Rotation Of Ukrainian Peacekeeping Contingent In Lebanon (Ukraine, Lebanon)

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The Ukrainian Defense Ministry has sent to Lebanon 144 servicemen to replace a part of the Ukrainian peacekeeping contingent among the UN mission in that country.

On Thursday, a Tu-154 plane of the Defense Ministry's enterprise Ukrainian Aviation Transport Company took off from the Boryspil airport with the first group of peacekeepers aboard.

During the seeing-off ceremony, Land Force Commander in Chief Petro Shuliak said the Ukrainian peacekeepers made a good showing while carrying peacekeeping missions in different regions of the world, and wished the servicemen leaving for Lebanon to hit their targets.

"I have no doubt that you will continue the best traditions of peacekeepers," he emphasized.

Shuliak has also wished the servicemen a happy return home.

"Remember that your near and dear are waiting for you," he said.

During the second stage of the rotation, July 16, an Il-76 plane will take one more group of peacekeepers numbering 43 from the Sknyliv airport outside Lviv.

All of the 187 servicemen who will carry out their peacekeeping mission in Lebanon underwent extra training to seek and neutralize explosives at the Armed Forces' mine cleaning center in Kamianets-Podilskyi (Khmelnytskyi region).

According to the Defense Ministry, during three years of their stationing in Lebanon, Ukrainian field engineers have rendered harmless 3227 explosive devices, including two aircraft bombs, 1408 antipersonnel mines, 110 grenades, 243 artillery shells and mortar mines.

Sappers have checked on over 367,000 square meters of territory, examined 5,881,000 square meters of minefields and evacuated four people from there.

As Ukrainian News reported, Ukrainian peacekeepers have been staying in Lebanon since July 2000.

Their main objectives are to clean fields and highways from mines, lay roads, fortify the UN mission systems, and build new base stations for the mission units.

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