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- ON 2 MAY 2016, THE PALACE OF THE GRAND DUKES OF LITHUANIA HOSTED THE COMMEMORATION OF THE 225TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CONSTITUTION OF 3 MAY 1791
- SEIMAS HONOURED THE MEMORY OF THE VICTIMS OF THE CHERNOBYL DISASTER
- SEIMAS ADOPTED A RESOLUTION ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN CRIMEA OCCUPIED BY THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION
- GOVERNMENT PRESENTED ITS ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT TO THE SEIMAS

ANNIVERSARIES

Constitution of 3 May – the fundamental law and historical heritage of the Commonwealth of the Two Nations (Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania)



On 2 May 2016, the Palace of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania hosted the commemoration of the 225th anniversary of the Constitution of 3 May 1791 (The Government Act adopted by the Sejm of the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Mutual Pledge of the Two Nations of 20 October 1791).

Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, appreciated the beautiful tradition to jointly mark, both in Lithuania and Poland, the anniversary of the Constitution of 3 May. The Speaker also noted that although the

Constitution of 1791 was effective for only 14 months and its advocates were defeated and the defeat turned into the defeat of the entire Commonwealth, the Constitution was not a mere attempt to reform the country plunging deeper into anarchy. "It contained guidelines on social and public reform which became a guiding light for the next generations, since all Lithuanian and Polish uprisings against Russia in the 19th century were inspired by the ideas of the Constitution of 3 May. The Constitution opened up a new prospect for the development of the Lithuanian and Polish states, which was fostered for over a century and which brought our nations to the achievements of 16 February and 11 November 1918," Mrs Graužinienė said.

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Seimas honoured the memory of the victims of the Chernobyl disaster



At its plenary sitting on the 21 April 2016, the Seimas honoured the memory of the victims of the accident that happened at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant (Ukraine) 30 years ago. The explosion killed as many as 31 workers and a firefighter; approximately 100,000 people died of cancer in subsequent years. Vydas Gedvilas, First Deputy Speaker of the Seimas, noted that the then authorities of the Soviet Union had deployed thousands of workers without any protective equipment to extinguish the fires and clear the debris of the disaster. Over 7,000 Lithuanian nationals of various professions were among the clean-up workers.

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Committee on Foreign Affairs discussed Lithuania's 25-year-long membership of international organisations

At its meeting on 13 April 2016, the Committee on Foreign Affairs and Linas Linkevičius, Minister of Foreign Affairs, reviewed Lithuania's full membership of international organisations since the restoration of Lithuania's independence 25 years ago. On this occasion, the Committee on Foreign Affairs adopted a statement highlighting that Lithuania's active and responsible membership of global and regional international organisations, which rested on respect for democracy and human rights, was an integral part of Lithuania's successful foreign policy.

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PARLIAMENTARY BUSSINES

Seimas adopted a Resolution on the human rights situation in Crimea occupied by the Russian Federation

On 12 April 2016, the Seimas, with 90 votes in favour, none against and two abstentions, adopted the Resolution on the Human Rights, in Particular of the Crimean Tatars, in Crimea Occupied by the Russian Federation.

In the document, the Seimas recalled that two years ago the Russian Federation, by using military force, had occupied and annexed the Crimea, a part of Ukraine's territory. The document stressed that respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms was a key value of the European Union and a basic guiding principle in its relations with other countries.

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11 April 2016, Press release: [Speaker of the Seimas hopes for more attention from the international community to the massive human rights violations in the occupied Crimea](#)

12 April 2016, Press release: [Speaker of the Seimas: I believe that the World Congress of Crimean Tatars will soon be held in free Crimea](#)

Government presented its Annual Performance Report to the Seimas

On 21 April 2016, Algirdas Butkevičius, Prime Minister, presented to the Seimas the Government Annual Performance Report. The Prime Minister pointed out that 2015 was a very controversial year, full of historical events, long-awaited breakthroughs and shocks. “We have introduced the euro and felt the benefits it has brought to our economy. Lithuania has seen a breakthrough in foreign investment, a record growth in terms of industrial production, and a number of other successes. However, we have also experienced a new wave of the crisis caused by Russia’s economy-related bans and economic recession”, the Head of the Government emphasised.

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Seimas increased cash benefits for volunteer soldiers



On 14 April 2016, the Seimas adopted amendments to the Law on Military Service, which provided for increased cash benefits to volunteers in the continuous mandatory initial military service or basic military training. The new provisions were approved by 67 votes in favour, 1 against and 29 abstentions.

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Committee on European Affairs adopted an opinion on the proposal to reform the system for conducting European elections

On 20 April 2016, the Committee on European Affairs adopted a political opinion on the Proposal of the European Parliament for a Council decision adopting the provisions amending the Act concerning the election of the members of the European Parliament by direct universal suffrage.

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Committee on Foreign Affairs discussed Lithuania’s preparation for the NATO Summit of Heads of State and Government to be held in Warsaw on 8–9 July 2016

At its closed meeting on 20 April 2016, the Seimas Committee on Foreign Affairs and representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of National Defence discussed the preparation for the NATO Summit of Heads of State and Government to be held in Warsaw on 8–9 July 2016.

On this occasion, the Committee on Foreign Affairs adopted a statement underlining that the NATO Summit of Heads of State and Government to be held in Warsaw on 8–9 July 2016 would provide an opportunity to assess, at the highest political level, the implementation of the commitments undertaken at the NATO Summit of Heads of State and Government held in Wales in 2014, the effectiveness of the measures implemented, and new challenges to international security, and to adopt appropriate solutions to address these challenges.

Please find the statement [here](#).

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: MEETINGS&VISITS

Meeting between the Lithuanian and Latvian Parliament Speakers at the border

On 5 April 2016, Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, met with Inara Mūrniece, Speaker of the Saeima, in Kronauce close to the Lithuanian and Latvian border. The Speakers addressed issues of bilateral cooperation, regional policy, Nordic–Baltic co-operation (NB8) and Eastern Partnership. The interlocutors also focused on strengthening of regional security, solutions to migration problems and preparation for NATO's Summit in Warsaw, due on 8–9 July 2016.

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Speaker of the Seimas met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia



On 7 April 2016, Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, received Mikheil Janelidze, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, who came with the official visit to Lithuania. The officials expressed their satisfaction with intensive, bilateral political, economic and cultural cooperation that is taking on ever more novel forms.

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Speaker of the Seimas: *I hope for more attention from the international community to the massive human rights violations in the occupied Crimea*



On 11 April 2016, Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, welcomed the participants of the international conference *Mass Violation of Human Rights in Occupied Crimea*, held at the Lithuanian Parliament, and thanked them for their deep interest in the subject of human rights violations of Crimean Tatars in the annexed peninsula.

The Speaker stressed that the Crimean Tatars were a nation with a deep-rooted, rich and complex history. She stated that the events of the past several years were a significant historical challenge. “Following Russia’s seizure of Crimea, the Autonomous Republic bears witness to the ongoing systematic violations of human rights on its soil. A cause for concern is also repression against the Crimean Tatars and limitations of the freedom of expression and assembly,” said Loreta Graužinienė.

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Speaker of the Seimas: *I believe that the World Congress of Crimean Tatars will soon be held in free Crimea*



On 12 April 2016, Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, received representatives of the World Congress of Crimean Tatars. She expressed Lithuania's firm support to Crimean Tatars and to their events held in Lithuania. The Speaker also welcomed the adoption by the Seimas of the Resolution on the Human Rights Situation, in Particular of the Crimean Tatars, in Crimea Occupied by the Russian Federation.

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Speaker of the Seimas met with the Marshal of the Sejm of Poland



On 15 April 2016, Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, met with Marek Kuchciński, Marshal of the Sejm of Poland, as part of her visit to Poland*. At the meeting, they discussed strengthening of bilateral parliamentary cooperation, preparation for the Conference of Speakers of EU Parliaments to be held in Luxembourg this May, and issues pertaining to the Assembly of Members of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, the Sejm and Senate of the Republic of Poland, and the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine to be held in Kiev on 30–31 May 2016.

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**On 14–15 April 2016, the Speaker of the Seimas visited Poznań, Poland, where she took part in the events marking the 1050th anniversary of the Baptism of Poland at the invitation of Marek Kuchciński, Marshal of the Sejm of Poland, and Stanisław Karczewski, Marshal of the Senate of Poland.*

More photos of the event



Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas: *the EU will meet all the challenges only by being united and showing solidarity*



On 2 May 2016, Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, had a meeting with Barbara Stamm, President of the Landtag of Bavaria of the Federal Republic of Germany, and the delegation under her leadership. The meeting focused on cooperation between the two countries, security matters, and an exchange of views on the refugee crisis that had shaken Europe.

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Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas: *it is necessary to take a positive approach towards the future in our relations with the neighbouring Poland*



On 2 May 2016, Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, met with Maria Koc, Deputy Marshal of the Senate of the Republic of Poland, and the delegation under her leadership. The meeting focused on inter-parliamentary cooperation between the two countries, joint international projects, security issues and other relevant matters.

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PHOTOS



Meeting of Vydas Gedvilas, First Deputy Speaker of the Seimas, and Nathalie Tocci, Special Adviser to Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission.
6 April 2016



Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, received Volodymyr Yatsenyuk, the newly appointed Ambassador of Ukraine.
7 April 2016



*Meeting of the Welfare Committee of the Baltic Assembly.
8 April 2016*



*Vydas Gedvilas, First Deputy Speaker of the Seimas, met
Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn of the
Kingdom of Thailand during her official visit to Lithuania.
15 April 2016*



*Benediktas Juodka, Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs,
and Allain Hauser, Ambassador of Canada to Lithuania, at the
meeting with Members of the Seimas Committee on Foreign
Affairs and the Chair of the Seimas Group for Inter-Parliamentary
Relations with Canada.
20 April 2016*



*Meeting of the Seimas Committee on National Security and
Defence with the delegation headed by Anatolie Salaru, Minister
of Defence of Moldova. On the right: Artūras Paulauskas, Chair
of the Seimas Committee on National Security and Defence.
21 April 2016*



*Discussion with Cecilia Malmström, Commissioner for Trade.
28 April 2016*

***For more photos of the April 2016 events
and meetings, see [here](#).***

TEXT

Press Office of the Information and Communication Department

Jolanta Anskaitienė, Adviser, tel: +370 5 239 6508, e-mail: jolanta.anskaitiene@lrs.lt

LAYOUT

Neringa Motiejūnaitė-Lilienė, tel: +370 5 239 6204, e-mail: neringa.motiejunaite@lrs.lt

PHOTOGRAPH

Džoja Gunda Barysaitė, tel: +370 5 239 6215, e-mail: dzoja.barysaite@lrs.lt

Olga Posaškova, tel: +370 5 239 6205, e-mail: olga.posaskova@lrs.lt

Information and Communication Department

Loreta Raulinaitytė, Director, tel: +370 5 239 6762, e-mail: loreta.raulinityte@lrs.lt

Public Relations Unit of the Information and Communication Department

Artūras Zeleniakas, Head, tel: +370 5 239 6201; e-mail: arturas.zeleniakas@lrs.lt

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