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## NATO Summit in Washington

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### **President Andrzej Duda has said that no one from the outside can prevent Ukraine from joining NATO as such a decision is taken by alliance members and Ukrainians.**

Speaking to reporters before the beginning of the main part of the NATO summit in Washington on Wednesday, Andrzej Duda said that such a decision could only be taken by NATO members and the Ukrainian people whose opinion on the matter was clear.

„No one from the outside can block such a decision, no one apart from NATO countries, which decide if a given country can join the alliance, and society of this state which in a democratic way lays down directions of its policy,” Andrzej Duda said.

He underlined that no one from the outside could have a say here, and that no one could effectively interfere in this process.

Referring to the support offered by the alliance to Ukraine and its future membership of the alliance, the Polish president said that Ukraine was being supported in its defence operations by NATO states.

„...I hope that the ongoing NATO summit in Washington will show that the road to NATO for Ukraine is irreversible,” Andrzej Duda said, adding that he meant the alliance's readiness to accept it as a new member.

„But the decision, above all, belongs to the Ukrainian people,” he repeated.

„Today, the voice of the Ukrainian people is clear – they want to join the community of the West, and the community of the West sends a clear signal to Ukraine telling it that it is open to this membership and ready for it.

Asked about the opinion of other NATO members about Ukraine's membership, Duda said that „the discussion about Ukraine joining NATO is only about when it will join, not if it will join.”

Andrzej Duda also said that „the war must end to make it possible for Ukraine to join NATO with the equal rights of any other alliance member.”

„This means that Article 5 which speaks of collective defence will cover Ukraine,” he said, adding that „today, when there is a war going on, this would mean NATO's automatic involvement in the war against Russia.”

„And this is what nobody wants,” Andrzej Duda said and added that all NATO leaders were sure that „Russia must not win this war.” (PAP)

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