SECURITY POLICY CHALLENGES FOR THE NEW GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND

After the parliamentary elections on October 15, 2023, there was a change in the balance of power in the Sejm and Senate of the Republic of Poland. This also means changes in government. Over recent years, we have observed numerous unprecedented threats to the security of the Republic of Poland. In 2022, the Sobieski Institute published a report on this topic ("Poland's security after the NATO summit in Madrid"). Many of its theses and recommendations remain valid. In this analysis, we present the challenges for the new Polish government in several areas of security policy.

INTRODUCTORY NOTES

Security policy is the purposeful activity of a state institution (policy), whose task is 1) creating, 2) maintaining and 3) developing national security systems of a military and non-military nature, constituting the state's response to challenges and threats of domestic and foreign origin. State security policy is public policy, i.e. a directional process of influence of public authorities in order to solve problems of public importance. What are these problems? The Constitution of the Republic of Poland defines (Article 5) five key tasks of the Polish state, which include: (1) safeguarding the independence and inviolability of its territory, (2) ensuring human and citizen freedom and rights, (3) ensuring the security of citizens, (4) guarding national heritage and (5) ensuring environmental protection, guided by the principle of sustainable development. The Constitution indicates that state security is a synergy of internal and external security policies. Traditional security policy covers the issues of the ministries of foreign affairs, internal affairs and defense. Moreover, activities that are the responsibility of the Prime Minister and the minister responsible for justice should be taken into account.

ISSUE 1. NATIONAL DEFENSE

The report postulated: (1) increase personal and material involvement in the development of the Polish Armed Forces and their reserves, (2) take action to promote Poland's military specialization in the EU and NATO through the participation and organization of military and industrial cooperation, training, field and staff exercises and (3) begin an audit of state security systems in order to obtain information on opportunities for improvement based on the experience of the Russian-Ukrainian war. This would be a targeted preparation for a new strategic review of national security.

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Changes in the government mean that the outgoing ministers make the closing balance, and the incoming ones – the opening balance. As a result, we will have to audit military security systems in terms of planning, personnel and materials. A good starting point is to compare the state of affairs with doctrinal documents, such as “The National Security System Development Strategy 2013-2022, the National Security Strategy of 2020” and the technical modernization programmes of the armed forces for 2013-2022 and 2021-2035. The continuity of decision-making processes and the transparency of the costs of decisions made are crucial. The audit should also cover purchases of military equipment, due to the great importance of these issues for the Polish arms industry.

ISSUE 2. CIVIL PROTECTION

The problem is non-military security. One of the greatest failures of all governments of 2007-2023 was the dismantling of the civil defense system. Third party liability insurance was finally abolished under the Homeland Defense Act in 2022. As no new law has been passed integrating crisis management and civil protection systems, thousands of people currently function in a legal loophole. This situation is astonishing considering the proximity of war, mass migrations and previously the pandemic.

The IS report from 2022 proposed: “to adopt a law on civil protection and rebuild the country’s civil defense system, based on new rescue services (consider establishing a separate ministry).” In addition, we wrote that “investments should be planned to restore critical infrastructure that has been neglected for decades in each voivodeship (shelters, resource and reserve bases, civil protection training centers).” The task is current. At the turn of 2022 and 2023, drafts of such a law were discussed, but they raised objections among lawyers in terms of limiting self-government and human rights. This was perhaps the fifth failed attempt to reform the system. This will be one of the key tasks for the new government.

ISSUE 3. DIPLOMACY

The report suggested the use of in-depth foresight work on the “new opening” in relations with key partners and the development of “road maps” for the development of intergovernmental cooperation, also within NATO and according to the procedures of the so-called enhanced cooperation in the EU. An important issue when it comes to the predictability of Polish foreign policy would be to propose priorities for Polish foreign policy for the rest of the current decade. Such

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documents existed in the years 2012-2021, then their creation was discontinued. Moreover, an important issue is monitoring the development of Polish staff in EU and NATO institutions. These processes have been the Achilles' heel of Polish foreign policy for years.

The scale of foreign challenges remains enormous. This means the need to revise the legislation on foreign service and strengthen personnel by expanding training and improving working/service conditions in civilian and military structures. This also requires the development of an analytical base (think tank industry, intelligence) responsible for providing analyzes and expertise on changes in the international situation.

ISSUE 4. NEW POLISH *SOFT POWER*

In recent years, Poland's involvement in regional cooperation formats has increased, such as the Three Seas Initiative, bilateral initiatives in the field of energy security, and the B9 group. These are useful activities because they stimulate numerous grassroots projects and expand the circle of stakeholders who care about the success of Polish initiatives. In the 2022 report, we proposed the expansion of business and intellectual forums of the Three Seas region countries and bilateral forums working for the common interests of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Progress can be noted on this topic. This area would also be a place of cooperation between the government and the President of the Republic of Poland, who has been involved in the co-creation of the above-mentioned formats for years.

The IS report also pointed to several other elements of soft power development. The new government should support networking of Polish elites with their Western partners. We noticed that it is worth supporting the processes of establishing Western media and expert institutions in Warsaw, which would strengthen the Polish message in the Western world and reduce Russian influence in the region. It would also be important to increase funding for Polish cultural institutes to enable them to expand their activities to include language courses, cultural events, and strengthen the presence of Polish elites ideas in Europe. Another issue is to reform media communication channels by supporting foreign Polish media channels.

As part of traditional Polish soft power, it is worth constantly expanding cooperation with the elites of post-Soviet countries disappointed with Russia's policy, within Polish cultural institutes or in other ways. At the same time, it will strengthen the

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tools to counteract the undesirable influence of hostile third countries. The new government will probably also audit the activities of the secret services. The controversy surrounding the actions of some of them allows for discussion on restoring some of the investigative and anti-corruption powers for the traditional police service. In the past, there were only two special services, now there are five. In addition, there are other services, departmental police and inspections, working for public order and safety.

SUMMARY OR A QUESTION OF A NEW OPENING

In recent years, many public issues have been securitized. This means that issues previously not associated with security suddenly became a strategically important problem. The Polish state has been tested by a global pandemic, an influx of refugees, war, a food crisis, an energy crisis, river contamination, and the need to accelerate the expansion of the army. These events were a test of the efficiency of individual state institutions, including ministries not previously associated with security policy, such as ministries responsible for health, energy, climate, environmental protection and digitalization. The Polish state is much more experienced today than a decade ago. The new government should use the knowledge of people who have experienced various crisis situations firsthand. Competent people are a key development resource of every country.

Historically high voter turnout and generally positive reception of Polish elections abroad create some capital that can be used in relations with neighbors and allies. Poland remains one of the leaders of the democratic transformation, a country of Solidarity's heritage, a key ally in NATO and the main eastern country in the EU. It seems that in the period 2023-2025 the new government will (1) continue the expansion and modernization of the army, (2) improve relations with the EU (KPO funds, dispute over voting systems) and (3) large European countries, including (4)) Ukraine, whose security is closely linked to ours. Poland's two strategic priorities, i.e. cooperation with the US and deterring Russia, remain unchanged.

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