

## Experts say... nanotechnologies key to Polish economic success

In a July 12, 2007 article of *Cordis News*, it is reported that nanosciences and nanotechnologies have a key role to play in determining Poland's position in the global, competitive economy, according to the country's new strategy for research and development in the nano field.

"Nanosciences and nanotechnologies will be the most important factor in the development of the economy in the next 20 years," the Interdisciplinary Committee for Nanoscience and Nanotechnology writes. It adds that realizing the goals of the strategy will require "a multidisciplinary approach, as well as the cooperation of the government, scientific institutions and industry."

According to the 14 experts who make up the Committee, there are solid foundations for the development of nanosciences and nanotechnologies in Poland, notably in the areas of 'nanomaterials and composites' and 'nanoscale phenomena and processes'.

The Committee calls for ongoing support for these areas as well as for research into nanostructures; nanoscale devices; nanoanalytics and nanometrology; and manufacturing processes and devices for nanotechnology. These priorities are compatible with European priorities, the Committee states.

The authors note that attaining international levels of excellence in these research fields is a prerequisite for the effective development of Polish nanosciences and nanotechnologies in general and for boosting levels of innovation in the wider Polish economy.

However, achieving excellence in these fields requires the best people, and the experts describe human resources as 'the acknowledged foundation of the strategy'. Actions to make Poland attractive to leading nanotechnology experts include scholarships for the best students and post docs, social support and lectures in English. The experts also propose the establishment of special grants for early career scientists, and recommend that nanosciences be included in more university courses.

Other recommendations in the report include the launch of a virtual network of institutes working on nanotechnologies and greater investments in infrastructure. The importance of boosting collaboration between the research sector and industry is also highlighted. Here suggestions include the design of a database which would provide constantly updated information on the needs of the industry and a 'radical' improvement of the patent system.

The social aspect of the nanosciences is not neglected by the experts, who state that, "Polish representatives should be present in European scientific committees in the field of consumer safety, public health, environmental protection and ethics." Furthermore, an information campaign on the opportunities and threats of nanotechnology development should be launched.

Looking to the future, the Committee recommends that the strategy be updated regularly to reflect new economic challenges and changing social conditions.

"Its implementation should contribute to the creation of an advanced, knowledge-based society and ensure that Poland holds a significant position among the countries investing in nanosciences at the global scale and winning considerable economic profits from the applications of nanotechnology solutions," the experts conclude. □

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## Russia suspends arms control pact

*Russian President Vladimir Putin has suspended the application of a key Cold War arms control treaty*

In a BBC News website article dated 14 July 2007, Mr. Putin signed a decree citing "exceptional circumstances" affecting security as the reason for the move.

Russia has been angered by US plans to base parts of a missile defence system in Poland and the Czech Republic.

The US said it was "disappointed" by Russia's decision but would "continue to have discussions with them in the coming months" on how to proceed.

The 1990 Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty (CFE) limits the number of heavy weapons deployed between the Atlantic Ocean and the Urals mountains.

The Russian suspension will become effective 150 days after other parties to the treaty have been notified, President Putin's decree says.

### Cornerstone

The suspension is not a full-scale withdrawal - but it means that Russia will no longer permit inspections or exchange data on its deployments.

Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Kislyak said Moscow was not "shutting the door to dialogue".

"We have submitted to our partners proposals on ways out of the situation. And we continue to wait for a constructive reaction," Mr Kislyak said.

A Nato spokesman echoed White House sentiments, saying the alliance "regretted" Russia's decision. "The allies consider this treaty to be an important cornerstone of European security," James Appathurai said. He added that the move was "a disappointing step in the wrong direction". Nato allies in Eastern Europe also expressed "regret" at the Russian decision.

"We hope that Russia will stop taking unilateral steps and will return to the negotiating table because negotiations, not threats, can produce positive results," said a spokeswoman for the Czech foreign ministry.

Poland's Deputy Foreign Minister Witold Waszczykowski said the decision was "disconcerting" and might be related to the planned missile defence system.

But it could also be influenced by Russia's internal politics - as a display of strength ahead of presidential elections in 2008, Mr. Waszczykowski said.

### Worsening ties

Russia's suspension of its application of the treaty is yet another sign of a worsening relationship between the US and Russia, says the BBC's diplomatic correspondent, Jonathan Marcus.

An informal meeting earlier in July at the Bush family's Maine home seems to have done very little to improve ties between the two leaders, he says.

It is also yet one more sign of a more assertive Russian foreign policy, our diplomatic correspondent says.

The CFE agreement of 1990 was one of the most significant arms control agreements of the Cold War years.

It set strict limits on the number of offensive weapons - battle tanks, combat aircraft, heavy artillery - that the members of the Warsaw Pact and Nato could deploy in Europe, from the Atlantic to the Urals.

In the wake of the collapse of communism, the treaty was revised in 1999, in part to address Russian concerns. But this revised treaty has never been ratified by the Nato countries who want Russia to withdraw all of its forces from two breakaway regions with Russian-speaking majorities - Abkhazia in Georgia and Trans-Dniester in Moldova.

"The CFE treaty and missile defence are the two major irritants between Russia and the West. It would have been easy, it still is easy, I think Nato allies feel, to move closer to ratifying the CFE treaty," the Nato spokesman added. □

## Anti-Missile Shield" - an Exercise in Obedience to the Global Hegemon?

By: **Dr Marek Glogoczowski**, Poland

In May 2007 negotiations Poland/USA concerning the installation of the American, controversial "anti-missile shield" on Polish territory, went, according to the press, into the phase of discussion of such fine details as the relation of this bases' "only American" personnel towards civil laws obligatory in Poland. Up to now in Poland the resistance to the planned occupation by the US Army of a relatively small stretch of Polish territory (circa 250 hectares, 2,5 square kilometers) in relatively remote areas of Northern Poland, is practically negligible. There were minor manifestations of "leftist" youth groups in Warsaw, and also few meetings of elder people, interested in the maintenance of Poland's sovereignty, in Gdansk and in other large cities. Nevertheless such large scale events, like the "referendum" held in the Czech Republic, in villages situated in vicinity of proposed sites of installations of enormous American radars, were completely absent in my "free to be silent" country.

The Polish "silence of sheep" was broken only by the director of the Polish Institute of International Affairs (PISM), Roman Kuźniar, who at the beginning of February this year furnished to the government a very negative, initially classified, expertise concerning dangers linked with the acceptance of the American proposal of the installation of 10 "anti-missile missiles" silos at Polish territory. Only few days after submitting this expertise Kuźniar was fired, personally by Polish PM Jarosław Kaczyński, from his post as a director of PISM. In Warsaw journal "Życie Warszawy" (ŻW) on February 9th he gave an interview in which he enumerated dangers, which the American "anti-missile shield" brings not only to Poland but also to Europe as a whole.

### Increasing security of the USA at the expense of reducing the security of Poland

According to Kuźniar "The goal of the 'shield' is the protection of the territory of the USA, and the location of this base in Poland would reinforce the security of USA at the cost of security of Poland". According to him, Poland as a member of NATO and EU, has sufficient warrants of security, and the agreement to the American proposal would be the proof of the lack of confidence in the North Atlantic Alliance. In his opinion the full operation of the proposed "anti-missile shield", together with bases situated in Alaska and California, is planned for the years 2025 - 2030. (The Central European part of the "shield" should be operant already in 2012). This truly "global" military complex "is necessary as an 'umbrella' during American military operations in every possible area of the earth. The idea is to provide the American navy, terrestrial bases, and mobile formations with a protection against missiles from states, against which Americans want to undertake military actions. The base in

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## 150,000 join Radio Maryja pilgrimage in Poland

More than 150,000 Catholics gathered at the Marian shrine of Częstochowa, Poland, this past weekend, for the 15th annual pilgrimage sponsored by the controversial broadcaster, Radio Maryja.

Bishop Stanisław Stefanek of Łomża celebrated for the pilgrims on Saturday, July 7, and Bishop Andrzej Dziega of Sandomierz on Sunday, July 8. Among those in attendance were Polish Prime Minister Jarosław Kaczyński, three deputy prime ministers, and Marianna Popieluszko, the mother of the murdered Solidarity chaplain (and current candidate for beatification) Father Jerzy Popieluszko. The congregation also included groups from Germany, Switzerland, England, and Australia, among other countries.

In the latest burst of controversy involving Radio Maryja, the magazine *Wprost* is reporting that the station's founder, the outspoken Redemptorist Father Tadeusz Rydzyk, called Poland's first lady Maria Kaczyńska, a "witch who should be euthanized." In April of this year, the first lady spoke in opposition to a constitutional amendment to protect human life from the moment of conception. The general secretary of the governing Law and Justice Party, Joachim Brudziński, and deputy prime minister, Przemysław Gosiewski, have said that they do not believe the report by *Wprost*. □

## Celebrating 100 years of scouting in Poland

The Museum of Scouting at the southern Polish city of Kielce is the venue of an exhibition celebrating 100 years of the scouting movement in Poland. The display focuses on the beginnings of the scouting tradition, which came to Poland in early 20th century.

"We wanted to show how it was possible to transfer the idea of scouting to Poland," said the museum director Katarzyna Traczyk. She stressed that Poland was one of the first countries to undertake the idea of scouting.

The exhibition will be on until the end of September and it is accompanied by a display of military compasses, organized by the National Museum in Kielce and the Tadeusz Kościuszko Foundation in Cracow. One of the most valuable exhibits is the pair of compasses belonging to Tadeusz Kościuszko which had been brought by him to America. □

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