: "deterrence by punishment" to "deterrence by denial," to literal deterrence, that is, such deterrence so that the territory of a NATO country is not seized. This is a significant change," the president said. The president pointed out that "NATO's response must be immediate, rapid and very decisive." As he said, Poland "demanded the strengthening of NATO's air defense and such a decision was made." He explained that the North Atlantic Alliance's air defense will be strengthened with rotational monitoring of the potential threat area, the eastern flank. The NATO air force will be active all the time and will strengthen the alliance in our region, he added.^{viii}

At the end of the summit, Alliance chief Jens Stoltenberg said that "NATO members have approved the most comprehensive defense plan since the end of the Cold War." ^{ix} - The new plans have 300,000 troops on high alert, including significant air and naval capabilities. Decisive defense and deterrence require an industrial base, so an action plan has been adopted that will accelerate joint procurement, increase interoperability, and enhance production and investment capabilities, he pointed out.

NATO says threat from Belarus

The Polish President recalled at the SNB meeting that a few days before the NATO summit in Vilnius, he, together with the presidents of Lithuania and Latvia, sent a letter to member states regarding Belarus. - After the Wagner Group mutiny in Russia and President Vladimir Putin's statements regarding the relocation of tactical nuclear weapons to the Belarusian area and the de facto relocation of the Wagner Group to Belarus, we had no doubt that this significantly affects the security architecture in our part of Europe. That is why we decided to send a letter to the leaders of NATO countries on this issue," the president said.

"We achieved an effect, because Belarus not only appeared as a subject of discussion, but was also included five times in the conclusions on the so-called Brest Gate, a strategic area that is currently under increased threat." - Andrzej Duda added. He noted that the summit also discussed the relocation of Russian tactical nuclear weapons to Belarus, and the summit's conclusions very strongly emphasized that NATO's nuclear umbrella is extended over all members of the alliance, that is, us as well, he noted. According to the president, this is a signal from NATO that "this issue is being monitored all the time."

In a statement concluding the first day of the meeting, NATO leaders noted the "deepening military integration of Russia and Belarus," which poses a challenge to regional stability. "NATO will remain vigilant and continue to carefully monitor the development of this situation, especially the possible deployment of so-called private military companies in Belarus," - the text of the document proclaims. "We condemn Russia's articulated intentions to deploy nuclear weapons and nuclear warhead delivery systems on Belarusian territory," the - the allies declared.

Poland, Lithuania and Latvia together on the threat from Belarus

Ahead of the Vilnius summit, the presidents of Poland, Lithuania and Latvia - Andrzej Duda, Gitanas Nauseda and Egils Levits - called on NATO to take action to counter threats from Russia. In a letter published by the Lithuanian Presidential Palace, among others, they also point to the changing situation in Belarus.^x The presidents stressed that the cooperation between Russia and Belarus has worsened security in the region and throughout the Euro-Atlantic area. "The territory of Belarus and its resources are being used by Russia for illegal and brutal aggression against Ukraine, which demonstrates the increasingly close military integration of the two countries," the document reads. The leaders of Poland, Lithuania and Latvia point out that the latest manifestation of this integration was the deployment of tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus, which poses a direct threat to the societies of these countries.

The leaders also pointed out that the deployment in Belarus of Russian mercenaries from the Wagner group and their leader Yevgeny Prigozhin could be an incentive for the regime in Minsk to trigger a new wave of migration and humanitarian crisis on the borders of the European Union. In their view, Belarusians need a clear signal that the vision of a "democratic, stable and prosperous Belarus, independent of Russia's will and the Kremlin's internal conflicts," is important to the Alliance. The leaders of Poland, Lithuania and Latvia proposed concrete steps to improve the security situation including, among others, reviewing the nuclear deterrence program and adapting it to new realities, strengthening NATO's eastern flank and increasing defense spending beyond 2 percent of GDP, and increasing the Allies' resilience to hybrid threats.

Conclusion

The visit of President of the Republic of Korea Yoon Suk-Yeol to Poland reflects the deepening ties between Poland and South Korea in the areas of infrastructure, defense and energy. The country has become one of Poland's major investors and trade partners.

The NATO summit in Vilnius, despite the failure to meet Poland's demands for more concrete plans to admit Ukraine to NATO, strengthened Poland's security guarantees with new NATO defense plans guaranteeing the immediate defense of the Alliance member's territory in the event of aggression by NATO's Rapid Reaction Force. The Alliance has also recognized the threat from Belarus.

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- i The official website of the President of the Republic of Poland
<https://www.prezydent.pl/aktualnosci/biuro-polityki-miedzynarodowej/aktualnosci/prezydent-republiki-korei-z-wizyta-w-polsce,71958>
- ii The business portal StrefaBiznesu.pl <https://strefabiznesu.pl/wizyta-prezydenta-korei-poludniowej-w-polsce-seul-staje-sie-drugim-po-waszyngtonie-partnerem-strategicznym-warszawy/ar/c3-17720273>
- iii Ibidem
- iv The Polish Radio portal <https://polskieradio24.pl/42/259/artukul/3208118,prezydent-korei-pld-yoon-suk-yeol-polska-jest-naszym-waznym-partnerem>
- v The business portal StrefaBiznesu.pl <https://strefabiznesu.pl/wizyta-prezydenta-korei-poludniowej-w-polsce-seul-staje-sie-drugim-po-waszyngtonie-partnerem-strategicznym-warszawy/ar/c3-17720273>
- vi TVP Info television portal <https://www.tvp.info/71260991/wizyta-prezydenta-korei-pld-w-polsce-towarzyszy-mu-89-topowych-firm>
- vii The Polish Radio portal <https://polskieradio24.pl/42/259/artukul/3208118,prezydent-korei-pld-yoon-suk-yeol-polska-jest-naszym-waznym-partnerem>
- viii The RMF Radio portal FM https://www.rmfm24.pl/regiony/warszawa/news-szczyt-nato-w-wilnie-duda-mowi-o-bardzo-waznych-postanowieni,nld,6900263#crp_state=1
- ix TVN24 TV portal <https://tvn24.pl/swiat/nato-szczyt-w-wilnie-najwazniejsze-ustalenia-7218288>
- x The official website of the President of the Republic of Poland
<https://www.prezydent.pl/aktualnosci/wydarzenia/do-szefow-panstw-i-rzadow--sekretarza-generalnego-organizacji-traktatu-polnocnoatlantyckiego,71447>