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## **POLISH INVOLVEMENT IN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS AND STABILISATION MISSIONS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE FOREIGN POLICY**

**KEYWORDS:** Peacekeeping operations, stabilisation missions, foreign policy.

**ABSTRACT:** The involvement of Poland in the activities of the international community for strengthening peace, security and stability in conflict-prone states and regions was one of significant elements of the foreign policy pursued after 1989. It assumed various forms, from diplomatic initiatives and activities, to the direct participation in international peacekeeping operations and stabilisation missions. The involvement of Poland in the activities of the international community for strengthening peace, security and stability in conflict-prone states and regions was one of significant elements of the foreign policy pursued after 1989. It assumed various forms, from diplomatic initiatives and activities, to the direct participation in international peacekeeping operations and stabilisation missions.

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The aim of the article is the analysis of Poland's involvement in peacekeeping operations and stabilisation missions from the perspective of foreign policy after 1989. The analysis of the above-mentioned issue requires a broader view including not only the process of redefining the assumptions of the foreign policy pursued after 1989, but also the transformations in the international milieu and the modification of peacekeeping operations, their function and character. The adopted construction of the article does not allow to conduct a multi-faceted analysis of the foregoing question, but only to concentrate on selected issues, namely the

motives and conditions of Polish armed forces' involvement in the actions of the international community for peace and security.

The analysis of the literature concerning the subject, both from the scope of military science and from the field of political science allows to make the assumption that:

1. After 1989 Poland continued actions for peace and security by, among others, taking part in international peacekeeping missions and stabilisation operations;
2. Participation in peacekeeping missions and stabilisation operations was a significant means of pursuing foreign policy;
3. It is not possible to achieve the assumed objectives in the foreign policy only through participation in peacekeeping missions and stabilisation operations.

## 2. CONCEPTUALISATION OF NOTIONS

The changing conditions of conducting peacekeeping missions, their functions and objectives presently determine the difficulties in adopting a consistent definition of peacekeeping operation. The notion is not listed in the Charter of the United Nations and despite the attempts made at the UN, neither a uniform definition nor the kinds, types and ways of conducting peacekeeping operations have been determined. The lack of a single commonly used definition indicates the complexity, ambiguity and multidimensionality of such actions.<sup>1</sup> This notion is applied to activities of different character and conducted with the use of various means, and their common denominators are the aim and tasks defined in the legal basis of the operation. Regardless of the interpretation-based difficulties, multitude of attempts of typologisation, and discussion concerning their effectiveness, they are the instrument that the international

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<sup>1</sup> See: A. Józwiak, Cz. Marcinkowski, *Wybrane problemy współczesnych operacji pokojowych*, Warszawa 2002, p. 13; D.S. Kozerański, *Kontyngenty Wojska Polskiego w międzynarodowych operacjach pokojowych w latach 1973–1999. Konflikty – interwencje o bezpieczeństwo*, Toruń 2012, p. 25.

community most frequently appeal to in the situations of threat to peace and security.

Taking the interpretational problems into account, we assumed, after Dariusz Kozerawski, that a peacekeeping operation incorporates all the proceedings related to preventing, limiting, alleviating or terminating military actions between states or within states, mediated by an organised peaceful intervention of a third party, on a legal basis supported by the decisions of the UN or other international organisations.<sup>2</sup>

It being understood this way, one should note the co-occurrence of the terms “peacekeeping mission” and “peacekeeping operation”. In the contemporary Polish jargon describing the events related to using the troops outside the country, the term “mission” is understood as “peacekeeping mission” and equivalent to the term “peacekeeping operation”. The word “mission” is much more widely used by politicians explaining the motives of sending the troops to various distant places on the globe to the general public.<sup>3</sup>

Stabilisation mission is a term derived from the American doctrine on the functioning of land forces which has been widely accepted by the military and journalists.<sup>4</sup>

For the needs of the article, it was assumed that foreign policy is an intentional, organised and oriented activity of a state, subordinate to its vital interests, expressing itself in the actions towards and for the benefit of shaping its external environment.<sup>5</sup> The premises of this activity, their

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 42.

<sup>3</sup> See: Cz. Marcinkowski, *Istota i ewolucja misji pokojowych ONZ*, in: M. Marszałek, J. Zuziak (eds.), *Wojsko Polskie w międzynarodowych misjach i operacjach pokojowych*, Warszawa 2010, p. 12; G. Ciechanowski, *Operacje pokojowe ONZ w XX wieku*, Toruń 2013, p. 15.

<sup>4</sup> *Słownik terminów z zakresu bezpieczeństwa narodowego*, Warszawa 2002, p. 62.

<sup>5</sup> See: S. Bieleń, *Polityka zagraniczna w stosunkach międzynarodowych*, in: E. Haliżak, R. Kuźniar, G. Michałowska, S. Parzymies, J. Symonides, R. Zięba (eds.), *Stosunki międzynarodowe w XXI wieku. Księga jubileuszowa z okazji 30-lecia Instytutu Stosunków Międzynarodowych Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego*, Warszawa 2006, p. 955; E. Cziomer, *Polityka zagraniczna państwa*, in: E. Cziomer, L.W. Zyblikiewicz (eds.), *Zarys współczesnych stosunków międzynarodowych*, Kraków 2005, p. 121; M. Dobroczyński, J. Stefanowicz, *Polityka zagraniczna*, Warszawa 1984, p. 6, 14; J. Kukułka, *Polityka zagraniczna*

character and dynamics are the resultant of the defined and recognised needs of the state, determined by internal and external determinants.<sup>6</sup> By employing foreign policy, the state strives to create such conditions, in which its vital national interests – related to the co-existence of the state in the international environment – will have the opportunity to be achieved. As Ryszard Zięba observes, foreign policy is a part of general policy of the state, aimed at satisfying particular needs and realising the interests on the international stage, while these interests can only be achieved by contacts with other participants of the international system, in the form of cooperation, competition and even conflicts with other states and the remaining actors of international life (international organisations, corporations, social movements and others).<sup>7</sup>

### 3. PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS AND STABILISATION MISSIONS IN THE FOUNDATIONS OF POLISH FOREIGN POLICY

The involvement of Poland in the activities of the international community for strengthening peace, security and stability in conflict-prone states and regions was one of significant elements of the foreign policy pursued after 1989. It assumed various forms, from diplomatic initiatives and activities, to the direct participation in international peacekeeping operations and stabilisation missions.

The involvement in peacekeeping operations and stabilisation missions is a clear declaration of the preferred development directions

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*a polityka wewnętrzna*, in: *Polityka zagraniczna państwa*, J. Kukułka, R. Zięba (eds.), Warszawa 1992, p. 19; T. Łoś-Nowak, *Stosunki międzynarodowe. Teorie – systemy – uczestnicy*, Wrocław 2000, p. 191; R. Zięba, *Paradoksy polityki zagranicznej Polski w okresie transformacji*, in: M. Karwat (ed.), *Paradoksy polityki*, Warszawa 2007, p. 387.

<sup>6</sup> R. Podgórzeńska, *Polityka zagraniczna Polski wobec obszaru pojugosłowiańskiego*, Toruń 2013, p. 34.

<sup>7</sup> R. Zięba, *Paradoksy polityki zagranicznej...*, p. 387.

of the foreign policy and the foundations of Polish security policy after 1989. The justification of Polish participation in international activities is to be found in the programming documents of Polish foreign policy and security policy.<sup>8</sup> Documents of strategic nature, sequentially adopted after 1989 and defining the objectives and guidelines for the activities aimed at strengthening Polish security<sup>9</sup>, including the applicable National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland adopted in 2007<sup>10</sup>, are of cardinal significance. The document which presently defines the foundations of Poland's participation in actions of the international community aiming at strengthening peace and security through involvement in peacekeeping operations and stabilisation missions is the Strategy for participation of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland in international operations<sup>11</sup>, adopted in 2009. The involvement of Polish Armed Forces in operations outside the state is, according to the document, a significant instrument of Polish foreign policy, securing the influence on shaping international security. In the aforementioned document it is emphasized that Poland is going to be actively involved in operations under the auspices of NATO, the EU, the UN and OSCE and also within the coalitions created ad hoc, as a part of joint actions ensuring common security. The degree and geographic areas of commitment are the resultant of the present capabilities of the state and the clearly defined political objectives, convergent with Polish *raison d'État*. The document accentuates that from the perspective of Polish national interest,

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<sup>8</sup> See: S. Koziej, *Między piekłem a rajem. Szare bezpieczeństwo na progu XXI wieku*, Toruń 2008, pp. 229–280.

<sup>9</sup> See: Uchwała Komitetu Obrony Kraju z dnia 21 lutego 1990 r. w sprawie doktryny obronnej Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, M.P., 1990, No. 9, item. 66; *Polityka bezpieczeństwa i strategia obronna Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*, Warszawa 1992; *Strategia obronności Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*, Warszawa 2000; *Strategia bezpieczeństwa narodowego RP*, Warszawa 2003.

<sup>10</sup> *Strategia bezpieczeństwa narodowego Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*, Warszawa 2007.

<sup>11</sup> *Strategia udziału Sił Zbrojnych Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w operacjach międzynarodowych*, [http://www.bbn.gov.pl/portal/pl/475/2827/Strategia\\_udzialu\\_Sil\\_Zbrojnych\\_RP\\_w\\_operacjach\\_miedzynarodowych.html](http://www.bbn.gov.pl/portal/pl/475/2827/Strategia_udzialu_Sil_Zbrojnych_RP_w_operacjach_miedzynarodowych.html) (accessed: 12.10.2014).

priority shall be given to operations of NATO and the EU, followed by the UN and the OSCE. At the same time, participation in the international operations under the auspices of the said organisations does not exclude involvement within the framework of the ad hoc coalitions.

The will for participation in the actions of international community was systematically corroborated in the parliamentary speeches of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs specifying the foundations of foreign policy. Since the very moment when the socio-political transformation was initiated in Poland, shared participation in international undertakings of the kind has been consequently declared, making the involvement in the UN operations the main instrument of Polish influence on the development of situation on the international arena and one of the instruments of accomplishing the priorities in the foreign policy of the 1990s. In the programming documents it was being indicated that by active participation in stabilisation missions Poland was becoming involved in the process of stabilisation and conflict-solving both in the global and the regional scale.<sup>12</sup> The successive realisation of the priorities of the foreign policy adopted on the threshold of the transformation process corroborated the readiness to participate in the actions of the international community. It was argued that Poland, willing to play the increasingly significant role in the Euro-Atlantic structures could not only become a beneficiary of security guaranteed by these structures, but ought to participate in its formation.<sup>13</sup>

The evolution in the international situation required modification of the character of Polish involvement, while the increasing economic crisis enforced modification of Polish participation in peacekeeping missions and operations, but also stabilisation missions.<sup>14</sup> Hence the decision about

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<sup>12</sup> See: Informacja ministra spraw zagranicznych o zadaniach polskiej polityki zagranicznej w 2007 roku. Sprawozdanie stenograficzne z 41. posiedzenia Sejmu RP w dniu 11 maja 2007 r., V kadencja, Warszawa 2007.

<sup>13</sup> See: Informacja ministra spraw zagranicznych o założeniach polskiej polityki zagranicznej w 2010 roku. Sprawozdanie stenograficzne z 64. posiedzenia Sejmu RP w dniu 8 kwietnia 2010 r., VI kadencja, Warszawa 2010

<sup>14</sup> See: Informacja ministra spraw zagranicznych Pana Radosława Sikorskiego dotycząca zadań polskiej polityki zagranicznej w 2009 roku. Sprawozdanie stenograficzne

continuing the effort of participating in the missions of NATO and the EU and their perception as priorities from the perspective of Polish national interest. In this place, it is worth citing the document adopted in March 2012 entitled *Polish Foreign Policy Priorities for 2012–2016* which corroborates the evolution of Polish involvement in peacekeeping missions and operations, since it accentuates the involvement in the missions by NATO and the EU first.<sup>15</sup>

In conclusion, Poland, by engaging its forces and means in peacekeeping operations, included them in the strategic interests of the state related to strengthening security, creating conditions for the development and reinforcing its position in international relations.

#### 4. THE MOTIVES OF POLISH INVOLVEMENT IN PEACEKEEPING AND STABILISATION OPERATIONS

The participation in peacekeeping operations is not a new phenomenon in Polish experience. Polish involvement in the activities of the international community aimed at preventing or terminating conflicts and re-establishing peace in the world has 60-year-old tradition. Since 1953, Poland has been taking part in various installments of international involvement under the aegis on the UN, gaining considerable experience in this respect.<sup>16</sup>

The first military operations engaging Polish troops outside the country belonged to the category of traditional peacekeeping operations and were characterised by low risk, and the involvement of Poland were not

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z 35. posiedzenia Sejmu RP w dniu 13 lutego 2009 r., VI kadencja, Warszawa 2009.

<sup>15</sup> *Priorytety polskiej polityki zagranicznej 2012–2016*, Warszawa 2012.

<sup>16</sup> See: G. Ciechanowski, *Operacje pokojowe ONZ w XX wieku*, Toruń 2013; D.S. Kozrawski, *Kontyngenty Wojska Polskiego w międzynarodowych operacjach pokojowych w latach 1973–1999. Konflikty – interwencje o bezpieczeństwo*, Toruń 2012; K. Gaj, J. Zuziak, *Wojsko Polskie w międzynarodowych misjach pokojowych (1953–2011)*, „Przegląd Historyczno-Wojskowy” 2011, No. 5; K. Łastawski, *Misje i operacje pokojowe w polskiej polityce zagranicznej*, „Stosunki Międzynarodowe” 2006, No. 1–2; C. Marcinkowski, *Is-tota i ewolucja misji pokojowych ONZ*, „Przegląd Historyczno-Wojskowy” 2011, No. 5.

a permanent constituent of the security policy of the state. As it is pointed out by Kazimierz Łastawski, the involvement in peacekeeping missions and operations before 1989 enhanced the positive image of Poland and in certain way moderated the vassal character of the foreign policy and clientelism towards Moscow.<sup>17</sup>

The transformation of 1989 brought fundamental modification of the attitude to military involvement outside the country, resulting in considerable qualitative and quantitative changes, whereby Poland remained a significant contributor to the UN peacekeeping operations despite the change in the character of conducted operations, and was gradually becoming involved in the operations accomplished by other organisations and coalitions of states.

In order to organise the reasoning, one can distinguish several stages of Polish engagement in the peacekeeping operations accomplished in the new geopolitical conditions. The first stage (1991–1992) comprising the activity within the UN, the second (since 1992) featuring the beginning of the involvement of Polish representation (including the police) in the peacekeeping missions (operations) of the OSCE and the EU, the third (1995–1999), when Poland joined into the NATO actions in the Balkans, and the following (final) one, characterised by the multidimensional presence of Poland in the peacekeeping missions conducted by international organisations and coalitions of states.<sup>18</sup>

For the purpose of further analysis, three stages of Polish involvement in peacekeeping operations have been identified, taking into consideration not only the defined objectives and priorities of the foreign policy, but also the concepts of Polish involvement in peacekeeping operations. The first stage (1989–1999) implies the redefinition of the assumptions, directions and priorities in the foreign policy and determining new principles of the foreign policy and security policy. The second (1999–2009) begins with obtaining membership in NATO. The third stage (since 2009) involves the modification of Polish involvement in peacekeeping operations and the concentration of effort on the operations accomplished by NATO, the EU

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<sup>17</sup> K. Łastawski, *Misje i operacje pokojowe...*, pp. 32, 34.

<sup>18</sup> Cz. Marcinkowski, *Istota i ewolucja...*, pp. 18–19.



and short-term coalitions of states, in accordance with the adopted Strategy for participation of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland in international operations.

When analysing the motives of Poland's international involvement in peacekeeping operations, one ought to pay attention to the existence of a discrepancy between the declared motives and the actual ones which determined the degree and the forms of involvement in this kind of international initiatives. In order to justify the necessity of Polish involvement, specific aspects of participation were emphasized, at the same time diminishing or disregarding others, equally significant from the perspective of the foundations of the pursued foreign policy. Their importance was belittled, out of the concern for their social and political reception, by accentuating in the first place the premises which did not raise objections and were compliant with the guidelines of the realised foreign policy.

In order to systematise further reasoning, one might attempt to catalogue the arguments advanced by the decision-makers to justify the necessity of the involvement in peacekeeping operations. First, the advantages of joining in the international activities for the benefit of the international environment's security were indicated. Second, when arguing for the necessity of Polish engagement, it was overtly emphasised that it decided about the position of Poland on the international stage, and was building the image of a state that is able and willing to join in resolving the problems of the contemporary world. Third, it was accentuated that the participation in peacekeeping operations and stabilisation missions would have positive impact on Poland's bilateral relations, especially in the context of relations with the USA. Fourth, Poland's duties as the member of international organisations were pointed out. Fifth, the participation in peacekeeping operations and stabilisation missions determined Polish position in the international organisations and the possibility to influence the decisions made by them. Sixth, the aspect of Poland's credibility as the member of the international community was raised. Seventh, the humanitarian aspect was accentuated, emphasizing that one cannot disclaim wars and conflicts only because of the fact that they do not concern the closest

neighbourhood. Eighth, the advantages in respect of the professionalisation and modernisation of Polish army were underlined.

Specific collision of idealistic and pragmatic motives is a noteworthy fact. Arguments about solidarity, joint responsibility or the necessity to join the international actions regardless of potential consequences were the derivative of the idealism accompanying Poland. Simultaneously, that romantic impulse did not exclude pragmatism. Perhaps the thesis about the instrumentalism of Polish involvement is an abuse, but certainly such approach was to be useful from the perspective of accomplishing the priorities of the foreign policy.

The idealistic justification is particularly important from the point of view of the state and nation afflicted by war and its consequences. Parallely, the topic of the international responsibility of Poland as a member of the international community appeared. Allegedly, considering the possessed resources and capabilities, Poland has to and ought to take part in resolving global problems regardless of the consequences which might be related to it. Solidarity with the actions of other states which become engaged in the actions for security is another argument of idealistic character, whereas realism is the belief that the participation in peacekeeping operations may serve the realisation of the state's own interests.

Even a rough overview of Poland's involvement in peacekeeping operations and stabilisation missions conducted in the post-Cold War reality proves the significance attributed to this form of international activity of the state. Poland's first particularly significant commitment in the early 1990s was the involvement in the actions in the Persian Gulf. An important premise for becoming engaged was strengthening the image of Poland on the international arena as a pro-Western, and especially pro-American state. It is worth emphasizing that the decision on participation was made in the moment that was crucial from the perspective of Polish foreign policy. Reassuring the Western world about the permanent character of the transformations taking place in Poland was certainly aimed at fostering the process of accomplishing its foreign policy.<sup>19</sup> The pro-Western course of the foreign policy was also confirmed by the participa-

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<sup>19</sup> D. Kozerański, *Kontyngenty Wojska Polskiego...*, pp. 255–266.

tion of soldiers from the GROM special forces unit in the operation in Haiti in 1994.<sup>20</sup> Polish military presence in the Balkans was equally important, as in 1992 Poland accepted the UN Secretary-General's invitation to participate in the UN Protection Force in Yugoslavia.<sup>21</sup>

The confirmation of Poland's usefulness as a potential ally and the possibility to participate in the undertakings carried out by the international community was the involvement in peace enforcement operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1995.<sup>22</sup> Poland, due to the defined political interests related to the Euro-Atlantic aspirations could not refrain from responding to undertaken actions. Signing the Dayton Agreement was a premise to become involved in NATO actions (IFOR and SFOR) to a broader extent. Adopting an active stance, Polish decision-makers expected that thereby it would be possible to improve the chances of accomplishing such objectives as the status of a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council (in 1996), the membership in NATO or the approximation to the EU. At the same time, the presence of Poland was to result in the strengthening of its image of a state which is active on the international stage and is willing to become engaged in resolving problems of international character.

In this place, it is worth quoting an opinion of Piotr Piątkowski and Adam Dąca who observe that the lack of resolute involvement in actions of the international community might adversely influence the reception of Poland on the international stage. Weakness and lack of preparation to

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<sup>20</sup> G. Ciechanowski, *Operacje pokojowe...*, pp. 450–454.

<sup>21</sup> See: G. Ciechanowski, *Żołnierze polscy w misjach i operacjach pokojowych poza granicami kraju w latach 1953–1989*, Toruń 2009; T. Bąk, *Rola i zadania polskich wojskowych w operacjach wsparcia pokoju na Bałkanach*, in: P. Chmielewski, S.L. Szczesio (eds.), *Bośnia i Hercegowina 15 lat po Dayton. Przeszłość – teraźniejszość – perspektywy*, Łódź 2011, pp. 113–117.

<sup>22</sup> J. Dobrowolska-Polak, *Międzynarodowa solidarność. Operacje pokojowe ONZ, NATO i UE*, „Policy Papers” No. 3, Poznań 2008; P. Piątkowski, A. Dąca, *Konflikty zbrojne w otoczeniu Polski: Była Jugosławia*, Warszawa 1996; A. Józwiak, Cz. Marcinkowski, *Udział polskiej jednostki wojskowej w siłach stabilizacyjnych w Bośni i Hercegowinie*, „Sprawy Międzynarodowe” 1999, No. 3; P. Piątkowski, *Operacja IFOR „Wspólny Wysyłek” w Bośni i Hercegowinie*, Warszawa 1996; M. Zawistowska, *Polityczna i wojskowa obecność NATO na Bałkanach w latach 1992–1999*, Ekspertyzy, Departament Strategii i Planowania Polityki MSZ 2000, No. 94.

the role of a NATO member would be pointed out, which – in their opinion – would considerably diminish Poland's chances of accession to this organisation. The efforts aimed at integration with the EU structures would also be called into question.<sup>23</sup> Hence, from the perspective of accomplishing the objectives of foreign policy, it was necessary to join the actions for stabilisation and security in the area of former Yugoslavia.

However, it should be emphasized that Poland's participation in peacekeeping operations, regardless of their character and form, was subordinated to the realisation of key priorities in foreign policy. How else can we explain Polish involvement, if not by the wish to bring the Euro-Atlantic vector of Polish foreign policy into prominence, to indicate our stance towards the Western world. Still, a question arises whether the economic problems which Poland had to face in that period, or the challenges of reforming Polish army, actually allowed such considerable participation in peacekeeping operations. Regardless of the doubts, peacekeeping operations undeniably became the foundation of Poland's involvement in shaping the international environment.

Acquiring the membership in NATO marked the new stage of Polish involvement in peacekeeping operations. Before, undertaken activities had been justified by the necessity to build a positive image of Poland as a state engaging in the international actions for strengthening the security, peace and stability in conflict-prone areas, which was to result in acquiring the membership in this organisation. After the accession, Poland faced new challenges and new duties. As early as in spring 1999, the first activities needed to be undertaken as a consequence of Poland's new status of NATO member state. On making the decision about sending a contingent to Kosovo it was emphasized that Poland as a new member of the Treaty had to demonstrate its credibility and responsibility.<sup>24</sup> The fact of joining

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<sup>23</sup> P. Piątkowski, A. Dąca, *Konflikty zbrojne w otoczeniu Polski: Była Jugosławia*, Warszawa 1996, p. 45.

<sup>24</sup> J. Kajetanowicz, *Wojsko Polskie w operacjach utrzymania bezpieczeństwa międzynarodowego 1973–2008*, „Rocznik Bezpieczeństwa Międzynarodowego 2009/2010”, Wrocław 2010, p. 160. See also: *Udział SZ RP w operacjach pokojowych*. Informacja na posiedzenie Komisji Obrony Narodowej oraz Spraw Zagranicznych w dniu 25 maja 2000 r., AS, Protokół wspólnego posiedzenia Komisji Obrony Narodowej oraz

into the stabilisation process in Kosovo confirmed the legitimacy of the decision to accept Poland as a member of NATO. It was also to pave the way for the EU membership, by emphasizing the credibility of Poland as an ally and a responsible member of the Euro-Atlantic structures.

After Kosovo, the next tryout for the loyalty of an ally were the events from 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001. As a consequence of a terrorist attack on the United States of America, Poland decided to send a contingent to Afghanistan, employing the argument of loyalty, credibility and joint responsibility. Apart from these premises, one should also acknowledge other reasons of our support for the American conception of combat against international terrorism. Becoming involved in this process should also be analysed in terms of radical change in Poland's perception of the international environment and the problems that determined the reality of the time. There were arguments that Poland could not only focus on the matters given priority from the perspective of the state's own interests, whereby the issue of fighting terrorism was treated instrumentally to a certain extent, as Poland assumed that making it a significant concern in the foreign policy might serve other purposes. Becoming involved was considered to be an effective means of building the international position of the state. Firstly, it was seen as the opportunity to approximate to the USA, and secondly, involvement in the combat against terrorism, or at least some of its aspects, resulted from the wish to demonstrate the autonomy of Polish foreign policy.<sup>25</sup>

In the course of time, the combat against terrorism as the primordial motive of Polish involvement in the actions of American administration in Iraq ceased to be sufficient. The participation in Operation Iraqi Freedom, and especially taking responsibility for the stabilisation zone and the

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Komisji Spraw Zagranicznych, III kadencja, nr 84, k. 421–423; Informacja Ministerstwa Obrony Narodowej RP nt.: „Udział polskich jednostek wojskowych w operacjach pokojowych”, AS, Załącznik nr 4 do protokołu wspólnego posiedzenia Komisji Spraw Zagranicznych, Komisji Obrony Narodowej w dniu 13 maja 2004 roku, IV kadencja, t. XVI, k. 24.

<sup>25</sup> See: K. Pawłowski, *Misje pokojowe i operacje stabilizacyjne Sił Zbrojnych Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej na początku XXI wieku: przesłanki i głosy krytyczne*, <http://www.pan-ol.lublin.pl/wydawnictwa/TPol5/Pawłowski> (accessed: 22.09.2014).

considerable reinforcement of our military presence were not unambiguous anymore. Accentuating the idealistic assumptions that Poland was joining into the process of promoting democracy and wished to contribute creating the conditions facilitating Iraqi transformation did not actually convince the sceptics of participating in the struggle for the objectives considered by many to be American.<sup>26</sup>

Fighting terrorism as a premise for Polish activity was also employed in 2006, when Poland decided to increase Polish contribution to the ISAF mission in Afghanistan. It was not the only justification of Polish effort, as Poland's allied commitments within NATO were indicated more often. It was argued that Polish involvement corroborated our credibility as a responsible member of the international community. It also served maintaining the coherence, credibility and effectiveness of NATO itself as the guarantor of European security.<sup>27</sup>

At the same time it should be observed that Poland's increasing military involvement in the Balkans and joining in the "war against terrorism" required developing new foundations of Poland's involvement in peace-keeping operations. Poland's participation in the missions organised by other organisations decreased systematically, as a result of the involvement in NATO and the EU missions. Due to the impossibility of simultaneous participation in all international undertakings and for fear of the dispersion of involvement, Polish government decided to give direction to our presence in those operations which directly related to Polish interests. The extent of participation of the Polish forces was to be a compromise between the requirements of foreign and defensive policies of the state and the limited capabilities.

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<sup>26</sup> See: M. Lasoń, *Polska misja w Iraku. Użycie sił zbrojnych jako środka polityki zagranicznej Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej na przykładzie interwencji w Iraku 2003–2008*, Kraków 2010.

<sup>27</sup> K. Pawłowski, *Misje pokojowe i operacje stabilizacyjne...*

## 5. CONCLUSION

Nowadays, political realism more and more frequently determines the extent of involvement in peacekeeping operations. Even so, idealistic accents are still present, as the motives of solidarity, responsibility and credibility are still being employed. However, a specific “realistic awakening” is occurring. At least, it appears that it is the way we should read the declarations of President Bronisław Komorowski about the end of the expedition policy, the latter of which was, in his opinion, “inconsiderately” announced in 2007.<sup>28</sup> At the same time, it does not imply the withdrawal from participation in the foreign missions, but only assigning them a proper place in the hierarchy of tasks for the state and the Polish Armed Forces.<sup>29</sup>

Thus, one can reckon that the actions undertaken by Poland so far exceeded the limitations and capabilities of a middle-ranking state.<sup>30</sup> One could also suppose that the potential benefits and costs related to Polish activity were not always rationally calculated. Undoubtedly, the involvement in operations like the ones in Iraq or Afghanistan involved huge financial burden, which in the course of time became more and more difficult to bear, due to the aggravating economic crisis. It was also increasingly difficult to justify our involvement, especially in the face of the growing number of victims. And what is the most significant, the arguments about the possibility that Afghanistan will become a democratic state and will reach stability turned out to be an illusion. However, it is difficult to imagine the situation when Poland focuses only on the defence of its own territory. The trait of being conflict-prone which

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<sup>28</sup> *Prezydent: “Koniec polityki ekspedycyjnej”*, <http://www.prezydent.pl/aktualnosci/wydarzenia/art,2652,prezydent-koniec-polityki-ekspedycyjnej.html> (accessed: 10.10.2014).

<sup>29</sup> *Doktryna Komorowskiego – założenia*, <http://www.bbn.gov.pl/pl/wydarzenia/5226,Doktryna-Komorowskiego-zalozenia.html> (accessed: 10.10.2014). See also: M. Fryc, „*Doktryna Komorowskiego’ – próba scharakteryzowania. Idea, zakres, priorytety, realizacja*,” *Bezpieczeństwo Narodowe* 2014, No. 2, pp. 41–72.

<sup>30</sup> J. Piątek, *Bezpieczeństwo Polski w kontekście udziału w operacjach pokojowych NATO i UE*, in: S. Wojciechowski, A. Wejksznar (eds.), *Kluczowe determinanty bezpieczeństwa Polski na początku XXI wieku*, Warszawa 2013, pp. 49–71.



accompanies the international relations nowadays, excludes such form of isolationism.

Poland has consequently employed participation in peacekeeping operations as an instrument for the foreign policy. The involvement in peacekeeping operations is being treated as supporting the realisation of the fundamental guidelines of the foreign policy and as being servient to the defined objectives and priorities. At the same time, the involvement of the state in peacekeeping and stabilisation operations should not be considered crucial, since it is not possible to form the optimum functioning of the international environment for the purpose of achieving the assumed objectives of the state's foreign policy.

Olaf Osica, analysing the efforts undertaken by Poland, paid attention to the false motive appearing in the argumentation of the political elites, concerning the participation in peacekeeping operations and stabilisation missions. In the justification, Polish diplomacy were accentuating the objectives of the "actor" and not of the "action". In his opinion, two fundamental problems were arising due to this misplacement of focus on the actor instead of the action. Firstly, Poland's reluctance to become more seriously involved in conflict-prone areas, and secondly – exposing the principle of solidarity with the allies to the detriment of the state's own interest.<sup>31</sup>

Leaving the critical comments aside, Poland's involvement in peacekeeping operations and stabilisation missions remains a significant – yet one of many – instruments of pursuing the foreign policy.

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<sup>31</sup> O. Osica, *Fałszywy motyw i słabe państwo*, „Rocznik Strategiczny 2008/2009”, Warszawa 2009, p. 42.



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