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NEWSLETTER

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- SEIMAS HEARD THE EIGHTH PRESIDENTIAL STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS
- THE SEIMAS CALLED ON THE NEIGHBOURING STATES TO DENY ACCESS TO ELECTRICITY FROM UNSAFE NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS
- SEIMAS ADOPTED AMENDMENTS TO THE NEW LABOUR CODE
- VIKTORAS PRANCKIETIS, SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS: US WILL FULFIL ITS NATO OBLIGATIONS. THE PLEDGE WAS CONFIRMED BY THE US HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PARLIAMENTARY BUSINESS

Seimas heard the eighth presidential State of the Nation Address



On 8 June 2017, Dalia Grybauskaitė, President of the Republic of Lithuania, has delivered the eighth State of the Nation Address at the Seimas sitting, covering the situation in Lithuania as well as domestic and foreign policy.

The Head of State began by stressing the importance of the history of Lithuania's statehood. "The approaching centenary of the restoration of Lithuania's independence has expanded the usual field of vision, offering deeper insights into our statehood, ultimate goals, and responsibility. The February 16 generation brought the nation back from oblivion and set out to build a new modern Lithuania. Remarkable progress had been achieved by the time it celebrated 20 years of independence. If we had not been brutally stopped, today we would be living in a state that does not need to catch up for the time lost. The jubilee year commits us to take an intense and realistic look at the most challenging tasks facing us. There is no one but us to speed up national progress. And there is no other time but now," Ms Grybauskaitė said.

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Seimas called on the EU to develop an ambitious vision of the Eastern Partnership

Having regard to the aggressive Russian foreign policy, which aims at disrupting the European security architecture and is responsible for the creeping occupation of Georgia, the continuing aggression in Ukraine, which has already claimed over 10,000 lives, the information warfare being waged against democracies, and the interference with electoral processes in sovereign states in the Euro-Atlantic area, which poses an increasing threat, the Seimas urged the Western world at this time of particular threats to not only maintain unity, but also focus on supporting and enhancing the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms.

On 8 June 2017, the Seimas Resolution on the Need to Renew Commitment to Support Democracy was adopted by 85 votes in favour with 2 against and 5 abstentions.

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Seimas adopted a Resolution on the United Kingdom's Withdrawal from the European Union

On 13 June 2017, with 101 votes in favour to none against and 3 abstentions, the Seimas adopted a Resolution on the United Kingdom's Withdrawal from the European Union. The Resolution underlines that the unity of Member States of the European Union (EU) in the negotiations with the United Kingdom (UK) provides the only adequate and necessary guarantee for ensuring the interests of the EU and its citizens and the indivisibility of the Union. In parallel, the Resolution takes note of the importance of the process of constructive negotiations and smooth withdrawal of the UK from the EU, which constitutes the basis for further development of relations.

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The Seimas called on the neighbouring states to deny access to electricity from unsafe nuclear power plants

On 22 June 2017, the Seimas called on the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia, the Riigikogu of the Republic of Estonia, and the Sejm of the Republic of Poland to take decisions preventing the entry of electricity supplied by the developers of unsafe nuclear power plants into the electricity systems of Poland and the Baltic States. A resolution to that effect was adopted at the Seimas by 74 votes in favour to none against and no abstentions.

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The Seimas adopted a resolution on enhancing the strategic dialogue between Lithuania and Poland

On 27 June 2017, by 90 votes in favour, none against and 3 abstentions, the Seimas adopted a resolution on enhancing the strategic dialogue between Lithuania and Poland.

In the Resolution, the Seimas welcomes the decisions of the NATO Summit in Warsaw dispelling doubts over allegations that NATO membership of Central and Eastern European countries is not fully-fledged. The document stresses the importance of bilateral and regional cooperation for successful implementation of the summit decisions; emphasises the importance of promoting and jointly developing the transatlantic relations because a strategic partnership with the US is the guarantee of security of the Nordic-Baltic and Central European states; and encourages continuation and development of strategic inter-parliamentary dialogue between Lithuania and Poland based on the principle of mutual respect for sovereignty.

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Seimas adopted a resolution on assessing the criminal activities of the Lithuanian Communist Party

On 27 June 2017, the Seimas noted that the brutal Soviet occupation of Lithuania, launched on 15 June 1940, inflicted enormous damage on the country and its people and the regime's perpetrators of crimes against humanity had not yet been properly held to account at either national or international levels. The Seimas, therefore, called on the Government to urgently draft a law of the Republic of Lithuania criminalising the Lithuanian Communist Party. The Seimas resolution on assessing the criminal activities of the Lithuanian Communist Party was adopted by 53 votes in favour, with 1 vote against and 24 abstentions.

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Seimas adopted amendments to the new Labour Code

On 6 June 2017, the Seimas adopted amendments to the new Labour Code and the accompanying legislation due to come into force on 1 July 2017. The amendments were developed in accordance with the proposals approved by consensus at the Tripartite Council. The new provisions were passed by 84 votes in favour, 10 against and 29 abstentions. The Seimas amended 45 articles in the new Labour Code.

The adopted amendments enshrine an employee's and employer's professional legal capacity and capacity to act in order to allow all individuals, including those with disabilities, to participate in the labour market.

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INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: EVENTS, MEETINGS, VISITS

Speaker of the Seimas and President of the Republic of Slovenia discussed the situation in the Western Balkans and Ukraine



On 12 June 2017, Viktoras Pranckietis, Speaker of the Seimas, met with Borut Pahor, President of the Republic of Slovenia in the Seimas. They discussed bilateral relations between Lithuania and Slovenia, situation in the European Union, Ukraine and the Balkans. The focus was on hostile propaganda, its prevention, and fight against hybrid threats.

“We commend Slovenia's role in the region and are in favour of maintaining the EU's active role in the region and a credible European perspective as well as strengthening the EU's strategic communication. At the same time, we expect that the Western Balkan countries remain committed to the pro-European choice by further pursuing the necessary reforms and that the Balkan leaders continue communicating the benefits of implemented reforms and integration process to their societies,” said the Speaker of the Seimas.

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Viktoras Pranckietis, Speaker of the Seimas: *sanctions against Russia should be retained until full implementation of the Minsk agreements*



Viktoras Pranckietis, Speaker of the Seimas, discusses transatlantic security, support to Eastern partners and transatlantic trade, while on a visit to Washington D.C., USA.

Together with other Speakers of Parliaments of Nordic and Baltic countries, Mr Pranckietis met with the US administration officials in Washington D.C. on 27 June 2017.

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Viktoras Pranckietis, Speaker of the Seimas: *US will fulfil its NATO obligations. The pledge was confirmed by the US House of Representatives*



On 28 June 2017 in Washington DC, Viktoras Pranckietis, Speaker of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, together with the Speakers of the Parliaments of the Nordic and Baltic countries, met with Paul Ryan, Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi, Minority Leader of the House of Representatives. The delegation also participated in a discussion at the US Congress co-organised by the embassies of the Nordic and Baltic countries and Center for Transatlantic Relations under John Hopkins University.

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Committee on State Administration and Local Authorities will regularly exchange experience with their counterparts from the Polish Sejm



On 14 June 2017, Members of the Committee on State Administration and Local Authorities met with a delegation of the Local Self-Government and Regional Policy Committee of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland headed by Andrzej Maciejewski, Chairman of the Committee.

The meeting mainly focused on the improvement of regional policy and the use of European funds for regional development. The discussion showed that in Poland, as is the case in Lithuania, the greatest amount of effort in regional policy field was required by the objective to ensure balanced regional development allowing to reduce socio-economic disparities between regions, as the previous use of EU financial support only increased the gap between cities, small towns and rural areas.

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EVENTS

Seimas solemnly commemorated the Day of Mourning and Hope and marked the Day of Occupation and Genocide



On 14 June 2017, the Seimas paid tribute to the victims of Soviet occupation and genocide and marked the Day of Mourning and Hope by hosting a solemn commemoration in the Hall of the Act of 11 March.

The violent repressions carried out by Soviet repressive structures affected every generation in Lithuania, including the young, adults, and the elderly. It afflicted suffering on people of various nationalities and professions. It was important for the occupying power to mutilate the nation not only in physical, but

also in moral terms by depriving the people of all hope, knowledge, and a human face, said Viktoras Pranckietis, Speaker of the Seimas, during the commemoration.

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PHOTOS



For more photos of the May 2017 events and meetings, see [here](#) or please visit the Seimas [Flickr account](#).

TEXT

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