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President: West should not close doors to Ukraine

Poland's role is to see that the West does not close its doors to Ukraine, President Bronislaw Komorowski said Thursday in Lublin, southeast Poland.

B. Komorowski, in Lublin to inspect the command of the currently formed Lithuanian-Ukrainian-Polish LITPOLUKRBRIG multinational brigade, said Poland's task was to "keep its foot in the door" and aid Ukraine in its ambitions to draw closer to the West.

He added that the LITPOLUKR brigade, planned as a support unit in UN, NATO and EU military operations, was one of the instruments to ensure such aid.

In Komorowski's opinion the brigade will allow Ukraine to gain experience in cooperating with western structures. In this context he reminded about the Partnership for Peace programme which aided Poland in its NATO accession.

The Polish section of the LITPOLUKR command in Lublin currently numbers about 50 troops and a 250-strong command battalion. Defence Minister Tomasz Siemoniak told reporters Thursday that a technical accord regulating the addition of Lithuanian and Ukrainian officers to the Lublin-based command will be signed still this month.

An agreement on the formation of the LITPOLUKR brigade was signed last September by the defence ministers of Poland, Lithuania and Ukraine. The unit is to be combat-ready in two years' time.

Source: PAP

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