

Poland agrees to host U.S. missile defense shield

By [Global Research](#)

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Global Research Editor's Note

These and other developments confirm that the US and its allies are on a war footing.

Russia has responded by holding major war exercises involving the deployment of some 30 aircraft.

Poland and the U.S. have reached an agreement in principle to install a controversial American missile defense system on Polish soil.

In return for hosting part of the shield, the U.S. has said it will help bolster Poland's air defenses.

The U.S. wants to install interceptor missiles in Poland and a radar base in the Czech Republic.

Russia opposes the project, saying it would destabilize global security and undermine its own nuclear deterrent.

Russia has threatened to point missiles at Europe if the U.S. positions elements of the new missile shield near its borders.

In response to this threat, Poland says it wants help to upgrade its air defenses.

Speaking in Washington, Polish foreign minister Radek Sikorski said he was satisfied that the security concerns Poland had raised would be dealt with.

“There is still a great deal of work for our experts... But yes, I am satisfied that the principles that we have argued for have been accepted,” he said.

U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said: “We understand that there is a desire for defense modernization in Poland and particularly for air defense modernization in Poland. This is something that we support because it will make our ally, Poland, more capable.”

But Sikorski said there was still a long way to go.

“We are not at the end of the road as regards negotiations. We are in the middle of the road,” he said.

“We have an agreement in principle.”

Any final agreement will have to be ratified by the Polish parliament.

The Czech government aims to submit a draft accord on the radar base to parliament in April.

““We’ve been a NATO member since ‘99, but we don’t have any hard NATO facilities on our territory,”” Sikorski said in the interview with Reuters on Thursday. ““The only thing we have is a conference center. And we are a border country of NATO.””

““We believe that NATO infrastructure, defense infrastructure, should be more or less evenly spread over its territory. And at the moment it certainly is not,”” he said.

““As many of you know, Poland has come under political pressure, and has even been blackmailed by some of our neighbors, who fiercely oppose this project,”” Sikorski said also at the American Enterprise Institute think tank.

The head of the new center-right Polish government, Prime Minister Donald Tusk, is expected to visit Washington next month.

(Source: BBC)

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