

POLAND

In 2008 there were around 4,700 Polish personnel deployed in operations. Generally there were two major developments that influenced Polish commitment to international operations. One of them was gradual withdrawal from operation *Iraqi Freedom*. The last rotation of 900 personnel left Iraq in October 2008. The other development was increased participation in Afghanistan.

The biggest Polish military commitment to NATO in 2008 was ISAF operation in Afghanistan. Poland increased its contingent by additional 400 troops and 8 helicopters. We consolidated our forces in Ghazni province and took responsibility over it in November last year. With 1,600 personnel stationed there by the end of 2008, Poland is one of the biggest contributors to this mission. There are no changes in reference to number of troops scheduled for 2009.

Over 300 personnel continued their presence in NATO's operation in Kosovo. Since March till June 2008 the Polish Air Force was taking part in Air Policing mission over the Baltic states. In September Polish ship was operating in Partnership for Peace mission - *Open Spirit* of mine-sweeping of the Gulf of Riga. Moreover in the period of July-November 2008, an Oliver Hazard Perry-class frigate took part in the naval operation *Active Endeavour* in the Mediterranean and since November a Polish Kobben-class submarine began its mission in the operation. 20 personnel were continuing participation in *NTM-I*, training Iraqi security forces.

As the member of the European Union, Poland has been actively participating in the military operations under the aegis of this organization. There were two major missions under the EU auspices that Poland was involved in. Over 200 personnel continued their involvement in *EUFOR* in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In April 2008, 400 personnel established new contingent in Chad. Since March 2009 these forces will operate under the UN auspices and will continue the mission by Autumn the same year. In addition since September 2008 there are 15 military police officers engaged in the EU civilian observation mission in Georgia.

Poland has been continuing its presence in the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations. There were two operations, where the Polish Armed Forces took part in 2008: *UNDOF* in Syria with about 360 personnel and *UNIFIL* in Lebanon consisting of 500 personnel. However Poland is planning to withdraw both contingents in Autumn 2009.

The main goals of the future Polish engagement in deployed operations have been set up in the "Strategy of the Polish Armed Forces Participation in International Operations", adopted in January 2009 by the Polish government. The priority will be given to the operations conducted within NATO and the EU.

Poland is also aiming to reach commonly agreed *usability* targets for land forces. As of 2008 the numbers significantly increased to 38% *deployable* and 7% *sustainable*.

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