

## Polish national security dilemmas

Śliwiński, Krzysztof

*Published in:*  
Democracy and Security

*DOI:*  
[10.1080/17419166.2012.681602](https://doi.org/10.1080/17419166.2012.681602)

Published: 01/04/2012

*Document Version:*  
Peer reviewed version

[Link to publication](#)

*Citation for published version (APA):*

Śliwiński, K. (2012). Polish national security dilemmas: The us missile defense complex and its role in polish foreign policy. *Democracy and Security*, 8(2), 191-212. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17419166.2012.681602>

### General rights

Copyright and intellectual property rights for the publications made accessible in HKBU Scholars are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners. In addition to the restrictions prescribed by the Copyright Ordinance of Hong Kong, all users and readers must also observe the following terms of use:

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from HKBU Scholars for the purpose of private study or research
- Users cannot further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- To share publications in HKBU Scholars with others, users are welcome to freely distribute the permanent publication URLs

## **Polish National Security Dilemmas:**

### **The US missile defense complex and its role in Polish Foreign Policy**

#### **Abstract**

*This article examines fundamental dilemmas concerning contemporary Polish Security Policy. Firstly, it addresses the question of US missile defense complex and its place in Polish politics.*

*Secondly, it employs Foreign Policy Analysis tools with special attention to the agency-structure nexus. Specifically, it analyses three distinct dimensions: intentional, dispositional and structural. The author claims that Polish attitudes towards US missile defense are a result of Polish-US and Polish-Russian relations. Although evidence suggests that public attitudes towards US missile defense complex in Poland are affected by the threat of international terrorism, the issue should be seen within a broader geopolitical perspective.*

#### **Introduction**

A year after the 9/11 terrorist attacks against the US, one of the leading Polish opinion research centers<sup>1</sup> published its report on the threat of war as perceived by Polish society. The biggest number of respondents (37 per cent) saw the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as the major threat to international peace at that time.<sup>2</sup> Terrorism ranked second with 31 per cent believing it was the greatest threat of all. At the same time, less than half of respondents (39 per cent) held that international conflicts could pose a direct threat to Polish national security. Five years later in 2006, in another survey by the same research center, 65 per cent of the

respondents saw a direct link between the participation of Polish troops in international military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and potential terrorist attacks carried out by Islamic fundamentalists. According to the very same survey, 61 per cent conceived of a probability of such attacks as caused by the anticipated construction of a US missile defense complex in Poland.<sup>3</sup>

In recent years, Polish public debate has revolved around the issues of international terrorism, the role of the United States in international relations and the role of NATO (including regional implications of those issues) especially Complex, from the perspective of Foreignheld view among experts that Polish attitudes towards the US missile defense program is a result of Polish-US relations.<sup>4</sup>

This article looks at one of the fundamental dilemmas in Polish security policy, the participation in the European Interceptor Site or the US Missile Defense Complex, from the perspective of Foreign Policy Analysis with special attention to the agency-structure approach. In doing so, it draws on Walter Carlsnaes's approach, which examines how foreign policy actions are linked together in the form of intentions, cognitive-psychological factors and the various structural phenomena characterizing societies and their environments. Hence explanations of actual foreign policy actions must be able to give accounts that do not by definition exclude or privilege any of these types of independent variables.<sup>5</sup> In this respect a tripartite framework is employed in order to analyze the decision of the Polish government to participate in the American missile defense initiative.

The first part of the article introduces the main idea and origin of the US missile defense complex in Poland, providing a factual and objective background. The second, third and fourth parts analyze intentional, dispositional and structural dimensions of a foreign policy

action seen as an agreement to engage with the US in missile defense. In conclusion, a broader geopolitical perspective of the 'politics of the shield' is explained.

## **Background**

As early as 2002, the first talks began between the US administration and authorities from Eastern European countries over the possibility of mounting a European base to intercept long-range missiles. According to US officials, a site similar to the US base in Alaska would help protect the US and Europe from missiles fired from the Middle East or North Africa.<sup>6</sup> Formal negotiations with the Polish government were launched in February 2007, eliciting an immediate Russian response. The Kremlin warned that if the United States refused to abandon its plans to deploy ten interceptor missiles and radar in Poland and the Czech Republic, it would place short-range nuclear missiles on its borders with NATO.<sup>7</sup> On August 20, 2008, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Poland's Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski signed the 'Agreement Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Poland Concerning the Deployment of Ground-Based Ballistic Missile Defense Interceptors in the Territory of the Republic of Poland'.<sup>8</sup> After President Obama and the new democratic administration took the reins of power in early 2009, plans changed in response to bold statements from Dmitry Medvedev and Vladimir Putin and a lot of skepticism from Western European countries. On September 17, 2009 the White House issued a statement saying that the US "no longer planned to move forward" with the project. According to President Obama, new intelligence had shown Iran was pursuing short- and medium-range missile development, rather than long-range, necessitating a shift in strategy.<sup>9</sup>

On July 3 the protocol amending the Ballistic Missile Defense Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Poland was signed. The document stipulates that the Missile Defense Complex (to be localized in Słupsk-Redzikowo – in northern Poland) will no longer include Ground Based Interceptors (GBIs).<sup>10</sup> Instead, since May 2010, Poland has installed a battery of Patriot launchers. The system will be integrated into the Polish air defense system until 2012. In the future, SM-3s (Standard Missile 3) are to be stationed on Polish soil as well.<sup>11</sup> Heads of state and governments participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Lisbon issued the “Lisbon Summit Declaration” on 20 Nov 2010. It specifies that the United States European Phased Adaptive Approach (missile defense system) is going to be part of the NATO missile defense architecture.<sup>12</sup>

### **Structure: uncertainty and the ‘new world dis/order’ in Central and Eastern Europe vis-à-vis Russia**

An abundance of structural factors could be attributed to the Polish-American agreement on missile defense cooperation. Most experts would obviously point to the end of the Cold War as an underlying cause behind redefinitions of foreign policy goals of all countries involved in this multifaceted conflict. A considerable variety of theories and ontological approaches address the causes and nature of the processes that led to the end of Cold War confrontation, with many pointing to two major determinants: structural crisis within communist systems of the Soviet bloc and competitive politics of the western bloc headed by the US.<sup>13</sup> In the case of Poland and other countries in the region, the end of the Cold War meant above all regaining sovereignty.<sup>14</sup> Given the great ‘unknown’ of politics in Central and Eastern Europe at the very beginning of the 1990s, it was of paramount

importance for them to reassure their position in Europe and regain security. For Poland, providing security became the most important goal of state foreign policy.

It is a popularly held view that Poland's geography is the villain of its history, the source of all her losses and a useful excuse for all her failings. Described as 'the disputed bride' or worse still as a 'gap between two stools', not protected by any natural boundaries from the east or the west, in the minds of many generations, Poland was an easy prey for more powerful neighbors from both East and West.<sup>15</sup> The end of the Cold War fundamentally changed the country's geopolitics. For the first time in many years, there appeared to be no threat from the West. The epoch reunification of Germany on 3 Oct 1990 caused some uneasiness in Poland, as not all German politicians were positive about the Polish-German borderline as envisaged by the Potsdam Conference and consequently 'Układ Zgorzelecki' of 1950. But generally it was perceived as another step on the peaceful path to consolidation of the European Community. The latter is also to be understood in terms of structural changes fundamentally transforming the international environment of Poland.<sup>16</sup>

As early as 1990, the security policy and defensive doctrine of Poland were formulated so as to develop close cooperation with the FRG, including the military sphere.<sup>17</sup> But as much as it was assumed that the western flank was secure, the problem looked different on the eastern 'front'. The Soviet Union finally dissolved in 1991, amid the chaos of domestic tensions. A new regional power, the successor of the USSR, remained a major concern not only for Polish leaders but for all in the Atlantic community.<sup>18</sup> The internal weakness of Russia's political institutions presented a major challenge for Central and Eastern European States – former vassals of the Soviet empire. It wasn't long until Russian politicians started giving signals that they were still thinking of Central and Eastern Europe in terms of the 'historically shaped sphere of Russian interests'.<sup>19</sup>

In fact, relations with Russia became right from the outset a function of Polish aspirations to join NATO. On the one hand, Polish political elites were in agreement that security of the state could best be achieved through joining the alliance.<sup>20</sup> This concept was formed very early in the 1990s and later supported by the FRG.<sup>21</sup> On the other hand, Russia saw such a possibility as a potential threat to its security position in the region. Hence, very strong objections on Moscow's part only aggravated the feeling of insecurity in Central and Eastern Europe, which in turn further fuelled aspirations of countries such as Poland to join NATO as soon as possible.<sup>22</sup> At that time a simple question was posed by many in Western Europe as well as in the Kremlin – why NATO? – especially after the end of the Cold War. The argument often raised was that since the global confrontation was over, institutions such as NATO no longer had grounds for existence, since they had been created for the purpose of defense from possible attack by the Soviet Union. The events of 1989 and 1991, generally speaking, removed the purpose of its existence.<sup>23</sup>

Yet we need to recognize some underlying factors deeply embedded in the social psyche of the nations of Central and Eastern Europe in general, and in Poland in particular. It needs to be emphasized that for many years after the Second World War, Western Europe, and to a greater extent, the United States, came to be associated with freedom, wealth and security. American support shown to the Polish nation during the 'civil war' at the beginning of the 1980s was strongly appreciated by Poles<sup>24</sup>, and it was common knowledge that Reagan's foreign policy of 'star wars' was one of the decisive factors that led to the collapse of the Soviet Union. On top of those, the weakness of European communities and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe at the beginning of the 1990s settled the notion and strong belief that, for a country like Poland, the only way to achieve national security was to align with the US itself and its institutional engagement in Europe – NATO. Consequently, NATO came to be associated with the only hard guarantee of security.<sup>25</sup>

The fact that Polish diplomacy had to ‘battle’ for membership in NATO had substantially marred official relations with Russia. As Zbigniew Brzezinski put it, ‘We [the US] couldn’t have prevented the Czechs and the Poles and the Hungarians from wanting to be part of the Western world. If we had kept them out, they would today be a no-man’s-land, probably the object of serious frictions with Russians.’<sup>26</sup> In addition, the evolution of an alliance, continuing weakness of the EU in the field of security and defense, and emerging threats from international terrorism or ‘rogue regimes’ such as Iran prevailed as major factors in the thinking that was behind closer cooperation with the US and NATO.

It should also be noted that the state of the Polish army and consequently its defense doctrine was hard hit by political and economic realities of the early 1990s. As a member of the Warsaw Pact, Poland was closely linked with the Soviet military complex. Logistics, decision-making procedures and consequently, defense doctrine were ‘coordinated’ with the Kremlin. The dismantling of the Soviet empire left the Polish military complex without financial support. Their military industry in general was faced with the need to find new markets for their often outdated products. This appeared to be one of the major problems in domestic politics, as ‘*zbrojeniówka*’ had always been influential in drawing assets from the state budget. The subsequent governments were not in a position to restructure the industry amid hard lobbying, existing strong links between the military and politicians and fear of massive protests on the part of employees.

The Polish army at the beginning of the 1990s was generally speaking in bad shape. Its equipment was outdated and often not operational, and its financial standing was weak. A quick look at the country’s military expenditure allocation for 1989-1992 reveals the picture. Already limited budgets were increasingly spent on military salaries and day-to-day operations. In absolute terms, amounts spent on personnel rose tenfold, from 874 billion zloty in 1989 to 9,666 billion zloty in 1992. Percentage-wise it remained very high for that period



at around 40 per cent.<sup>27</sup> Likewise, operations and maintenance (including civilian personnel costs) increased from 676 billion in 1989 to 10,060 billion in 1992, rising from 30.5 per cent to 41.3 per cent. Over that same period, research and development rose in absolute terms from 52 billion zloty in 1989 to 541 billion in 1992; but it actually decreased from 2.3 per cent down to 1.9 per cent.<sup>28</sup>

From that perspective, joining NATO was a major challenge, but it also presented the country with the only feasible option of modernizing its military complex. Command plans had to be changed and redefined, equipment had to be modernized and defense doctrine had to be redrawn. NATO offered an unprecedented ‘civilization’ leap forward. This explains why the Partnership for Peace was treated only as a step towards full membership in NATO.<sup>29</sup> As politicians and generals realized the scale of backwardness of the Polish army, they opted for as much integration with NATO standards as possible. This in effect became the rationale behind obtaining American F16 jet fighters<sup>30</sup> by the government of Hanna Suchocka. It also influenced the decision about the antimissile defense system to be placed in Poland. Since elements of that system, namely Ground Based Interceptors (GBIs), were supposed to be integrated into Polish missile forces, it was hoped that, apart from boosting up defense capabilities, they would also be a major factor in the modernization of missile forces.<sup>31</sup>

### **Disposition: the threat from the East and the inherent weakness**

National identity is an elusive concept that not only defies clean definition but is also difficult to apply to particular cases. Certainly historical experience will greatly influence a nation’s underlying values/belief systems and perceptions. Consequently its political institutions and philosophical outlook will vary from those of its neighbors or other, even

more distant nations. Additionally, when analyzing the dispositional dimension, the influence of cultural factors on a state's decisions concerning foreign policy should not be disregarded.

As mentioned earlier, Poland has had a particularly difficult experience with statehood. Once one of the most powerful kingdoms in the whole of Europe, she later lost her independence for 123 years only to be reborn as a troublesome state after World War I and finally, crushed by two titans, to suffer greatly during World War II. The shape as well as status of the state and its political system after 1945 were neither determined by the Poles, nor were they ever accepted by the majority of those who tried to redefine their lives in communist Poland.

Therefore much of the modern history of Poland has been dominated by the unquenchable thirst for true independence against all possible odds. This particular theme – fighting for freedom, paying the highest possible price for it and finally winning it – has deeply engraved the Polish soul, which is manifested by the cultural richness of the country as well as recurring motives in its foreign policy at the beginning of the twenty-first century.<sup>32</sup>

Historiography divides into two major schools of thought here. First, the so called Warsaw school (*Szkoła Warszawska*) was associated with terrible geo-political circumstances that many Polish leaders believed gave Poland no chance for freedom and peaceful development whatsoever, ultimately victimizing and 'sacrificing' Poles and their country. In this view there is nothing that could have been done to avoid the tragedy of World War II or communist reigns.

There is, on the other hand, an opposing view, attributed to the so-called Cracow-School (*Szkoła Krakowska*). This body of thought supports the idea that each and every country's frontiers, geographical and economic situations and social dynamics create a set of

underpinning variables that shape its position in international relations. In this view the main fault for losing once a powerful state rests solely with Poles themselves.

Regardless of these approaches, it remains beyond doubt that the end of the Cold War and the regaining of political independence brought stark need for the identification/redefinition of basic values in Polish foreign policy. The catalogue of such would obviously differ, depending on the agent that defines them, therefore rendering some of them disputable. Some however seem to be unchallenged and consequently often tend to be raised every time the discussion about foreign policy is held.

First and foremost is the prevailing trait of 'Europeanness' in the Polish experience. In this sense Poles have always seen themselves as members of a distinct 'European community', based on achievements of major cultural strands from the Renaissance through the Enlightenment to Positivism.<sup>33</sup> Throughout the ages, contacts with the West were considered a litmus test of tolerance and social status among Polish nobles. On those occasions, Poles would brag about being the first country in Europe to adopt a modern constitution that introduced major institutions and values such as equality, the rule of law and preservation of human rights.<sup>34</sup>

The oft-used phrase in Polish political discourse, 'return to Europe', testifies to the place of Poland on the maps of Europe as envisaged at the beginning of the 1990s. The end of the Cold War enabled the country to join all the continental organizations, from the Council of Europe through OECD to the ultimate goal of full European membership.<sup>35</sup> In itself, seen as the guarantor of security, European membership was also considered a great 'civilianization leap' forward. For Poland, participation in the 'European project' meant the necessity to comply with Copenhagen criteria.<sup>36</sup> This in turn was perceived as a confirmation of Polish

aspirations as well as an objective guarantor of future political, economic and societal developments.

Krzysztof Skubiszewski, the first minister of foreign affairs after 1989 and a renowned international scholar, emphasized in his first exposé: 'It is in Poland, where thanks to Solidarność, the movement began that ended totalitarianism in our region and therefore triggered reaction of the West to such transformations, which by itself creates perspectives for European unity in freedom and democracy.'<sup>37</sup>

The European 'option' in Polish foreign policy, albeit unquestionable, has not been the only vector since 1989. Indeed, when it comes to national security, Poles have always looked to NATO rather than the European Union. That brings another trait of Polish foreign policy after 1989 – Atlanticism – a vector in external relations that has been predominantly based on a deeply rooted conviction that it is only American engagement in Europe that gives its nations real security guarantees. That conviction put Polish European aspirations somewhat at odds. A popularly held view by many politicians and academics alike was that European and Atlantic options are not only incompatible but also form a fundamental dilemma for Polish foreign and security policies.<sup>38</sup> This perspective was reinforced in 2003 when the 21<sup>st</sup> Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, was talking about 'old' and 'new' Europe, whereas French President Jacques Chirac uttered his highly 'undiplomatic' remark referring to Central European and Baltic EU member states: *'they missed a good opportunity to keep silent'*.<sup>39</sup>

As far as values and principles are concerned, Atlanticism in Polish foreign policy can be explained by powerful sentiments deeply rooted in Polish society towards Americans and its attitude towards life. As Konstanty Gebert asserted, 'The country is pro-American, not only

for geostrategic reasons but also--surprisingly for cultural reasons...<sup>40</sup> The Second World War brought destruction to traditional social structures. Old elites were murdered, expelled or pushed to the outskirts of society. Paradoxically, the mass advancement of people after the war, their striving for education, social status and power, even more so after 1989, resembled the American myth of a 'self-made man'. Given the huge Polish diaspora in the US (more than 10 million)<sup>41</sup> as well as massive temporary economic emigration, it rendered the American 'social model' much closer to that of the 'old' Europe with all its establishments. On top of that, there is a strong trend in the Polish national psyche of the romantic battle cry – For Your Freedom and Ours – which has been manifested throughout the centuries by Poles fighting in most wars, often for other nations' emancipation.<sup>42</sup> These values are attributed in the literature to a strong commitment of Polish society as well as political elites after 1989 to special relationships with the US. Recognition of the unique American position in international relations, historical experience and subscription to principles of human rights and democracy were grounds for the official support that the Polish government issued to the US during the Iraq War and 'war on terrorism' in Afghanistan.<sup>43</sup>

One of the least emphasized elements in many studies on Polish Foreign Policy is the country's religious foundation. Poland is notoriously associated with conservatism, social rigidness or even religious fundamentalism. The sole fact that more than 90 per cent of people in Poland declare themselves as Catholics makes it impossible for many in the West to treat the nation on similar terms as western, postmodern atheistic societies.<sup>44</sup> On the other hand, everybody who has studied the history of Europe realizes how important religion has been for states in all periods of history. Christianity, in the case of Poland, meant international recognition and grounds for economic development when the state emerged in the 10<sup>th</sup> century. It also defined Poles in their relations with numerous cultures, especially

from the East (the role of Poland in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries has often been referred to as *Antemurale Christianitatis* – the Bulwark of Christianity).<sup>45</sup> Communist authorities of Poland also saw an influential position of the Catholic Church as one of the opposition platforms to official, secular ideology.

The history of the foundation of the United States is full of examples of strong religious influence. Its foreign policy has been based on Christian principles, although imperialism marked many of its actions. In this respect, the intellectual tradition of ‘Christian Atlanticism’ points to the importance of the expansion of Christianity from Europe to the rest of the globe as a basic feature of the history of the modern world.<sup>46</sup> Consequently America’s leadership in international relations was associated with a conservative project: “restoration of Christian truth through demolition of false myths of nation, race, and class created by fascism, Nazism, and communism”.<sup>47</sup> During the Cold War it somewhat diminished, nevertheless stayed active; consequently Christian Atlanticists welcomed the creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization as formalization of US commitment to preserve the freedom of Europe.

Turning to Russia, few would deny its religious base. Communism might have attempted to eradicate orthodoxy to create a *homo sovieticus*, but after 1991 the role of religion and consequently the Orthodox Church has increased greatly.<sup>48</sup> The thing is that from Warsaw’s perspective, Russian religious authorities are seen very much as chauvinistic, or to be more precise given the difficult history of Polish-Russian relations, anti-Polish. As mentioned before, the end of World War II marked a decisive change for Eastern and Central Europe. The Soviet type of communism exported to Poland was marked by secularism. In that respect, given the history of Polish statehood and the role religion played, it rendered communist authorities not only anti-Polish but also anti-Catholic.

Positive perceptions towards America and many Western European countries seem to parallel anti-Russian sentiments held by many members of Polish society. Consequently the image of Russia has been constantly deteriorating since 1990. According to the Public Opinion Research Centre (CBOS), as of 1990, 18 per cent of those surveyed referred to the USSR/Russia as an ally. Fifteen years later that percentage dropped down to only 4 per cent. (Not surprisingly, by contrast, the same attitude towards the US moved from 23 per cent in 1990 to 33 per cent by 2005).<sup>49</sup> When asked which countries Poland should apprehend, 25 per cent indicated the USSR/Russia in 1990 but as much as 67 per cent in 2005. Such an attitude is associated with Russian ‘unpredictable’ behavior with regards to energy exports<sup>50</sup>, political instability, the unknown future of the country, emerging organized crime or even massive migrations.<sup>51</sup> Last but not least, imperialism is attributed to many actions of Russia in the region.<sup>52</sup>

These perceptions give solid grounds for the Polish government to pursue tighter relations with the US as well as accepting Polish participation in the antimissile defense system.<sup>53</sup>

### **Intention: regional power in the world of uncertainty**

On the intentional front, Polish access to the American missile defense complex was dictated by a number of reasons. This part will introduce and analyze the most important of them.

Firstly, from a global level point of view analysis, as a member of NATO and a strategic partner of the US in Europe, because of its geographical location, Poland was in a unique

position to participate in the international community's response to the threat posed by Iran. It is commonly assumed that Iran has been working on its nuclear program for reasons that cannot be described as peaceful. Regardless of what officials in Islamabad claim, the delicate situation in the Middle East, US interests in the region, the role of Israel as well as vicious activities of terrorist groups all make Iran's nuclear developments highly suspicious. There is also the question of the role of Iran in proliferation of nuclear technology and know-how.

It is a general trend in international relations that states invest in missile technology. Missiles play a major role in the realization of military power. They have become very efficient in the potential projection of nuclear might. Conversely, there has recently been an uncontrolled proliferation of missile technology, which is also available to non-state actors.<sup>54</sup> The latter reinforce development of its antiballistic counterpart, making it a dominant trend in military developments worldwide. In this respect the American Antiballistic Missile (ABM) program should be seen as part of a much bigger picture. Today, the group of states developing their own antiballistic technologies includes the People's Republic of China, Israel, India, Japan, France, let alone Russia.<sup>55</sup> Since at least some components of Missile Defense Systems (MDS) can also be used as offensive weapons, it seems that the world continues this 'vicious cycle' of militarization<sup>56</sup>, whereby the seeming cure reinforces the disease.

Secondly, from an international level point of view analysis, Polish participation in the US project was supposed to strengthen the strategic alliance forged between the two countries. As mentioned before, official negotiations between the US and Polish governments concerning components of the anti-ballistic missile defense system were begun in 2007. An official agreement was signed the next year, together with the Declaration on Polish-American Strategic Cooperation. The latter is seen as a final accomplishment of long pursued



endeavors on the part of Polish authorities in alleviating relations with the US to the highest possible level. The document introduces reactivation of the Polish American Strategic Dialogue and establishment of the Strategic Cooperation Consultative Group as well as High-Level Defense Group as its working body. It reconfirms American commitment to Polish security and its support to the modernization of the Polish military force, and it stipulates deepening of the cooperation of military industries as well as that of defense research and technology.<sup>57</sup> In fact, by signing both documents, Warsaw had wider goals in mind. The long list of issues that have been behind it include: relatively weak support from the US administration in promoting Ukraine's and Georgia's prospects for NATO membership; stronger American support for Polish candidates for top positions in NATO's structure (including Radek Sikorski's candidacy for the post of NATO Secretary General); and diplomatic efforts to establish critically important elements of NATO's military infrastructure, such as Allied Ground Surveillance on Polish territory. On top of that, the recurring theme of Polish-American relations includes introduction of the Visa Waiver Program for Polish citizens travelling to the US.

It needs to be mentioned here that the agreement concerning the deployment of components of the US missile defense shield took place in the middle of the 2008 South Ossetia War, in which Poland had taken a leading role in the international community's response on the side of Georgia. This sparked angry reactions from the Kremlin, with Dmitry Medvedev indicating that such moves made Poland "a legitimate military target".<sup>58</sup>

Thirdly, keeping with the international level, elements of the missile defense complex based on Polish soil were to underpin the role and position of the country in Central and Eastern Europe as a regional power. Poland has been very active towards its imminent neighbors

(seven of them after 1991), playing the role of a regional leader in forging structures of regional integration.

This dimension includes Ukraine, Belarus, the Visegrád Group (Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary) and Lithuania. For strategic reasons, Ukraine and Belarus make a special case. For most of the 1990s, the situation in Lithuania as well as the Czech Republic and Slovakia did not pose any direct or indirect challenges to Polish security. It is true that Slovakia under Vladimír Mečiar had its ‘romance’ with nationalism, which was seen as potentially dangerous given the example of Yugoslavia. Yet Ukraine for that matter presented Polish security with a somewhat greater challenge. The so-called ‘orange revolution’ of 2004/2005 was actively supported by Polish President Aleksander Kwaśniewski. And yet, as Radek Sikorski, the Minister of Foreign Affairs asserted in his latest yearly parliamentary speech: ‘Orange revolution politicians haven’t fulfilled the hopes of Ukrainian society. To join European institutions, Ukraine needs to implement profound reforms. Corruption, unrealized rule of law, decreasing democracy standards all hinder the role of Poland as a promoter of Ukraine in Europe.’<sup>59</sup>

Ukraine was often referred to as a ‘jewel in the crown’ of the Russian empire. Russian great power politics naturally included Kiev, which obviously ran against Polish ideas of ‘winning over Ukraine’ in supporting western orientation of the country.<sup>60</sup> The 2010 election won by Viktor Yanukovich brought the country back into the ‘arms’ of Russia, consequently questioning European prospects of its foreign policy.<sup>61</sup>

Belarus seems to pose an even greater challenge, since it is the last authoritarian regime in Europe. Aleksandr Lukashenko and his ministers remain on a black list of the EU. Official

relations between the two countries remain tense. The Belarusian press, serving as a mouthpiece of Minsk, heavily criticizes Polish foreign policy in general and even more so with reference to ‘strategic partnership’ with the United States. The Polish minority and its political representation in Belarus are often sabotaged. To make matters more interesting, in September 2009, Russia and Belarus conducted joint military exercises close to Polish borders. The scale of the operation made it the biggest war games Russia has ever conducted since the end of the Cold War.<sup>62</sup> Codenamed ‘Operation Zapad – 2009’ they included a simulated nuclear attack against Poland as well as the suppression of the uprising of the Polish minority.

Part of the great redesign of Polish foreign policy after 1989 was the realization of hopes that the country could become the leader of regional integration, which by itself was meant to boost the position of Central and Eastern European States on their way to EU and NATO.<sup>63</sup> The Visegrád Group serves as a prominent example of such endeavors. Created back in February 1991, it grouped countries that shared geographical location, history and economic hardships. Hungary and Czechoslovakia (since 1993, Czech Republic and Slovakia), together with Poland, meant to create some sort of mechanism for diminishing threats from the East by the consolidation of the sense of security and stability in the region.<sup>64</sup>

After some initial ‘hiccups’, the group revitalized in 1998 and has been an important element in the regional ‘security environment’ by virtue of its scope of cooperation ranging from culture, through economy to security.<sup>65</sup> In this respect, recent years have seen intensification in the areas of the fight against terrorism, organized crime and illegal migration, as well as energy security.

On the domestic level, subsequent Polish governments have been hoping to strengthen the Polish defense complex by integrating elements of the missile defense system (Ground Based Interceptors) with Polish air defense forces. This intention has been contested by many, among experts and society alike. Most often arguments used against AMD (Anti-Missile Defense system) include exposure to Russian offensive posture, reinstatement of a Cold War-like armaments race, militarization of US foreign policy and therefore marginalization of 'medium' and small states, wakening of military ties between the US and some European members of NATO, asymmetry between Poland and the US, which hinders potential benefits on Polish side, finally reinforcing a negative image of Poland in some of the European members of NATO as an American 'client'.<sup>66</sup> It has also been raised that from a purely military point of view, the installation of components of American AMD intensifies security threats to the country. The very components may potentially become the target of a physical attack by a hostile state, and may trigger intelligence activity, or cyber attacks, finally becoming an aim for transnational organized crime organizations or terrorists.

There is also a relevant element of party politics involved. The last parliamentary elections in Poland were held in 2007.<sup>67</sup> It has to be admitted that in their official programs, political parties did not focus on the issue of AMD. The leading party, Civic Platform, which won the elections of 2007, mentioned this issue only once in its platform.<sup>68</sup> Likewise, in his exposé, Prime Minister Donald Tusk referred to the antiballistic shield only once, and he did so only in the context of NATO.<sup>69</sup> The major competitor, Law and Justice, also did not emphasize the issue in its program, similarly referring to it only once, underlining the role of the missile defense system in forging a strategic partnership with the US.<sup>70</sup> The main coalition partner of the Civic Party, the Polish People's Party, did not even mention the issue in its platform.<sup>71</sup>

Nevertheless the question of AMD components located in Poland has taken a large portion of public discourse, forcing parties and their leaders to take positions. Civic Platform and its leaders generally take the view that the decision to participate in this project, regardless of possible threats it might bring, is worthwhile and sound, considering Polish geopolitics. Yet, by endorsing this project, CP has not been emphasizing the narrow-minded, military anti-Russian character of it. In other words, it has been trying to focus on positive elements linked with enhanced partnership with the US, the raised profile of the country in European politics and the modernization of Polish armed forces. Hence, the modified concept of the Obama administration did not make CP politicians hot under the collar.

Law and Justice, on the other hand, has been very explicit about the narrowly understood military dimensions of the project. This stems from very different origins and political outlooks of the party leaders, who drawing on a historical experience (*Szkola Warszawaska*) perceive numerous Russian actions still as potential threats to national security.

Consequently, Obama's decision to redefine the AMD concept was met with stark criticism within the party. Some went as far as to suggest that the Americans have once more made a deal with Russia at the expense of the Polish nation. This argument has been eagerly used to attract voters who generally distrust international politics. One of the latest public opinion surveys on the topic reveals characteristic themes. When asked about their opinion on the construction of AMD in Poland, 56 per cent declared support versus 34 per cent who declared themselves against. In the case of CP, the rates were more equally distributed – 52 per cent for and 42 per cent against.<sup>72</sup> It is also very typical for supporters of the two parties that originate directly from the old political system – the Democratic Left Alliance and Polish People's Party - to strongly oppose any such ideas. Here respective numbers tell a typical story: 30 per cent for and 60 per cent against for DLA; 28 per cent for and 56 against for PPP.

Last but not least there is also an individual level to be addressed. In this respect the roles of subsequent presidents and governments are more than just relevant. The media in Poland devote a lot of attention to the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs in the coalition government, Radosław ‘Radek’ Sikorski. Born in Poland and educated in Oxford, Sikorski has often been referred to as a representative of the new wave in Polish politics. This wave includes well-off, often educated abroad, energetic and ambitious politicians, who represent a modern political outlook devoid of the ideological stigma of their older colleagues who started and developed their careers when the real decisions were made in the Kremlin rather than in Warsaw. Sikorski has been very active in international politics. There was a lot of speculation that he might have been nominated as a Secretary General of NATO back in 2009. He is also one of the most trusted Polish politicians. According to the latest public survey, he holds second place in the ranking of most trusted Polish politicians, after President Bronisław Komorowski.<sup>73</sup> When asked about his future political career, he implicitly indicated that he would be interested in running for the highest office in the next presidential elections.<sup>74</sup> His position within the party has grown substantially in recent years, and his personal engagement in the negotiations and signing of the 2008 agreement with the US has been emphasized by many commentators.

His most vocal opponent/critic is his former boss, Jarosław Kaczyński. Leader of the second major party, Law and Justice (Sikorski served as a Minister of National Defense between 2005–2007 in the government headed by J. Kaczyński), he commands a lot of attention based on negative campaigns. By constant criticism towards all political opponents, be it in government or in the opposition, often built on the grounds of a personal agenda, he has gained popularity among more conservative members of the society. Kaczyński has starkly

criticized the coalition government of Donald Tusk (CP and PPP) of conformity and lack of 'guts' in their dealing with the American administration. The 2009 redefinition of AMD meant that Ground Based Interceptors (GBIs) were no longer meant to be stationed on Polish ground. One of the points of the agreement stipulates that Poland should receive Patriot class missiles. This however has been softened by the Americans, who early on revealed that Patriots were intended only to be used for training reasons and as such would not be armed. Minister Sikorski has been very active in urging Americans not to diminish their commitments and negotiated that the US Air Force's Aviation Detachment be deployed in the country on a continuous basis.<sup>75</sup> All of these have been vehemently criticized by Jarosław Kaczyński, who believes that the USA has been afraid of stark Russian opposition towards the AMD and once again has turned its back to Polish allies, who have been so eagerly supporting it in Iraq and Afghanistan. His latest rankings show that a number of voters disapprove of his approach to politics. The former Prime Minister is one of the least trusted politicians in the country with 55 per cent disapproval.<sup>76</sup>

## **Conclusion**

In May 2011 Romanian President Traian Basescu announced that the elements of a modified antimissile defense system will be stationed in Romania at a military base in Devesel.<sup>77</sup> Bulgaria has also expressed its interest in hosting elements of the US/NATO missile defense system should Turkey refuse to do so.<sup>78</sup> As these two examples clearly show, the presence of any elements of the designed AMD, be it US or NATO, are seen in Central and Eastern European countries as very attractive. They boost the country's political profile and its real military potential at considerably very low cost.

Finally there is also a geopolitical perspective that needs to be considered in order to understand the complexities of AMD politics. After the collapse of the USSR in 1991, Moscow found itself increasingly close to former Cold War adversaries. Geographical distance to NATO diminished even further in 1999 when Poland became a member. As George Friedman puts it: “Russian influence is now increasing in three directions: toward Central Asia, toward the Caucasus, and inevitably toward the West, the Baltics, and Eastern Europe. For the next generation, until roughly 2020, Russia’s primary concern will be reconstructing the Russian state and reasserting Russian power in the region”.<sup>79</sup> For that reason, if we agree with Friedman that the Russian-European frontier remains a fault line, states in Eastern Europe such as Poland are more than likely to insist on their national security to be ‘guaranteed’ by the West, preferably by the US.<sup>80</sup> In turn, Russia is more than likely to continue regarding such actions as potential threats to its national security.

The decision of consequent Polish governments to participate in the American antiballistic shield project directed against rogue states such as Iran has in reality resulted in limiting the level of analysis to the local level, Polish-Russian relations. It has also been ‘regionalized’ as far as the position of Poland against reasserting Russia in Central and Eastern Europe is concerned.



## Endnotes

---

<sup>1</sup> CBOS, "Public Opinion Research Centre," accessed 16 November 2010, <http://www.cbos.pl/>.

<sup>2</sup> "CBOS Public Opinion Research Centre, *Poczucie Zagrożenia Wojną*" (Warsaw, 2002), accessed 16 November 2010, [http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2002/K\\_154\\_02.PDF](http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2002/K_154_02.PDF).

<sup>3</sup> CBOS Public Opinion Research Centre, *O Terminie Wycofania Żołnierzy Polskich z Iraku, Stosunku do Ulokowania w Polsce Elementów Tarczy Antyrakietowej i Obawach przed Terroryzmem* (Warsaw, 2007), accessed 16 November 2010, [http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2007/K\\_176\\_07.PDF](http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2007/K_176_07.PDF).

<sup>4</sup> Maria Wągrowka, "The Shield Brings New Dilemmas in the Security Policy," *Rocznik Strategiczny 2007/08* (2008): 35-44. Also: "Polska Polityka Zagraniczna: Jeden Rok - Dwie Odśłony," *Rocznik Strategiczny 2007/08* (2008): 313-315. Or: "An Open Letter to the Obama Administration from Central and Eastern Europe." *Gazeta Wyborcza*, July 16, 2009. Accessed 29 April 2011, [http://wyborcza.pl/1,76842,6825987,An\\_Open\\_Letter\\_to\\_the\\_Obama\\_Administration\\_from\\_Central.html](http://wyborcza.pl/1,76842,6825987,An_Open_Letter_to_the_Obama_Administration_from_Central.html)

<sup>5</sup> Walter Carlsnaes, "Actors, structures, and foreign policy analysis," in *Foreign Policy. Theories, actors, cases*, ed. Steve Smith, Amelia Hadfield, Tim Dunne (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 97.

<sup>6</sup> "US considers Polish missile base." BBC News, Europe, November 17, 2005. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4445284.stm>, accessed 29 April 2011.

<sup>7</sup> "Russia piles pressure on EU over missile shield" The Telegraph, News, World, November 15, 2007. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/1569495/Russia-piles-pressure-on-EU-over-missile-shield.html>, accessed April 29, 2011 and "Russia and China Attack U.S. Missile Shield Plan" The New York Times, World, May 24, 2008. [http://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/24/world/24china.html?\\_r=1&scp=1&sq=China,%20Russia%20sign%20nuclear%20deal,%20condemn%20US%20missile%20defense%20plans&st=cs](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/24/world/24china.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=China,%20Russia%20sign%20nuclear%20deal,%20condemn%20US%20missile%20defense%20plans&st=cs), accessed 29 April 2011.

<sup>8</sup> See: <http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2008/August/20080820163900xjsnommis0.4542505.html>

<sup>9</sup> "White House Scraps Bush's Approach to Missile Shield", The New York Times, World, September 17, 2009. [http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/18/world/europe/18shield.html?\\_r=1&hp](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/18/world/europe/18shield.html?_r=1&hp), accessed 29 April 2011.

<sup>10</sup> "Protocol Amending the Ballistic Missile Defence Agreement Between the United States of America and the Republic of Poland." <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2010/07/143945.htm>, accessed 14 February 2011.

---

<sup>11</sup> “Tarcza ma być na czas”, Rzeczpospolita, May 28, 2011.  
<http://www.rp.pl/artykul/84379,665167.html>, accessed 31 May 2011.

<sup>12</sup> “Lisbon Summit Declaration,” accessed 14 February 2011,  
[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-A5E36187-2E1BC9D1/natolive/official\\_texts\\_68828.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-A5E36187-2E1BC9D1/natolive/official_texts_68828.htm)

<sup>13</sup> Rose Richard, *Understanding Post-communist Transformation. A Bottom Up Approach*. (London and New York: Routledge, 2009), 14-16. Archie Brown, *The Rise and Fall of Communism*. (New York: An Imprint of Harper Collins Publishers, 2009), 522-548. Crampton R. J., *Eastern Europe in the twentieth century*. (London: Routledge, 1997), 379-418. Henderson Karen, Robinson Neil, *Post-communist politics: an introduction*. (London: Prentice Hall, 1997), 61-90. Rothschild Joseph, Wingfield M. Nancy, *Return to diversity: a political history of East Central Europe since World War II*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 227-264. Daniels Robert V., *The rise and fall of Communism in Russia*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 319-382. Mason David S., *Revolution in East-Central Europe: The Rise and Fall of Communism and the Cold War*. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992), 105-144. Wydra, Harald, *Communism and the Emergence of Democracy*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 162-216. Richard Pipes, *Communism: A History*. (New York: Modern Library Chronicles, 2001), 145-160.

<sup>14</sup> Formally Poland became politically independent of the USSR in 1989 when the first ‘free election’ was organized. Practically it wasn’t until 1993 when the Soviet troops were withdrawn from the country.

<sup>15</sup> Norman Davies, *Gods Playground. A History of Poland. Vol. 1*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), 34. Also George Sanford, “Overcoming the Burden of History in Polish Foreign Policy”, in *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, 19/3 (2003): 178-199.

<sup>16</sup> To this day there remains an unresolved issue of Poles living in Germany being declined the status of ethnic minority. On top of that one of the ‘thorny’ issues in Polish-German relations concerns the activities of Erika Steinbach, president of the Federation of Expellees, that represents the interests of Germans who either fled or were expelled from their homes in parts of Central and Eastern Europe following World War II.

<sup>17</sup> Jarosław Drozd, “Polish-German Relations and the Question of Security,” in *Poland’s Security Policy 1989-2000*, ed. Roman Kuźniar (Warsaw: SCHOLAR Publishing House, 2001), 97.

<sup>18</sup> See more: Report For Congress, *Nuclear Smuggling and International Terrorism: Issues and Options for U.S. Policy*, October 22, 2002, Order Code RL31539.  
<http://www.usembassy.it/pdf/other/RL31539.pdf> accessed June 3, 2011. Also Franklyn Griffiths, “From Situations of Weakness – Foreign - Policy of the New Russia,” *International Journal* 49, no. 4 (1994): 699-724.

<sup>19</sup> Roman Kuźniar, "Security Policy in Polish Foreign Policy," in *Poland’s Security Policy 1989-2000*, ed. Roman Kuźniar (Warsaw: SCHOLAR Publishing House, 2001), 70-71.

<sup>20</sup> Sarah Meiklejohn Terry, “Poland’s foreign policy since 1989: the challenges of independence,” *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 33 (2000): 8. Also: “Principles of

---

Poland's Security Policy November 2, 1992" in *Poland's Security Policy 1989-2000*, ed. Roman Kuźniar (Warsaw: SCHOLAR Publishing House, 2001), 554. and *Exposé ministra spraw zagranicznych Andrzeja Olechowskiego w Sejmie - 12 maja 1994 r.*

[http://www.stosunki-miedzynarodowe.pl/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1122:expose-ministra-spraw-zagranicznych-andrzeja-olechowskiego-w-sejmie-12-maja-1994-r&catid=46:przemowienia&Itemid=130](http://www.stosunki-miedzynarodowe.pl/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1122:expose-ministra-spraw-zagranicznych-andrzeja-olechowskiego-w-sejmie-12-maja-1994-r&catid=46:przemowienia&Itemid=130) accessed 3 June 2011.

<sup>21</sup> Jarosław Drozd, "Polish-German Relations..." *op. cit.*, 104.

<sup>22</sup> Initially Russian President Boris Yeltsin implicitly supported Polish membership in NATO during his visit to Warsaw on 25 August 1993. Three weeks later however, the Russian position changed and expressed strong opposition to any such possibilities, offering instead cross-security guarantees together with NATO. See more: Marek Menkiszak, "Difficult Neighborhood: The security question in Polish relations with Soviet Union and Russia," in *Poland's Security Policy 1989-2000*, ed. Roman Kuźniar (Warsaw: SCHOLAR Publishing House, 2001), 146.

<sup>23</sup> There is an endless list of newspaper, magazine and journal articles and papers on the topic. These two are just examples. "NEWS ANALYSIS Strategists Debate NATO's Military, Political Future Alliances: Despite U.S. support, the group must prove it can serve new European security interests to survive", Los Angeles Times, May 6, 1990  
<http://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/latimes/access/60049115.html?dids=60049115:60049115&FMT=ABS&FMTS=ABS:FT&type=current&date=May+06%2C+1990&author=WILLIAM+TUOHY&pub=Los+Angeles+Times+%28pre-1997+Fulltext%29&desc=NEWS+ANALYSIS+Strategists+Debate+NATO%27s+Military%2C+Political+Future+Alliances%3A+Despite+U.S.+support%2C+the+group+must+prove+it+can+serve+new+European+security+interests+to+survive.&pqatl=google> accessed 6 June 2011. Also Svein Melby, "The American debate on NATO expansion," *Internasjonal Politikk* 54, Issue 4, (1996): 481-&.

<sup>24</sup> Immediately after communist authorities imposed martial law in December 1981, the United States invoked economic sanctions against Poland. General Wojciech Jaruzelski was at that time Prime Minister, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers Party and a member of the Military Council of National Salvation, which made him a dictator. See more: Nicholas G. Andrews, "The Effectiveness of US Sanctions Against Poland," in *Creditworthiness and reform in Poland: Western and Polish perspectives*, ed. Paul Marer, Włodzimierz Siwiński (Indiana University Press, 1988), 323-334. Also: Arthur R. Rachwald, *In Search of Poland. The Superpower's Response to Solidarity, 1980-1989* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1990), 47-62, 63-92.

<sup>25</sup> Especially art. 5 of the Washington Treaty that envisages common defense. More: Adam Daniel Rotfeld, *Polska w Niepewnym Świecie*. (Warszawa: Polski Instytut Spraw Międzynarodowych, 2006) 298-299.

<sup>26</sup> An argument still very relevant in light of the latest Russian-Georgian crisis. Zbigniew Brzeziński, Brent Scowcroft, *America and the World*. Moderated by David Ignatius. (New York: Basic Books, 2008), 10.

---

<sup>27</sup> *SIPRI Yearbook 1993. World Armaments and Disarmament.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 409.

<sup>28</sup> For more detailed information on Polish armed forces and military budgets at the beginning of the 1990s refer to *The Military Balance 1992-1993* (London: Brassey's, 1992), 80-82.

<sup>29</sup> Partnership for Peace – a program aimed at creating trust between NATO and other states in Europe and the former Soviet Union. First proposed as an American initiative at the meeting of NATO defense ministers in Travemünde, Germany, on 20–21 October 1993, and formally launched on 10–11 January 1994 NATO summit in Brussels, Belgium. Poland became a member of PfP on February 2nd 1994. See more at: [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_50349.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_50349.htm)

<sup>30</sup> Poland purchased 48 F-16C/D-52+ aircraft. They were delivered from 2006 to about 2009 under the PEACE SKY program. The contract was signed on April 18, 2003 during the Hanna Suchocka term in Government. See more at: [http://www.mon.gov.pl/pl/strona/170/Pg\\_154\\_177/#kalendarium-fl6](http://www.mon.gov.pl/pl/strona/170/Pg_154_177/#kalendarium-fl6)

<sup>31</sup> Marek Madej, “Obama's missile defense rethink: The Polish reaction”, *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, web edition, 30 September 2009 <http://thebulletin.org/web-edition/features/obamas-missile-defense-rethink-the-polish-reaction> accessed 13 June 2011.

<sup>32</sup> It has often been suggested after 1989 that the West owes Poland for its wealth and security that was in effect gained at the expense of Central and Eastern European countries that were ‘sold’ to Stalin in Yalta. See more: George Sanford, “Overcoming the Burden of History in Polish Foreign Policy”, *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, 19/3 (2003): 178-199.

<sup>33</sup> Iwona Anna Hanska, “The European Union after Enlargement – a Polish View”, *Germany GARNET Working Paper*: No 3408: [http://www.garnet.eu.org/fileadmin/documents/working\\_papers/3408.pdf](http://www.garnet.eu.org/fileadmin/documents/working_papers/3408.pdf) accessed 15 June 2011.

<sup>34</sup> The so-called Constitution of May 3 was ratified by the parliament of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May 1791, four months before the famous French constitution of the same year and similarly short-lived.

<sup>35</sup> George Sanford, “Overcoming the Burden of History...” *op. cit.*, 182.

<sup>36</sup> In 1993, at the Copenhagen European Council, the European Union agreed on a set of reference criteria for prospective members. They include: stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities; the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union; the ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the aims of political, economic & monetary union. See more at: [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/enlargement\\_process/accession\\_process/criteria/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/enlargement_process/accession_process/criteria/index_en.htm)

<sup>37</sup> Expose ministra spraw zagranicznych Krzysztofa Skubiszewskiego w Sejmie - 26 kwietnia 1990 r. at: [http://www.stosunki-miedzynarodowe.pl/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1133%3Aexpose-](http://www.stosunki-miedzynarodowe.pl/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1133%3Aexpose-)

---

[ministra-spraw-zagranicznych-krzysztofa-skubiszewskiego-w-sejmie-26-kwietnia-1990-r&catid=46%3Aprzemowienia&Itemid=130](#)

<sup>38</sup> Throughout the period preceding Polish accession to the EU and shortly afterwards, voices could be heard depicting Poland as a ‘Trojan horse’ of the USA in Europe. Scholars occasionally also alluded to such views see: Guglielmo Meardi, “The Trojan Horse for the Americanization of Europe? Polish Industrial Relations towards the EU”, *European Journal of Industrial Relations*, 8, Issue 1 (2002): 77-99.

<sup>39</sup> “New Europe’ backs EU on Iraq.” BBC News, Europe, 19 February 2003. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/2775579.stm>, accessed 14 June 2011.

<sup>40</sup> Konstanty Gebert, “Between the European Union and the United States: Does Poland Have to Choose?” in *Conflict and Cooperation in Transatlantic Relations*, ed. Daniel S. Hamilton (Washington, D.C.: Center for Transatlantic Relations, 2004), 30.

<sup>41</sup> According to the latest survey around 10 million Poles or persons of Polish origin permanently resided in the USA. The biggest ‘Polish’ cities include: Chicago, New York, Los Angeles and Washington. See more: Raport o Sytuacji Polonii i Polaków za Granicą 2009 (Warszawa: Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych, 2009), 219 available at: [http://www.msz.gov.pl/files/docs/polonia/Raport\\_PPG.pdf](http://www.msz.gov.pl/files/docs/polonia/Raport_PPG.pdf) accessed on 23 July 2010.

<sup>42</sup> That includes Kazimierz Puławski. Polish nobleman, who took part in the American Revolutionary War and saved the life George Washington. He was awarded honorary citizenship of United States. Parks, squares and monuments commemorate him throughout the USA. See more: Kazimierz Puławski Foundation: <http://www.pulaski.pl/en/o-fundacji/patron.html> Also: Maria Mälkso, *The Politics of Becoming European. A Study of Polish and Baltic post-Cold War security imaginaries* (London: Routledge, 2010), 130-131.

<sup>43</sup> Radosław Sikorski, “Polish-American Relations on the Threshold of the 21st Century”, lecture by the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Poland, at the Jagiellonian University during the celebrations of the 75th anniversary of the Kosciuszko Foundation. <http://www.washington.polemb.net/?document=110> accessed 14 June 2011.

<sup>44</sup> The number of Catholics in Poland is actually quite a problematic issue. Formally, everyone who was baptized and hasn’t converted is a Catholic. According to statistics therefore, around 95 per cent of Polish are Catholics. Yet, at least half of them do not attend masses regularly, neither do they follow the teachings of the Catholic Church in their daily lives, which makes them *de facto* non-Catholics or ‘non-practising Catholics’. For official statistics see: <http://www.episkopat.pl/?a=statystyka1> accessed 14 June 2011.

<sup>45</sup> The Battle of Vienna in 1683 marked the final turning point in a 250-year struggle between Christian Europe and the Islamic Ottoman Empire. This decisive victory was largely orchestrated by King of Poland Jan III Sobieski. See more: Adam Zamoyski, *Poland*. (London: Harper Press, 2009). 167.

<sup>46</sup> Emiliano Alessandri, “The Atlantic Community as Christendom” in *Defining the Atlantic Community. Culture, Intellectuals, and Policies in the Mid-Twentieth Century*, ed. Marco Mariano (London: Routledge, 2010), 47.

---

<sup>47</sup> *Ibidem*, 48.

<sup>48</sup> According to various estimates 75 per cent of Russians are Orthodox. Vladimir Putin was oftentimes seen during his presidency in the company of Patriarch Alexy II of Moscow and all Russia.

<sup>49</sup> See more: Jarosław Ćwiek-Karpowicz, *Opinia publiczna o obawach i nadziejach wobec Rosji i Niemiec*, The Institute of Public Affairs, available at <http://www.isp.org.pl/files/17805778520923728001141999025.pdf> , 2.

<sup>50</sup> This was only reinforced in 2006 and 2009 when the Russians unilaterally cut off Ukraine from its gas supplies.

<sup>51</sup> On top of that there is still an on-going issue concerning cooperation between the two countries with regards to the tragic catastrophe in Smolensk (Russia) in April 2010 where the Polish President and a number of officials were killed in an air crash. The irony of history reveals itself fully in this event, as the President was supposed to take part in a commemoration ceremony of Polish officers and civilians killed in 1940 in what is known as the Katyń Massacre.

<sup>52</sup> Let alone latest examples of Russian actions against Estonia in 2007 and Georgia in 2008.

<sup>53</sup> This however has changed significantly over the last years. Proponents of the antiballistic missile system in Poland fell from 50 in 2005 to 29 in 2009. Those opposing such a project grew from 32 to 53 in the respective period. **OPINIA PUBLICZNA O TARCZY ANTYRAKJETOWEJ**, WARSZAWA, MARZEC 2009, p. 1.

<sup>54</sup> Koziej Stanisław, *Amerykański System Obrony Przeciwrakietowej*, *Rocznik Strategiczny 2007*, 23.

<sup>55</sup> On 7 April this year, Israel's 'Iron Dome' short-range missile defence system intercepted a rocket fired from Gaza for the first time. [http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/israel-pm-netanyahu-welcomes-first-successful-defense-of-new-iron-dome-missile-system/2011/04/07/AF5e2XwC\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/israel-pm-netanyahu-welcomes-first-successful-defense-of-new-iron-dome-missile-system/2011/04/07/AF5e2XwC_story.html) accessed 8 April 2011.

<sup>56</sup> As a percentage of GDP, defence expenditures of major powers have been on the rise for the past couple of years. For example, the U.S. raised its military budget from 3.10 in 2000 to 4.88 in 2008. Russia from 1.96 in 2000 to 2.41 in 2008 and China from 0.086 in 2000 to 1.88 in 2008. See more: *The Military Balance 2000*. (London: Brassey's, 2000). It is also estimated that worldwide military expenditure reached \$1,531bn in 2009, a 5.9% rise in real terms from 2008. See more: "World military spending soars in spite of recession" BBC News, Business, 1 June 2010 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10184610>, accessed 22 June 2011.

<sup>57</sup> See more at: [http://www.msz.gov.pl/Deklaracja\\_o\\_wspolpracy\\_strategicznej\\_29965.html](http://www.msz.gov.pl/Deklaracja_o_wspolpracy_strategicznej_29965.html)

<sup>58</sup> "Russia fails to withdraw from Georgia" The Telegraph, News, World, 18 August, 2008 <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/georgia/2578886/Russia-fails-to-withdraw-from-Georgia.html>, accessed 22 June 2008.

---

<sup>59</sup> From the Exposé 2011 of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland: <http://www.ms.gov.pl/Expos%C3%A9,2011,41979.html>, accessed 24 June, 2011.

<sup>60</sup> On the 7<sup>th</sup> of April 2011, Russia made yet another move to bring Ukraine into its orbit by offering to treat the country as a domestic consumer, cutting its gas bills and encouraging it to join the customs union between Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan. “Russia plays gas card to keep Ukraine in its club”, *EurActiv*, 8 April 2011, <http://www.euractiv.com/en/enlargement/russia-plays-gas-card-keep-ukraine-club-news-503910>, accessed 24 June 2011.

<sup>61</sup> As of 2011, officials in Kiev, at least on a verbal level, emphasize the so-called ‘balanced policy’. This entails forging strategic partnership with the EU and the US on the one hand and Russia on the other. See more: <http://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/19736.html>

<sup>62</sup> See more: “Medvedev says Russia-Belarus war games strengthen ties” RIANOVOSTI, Features & Opinion, 29 September 2009 <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20090929/156293664.html> accessed 24 June 2011.

<sup>63</sup> Zbigniew Brzeziński, Brent Scowcroft, *America and ... op. cit.*, 10.

<sup>64</sup> Jacek Gajewski, “Regionalism in Poland’s Defence Policy,” in *Poland’s Security... op.cit.*, 204.

<sup>65</sup> See more: <http://www.visegradgroup.eu/main.php?folderID=941&articleID=3936&ctag=articlelist&iid=1>

<sup>66</sup> Andrzej Żebrowski, “A missile defence system as a guarantee of Poland’s security – reality or fiction” in *Polska na Arenie Międzynarodowej – Współczesne Wyzwania*, ed. Jarosław J. Piątek, Renata Podgórska (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, 2009), 109.

<sup>67</sup> Parliamentary elections take place around August every four years, and the newly elected Sejm and Senat meet around October/November for their first posiedzenie.

<sup>68</sup> Podstawy programu politycznego Platformy Obywatelskiej RP Warszawa 2007. See more: <http://www.platforma.org/program/>, accessed 27 June 2011.

<sup>69</sup> “Stenogram z exposé premiera Donalda Tuska” *Gazeta.pl wiadomości*, 23 November, 2007, <http://wiadomosci.gazeta.pl/Wiadomosci/1,80708,4701279.html>, accessed 27 June 2011.

<sup>70</sup> Dbamy o Polskę. Dbamy o Polaków. – PIS. See more <http://www.pis.org.pl/article.php?id=10178>, accessed 27 June 2011.

<sup>71</sup> Razem tworzymy lepszą przyszłość. Narodowe priorytety PSL na lata 2007 – 2011. See more [http://www.psl.org.pl/upload/pdf/dokumenty/priorytety\\_1\\_.pdf](http://www.psl.org.pl/upload/pdf/dokumenty/priorytety_1_.pdf), accessed 27 June 2011.

<sup>72</sup> ”CBOS Public Opinion Research Centre, *Opinie Polaków o Tarczy Antyrakietowej*” (Warsaw, 2009), [http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2009/K\\_128\\_09.PDF](http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2009/K_128_09.PDF), accessed 28 June 2011.

---

<sup>73</sup> It is a rule that Presidents of Poland enjoy the highest social trust among society, which is often explained by experts by the sole fact that they are the most known politicians in the country. That in turn testifies to popularity/esteem of the President's Office rather than a particular person that happens to be holding it at the time of survey.  
[http://wpolityce.pl/view/8919/Kolejny\\_sondaz\\_zaufania\\_dla\\_politykow\\_Grzegorz\\_Napieralski\\_znow\\_wyprzedza\\_Donald\\_Tuska\\_Premier\\_ex\\_aequo\\_z\\_Ryszardem\\_Kaliszem.html](http://wpolityce.pl/view/8919/Kolejny_sondaz_zaufania_dla_politykow_Grzegorz_Napieralski_znow_wyprzedza_Donald_Tuska_Premier_ex_aequo_z_Ryszardem_Kaliszem.html), accessed 28 June 2011.

<sup>74</sup> According to survey conveyed at the beginning of 2010, Sikorski enjoys the highest support among his colleagues within the Civic Platform party. A lot can change, since the next presidential election will take place in 2015.  
<http://sondaz.blogspot.com/2010/01/radosaw-sikorski-prezydentem.html>, accessed 28 June, 2011.

<sup>75</sup> It said there would be four annual rotations of aircraft and trainers, two of them involving F-16 fighters, with the first rotation of aircraft taking place in 2013. See more at:  
<http://www.brahmand.com/news/Poland-US-strike-deal-on-air-force-deployment/7293/3/13.html>, accessed 28 June 2011. Also: "US to station F16 jets in Poland" The Telegraph, News, World, 10 May 2011,  
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/poland/8503910/US-to-station-F16-jets-in-Poland.html>, accessed 28 June 2011.

<sup>76</sup> See more:  
[http://wpolityce.pl/view/8919/Kolejny\\_sondaz\\_zaufania\\_dla\\_politykow\\_Grzegorz\\_Napieralski\\_znow\\_wyprzedza\\_Donald\\_Tuska\\_Premier\\_ex\\_aequo\\_z\\_Ryszardem\\_Kaliszem.html](http://wpolityce.pl/view/8919/Kolejny_sondaz_zaufania_dla_politykow_Grzegorz_Napieralski_znow_wyprzedza_Donald_Tuska_Premier_ex_aequo_z_Ryszardem_Kaliszem.html), accessed 28 June 2011.

<sup>77</sup> "Romania 'to host US missile shield'" BBC News,  
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/8498504.stm>, accessed 10 September 2011.

<sup>78</sup> "Bulgaria to Host Elements of NATO Missile Defense if Turkey Refuses" novinite.com, Politics, Defense, [http://www.novinite.com/view\\_news.php?id=129613](http://www.novinite.com/view_news.php?id=129613), 16 September 2011.

<sup>79</sup> George Friedman, *The Next 100 Years: A forecast for the 21<sup>st</sup> century*. (New York: Doubleday, 2009) 71.

<sup>80</sup> Hence the strong emphasis that Poland put during the negotiations leading up to the New Strategic Concept of NATO (Active Engagement, Modern Defence) to reassert article 5 of the Washington Treaty. Poland is also satisfied with the integration of the US Missile Defense System into NATO system covering all its members and their populations. See more: [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official\\_texts\\_68580.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_68580.htm), accessed 16 September 2011.



---

I hereby declare that this paper has not been published elsewhere and that it has not been submitted simultaneously for publication elsewhere.

16.09.2011, Hong Kong

Krzysztof Sliwinski