

# Raisons d'État. EU Security and Defence Policy Framework in the Context of Polish and German Interests. An Analysis

Krzysztof Miszczak

*Warsaw School of Economics*

The asymmetry of the cultures of security and different levels of perception of security interests in their direct international environment remains (for now) an insurmountable obstacle for Germany and Poland. Europe is facing new challenges, the establishment of new powers and the decline of traditional state structures, which is confronting it with threats aimed at weakening the European value system, democratic frameworks, the rule of law and the protection of human rights.

Europe is losing to the rest of the world in terms of demographics, economy and politics, and faces more and more obstacles in establishing alliances for the purpose of the development and maintenance of prosperity. For the European Union, this is a source of potential internal and external conflicts. Differences in the external activities of the European Union will hinder it from playing the role of a unified, responsible, international force in the future. It will therefore not be able to create enough political will to establish a European Foreign, Security and Defence Policy. On the contrary, the possibility of degradation of the achieved potential for unification in the form of the EU's Common Foreign, Security and Defence Policy must be taken into account. In such case, could Poland and Germany take the lead on European defence policy?

*Keywords:* NATO–EU, Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), Warsaw NATO Summit, Germany's and Poland's Eastern Policy, Polish–German relations.

The system of international relations and global security is currently being fundamentally transformed in the political and economic sense.<sup>1</sup> Political and economic survival in this insecure order now seems uncertain.<sup>2</sup> Forming an adequate response to these changes is a key challenge for the European Union and the key challenge for its policy of internal consolidation. Having new roles for their foreign and security policies amidst the dynamic changes in the international order in today's world, Poland and

---

**Krzysztof Miszczak** – Extraordinary Professor, Institute of Law, Warsaw School of Economics (SGH).

<sup>1</sup> See: G.J. Ikenberry (ed.), *Power, Order and Change in World Policy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014, pp. 1–17.

<sup>2</sup> See: M.J. Mazarr, 'The once and future order. What comes after hegemony?', *Foreign Affairs*, 2017, January/February, pp. 25–32.

Germany, along with the Russian Federation and its policy of new imperialism, which questions the international system established in the region after the Cold War, are the determinants of the new geopolitical and geo-economic international environment.

The key and thus far unrealised goal of the process of integrating the community of continental Europe is to strengthen Europe's political role as an international actor within the EU's foreign, security and defence policy. The provisions of the Treaty of Lisbon (of 13 December 2007) indicate that the EU is empowered to act within its common foreign and security policy with regard to all areas of foreign policy and general areas of security. Those areas include the gradual determination of a common defence policy, which is to lead to cumulative defence. Under the terms of the Treaty regarding the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), these areas not only constitute an integral part of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) but also provide the EU with an operational capacity. With the use of civilian and military assets and missions outside Europe, they are the source of tools for peacekeeping, conflict prevention and strengthening international security in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

### Central power

Initiated by revolutionary processes in Central Europe and the reunification of the two German states, the end of the Cold War influenced the shift in the distribution of power between the 'new' Federal Republic of Germany, which, until then, had been functioning in a traditional way, and its neighbouring states, with Germany becoming the 'central power in Europe'. Europe as a continent must cope with the advancing, evolutionary and relative decline in the civilisation-, politics- and military-related significance of the United States as a power in Europe and with the lack of equilibrium in the global liberal order, in which the United States used to be the uncontested leader.<sup>3</sup>

As the degradation of the newly imperialistic Russian Federation with regard to politics, the economy and industry advanced and the Federal Republic of Germany rose to the position of an uncontested political and economic leader in Europe, it became obvious that the structures of the old international order were gone forever. Parallel to this process, the former Soviet satellite states in Central Europe gained independence in political and economic issues. It was not until Poland acceded to NATO and the European Union that it strove to play the role of a political and economic leader in this new geopolitical area.<sup>4</sup>

These changes to the international system of European security forced Poland and the Federal Republic of Germany to re-evaluate the 'traditional' methods of

<sup>3</sup> K. Miszczak, *Polityka zagraniczna, bezpieczeństwa i obrony koalicji rządowej SPD-Sojusz 90 'Zieloni w okresie 1998–2005*, Warszawa: Dom Wydawniczy Elipsa, 2012, pp. 69–101.

<sup>4</sup> K. Miszczak, 'Die deutsch-polnischen Beziehungen in Zeiten der Krise in Osteuropa', *ZFAS, Zeitschrift für Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik*, 2015, No. 4, pp. 467–468.

international activity.<sup>5</sup> Their aim was to adjust their habitual foreign, security and defence policies to an international environment that was rapidly changing, to transform it into an effective instrument for implementing national interests, considering the new cooperation structures and geo-economic relationships.

The platforms for cooperation are supranational alliance structures and mechanisms such as the European Union and the North Atlantic Alliance. Germany and Poland have become active players. They organise commercial realpolitik, in particular within the subsystem of the European Union, assuming the role of the chief organiser of the community's development (Germany), hoping to fulfil its regional (for Poland) as well as European and global ambitions (for Germany).

Since 1989/1990, the governments of free Poland have approached the issues of the general development of European foreign policy and European anti-crisis forces rather positively. However, Poland did not have direct influence on the creation of the European security policy. Moreover, in its inception phase, the project of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) brought no real guarantees of safety to Warsaw, and it was not viewed as an alternative to NATO. In its foreign policy, Poland was looking for firm guarantees of security, and (in Warsaw's eyes) those could only be provided by the North Atlantic Alliance. Polish governments had relatively little trust in their partners in Europe, which was the result of fears related, in particular, to the ascent of the Federal Republic of Germany after the reunification of the German states, which, during the first phase of Poland's sovereignty, only exacerbated the fear that the foreign policy of Germany, Poland's largest western neighbour, was going to become nationalist again, as well as fears related to the imperial ambitions of the Russian Federation in the east (Moscow's doctrine of the 'near abroad').

Having opted for the Euro-Atlantic option with the United States as the leader, Poland viewed attempts to strengthen the EU's second pillar (security) sceptically, assuming that the creation of an independent European security policy might distance the states of Western Europe from the transatlantic security framework. The fear was that this could lead to the weakening of NATO itself, the foundation of the country's security. All Polish governments in the post-communist era gradually started demanding further strengthening of security in case the engagement of the United States in the security of Europe decreased.

As a member of NATO and the EU, Poland continues to opt for formal security guarantees provided by the Alliance in the form of internal, Alliance-bound deterrence and the internal civilian and military capacities of the European Union within the CSDP, in addition to NATO means. With the support of Berlin, Warsaw opted for the development of a strong and efficient European security policy, including European security policy. Poland has played an active part in the process of creating the European Union Rapid Reaction Force (battlegroups) and has participated in the EU's civilian and

---

<sup>5</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 470–471.

military operations.<sup>6</sup> The aim was obvious: to introduce more dynamics into Brussels' foreign policy and to develop its armed division in the form of a joint security and defence identity. As a result, after the Treaty of Nice came into force in 2003, the first European Security Strategy of 12 December 2003 was developed.<sup>7</sup>

### **Combat troops**

With regard to military aspects, the foundation for the process was the establishment of European Rapid Reaction Forces, i.e. battlegroups, which were formally a part of the Treaty of Lisbon. They reached operational capability (with the intent of running civilian and military operations globally) in January 2007. In November 2007, France and Germany came back to the idea from 2003 and suggested strengthening the EU mission's planning and control along with the creation of an EU general staff (without using that exact name) on the basis of an existing planning centre (operational centre). This resulted from processes started in January 2005 and the establishment of a civilian-military unit (within the EU General Staff) in order to create operational centres for EU peace operations.

The European Rapid Reaction Forces – 15 brigades, each with 1,500 troops – were to be sent to regions in crisis (two groups) and serve tours lasting half a year. As a consequence of the Iraq crisis and the increase of US supremacy in global politics, Germany initiated a broad strategic debate on the EU's concept of foreign and security policy.

France and Germany came up with a tool to accelerate the efforts to achieve the EU's integration goal within the areas of security and defence policy, namely the idea of creating a European Security Policy Union. Poland viewed these efforts as a continuation of the policy of the game of interests that France and Germany had played earlier, which led directly to deep divisions within the EU and forced smaller countries (such as Poland) to either participate in the French and German project or to reject it (which would, naturally, mean a decrease in Warsaw's influence.)

Every government of free Poland has defined its expectations in relation to the European security policy in two aspects. (1) It was believed that the relationship between Brussels and Warsaw was unsatisfactory as it did not ensure that the tasks of both parties in the context of cooperation between the EU and non-EU countries (NATO members), non-NATO members of the EU and NATO candidates were actually fulfilled. However, Poland declared its readiness to participate in operations organised as part of the ESDP. The country also declared that it would participate in the process of consolidating the European arms industry and in research programmes organised without

---

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/esdp/91624.pdf](https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/esdp/91624.pdf) (accessed on 10.01.2017).

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/78367.pdf> (accessed on 4.01.2017).

the division into arms-producing and arms-purchasing states. (2) Warsaw expected that the future role of the European defence policy in the emerging continental – and at the same time international – security system would be clearly defined. In addition, it opposed the possible distancing of the United States from Europe.

As a framework (leading) country, Poland decided in 2004 to create a battlegroup with Germany, Slovakia, Lithuania and Latvia. The battlegroup was to reach operational capability in the first half of 2010 and operate based on an agreement among the defence ministers of the states participating in the project of 13 November 2006.

The operational command was located in Potsdam. Poland was to provide half of the capacities for the battlegroup. Moreover, as a framework state, since the second half of 2013, Poland has also been participating in the Weimar Battlegroup, a multinational EU battlegroup with Poland, France and Germany as its members.

At the same time, there were efforts dedicated to the acceleration of European cooperation in the defence industry, fast implementation of the pooling and sharing initiative, improvement of EU crisis management structures and, last but not least, operational improvement of battlegroups and their application on the battlefield. At the end of November 2013, at a meeting of EU foreign and defence ministers, Poland and Germany initiated the reorganisation of the battlegroups. Poland advocated strengthening and increasing the effectiveness of the common security policy, with rapid reaction forces, i.e. battlegroups, at its centre. Despite all efforts, these units turned out to be something of a cold project for the EU, having never been used in crisis management operations.

### **Suspicious in partnership**

The period of the first government of Law and Justice (PiS) between 2005 and 2007 was a time of deterioration in Polish–German relations. This directly influenced the development of cooperation with Poland's German partners in the field of EU foreign and security policy. Berlin turned out to be an unreliable partner by choosing cooperation with the Russian Federation over Poland's security interests.

Issues were piling up already before that, but the climax took place first under the government of Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz and then under the government of Jarosław Kaczyński from the PiS. The main source of discrepancies were the issues of security policy (radically different opinions regarding the war in Iraq) and the eastern policy of the two countries. Germany opted for close energy cooperation with Russia (the construction of Nord Stream 1, bypassing Poland), clearly breaching the provisions of the EU's CFSP.

Another sign of divergent interests between Poland and Germany were their radically different views of the final integration of the EU members. Was the EU to become a union of nation states (according to Poland) or a political union, as seen by Germany? This gap was widened by their different views of history and divergent

historical narratives. It was not without reason that Warsaw accused Germany of hegemonic ambitions in European policy and emphasised that Poland ‘no longer played the role of a vassal’ in its relations with Germany.<sup>8</sup> Despite fundamental differences in their opinions, the two countries also demonstrated their engagement in the European foreign and defence policy within the Weimar Triangle.

Under the influence of public opinion, in a country where over 80 per cent of citizens were in favour of the European Union having its own armed forces and, in particular, as a result of the start of the construction of Nord Stream 1, bypassing the Baltic states and Poland, the Polish government changed its approach. Poland was confronted with a new situation that confirmed the fear in Warsaw that Berlin would not act in solidarity regarding the creation of a common security policy. Warsaw received solid confirmation of just how little influence it had on its German partner’s policy and how politically cynical it was.

This time, Poland’s goal was energy security and the development of a common EU policy towards Russia. This was the direction of an initiative by Prime Minister Marcinkiewicz, presented before the EU economic summit in March 2006, namely the proposal to create an ‘energy NATO’ (repeated on 2 November 2006),<sup>9</sup> which was rejected by Germany and other European Union Member States. Prime Minister Kaczyński’s idea of creating a 100,000-strong European armed force connected to NATO, presented during the Berlin talks between Kaczyński and German Chancellor Angela Merkel, met the same fate. The chief of those European troops was to be the President of the European Commission, and the operational units would have reported to NATO Headquarters.<sup>10</sup>

Both of these proposals were rejected by EU Member States. Brussels also opposed the concept presented by Merkel in March 2007, consisting in the creation of a European army of sorts, which was suggested during talks between the German Chancellor and PM Kaczyński in Poland. The Polish PM consented to the German proposal under the condition that the army in question become an integral part of NATO.

The government of the Civic Platform (PO) and the Polish People’s Party (PSL) brought an improvement to Polish–German relations. Trust remained limited, however, especially with regard to the European security policy. The reasons for this distrust were the development of a German–Russian raw-material alliance and Berlin’s objection to the Ballistic Missile Defence system. Poland and Germany still differed in their visions of European reforms. Within historical policy, the differences were related to a clear

---

<sup>8</sup> K. Miszczak, ‘Polen und die Sicherheits- und Verteidigungspolitik der Europäischen Union’, *WeltTrends*, 2015, No. 100, January/February, p. 53.

<sup>9</sup> K. Marcinkiewicz, ‘European’s energy musketeer must stand together’, *Financial Times*, 2006, February 9, <https://www.ft.com/content/fec8768c-999c-11da-a8c3-0000779e2340> (accessed on 18.02.2017).

<sup>10</sup> The author was participating in Kaczyński’s conversation with chancellor Merkel in Berlin, see also <http://www.dw.com/de/merkel-und-kaczynski-k%C3%B6nnen-streit-nicht-beilegen/a-2220448> (accessed on 4.02.2017).

sign of the expulsion of Poles by Germans during World War II, pecuniary claims and asymmetric accounting for history. Despite ostensible harmony, all these aspects led to Warsaw's doubts regarding Germany's real interests in 'common' policies on the European continent that were beneficial predominantly to Germany.

After the Treaty of Lisbon came into force in 2009, Berlin's efforts were directed at strengthening the civilian and military capacities of the European Union, including the establishment of permanent multinational structures that would accelerate the process of civilian and military integration. Just like Poland, Berlin emphasised the cooperation initiated in particular between Poland, France and Germany within the Weimar Triangle, referring to the joint Polish and French declaration of 5 November 2009.<sup>11</sup> According to Germany, this was also consistent with its view that the CSDP had to constitute an integral part of the European External Action Service.

The issue was the 'double hatting' condition. As stated in the paragraph regarding the Common Security and Defence Policy, Poland and France perceived the CSDP and NATO as two complementary structures. The two countries declared their support for Europe's increased defence capabilities. For Poland, a stronger EU with regard to foreign and security policy was also to become a more reliable partner for its NATO allies (including the United States) except in the areas where the EU Treaty and the North-Atlantic Pact were in force.

According to Poland, striving for a more determined foreign policy and stronger European defence was vitally important in order to increase influence within NATO and to expand the role of the EU Member States, which would also increase Poland's significance within the Alliance. Warsaw opted for dialogue and pragmatic cooperation with Russia within the NATO-Russia Council.<sup>12</sup>

Despite this, Germany persisted in demanding the creation of a separate formation within the European Union, namely a Defence Council, where the defence ministries of the Member States would become more empowered in the EU decision process. Poland feared that Berlin would aim for the creation of an independent command centre in the EU, independent of NATO structures. This was meant to spur the EU Member States to become more active while maintaining the control on the part of foreign ministers over the new EU political and military body. In the end, Berlin gave up on the project.

### **Ignorant acceptance**

At the time, Germany was sceptical towards the possible improvement of EU–NATO relations thanks to new institutional mechanisms. At the same time, it treated the issue of the possible establishment of EU troops with reserve. This could be a long-term

---

<sup>11</sup> *Déclaration commune sur la sécurité et la défense, sommet Franco-Polonais*, Paris, 5 November 2009.

<sup>12</sup> [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_50091.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_50091.htm) (accessed on 12.01.2017).

goal for German politics but only as part of the further development of the civilian and military framework of the European Union.

During the Polish presidency of the EU,<sup>13</sup> Warsaw's goal was to implement a division of roles between the CSDP (with the role of conflict resolution through the development of its civilian and military capacities) and NATO as an instrument of increased collective military defence of the Alliance (Article 5), as well as to maintain US engagement in Europe.

Despite the fact that Warsaw's influence on the development of the Common Security and Defence Policy (after the PO–PSL government took over and due to PM Donald Tusk's acceptance of the German policy on the European continent) was relatively limited, Poland became increasingly interested in the creation of the CSDP. The national security strategy of 2007 was clearly in favour of accelerated integration of the Member States' security and defence policies.

This approach had its sources in a friendlier policy of 'openness towards Europe' and the acceleration of the process of asymmetrical normalisation of the country's relations with Germany by the government. Another reason was that the Civic Platform did not approve of the methods applied in Poland's policy towards Europe by the PiS government. The failure to achieve the goals of the Polish intervention mission in Iraq, the political and financial reservations regarding the installation of parts of the Ballistic Missile Defence System in Poland expressed by the United States were a consequence of President Obama's policy of a 'Russian reset', along with the accelerated withdrawal of the United States from Europe and a shift towards the Pacific (resulting in Washington's decreased engagement in European security), these were the main reasons for the change in the perception of Polish relations with the 'German' European Union.

At that time, Poland pointed out the challenges to international security related to Russia. These were related to energy security and diversification of energy sources, the Polish–Swedish initiative of Eastern Partnership, further development of the EU's rapid reaction forces, civilian and military cooperation and the consequences of the Georgia crisis.

Warsaw's aim was to update and adjust the European Security Strategy of 2003 to meet new challenges, taking into account the radical change in the political situation in Europe and in its direct neighbourhood that resulted from the destabilisation of North Africa, the Middle East conflict, the unresolved Caucasus conflict and lack of political stability in Eastern Europe, as well as increasing the qualitative contribution of the EU to the creation of a new international order.

Polish demands were in part the fulfilment of the Treaty of Lisbon of 1 December 2009,<sup>14</sup> in which the previous European security and defence policy was replaced

---

<sup>13</sup> [http://www.mf.gov.pl/en/documents/764034/1137013/Report\\_Polish\\_presidency.pdf](http://www.mf.gov.pl/en/documents/764034/1137013/Report_Polish_presidency.pdf) (accessed on 10.01.2017).

<sup>14</sup> [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/ftu/pdf/en/FTU\\_1.1.5.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/ftu/pdf/en/FTU_1.1.5.pdf) (accessed on 10.01.2017).

by the Common Security and Defence Policy. The new treaty ensured that the EU had operational capacity based on civilian and military assets. Thus, it confirmed that implementing a common defence policy was sensible. Poland engaged in the implementation of the assumptions behind the Headline Goal 2010<sup>15</sup> related to the development of common military capacities in order to create rapid reaction capacities in case of a crisis within the Member States' armies.

During its Presidency of the Council of the European Union (the second half of 2011),<sup>16</sup> Warsaw suggested a solution to EU crisis management. The Polish proposals, which were aimed at improved effectiveness of the security and defence policy, called 'Safe Europe', were based on the conclusions reached by the Weimar Triangle states in April 2010, when Poland, Germany and France engaged in an initiative to strengthen the common security and defence policy. According to these three states, the key part of the project was the establishment of a permanent civilian and military structure for planning and control, a headquarters that would prepare and implement civilian and military missions for the European Union.

Moreover, during its Presidency, Poland focused on the issue of increasing the usability and functionality of battlegroups as the civilian and military arm of the EU. Warsaw suggested that the duty period of the battlegroups be increased from six to twelve months and that they be co-financed by all Member States. Additionally, plans included the strengthening of the EU's capabilities within the area of planning and implementing operations under the CSDP as well as acquiring and using defence capabilities as efficiently as possible within a pooling and sharing mechanism under the German–Swedish Gent Initiative of September 2010. Moreover, it was Warsaw's ambition for the security and defence policy to be internally balanced by engaging the EU's partner states, not only in Africa and the Balkans but also to the east, where Poland is on the front line of the European Union and NATO.

The Polish Presidency failed to achieve its goals in the area of the CSDP due to the lack of political will of its EU partners but also as a result of gradual cuts of defence budgets. Poland's proposals were treated as exaggerated and overly ambitious in the political sense, with no real application in the political and economic realities of the remaining EU Member States.

The next EU security summit (19–20 December 2013)<sup>17</sup> also failed to result in any breakthroughs in the development of European defence. The EU Member States only agreed to undertake regular reviews of progress within the CSDP. The next meeting took place in June 2015. Despite reservations on the part of other EU members, Poland succeeded in pushing through a concept for strengthening partnership with the EU's

---

<sup>15</sup> [https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/Civilian\\_Headline\\_Goal\\_2010.pdf](https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/Civilian_Headline_Goal_2010.pdf) (accessed on 15.02.2017).

<sup>16</sup> [http://oide.sejm.gov.pl/oide/en/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=30&Itemid=376](http://oide.sejm.gov.pl/oide/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=30&Itemid=376) (accessed on 4.02.2017).

<sup>17</sup> <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-217-2013-INIT/en/pdf> (accessed on 10.01.2017).

partner states, in particular with the participants of the Eastern Partnership. Moreover, a Polish proposal to extend the criteria for the use of battlegroups was accepted that would also include cooperation with NATO and would take into account cooperation between the two organisations in the management of regional conflicts.

In 2014, reforms of the Polish armed forces got under way (to be finalised by 2022) that took into account the significance of the four defence programmes conducted by the European Defence Agency. Three of these were consistent with the areas of reform in the Polish armed forces. They included support for infrastructure for the construction of unmanned systems, the adoption of political frameworks for cybersecurity and the development of a maritime security strategy as well as aerial refuelling and further development of satellite communications.

The Member States also consented to a proposal for balanced development of the defence industries of the EU Member States in order to counteract the dominance of the largest members with highly developed arms industries. They also reached agreement with regard to access to defence research and technology funding as well as to implementing dual-use ventures, consisting in a simplified transfer of technology and know-how between EU partner states. However, the restrictions of proper funding for military expenditure in the EU Member States continue to make it difficult for those states to structurally cooperate on a permanent basis.

### **Failed scenarios**

The plan to get Berlin's support for Poland's proposals failed. Germany did not see a future for intense EU military operations outside Europe. The decisions taken at the European Council summit on 25–26 June 2015 were limited to the intent to continue the process of strategic reflection regarding the option to build a global EU strategy of shaping the foreign and security policies of the EU Member States. This was to be decided at the European Council summit in June 2016. The draft (prepared by Poland, Sweden, Spain and Italy) foresaw the development of a common architecture for the culture of European security. Germany approaches this instrument of effective multilateralism with regard to defence from a general perspective, that is in a manner appropriate to the level of development of their own global interests.

There are more obstacles to the implementation of such a policy, such as political conflicts regarding foreign and security policy in the grand coalition of the CDU/CSU and SPD, which has governed Germany since 13 December 2013. The three parties differ in their strategies regarding the implementation of the policy, which is a source of further decline in the operational capabilities of the German government and a cause for concern with regard to the credibility and reliability of Germany in case of a threat to the security of the EU.

Divisions between the German Chancellery and the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Economy and Energy as well as the Ministry of Defence reflect the differences in

political beliefs between the CDU, CSU and SPD. Differences are also visible in particular federal states. The eastern states of Saxony and Brandenburg are pro-Russian. The Greens, the Left, a part of the governing parties and the far-right parties prefer dialogue with Moscow. The industry's opinions are ambivalent; however, the prevailing trend is to continue cooperation with Russia.

Germany's aggressive policy of enforcing its geo-economic interests on the European continent and in neighbouring states is connected with its position in the world, which is evolving towards a search for a new identity within the EU as the central framework for the influence of German foreign policy.

As Berlin imports raw materials, it is planning to develop its navy for the purpose of protecting cargo ships. This, in turn, entails extending the operational activities of maritime troops in the global arena. Maritime security is becoming the key security aspect for Germany, which defines its economic interests as global, requiring the capability of intervening all over the world.

The financial and economic crisis and the reduction in expenditure on security and defence were also not beneficial to the deepening of European integration in this respect. As Germany abstained from voting on the resolution on Libya and a military intervention to protect civilians in the Security Council on 17 March 2011<sup>18</sup> and declined to participate in the Althea operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina after November 2012, it became clear that the country was not engaged with its Western partners and its security policy was linked to its momentary interests and not the common interest of the Euro-Atlantic region.<sup>19</sup>

After the United States partially withdrew its forces from Europe, Germany expected a confirmation of its special relationship with the superpower. In their view, Germany was to fill the strategic security gap left by the United States and become the major political power in Europe (with the support of the US, a weak France and the British policy of maintaining a loose connection to the continent). This scenario undermines Polish security interests. Warsaw's distrust of this German policy has been confirmed by the continued strengthening of economic relations with the Russian Federation presented by the government of Chancellor Merkel, realised in order to implement the country's own (and not European) energy policy (Nord Stream 2), with no consideration for the interests of Poland and other European countries.<sup>20</sup>

German security interests, broadly understood, are defined today (despite the obvious conflicts with the US) predominantly by geopolitical guarantees for Euro-Atlantic security provided by the United States itself and the geo-economic energy

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.un.org/press/en/2011/sc10200.doc.htm> (accessed on 10.01.2017).

<sup>19</sup> See: *Poland and the future of the European Union, Mr. Radek Sikorski, Foreign Minister of Poland*, Berlin, 28 November 2011, [https://dgap.org/sites/default/files/event\\_downloads/radoslaw\\_sikorski\\_poland\\_and\\_the\\_future\\_of\\_the\\_eu\\_0.pdf](https://dgap.org/sites/default/files/event_downloads/radoslaw_sikorski_poland_and_the_future_of_the_eu_0.pdf) (accessed on 5.02.2017).

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.euractiv.com/section/energy/opinion/fridaythe-german-politics-of-nord-stream-2/> (accessed on 10.01.2017).

and raw-material security provided by Russia, not entirely, however, on Russian conditions. The limits of this cooperation are vague and dependent on the dynamic development of the international situation. The German political class sees threats coming from the Middle and the Far East. At the same time, dependence on energy and raw-material supplies from Russia to Germany is only perceived as a technical and economic matter.

Germany's security policy was aimed at civilising regional relations with Moscow by linking the Russian economy as closely as possible to the German-European economy according to the rule of forced responsibility in security partnership.<sup>21</sup> These plans fell apart after Russia invaded Ukraine and annexed a part of its territory (Crimea and Donbass). Moscow's new imperialism led to a crucial change in the geopolitics of Europe, along with the questioning of the international order after World War II.

Consequently, Germany's policy is based on an old NATO concept, drawn up in 1967 and included in a report by Pierre Harmel, Belgium's foreign minister. This provided the basis for the flexible response doctrine, which consisted in the policy of deterrence of the Soviet Union (with the use of Pershing II and BGM-109 Tomahawk missiles) and continued dialogue with Moscow. Today, such dialogue can only mean readiness to accept compromises, that is acceptance of the status quo. It is worth emphasising, however, that this is the approach of the grand coalition of the CDU/CSU and SPD that governs Germany. Thus, Poland should take into account Germany's defensive and reserved stance.

## Conclusion

For Poland, the situation today is far from comfortable. Security is determined in the west and in the south by partner states: Germany, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary. They are all members of NATO and the EU, with the latter three forming the Visegrad Group with Poland. Along with Germany and France, Poland also forms a unique, informal framework for cooperation and consultation: the Weimar Triangle.

Poland does not border today's pro-Russian Moldova, nor do the two countries have any alliance with each other. Ukraine is Poland's direct neighbour without any alliances, despite the fact that maintaining former's territorial independence and sovereignty is among Poland's fundamental security interests. Despite a short stretch of Russian land in the north of Poland (the Kaliningrad exclave), the Russian Federation is far, geopolitically, from Poland, even farther away due to the independence of Ukraine, with its pro-Western policy. Belarus is also a direct neighbour of Poland, but it is entirely dependent on Russia in the political and economic sense. Two of the Baltic states, Latvia and Estonia, Poland's allies in NATO and the EU, have large Russian-speaking

---

<sup>21</sup> S.F. Szabo, *Germany, Russia and the Rise of Geo-Economics*, New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015, pp. 8–9.

minorities. In Lithuania, in turn, also a member of NATO and the EU, there is a large and politically significant Polish minority.

Crimea's annexation by Russia in 2014, the war in eastern Ukraine, the political and military conflict with Russia due to its ongoing support of separatists in the east of Ukraine with military and logistical means (with Russia not abiding by the provisions of Minsk II), as well as the threat of economic and financial collapse of Ukraine are all sources of ongoing threats and have resulted in a dramatic decrease in the level of security in Central Europe. Moreover, the awareness of these threats is accelerating the process of the renationalisation of foreign and security policies among Europe's leaders, France and Germany, as well as among Poland's other partners in the field of foreign and security policy within NATO and the EU. As these countries take into account a fictitious threat to Russia's security (and emphasise the need to respect the provisions of the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation, signed in 1997<sup>22</sup> and repeatedly breached by Moscow), and as Germany, Poland's most important ally, continues to object to the deployment of permanent NATO bases in Poland and the Baltic states, Poland feels more and more abandoned.

Putin's policy of new imperialism is forcing Warsaw to start the process of strengthening its own security system (the concept of 'Międzymorze', the intermarium)<sup>23</sup> and state defence, which would take into account the relative weakness of Poland in the field of European security.

It is in Poland's interest to convince the United States and the other EU Member States to agree to plans to resolve our security-policy problems and to permanently include these states in the process. This is one of the reasons why Poland (the government and the opposition are unanimous in this respect) is cautious in its evaluation of the concept of a European army. Warsaw perceives the establishment of a second military union in Europe, parallel to NATO, as unnecessary, since it would weaken the Alliance, the best guarantee of security for Poland. For a European army to be created, the EU's common foreign policy would first have to work. In the meantime, it is still an unrealised concept due to the fact that there is no political will to give up sovereignty in the area of security. The key to European security is in maintaining a nuclear balance of power with Russia. This balance can only be provided by the United States. Nevertheless, we are not clear exactly what new US President Donald Trump's views are on the role of the United States in the world and the future design of the Euro-Atlantic relationship.

In this context, the decisions taken at the NATO summit in Warsaw in July 2016<sup>24</sup> are of fundamental significance to regaining trust regarding collective defence (like the

---

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2016/04/the-1997-natorussia-founding-act-does-not-prohibit> (accessed on 2.02.2017).

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.stratfor.com/the-hub/revival-intermarium-poland-can-talk-talk-can-it-walk-walk> (accessed on 2.02.2017).

<sup>24</sup> [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_133171.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133171.htm), K. Miszczak, *NATO: The Enduring Alliance 2016*, foreword. Publication prepared for the Foundation for Polish-German Co-operation,

fulfilment of Article 5 on mutual assistance) in the east of the EU and NATO.<sup>25</sup> Today, Germany is demonstrating an increasing readiness to take on more responsibility<sup>26</sup> and to become more engaged in the international arena, even if this approach is contrary to the interests and expectations of the international environment surrounding it.

However, after Brexit, the European continent will become fully dominated by Germany, with all the negative consequences for Poland that this would entail. This also refers to resolving the refugee issue in Europe (as prescribed by Germany), which, in fact, means the enforcement of German interests. It appears that the Polish–German conflict is unresolvable in this respect. Poland will not accept the German solution.<sup>27</sup>

The previous active leadership role played by the Federal Republic of Germany, with its traditional foundation of a civilian force, has been replaced by economic pressure on the rest of Europe. Poland, however, should aim to expand its role in the political and economic framework of the European Union, which would be beneficial to its security interests and elevate Warsaw's importance in geopolitical assessments run by its geopolitical allies in Europe. Parallel to close ties with the United States, deeper cooperation between Germany and Poland (with regard to the eastern policy and the European Neighbourhood Policy) would help achieve the fundamental goal of the Polish and German foreign and security policies, namely cohesion in the external activities of the EU Member States.

The asymmetry of the cultures of security and different levels of perception of security interests in their direct international environment remains (for now) an insurmountable obstacle for Germany and Poland. Despite this, Europe is facing new challenges, the establishment of new powers and the decline of traditional state structures, which is confronting it with threats aimed at weakening the European value system, democratic frameworks, the rule of law and the protection of human rights.

Europe is losing to the rest of the world in terms of demographics, economy and politics, and faces more and more obstacles in establishing alliances for the purpose of the development and maintenance of prosperity. For the European Union, this is a source of potential internal and external conflicts. Differences in the external activities of the European Union will hinder it from playing the role of a unified, responsible, international force in the future. It will therefore not be able to create enough political will to establish a European foreign, security and defence policy. On the contrary, the

---

Warsaw, 28 June 2016, pp. 2–3; [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_133163.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133163.htm) (accessed on 17.02.2017).

<sup>25</sup> *Joint Statement NATO-EU from 6.12.2016*, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_138829.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_138829.htm) (accessed on 12.02.2017).

<sup>26</sup> *German White Paper on German Security Policy and the Future of the Bundeswehr*, Berlin, 13 July 2016, <http://www.new-york-un.diplo.de/contentblob/4847754/Daten/6718448/160713weibuchEN.pdf> (accessed on 9.11.2016).

<sup>27</sup> K. Miszczak, 'Polska i Niemcy a realizacja Wspólnej Polityki Zagranicznej, Bezpieczeństwa i Obrony Unii Europejskiej', *Krakowskie Studia Międzynarodowe*, 2016, Vol. XIII, No. 1, pp. 83–106, p. 104.

degradation of the achieved level of potential for unification in the form of the EU's Common Foreign, Security and Defence Policy must be taken into account.

That is why Poland and Germany should become, together, one of the main pillars stimulating the development of political and military integration processes in the entire European Security and Defence Union.<sup>28</sup> It should be the ambition of Warsaw and Berlin to draw up a common strategy for foreign and security policy, security and defence policy, as well as neighbourhood policy, and Trump's presidency could even force this thinking. Germany's policy towards Poland should resemble its policy towards Israel; it should be based on the assumption that ensuring our security is a strategic part of the German *raison d'état*.

---

<sup>28</sup> *Council conclusions on implementing the EU global strategy in the area of security and defence*, <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/11/14-conclusions-eu-global-strategy-security-defence/> and <http://www.euractiv.com/section/security/news/european-defence-union-the-return-of-hard-power/> (accessed on 15.02.2017).