

IN THE ISSUE:

- LITHUANIA IS PREPARING FOR THE COMMEMORATION OF THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF RESTORATION OF INDEPENDENCE
- ON 10 MARCH 2015, THE SEIMAS WILL CONVEN FOR THE SPRING SESSION
- COMMITTEES OF THE BALTIC ASSEMBLY HELD MEETINGS IN THE SEIMAS AND IN ŠIAULIAI UNIVERSITY

ANNIVERSARIES



25 YEARS AGO ELECTIONS TO THE PARLIAMENT THAT RESTORED THE INDEPENDENCE OF LITHUANIA WERE HELD

On 24 February 1990, the first free elections to the Supreme Council were held. On the second consecutive day of their official mandate, the nationally elected representatives, by the majority of votes, adopted one of the most important decisions in Lithuania's history, namely, the decision to restore the independent state of Lithuania.

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COMMEMORATION OF THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RESTORATION OF LITHUANIA'S INDEPENDENCE IS FAST APPROACHING

A quarter of a century ago, on 11 March 1990, the representatives of the nation elected in the first free elections to the Supreme Council, that was subsequently renamed the Reconstituent Seimas, adopted one of the most significant decision in Lithuania's history – to re-establish the Independence of Lithuania. Events to commemorate this anniversary will be held both in our country and overseas.

The programme of the Commemoration, which was drafted by a group of politicians and experts headed by Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, is posted on the web page: <http://kovo11.lrs.lt/>.

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THE SEIMAS COMMITTEE ON EUROPEAN AFFAIRS: LITHUANIA'S MEMBERSHIP IN THE EUROPEAN STABILITY MECHANISM IS ONE OF THE KEY ISSUES OF THE EU MEMBERSHIP

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INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



MEETING OF THE BA LEGAL AFFAIRS AND SECURITY COMMITTEE

THE BA COMMITTEE IS DISCUSSING EXTERNAL THREATS AND THE COMMON SECURITY POLICY



At its meeting in the Seimas, the Legal Affairs and Security Committee of the Baltic Assembly has mainly been focusing on the recent geopolitical changes and the ensuing threats and security measures.

Virginija Baltraitienė, Chairperson of the BA Legal Affairs and Security Committee and Minister of Agriculture of Lithuania, expresses the urge to ensure national defence in different areas and not to rely on allied assistance alone. The Chairperson of the Committee notes that the US have been listed as the most powerful among militaries while Russia takes the second place (and in terms of some specific criteria, Russia goes ahead the strengths of the US by having, for example, more tanks and nuclear warheads). She says that, in this context, none of the Baltic States is even close to the first group of 35 countries on this list. "Of course, we can't compete with the leading military powers, but we should not under-estimate our potential. Yes, we are taking part in missions and we maintain our militaries, however, we are still very vulnerable. Don't we rely too much on external assistance?" the Chairperson questions.

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AT THE BA COMMITTEE MEETING: "WE ARE READY TO INTENSIFY DEFENCE COOPERATION"



At its meeting in the Seimas, the Legal Affairs and Security Committee of the Baltic Assembly discussed the strengthening of cooperation of the Baltic States in the areas of foreign and security policy. The participants of the meeting focused on joint procurements of military equipment, joint trainings of the Baltic States, joint actions and other issues.

Saulius Gasiūnas, Director of the Euro-Atlantic Cooperation Department, Ministry of National Defence of Lithuania, reassures the members of the BA Committee that we are ready to intensify defence cooperation. "Russia, our potential enemy or opponent, treats us as a single military operational space. [...] If they are holding a large-scale exercise, such as Zapad, involving hundreds of thousands of units of military equipment, they are following a scenario against the three Baltic States altogether and even against a wider region, including Poland and other countries," says the representative of the Ministry of National Defence.

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[MORE PHOTOS OF THE EVENT](#)

VALERIJUS SIMULIK: “EDUCATION AND SCIENCE IS THE BASIS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, SOCIAL STABILITY AND PUBLIC WELFARE”



The third event of the Lithuanian Presidency of the Baltic Assembly took place in Šiauliai University (Šiauliai). The BA Education, Science and Culture Committee held its meeting there. Valerijus Simulik, Chairman of the BA Committee on Education, Science and Culture, emphasised the importance of education and research for countries' competitiveness and the society's economic and social welfare.

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BA EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND CULTURE COMMITTEE: CIVIL DEFENCE TRAINING IS BECOMING A MATTER OF NATIONAL SECURITY



BA Education, Science and Culture Committee members together with representatives of the Lithuanian Ministry of National Defence, education institutions, and other experts meeting in Šiauliai University analysed public security and defence matters and considered including the subject into educational programmes of the Baltic States.

The main subject of the debate was presented by Antanas Valys, Vice-Minister of National Defence. Referring to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, Mr Valys said that modern warfare was not limited to conventional military capabilities. “The control of discourse in the media is especially important as it allows influencing the society. As a result, we find ourselves fighting the information war,” he said. According to the Vice-Minister, these factors have an impact on how Lithuania strengthens its defence. “All in all, the overall preparedness of the citizens for defence becomes a matter of national security. The notion of civil resistance is expanding. Armed resistance is just one of the ways among a variety of means that citizens may employ to withstand an aggressor. It could also include words, computers, social media, and all things imaginable,” Mr Valys said.

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After the committee meeting in Šiauliai University, participants went to the Lithuanian Air Force Aviation Base to get acquainted with the NATO air policing mission.



[MORE PHOTOS OF THE EVENT](#)

SPEAKER GRAUŽINIENĖ CONGRATULATED HER COUNTRYMEN IN THE UK ON THE UPCOMING SIXTEENTH OF FEBRUARY



Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, has arrived in London for a working visit. The visit includes a meeting with Baroness D’Souza, Lord Speaker of the House of Lords of the United Kingdom; Lord Timothy Boswell, Chairman of the European Union Committee; Lord John Sewel, chairman of several committees; and John Bercow, Speaker of the House of Commons.

The Speaker of the Seimas took part in a round table discussion with Mike Gapes, Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Commons, and Dr Julian Lewis, Member of the Defence Committee. The meeting focused on defence and security issues.

As part of her visit, the Seimas’ leader has met with her countrymen residing in Great Britain. She congratulated them on the upcoming Sixteenth of February.

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SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS, LORETA GRAUŽINIENĖ, MEETS WITH THE NEWLY-APPOINTED ISRAELI AMBASSADOR



Speaker of the Seimas, Loreta Graužinienė, has met with Israeli Ambassador to Lithuania Amir Maimon. While welcoming the newly appointed Israel’s representative in Lithuania, the Speaker expressed her satisfaction with the opening of the Embassy of the State of Israel in Vilnius. The Speaker highlighted the importance of strengthening bilateral relations between our states and parliaments and solving the issues of mutual concern.

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GEDIMINAS KIRKILAS, DEPUTY SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS, CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE ON EUROPEAN AFFAIRS: “LITHUANIA SUPPORTS GERMAN LEADERSHIP ON THE ISSUE OF UKRAINE”

“Lithuania supports the leadership of Germany and its Chancellor Angela Merkel in resolving the issue of Ukraine. This mission requires considerable wisdom, negotiating power and great personal commitment, which may not be undervalued in the face of this profound historical crisis,” said Social Democrat Gediminas Kirkilas, Deputy Speaker of the Seimas, Chair of the Committee on European Affairs, in his meeting with Jutta Schmitz, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Republic of Lithuania.

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MEMBERS OF THE SEIMAS AND OSCE REPRESENTATIVES DISCUSSED THE ROLE OF THE OSCE IN THE SETTLEMENT OF THE RUSSIA–UKRAINE CONFLICT



On 24 February 2015, the Seimas Committee on Foreign Affairs held a meeting with Lithuania’s representatives employed in the institutions of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The meeting was focused on the situation in Ukraine as well as on EU missions and their activities aimed at contributing to the resolution of the military conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

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SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS BIDS FAREWELL TO THE OUTGOING AMBASSADOR OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA



Speaker of the Seimas, Loreta Graužinienė, met with the outgoing Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Lithuania, Liu Zengwen, who ends his term in Lithuania. "The People's Republic of China is an important partner of Lithuania in the Asian region. We look forward to further developing political dialogue and economic cooperation with this country," says Loreta Graužinienė.

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LEADERS OF THE SEIMAS JOINED THE CAMPAIGN FOR RELEASING UKRAINIAN PILOT NADIYA SAVCHENKO



The Members of the Board of the Seimas, the Chairs of the Seimas Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on National Security and Defence, and the Head of the Seimas Delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly joined the campaign for releasing Ukrainian pilot Nadiya Savchenko who is imprisoned by Russia.

EVENTS



[Address by Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, at the Conference 20th Anniversary of the Law on the State Language](#)



Speaker of the Seimas Loreta Graužinienė at the Ceremony of raising state flags of the three Baltic nations on the 16 February – [Day of Restoration of Lithuania's Independence](#)

Event to pay tribute to Ukraine's Heroes of the Heavenly Hundred



From left to right: Valerii Zhovtenko, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine; Gediminas Kirkilas, Deputy Speaker of the Seimas and Chair of the Committee on European Affairs; Jonas Öhman, translator and director of documentaries; Vydas Gedvilas, First Deputy Speaker of the Seimas



CONFERENCE ON TRANSATLANTIC TRADE AND INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP (TTIP) WAS HELD AT THE SEIMAS



On 27 February 2015, the Seimas Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on European Affairs organised an international conference, *Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership: Free Trade from Alaska to Baltic States*.

The event focused on the progress of the negotiations for the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, the potential benefits for European Union Member States, and other relevant matters. The Conference was attended by representatives of the European Commission, Members of the European Parliament, Members of the Seimas, and experts.

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TEXT

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