

Joint Statement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of Ukraine

On April 4, 2024 Prime Minister of the Republic of Latvia Evika Siliņa and Prime Minister of Ukraine Denys Shmyhal met in Riga.

As a result of the meeting, the Prime Ministers of the Republic of Latvia and Ukraine:

Emphasise the need to strengthen bilateral cooperation to overcome new challenges and threats.

Look forward to continuing the existing dialogue and cooperation on regional and global issues of mutual interest.

Stand united in our shared values of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, in light of the current geopolitical challenges facing Europe.

Condemn in the strongest possible terms the Russian Federation's unprovoked, unjustified and illegal full-scale military invasion of Ukraine, started on February 24, 2022, which is an expansion of the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine, that has been ongoing since February 19, 2014, representing a gross violation of the United Nations (UN) Charter and undermining the foundations of the rules-based international order.

Reiterate the need to continue implementing the policy of non-recognition of the Russian Federation's attempted illegal annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, as well as parts of the Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhia regions of Ukraine.

Emphasise the illegal nature of the recent presidential elections in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol and in certain territories of the Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhia regions of Ukraine and the nullity of their results, **strongly condemn** holding by the Russian Federation of the so-called elections in the temporary occupied territories of Ukraine, which is a direct violation of international law.

Reaffirm support for the Peace Formula of Ukraine enshrined in the UN General Assembly Resolution «Principles of the Charter of the United Nations underlying a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine» and emphasise the importance of the participation of the Republic of Latvia in the Global Peace Summit and in the implementation of the points of the Peace Formula, with special attention to "Restoration of Justice", "Food Security", "Release of prisoners and deported

persons", "Ecological safety" and "Preventing escalation and repetition of aggression".

Declare readiness to continue cooperation within the International Core Group and other international formats to promote the establishment of the Special Tribunal on the Crime of Aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, including by its endorsement in international and regional fora documents and statements.

Highlight the importance of the "Riga principles", a set of guidelines established during the informal meeting of the Ministers of Justice of the Council of Europe on September 11, 2023 in Riga, Latvia, which serve as a political compass for the work of the Register of Damage, aiming to document the consequences of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine.

Underscore the significance of our collective support for the International Criminal Court (ICC). By facilitating the Court's in-depth investigations into the war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by Russian Federation and providing voluntary financial contributions, Ukraine and the Republic of Latvia aim to bolster the ICC's capacity to protect victims, bring persons who committed war crimes and crimes against humanity to justice, and enforce international law.

Intensify the mutual cooperation in the justice sector, focusing on enhancing judicial capacities within the European integration processes. This includes strengthening the bond between Ukraine and the Republic of Latvia probation institutions, investigation and prosecution authorities, forensic bureaus and supporting Ukrainian forensic experts. Such collaborative efforts are crucial for documenting the war crimes committed by Russian Federation and ensuring its accountability.

Intensify the mutual cooperation between the anti-corruption bodies of Ukraine and the Republic of Latvia. This includes the share of experience in implementing anti-corruption reforms and strengthening the institutional capacity of anti-corruption bodies.

Reaffirm the mutual unwavering commitment to judicial cooperation in criminal, civil and commercial matters amidst the adversities of Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine, prioritizing the expedient processing of legal assistance requests from Ukrainian judicial authorities.

Remain dedicated to the safety and well-being of Ukrainian children seeking refuge in the Republic of Latvia. Through diligent data exchange and collaboration, the competent authorities in both countries ensure these children are afforded the guardianship necessary to provide them with stability and care.

Condemn Russian Federation's abductions, forced transfer and illegal deportations of children from temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine as war crimes, commit to the broadening of the International Coalition for the Return of Ukrainian Children, of which Ukraine is the co-chair and the Republic of Latvia is a founding member, and express the aim of continuing working together on its focus areas and collective actions, such as the "Russia's War on Children" Conference organized in Riga in January 31 – February 1, 2024.

Note the importance of joint efforts in ensuring global food security, increasing the transit potential of the Republic of Latvia for the export of Ukrainian agricultural products to third countries.

Recognize the outstanding effort of the Republic of Latvia so far to provide comprehensive military-technical support to Ukraine, which aims to help Ukraine restore its territorial integrity and sovereignty within internationally recognized borders.

Reaffirm the intention to work together to realise the potential of the cooperation of defence industries.

Welcome the achievements in the training and equipment of Ukrainian servicemen in the Republic of Latvia to North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) standards in 2022 and 2023 and declare the intention to work both on bilateral level and with third-party partner countries to expand the appropriate programs in 2024 and beyond.

Reiterate commitment to expand the Drone Coalition for Ukraine, to provide drone deliveries to Ukraine and to ensure the exchange of technologies to reach the agreed quantities, as well as to conduct the training of Ukrainian operators.

Emphasise the importance of continuing assistance in the treatment and rehabilitation of wounded Ukrainian servicemen in the Republic of Latvia, as well as the organisation of training for Ukrainian rehabilitation doctors on the territory of the Republic of Latvia.

Acknowledge the will of the Government of the Republic of Latvia to maintain the provision of all military-technical support, including military training to Ukraine in 2024, 2025 and 2026 at the level of 0,25% of GDP.

Confirm the intention to continue increasing pressure on Russian Federation, by strengthening sanctions, both at the international and national levels, as well as to promote coordination to prevent the circumvention of sanctions.

Underline the importance of having Russian Federation's state assets remain frozen and immobilized until Russian Federation has paid for losses or damage caused to

individuals and entities, as well as to the state of Ukraine, and promote the European Union (EU) decision to direct the extraordinary revenues generated by the Central Securities Depositories holding assets and reserves of the Central Bank of Russian Federation for the benefit, rebuilding and restoring of Ukraine.

Welcome the need for the establishment of an international compensation mechanism, as envisaged by the Statute of the Register of Damage Caused by the Aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine adopted by the Resolution of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe CM/Res(2023)3, and welcome the importance of launching under the auspices of the Council of Europe's Register of Damage Caused by the Aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine as a first tangible step in the direction of a future compensation mechanism.

Continue, in accordance with their respective legal systems and international law, to work together with international partners to explore all possible avenues for the financing of a compensation mechanism, to aid Ukraine in obtaining compensation from Russian Federation and providing prompt and adequate compensation to victims of aggression.

Note the importance of the takeover of the former "Moscow House" in Riga as an international precedent, based on solid legal grounds.

Reaffirm the unwavering support of the Republic of Latvia for Ukraine becoming a full member of the EU, taking into account the decision of the European Council of December 14, 2023, on the opening of EU accession negotiations with Ukraine.

Declare support for the swift approval of EU negotiating framework with Ukraine and convening of the inaugural EU Intergovernmental Conference with Ukraine in June 2024 and start the negotiation process.

Express the interest to continue development cooperation programmes to transfer Latvia's experience when joining the EU. This includes share of best practices of harmonisation of national legislation with the EU acquis in the context of European integration, organisation of educational events to improve the level of qualification in the field of EU law and European integration, and promotion of capacity building of the civil service.

Express the interest in sharing of experience in judicial reform and strengthening the institutional independence and efficiency of the judiciary.

Confirm the support of the Republic of Latvia, as per the Joint Declaration of the Presidents of Ukraine and the Republic of Latvia of March 3, 2023, for Ukraine becoming a member of the NATO as soon as conditions allow, and working towards

this end at the Washington NATO Summit in July 2024, and subsequent summits of the Alliance.

Welcome the progress of bilateral dialogue, as per the Joint Declaration of Leaders of the Group of Seven (G7) of July 12, 2023, which the Republic of Latvia joined, on concluding negotiations for a bilateral agreement on long-term support and security commitments to Ukraine.

Recognize further importance of strengthening the Latvian-Ukrainian economic, trade and investment cooperation.

Confirm the readiness to hold the next, 10th Session of the Latvian-Ukrainian Intergovernmental Commission on Economic, Industrial, Scientific and Technical Cooperation on May 22, 2024, in Kyiv.

Stand ready to further develop trade relations between Ukraine and the Republic of Latvia with the consideration of Ukraine's European future and its prospective participation in the EU Single Market as a full-fledged member.

Agree to continue working towards enhancing Ukraine-Latvia economic cooperation, increase bilateral trade in goods and services and ensure further access to the global markets.

Emphasise the need for further development of bilateral relations in the field of transport towards the implementation of mutual infrastructure and logistics projects.

Facilitate the restoration of air services by allowing airBaltic to resume flights to and from Ukrainian cities, especially Kyiv or Lviv, as soon as conditions allows for the safe operation of such services.

Note the importance of the extension of two TEN-T Corridors – the North Sea Baltic corridor and the Baltic Sea-Black Sea-Aegean Sea corridor towards Ukraine, thus integrating Ukraine into the EU transport network and allowing to develop new logistics routes between Ukraine and the Baltic States.

Agree to work closely on proposals for removal of existing administrative barriers and necessity to make infrastructure improvements, to ensure smooth transportation of goods to and from Ukraine through Latvian ports, and to make an effort to communicate the proposals to the European Commission and countries involved, in particular Poland and Lithuania.

Continue to work towards common digital projects facilitating the aims of the 18 October 2023 Memorandum on Cooperation in the field of digitalisation between the Ministry of Transport of the Republic of Latvia and the Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine.

Note the interest in the bilateral cooperation in space sector, including in the area of gaining practical experience and expert advisory assistance from Latvia as an associate member of the European Space Agency (ESA) within the framework of Ukraine's integration into ESA, as well as the prospects of involvement in the implementation of the EU Space Programme.

Reiterate the readiness to continue working on providing Ukraine with humanitarian assistance. With this, the Ukrainian party expresses gratitude for the humanitarian and other assistance provided to Ukraine by the Government of Latvia and the Latvian society.

Note the importance of the Republic of Latvia's participation in supporting Ukrainian energy infrastructure in the face of ongoing shelling from the Russian Federation – a terrorist state.

Agree on continued readiness of the Republic of Latvia to deliver medical equipment to the hospitals of Chernihiv Region as humanitarian assistance.

Underscore the importance of the Republic of Latvia's participation in the "Gadget Coalition" and agree to continue working on supplying the educational institutions of Chernihiv Region with notebooks and tablets.

Recognize the comprehensive support of the Government of the Republic of Latvia, municipalities, NGOs and the whole society for Ukrainian citizens, who have been forced to seek refuge in the Republic of Latvia since the beginning of Russian Federation's full-scale military invasion of Ukraine and emphasise the importance of continuing such support.

Express the readiness to continue working on the recovery and reconstruction of Ukraine, focusing on social, medical and educational infrastructure of Chernihiv Region. With this, the Ukrainian party expresses gratitude for the efforts of the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Latvian society aimed at the reconstruction of Ukraine.

Note the importance to continue the implementation of reconstruction projects in Chernihiv Region launched in 2022 and 2023 (social infrastructure objects in Chernihiv city, housing for residents in Yahidne village and two psychological support centres for women). Support will be continued also through Latvia's development cooperation programmes, including by providing studies in European Law and Institutions for young professionals and providing support to Ukrainian hospitals in training and implementing rehabilitation programs for patients after limb amputations.

Take note of the preliminary list under consideration of priority projects of reconstruction of social, medical and educational infrastructure of Chernihiv Region, implementation of which will be launched in 2024 (Annex 1), as well as progress in the work to secure Latvian-made goods for institutions of Chernihiv Region.

Express the desire to strengthen and facilitate technical and financial cooperation between the two states, given the opportunities unlocked with the signature of the Agreement on Technical and Financial Cooperation between the Governments of the Republic of Latvia and Ukraine.

Recognize that educational and cultural cooperation remains an important part of the bilateral agenda and will be aimed at promoting people-to-people contacts, developing new initiatives, and implementing joint projects in the fields of education, science, culture and sports.

Note the importance of the decision of the Government of the Republic of Latvia on the transfer of the building to Ukrainian organisations with the aim of establishing the Ukrainian House as a social and cultural centre for Ukrainian citizens.

Confirm the intention to enhance cooperation and mutual support in the field of combating and countering Russian Federation propaganda and disinformation.

Acknowledge the Republic of Latvia's solidarity with Ukraine in the negation of any attempts by Russian Federation to legitimise its war crimes through sports.

**Prime Minister of
the Republic of Latvia**

**Prime Minister of
Ukraine**

Evika SILIŅA

Denys SHMYHAL

The preliminary list under consideration of priority projects of reconstruction of social, medical and educational infrastructure of Chernihiv Region, implementation of which will be launched in 2024 under the leadership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Latvia

1. Complete overhaul of the premises of the Novy Bykiv secondary education school of I-III degrees located at: Shevchenko Str. 1, p. Novy Bykiv, Nizhyn district, Chernihiv Region.
2. Restoration of the object of cultural heritage of the building of the communal institution "Chernihiv Regional Universal Scientific Library named after V.Korolenko", located at: Myru Prospect 41, Chernihiv, 14000.
3. Complete overhaul and comprehensive thermal modernization of building A-3 of the Chernihiv Regional Blood Centre.
4. Complete overhaul of the internal premises of part of the one-story building of the pediatric department located in Chernihiv located at: Shevchenko Street 114, Chernihiv region.
5. Replacement of windows in the workshops of the State Vocational and Technical Educational Institution "Chernihiv Vocational Construction Lyceum".