

Speech by President of the Riigikogu Jüri Ratas at the flag raising ceremony on the 137th anniversary of the national flag of Estonia in the Governor's Garden at Toompea

People of Estonia here, in your homes and everywhere in the world!

I congratulate all of us from my whole heart on the anniversary of the flag of Estonia.

Today, the blue-black-and-white flag we hold dearest to our hearts is 137 years old. During those years, we have seen both good times and bad times as a nation. The national flag has united us in the unwavering belief that we will achieve everything we jointly undertake with our hearts.

140 years ago, learned people who valued the Estonian culture and wished to increase our sovereignty gathered under this beautiful and rather unique combination of colours. At their annual meeting in September 1881, they chose blue, black and white, which in harmony among themselves reflect the character and the ideals of the Estonian people, to be the colours of their organisation, the Estonian Students' Society. For, in the words of Jakob Hurt, one of the towering figures of the Estonian National Awakening, as a small nation, we will have to become great in spirit.

This outstanding, dignified and great spirit lives on to this day. The blue-black-and-white flag is flying high in the lives and hearts of the people of Estonia. We can feel this when we see the respectfully displayed national colours in many places and on different occasions. On our houses and in our courtyards, on our festive days and at sports events, in our homes and on our clothing, on our products and in our creative work, in our country and in the world. Because both greater and larger causes to carry the spirit of Estonia are worth celebrating by flying our flag.

Fellow travellers!

The spirit of Estonia will live on as long as we carry and share it. One simple way to do this is to give the decision-makers of tomorrow the possibility to grow accustomed to the traditions connected with our national flag. Such as this festive event, which is dedicated to the National Flag Day. In this way, the blue-black-and-white flag will continue to fly as the symbol of the achievements of each one of us, all families and the whole Estonia. And always, the blue will be keeping our faith and hope in our future, the black will be honouring the hardships and complications of our past, and the white will inspire us to keep going further boldly and confidently.

Happy Estonian Flag Day to us all!

Good luck to blue-black-white!

Good luck to Estonia!