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Polish, Lithuanian Presidents share common views on military cooperation

Military cooperation between Poland and Lithuania is deepening, we have a common position on Nord Stream 2, Polish President Andrzej Duda said after meeting with Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaite in Warsaw on Thursday.

The Lithuanian President started a two-day visit to Poland on Thursday.



In the course of their meeting, the Presidents adopted a joint declaration on strengthening the Polish-Lithuanian partnership for security. In addition, both countries' defence ministers signed an agreement on establishing secure communications for the exchange of radiolocation information and a letter of intent regarding the affiliation of the Lithuanian Gelezinis Vilkas (Iron Wolf) mechanised brigade and the Polish 15th Mechanised Brigade in time of peace to the command of the Multinational North-East Division.

President Duda, welcoming the signing of the letter of intent, told a joint press conference that, "Polish-Lithuanian military cooperation is deepening within the North Atlantic Alliance." "This is firstly to show our activity within the NATO, secondly it shows our allies and our opponents that we are together, that we are able to act together, and that together we are raising security," said the Polish President.



At the same time he praised the fact that both countries' cooperation continues to develop, pointing to the joint implementation of the Via Baltica and Via Carpathia road and infrastructure projects and the Rail Baltica railroad undertaking. Duda said his talks with Grybauskaite also concerned energy cooperation, including the synchronisation of electricity systems.

He noted that together with his Lithuanian counterpart they have a clear-cut stand on the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline project. "We are definitely opposing this investment. We believe that it will worsen the energy security situation in terms of gas security not only in Poland and Lithuania, not only in our part of Europe, but also in the entire EU. It will worsen the gas security situation and it evidently leads to a very strong dependence on one

supplier," said the Polish President. He assessed that this as "a trend that should be interrupted and which absolutely should not be continued in the EU."



During the talks, both sides also referred to the situation in Ukraine. "Our positions are unambiguous in this respect, we believe that there is no other way - the occupation of Crimea, as well as the Lugansk and Donetsk provinces, must end, Russia must withdraw from there," stressed Andrzej Duda.

The two Presidents also discussed relations with Belarus. "Together with the (Lithuanian) President we have similar concerns as to how long Belarus will maintain or deepen its sovereignty in view of its eastern neighbour, which unfortunately has been manifesting imperial tendencies in recent years, and is actually deepening a state of threat in our part Europe," said President Duda.

Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė spoke in a similar tone of the Nord Stream 2 project. "Together with Poland, we are bound by many projects, including our common stance on Nord Stream 2. Both sides agree that it is a political project, not an economic one, damaging Europe and deepening the dependence on the Russian supplier," the Lithuanian President underscored.

"Our military cooperation has reached a level as high as ever," added the Lithuanian President. She also stressed that Lithuania supported "Poland's striving for a US military presence" so that, as she said, Lithuania would also have security guarantees.



Grybauskaitė also stressed the role of bilateral trade and jointly implemented projects. "We are developing very important bilateral and European infrastructure projects such as gas connections, projects concerning the synchronisation of power grids."

The Lithuanian guest stressed that Poland and Lithuania have an increasing number of common interests. "When we are together, we are strong," said Grybauskaitė referring to a 16th-century Polish-Lithuanian union. "I believe in our future and Polish-Lithuanian relations, no matter what the difficulties are, our future is as strong as our alliance is strong," stressed the Lithuanian President.

Source: president.pl, PAP

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