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THE UNITED STATES AND POLAND

ALLIES FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

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USA & Poland

The United States and Poland: Allies for the 21st Century

The United States and Poland are building an Alliance for the 21st Century. As close NATO Allies, the United States and Poland have forged exceptional bilateral defense ties; our day-to-day cooperation has never been closer. Firmly rooted in NATO's Article V commitments, our alliance encompasses training, exercises, contingency planning, and information sharing to assure our defense against the full range of security challenges. Our security partnership has reached important milestones in the last three years.

Allies for the Future

BOOTS ON THE GROUND: The United States and Poland will established a U.S. Air Force Aviation Detachment in Poland in the autumn of 2012, bringing for the first time an enduring presence of American "boots on the ground" to Poland. The Aviation Detachment is based at Łask Air Base. Beginning in 2013, American and Polish fighter aircraft and transport planes will conduct joint training exercises at Łask to strengthen interoperability and enhance our collective security.

NATO ENGAGEMENT: Poland's F-16 fighter aircraft, the most modern in Europe, achieved NATO certification in 2011 and successfully participated in the challenging international RED FLAG exercise in Alaska in 2012. More than $1.5 billion in NATO infrastructure funds have helped establish three of Europe's most modern air bases, at Krzesiny, Łask, and Powidz. Poland was the first country to approve the establishment of NATO's Phased Adaptive Approach to missile defense on its territory. The first elements of NATO's missile defense system are in place in NATO's southern tier, and initial planning has begun for the third phase of the NATO missile defense system at Redzikowo in 2018.

DEFENSE TECHNOLOGY: Polish aviation and defense firms manufacture major components of U.S. military aircraft, including the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter and the Blackhawk helicopter. The United States and Poland concluded the Reciprocal Defense Procurement Agreement that will facilitate defense cooperation and trade.

JOINT DEPLOYMENTS: U.S. National Guard Soldiers have deployed with Polish Land Forces, serving under Polish tactical command first in Iraq, and then in Afghanistan. The Illinois National Guard's State Partnership Program with Poland is one of the National Guard's oldest and largest state partnership programs. Today, U.S. National Guard Soldiers conduct pre-deployment training in Poland with their Polish counterparts, and then deploy together as one team to Ghazni Province, Afghanistan. Illinois National Guard members have participated in exchanges with Polish military and civilian organizations. The United States issued over 200 individual awards and decorations for meritorious service and outstanding achievement to members of the Polish Armed Forces for their service in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Shoulder-to-Shoulder in Combat and in Peace

AFGHANISTAN: Poland is the sixth largest troop contributor to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. U.S. and Polish Soldiers fight bravely side-by-side, together with their allies, advancing security and denying violent extremists safe haven. Our joint pledge of "in together, out together" symbolizes NATO's enduring Article V commitments and alliance solidarity.

TRAINING AND PARTNERSHIP: Each year, approximately 10,000 Polish service members participate in U.S.-led security cooperation activities, and over 600 Polish personnel attend formal U.S. training programs. For example, Polish F-16 and C-130 pilots train in the United States to improve their proficiency and interoperability with the U.S. Air Force. The United States provides professional military education to Polish officers and enlisted personnel, including training for Polish Army Soldiers at the U.S. Joint Mission Rehearsal Center in Germany, as part of their preparation for duty in Afghanistan. Exceptional Polish military cadets attend U.S. Service Academies at West Point, Annapolis, and Colorado Springs. All of these activities are augmented by the presence of U.S. military members stationed in Warsaw, Bydgoszcz, Szczecin, Krzesiny, Powidz and Łask Air Base.

SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES: Polish and U.S. Special Forces have established a close partnership, reinforced through joint training and combat. U.S. advisors have been working with their partners in the Polish Special Forces Headquarters in Krakow. U.S. and Polish Special Forces often use the same equipment, including the Polish-made M-28 light, twin-engine transport aircraft to operate in isolated and remote locations. Poland is on track to become a NATO Special Operations Forces Framework Nation in 2014, one of very few NATO nations to possess this highly specialized and critical capability.

FOR YOUR FREEDOM AND OURS: In war and in peace, the United States and Poland have forged a partnership built on our mutual commitment to ideals worth defending – your freedom and ours. From the first days of America's war for independence, when Kazimierz Pulaski, Tadeusz Kosciuszko, and George Washington waged their heroic struggle, our brothers and sisters-in-arms have made history together. As allies, partners, and friends, we are transforming that history into an Alliance for the 21st Century.