



NEWS RELEASE

Statement from Gen. Petraeus on Polish contributions in Afghanistan

KABUL, Afghanistan (Dec 19, 2010) – I have been privileged to command coalition efforts in Iraq and, now, in Afghanistan. In each case, Polish forces were very important members of the coalition and demonstrated impressive courage, professional expertise, and commitment. In each mission, I spent considerable time with Polish forces and valued highly what our Polish partners brought to the fight. Indeed, given my experiences serving with Polish forces during some 5-1/2 years in Bosnia, Iraq, and Afghanistan since 2001, I believe I am uniquely qualified to comment on the enormous contributions Polish forces made in those countries – and that very much includes the contributions they are currently making in Afghanistan.

Most recently, I visited Polish forces last week in Ghazni, and as in the past, I was very impressed by the excellent work of the Polish contingent. Brigadier General Reudowicz and the Polish conventional, special operations, and mentoring forces have established superb relationships with their Afghan counterparts. They are carrying out a comprehensive campaign in a very challenging part of Afghanistan, and doing it in outstanding fashion. They have, as they did in Iraq, sustained tough casualties over the years, but they have never wavered. For these reasons, all the members of the Alliance applauded as Poland's leadership increased the size of the Polish contribution in recent years.

While in Ghazni last week, I also met with the Governor of the province and the leaders of the Afghan Army and Police there, and it was clear that they have forged strong partnerships with General Reudowicz and his team. Additionally, in talking with the leaders of the other coalition forces at the main base in Ghazni, it was evident that they also have excellent relationships with, and considerable respect for, their counterparts in the Polish contingent.

It is, in short, a great privilege, once again, to serve with Polish forces in a difficult, important mission. Polish forces are serving their nation, the coalition, and Afghanistan in truly admirable fashion. And all of Poland's citizens should be very proud of the enormous contributions their men and women in uniform are making in Afghanistan.

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