

## **Appeal to countries and governments of the world by the restorers of freedom of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia**

We, Members of the Parliaments of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia who voted for the restoration of independence of our countries in 1990 and 1991, express our deep concern about the Russia's military invasion of the Ukraine. We deeply regret that, following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia has taken the path of totalitarianism instead of freedom and the rule of law, as proposed by Andrei Sakharov and other great Russian democracy activists. Russia has been taken over by the most reactionary powers that use the tactics of Hitler's Germany to execute their aggressive plans. The danger is magnified by the nuclear weapons inherited from the bankrupt USSR regime.

As a result of the infamous 23 August 1939 agreement between Hitler and Stalin, the Baltic States lost their independence and for long years were subjected to the communist genocide. Only on 24 December 1989, following the unprecedented act of Latvian, Lithuanian, and Estonian solidarity, which is now globally regarded as “the Baltic Way”, the Soviet Congress of People's Deputies in Moscow was forced to declare the dastardly pact between Hitler and Stalin on the division of Europe void and illegal since the moment of its signing. Through non-violent parliamentary struggle, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia regained their lost statehood and became member states of the European Union and NATO. The Baltic solidarity with other nations oppressed by the USSR, including Ukrainian people, was paramount.

We believe that this brutal attack on the Ukraine and annexation of its territories is just the first step of much more ambitious imperial plans of the Russian Federation. Russia's demands to withdraw NATO forces from Eastern Europe, the distorted interpretation of historical events by its leaders, the threats to re-assess the results of the Cold War, and the promises to renew the USSR all indicate that plans are being developed for a further attack on the democratic world.

We wish to remind that even now, when Russian revanchists and neo-Stalinists seek to return Europe to the realities of 1939, unwavering solidarity between democratic states and Ukraine, and refusal to agree to immoral compromises with the Kremlin are the only means to stop Russia's war against our rights to live according to the values and freedoms that are self-evident in the West.

We are certain that our people are ready to defend themselves, as well as the Eastern border of the European Union and NATO. We truly appreciate the help that has already been extended to the Baltic states. To strengthen our military capabilities, we expect even greater military and technical support from our allies, as well as a stronger presence of military forces in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. We call for such moral, financial, and military support for Ukraine that could help it stop further invasion of its land. We call for every possible action that would force the aggressor to withdraw its forces from all the annexed territories.

We call on the Western democratic societies to consider the past and present implications for the Baltic States of living next to an active aggressor who wants to deprive us of our peace, land, and all the self-evident rights and freedoms. Recalling the events leading up to World War II, we should realise that any concessions to the aggressor, any hopes that it might be possible to “pacify” it by sacrificing specific countries, only leads to further aggression, strengthens the aggressor's powers, and ultimately leads to a global tragedy like World War II.

In our opinion, this is the moment that the solidarity principles of the Baltic Way to Freedom must unite all the European Union and NATO member states more than ever before. These principles should also apply to Ukraine, which, with enormous sacrifices, is guarding the eastern border of the European Union and NATO and all of us from Russia's further invasion in Europe.

On behalf of the 4 May Declaration Club of Latvia  
President Velta Čebotarenoka

On behalf of the Club of Signatories of the  
Lithuanian Act of Independence  
President Birutė Valionytė

On behalf of the Estonian August 20<sup>th</sup> Club  
President Ants Veetõusme

