

POLISH MOD AT DEFENCE24 DAY: WE HAVE SENT A LETTER OF REQUEST FOR 32 F-35A JETS

“I have no doubt that 5th generation aircraft are an element of deterrence” - said Mariusz Błaszczak, head of the Polish MoD, opening the Defence24 DAY conference. Speaking in front of the soldiers, representatives of the Administration and of the defence industry, Błaszczak placed an emphasis on the fact that modern equipment for the military is one of the priorities he was setting for himself when he was assigned the role of the head of the MoD.

Błaszczak strongly emphasized the fact that he has set three priority issues for himself, when taking over the position of the head of the MoD. “I will start from the point that my mission, as a head of the MoD, is focused on three priorities. First, the Polish military must be quantitatively larger, second, it needs to be equipped with state of art equipment and third, it needs to be embedded more strongly, within the structure of the North Atlantic alliance.” Błaszczak noted that changes that are implemented in the Polish military are revolving around all of the aforesaid priorities.

Poland and 5th Generation Jets

Mariusz Błaszczak announced that Poland has sent a Letter of Request to the US government, concerning the acquisition of 32 F-35A 5th generation MRCA, along with a training and logistics support package. “I want the post-soviet equipment in the Polish military aviation to be replaced with the latest solutions available” - Błaszczak said. This task has been defined by the Minister as a priority.

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Mariusz Błaszczak, head of the Polish MoD

Head of the Polish MoD referred to the Harpia next generation MRCA programme in the words above. Harpia is one of the tasks included in the Technical Modernization Plan defined by the Polish MoD for the period until 2026. The new aircraft would replace the older post-soviet airframes - MiG-29 and Su-22. They would also be tasked with working together with the F-16 jets and other systems that the Polish military would be owning at the time. Earlier on the MoD had made numerous declarations suggesting that Harpia programme shall be a priority, expressing its willingness to replace the equipment operated by the tactical aviation element.

Speaking of modernization, Błaszczak also referred to other recently finalized programmes. He was talking about the agreement concerning the first phase of the Wisła (IBCS/Patriot) acquisition and HIMARS squadron procurement. He added that contracts pertaining to the Krab, Rak, Rosomak or Jelcz platforms are still on the go.

This year we have also signed agreements concerning delivery of helicopters for the special operations component, with the facility in Mielec. We have signed an agreement, concerning the acquisition of helicopters for the Navy, with the facility in Świdnik.

Mariusz Błaszczak, head of the Polish MoD

As Błaszczak noted, the MoD is motivated to assign the procurement efforts to companies that carry out their business activities in Poland. Hence the decisions to purchase the helicopters from the facilities in Świdnik and Mielec.



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PGZ - Growth Indicated. More than 2% of GDP Allocated to Defence

The audited net profit recorded by the PGZ Group for the year 2018 is defined as PLN 37.5 million, Błaszczak summarized during the Defence24 DAY conference. The Group's income was 5.5 billion zlotys - 550 million zlotys higher when compared to the year 2017 and 1 billion 200 million zlotys higher, when placed against the year 2016. Błaszczak underlined the fact that PGZ is still under development.

Net profit of the PGZ Group in the year 2018 was as high as 37.4 million zlotys. The result is 151 million zlotys better when placed against the year 2017 and 141 million zlotys better when compared to the year 2016.

Mariusz Błaszczak, head of the Polish MoD

Head of the Polish Ministry of Defence also recalled that the amount that is being allocated to defence within the budget is also becoming higher and higher. 2.02% of GDP was allocated to defence last year. "We are among an elite group of seven NATO member states that spend more than 2% of GDP on defence. So we're meeting the commitments we've made." - Błaszczak noted.

Speaking of the development of the military, Błaszczak recalled that 185 billion zlotys is expected to be used to cover modernization of the Polish military until 2026. However, this is not the end. The MoD is working on a technical modernization plan covering a timeline of 15 years to come.

More Soldiers = Security

"I have led to a situation in which a new division is created in the Polish military, stationed east of the Vistula river" - head of the MoD said. The former government considered liquidation of the 1st "Warszawska" Mechanized Division to be "completely incomprehensible". Head of the MoD also referred to the Territorial Defence component that is the youngest branch of the military. "Undoubtedly, the Territorial Defence component has proven its value" - the Minister said, referring to the Territorial Defence's involvement in the crisis response activities pertaining to the recent floods. Błaszczak also referred to the cyber component, defining it as a "21st century challenge".

The US presence in Poland was also mentioned by Błaszczak. "We are currently making steps aimed at achieving a success by the end of this year", referring to enhanced presence of the US soldiers in Poland. "Soon, Andrzej Duda would be visiting the White House to meet Donald Trump." - added Błaszczak.

Finally, the head of the MoD also made a reference to the Act on Veterans that has become a valid part of the Polish legislation, as of yesterday. The amendments made include expansion of the peacekeeping operation term definition, higher pension for the injured veterans, complex healthcare or extra vacation made available to them. "The Veteran Act Bill that I will present in front of the Council of Minister is a change that has been long awaited" - Błaszczak said.

Defence24 Group is the organizer of the Defence24 DAY Conference. The meeting covers the key challenges emerging in the domain of national security. The formula of the event fuses the matters pertaining to development of the defense doctrines, technical modernization and defence policy, and it would become a foundation for a broad debate on structural and technological changes in the defence industry and in the Polish military.

DM/JP

Defence 24 DAY

WARSZAWA 28.05.2019

PATRONAT HONOROWY



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PARTNERZY

