

# **FACT SHEET: The United States and Poland: Strong and United**

June 3, 2014

Poland and the United States are bound together by shared history and values, by our security alliance, and by our strong economic ties. This year marks 25 years since Poland's historic election that set the stage for its transition from communism to democracy. Poland is also celebrating its 15th anniversary as a NATO member and its 10th as a member of the European Union.

## **Security and Defense Cooperation**

The recent developments beyond NATO's eastern border reconfirm the importance of NATO solidarity embodied in Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. As NATO allies, the United States and Poland work closely to enhance the Alliance's collective defense, crisis management, and cooperative security. Poland's commitment to investing in defense capabilities, its leadership in the Baltic Air Policing mission, and its robust participation in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission in Afghanistan underscore its critical contributions to Alliance security. Poland plays a critical role in the European Phased Adaptive Approach to NATO missile defense as we work together to deploy a missile defense system to Poland in 2018. In addition, Poland is making significant contributions to NATO capabilities through its \$45 billion defense modernization initiative. The United States looks forward to even closer security ties through cooperation in support of this important project.

The United States and Poland are implementing a "Program for Solidarity and Partnership" to expand our military and security cooperation, including Special Operations forces, exercises and training, our joint aviation detachment, air and missile defense, and defense industry cooperation. This new initiative will enhance the security of the entire Alliance and particularly that of Central and Eastern European allies.

Our commitment to European and Polish security is exemplified by the 2012 deployment of a full-time aviation detachment at Łask Air Base, the first continuous presence of U.S. troops in Poland. The aviation detachment has already hosted five joint training rotations, including the U.S. deployment in March of 12 F-16s and approximately 200 support airmen. Since April, U.S. Airborne Infantry paratroopers have been in Poland conducting expanded U.S. land force training and exercises with Polish troops. Together with our NATO allies, we are committed to maintaining an augmented presence in Poland through the end of the year and beyond.

## **Shared Prosperity -- Economics, Trade, and Energy**

Poland is the United States' largest commercial partner in Central Europe, and the United States is one of the top sources of foreign investment in Poland. Over the past ten years, our bilateral trade quadrupled, American companies invested more than \$20 billion in Poland, and more than 180,000 Poles gained employment directly from U.S. companies. Poland stands to benefit significantly from the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, a free trade agreement between the United States and the European Union. More than half of Poland's gross domestic product is generated by small and medium-sized businesses, over 50,000 of which are already exporters.

The United States and Poland are collaborating on a bilateral innovation program that will bring together Polish and American government representatives, businesses, researchers, academics, and investors. Under the U.S.-Poland Science and Technology Agreement, American and Polish scientists and researchers already collaborate on advances in areas such as energy and natural resource management, as well as opportunities to expand the participation of women and girls in science.

Poland's growing market and ambitious investment plans, military and transportation infrastructure modernization, energy sector growth, and development of innovative industries all present major commercial opportunities for U.S. companies. In September 2014, Commerce Secretary Pritzker will lead members of the President's Export Council on a fact-finding mission to Poland. This delegation of senior U.S. business executives will meet with government and business leaders to discuss opportunities for greater U.S.-Poland trade and commercial engagement.

The United States supports Poland's efforts to increase its energy security by diversifying its energy supply and strengthening its energy infrastructure. We are committed to sharing best practices on shale gas development and facilitating consultations between our civilian nuclear regulatory authorities, and U.S. companies are engaged in Poland's efforts to develop its shale gas and renewable energy sectors, as well as its nuclear power sector.

### **Support for Democracy**

The United States and Poland work together to promote democracy and freedom in Europe and around the world. Key initiatives include our bilateral Democracy Dialogue and the Community of Democracies, which we co-founded. In Europe, we supported a program to train young political leaders from the Eastern Partnership countries -- Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine -- in democratic engagement. We coordinate closely on efforts to support Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as the aspirations of the Ukrainian people. In Moldova, we pursue joint efforts to support local governance and transparency. In Belarus, we jointly fund efforts to assist Belarusian victims of repression. Poland's own experience makes it an ideal mentor for these countries as they work to bolster their democratic institutions and free market economies.