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- *Official visit to Japan of the Delegation led by Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, in commemoration of the 25th Anniversary of the Restoration of Diplomatic Relations between Lithuania and Japan. Meetings with Masaaki Yamazaki, President of the Japanese House of Councillors, Tadamori Oshima, Speaker of the House of Representatives of the National Diet of Japan, Shinzō Abe, Prime Minister of Japan and other high politicians and official representatives.*
- *At the meeting with Maroš Šefčovič, Vice-President of the European Commission for Energy Union, the Speaker of the Seimas invited the EU to clearly state its position on the unsafe Astravyets Nuclear Power Plant currently under construction in Belarus, next to Lithuania.*

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



OFFICIAL VISIT TO JAPAN

OF THE DELEGATION LED BY LORETA GRAUŽINIENĖ, SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA, IN COMMEMORATION OF THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RESTORATION OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN LITHUANIA AND JAPAN

28 February - 5 March 2016

On 28 February - 5 March 2016, a delegation led by Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, paid an official visit to Japan. The visit was organised in commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the restoration of diplomatic relations between Lithuania and Japan.

The Speaker of the Seimas noted that Lithuania and Japan were bound together by a hundred-year-long history of bilateral relations, political, economic, scientific and cultural cooperation, shared values, and mutual trust and respect.

During the visit, the Speaker of the Seimas had meetings with the leadership of the Japanese parliament and government, members of the parliament, and ministers, namely, Masaaki Yamazaki, President of the Japanese House of Councillors; Tadamori Oshima, Speaker of the Japanese House of Representatives; Hirofumi Nakasone, Chairman of the Japan-Lithuania Parliamentary Friendship Association of the House of Councillors, and members of the Friendship Association; Shinzō Abe, Prime Minister of Japan; Hiroshi Hase, Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan; Yoji Muto, State Minister for Foreign Affairs; and Yosuke Takagi, State Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry. The delegation of the Seimas also met with representatives of KEIDANREN, Japan Business Federation, took part in the opening of the exhibition of Lithuanian production in the Embassy of the Republic of Lithuania, visited Chiune Sugihara Memorial Museum, and participated in other events.

Delegation of the Seimas: Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas; Gediminas Kirkilas, Deputy Speaker of the Seimas and Chair of the Seimas Committee on European Affairs; Andrius Kubilius, Leader of the Opposition; Dangutė Mikutienė, Head of the Seimas Group for Inter-Parliamentary Relations with Japan; and Irena Šiaulienė, Chair of the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party Political Group.

More information on the Seimas' delegation visit to Japan is available in the following press releases:

Speaker of the Seimas met with the President of the Japanese House of Councillors



On 1 March 2016, the delegation under the leadership of Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, visiting Japan met with Masaaki Yamazaki, President of the Japanese House of Councillors. The meeting focussed on the overview of successful bilateral relations and the possibility to use the mutual potential and move towards strategic partnership.

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Speaker of the Seimas, Loreta Graužinienė: Made in Lithuania becomes a quality label in Japan

During her official visit to Japan, Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, on 1 March 2016 opened the traditional exhibition of Lithuanian production in the Embassy of the Republic of Lithuania in Tokyo and welcomed the participants and guests. She said that the exhibition held for the fifth time showed well-established and increasingly growing economic relations between Lithuania and Japan and that, in search of high quality, Japanese ever more frequently chose the goods produced in Lithuania.

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Speaker of the Seimas: Lithuanian-Japanese scientific and technological breakthrough opens increasingly more opportunities for closer future cooperation

Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, on 1 March 2016 met with Hiroshi Hase, Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan. While appreciating the headlong and promising Lithuanian-Japanese cooperation in science and technologies, the Speaker of the Seimas also stressed the common values, namely, trust, respect for human rights and aspiration to universal human well-being, which were all important for successful development of bilateral relations.

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Speaker of the Seimas met the Speaker of the Japanese House of Representatives



On 2 March 2016, the delegation under the leadership of Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, visiting Japan had a meeting with Tadamori Oshima, Speaker of the House of Representatives of the National Diet of Japan.

The meeting recalled the 25th anniversary of the restoration of diplomatic relations between Lithuania and Japan, discussed political, economic, scientific and cultural relations that had strengthened between the two countries in recent years, as well as exchanged views on new opportunities for cooperation.

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Speaker of the Seimas: Considerable attention by the Japanese to our country is a result of successful cooperation between Lithuania and Japan with bright prospects for the future



On 2 March 2016, as part of her official visit to Japan, Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, met with Shinzō Abe, Prime Minister of Japan. During the meeting, the Speaker of the Seimas emphasised that Lithuania appreciated the Japanese support for our country's accession to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. The interlocutors also focused on the economic cooperation strengthened yearly between the two countries and discussed energy security issues.

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Prime Minister of Japan: Chiune Sugihara united the Lithuanians and Japanese

During the meeting between Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, and Shinzō Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, in his residence on 2 March 2016, the head of government stressed that the visit of the Speaker of the Seimas would strengthen and increase the cooperation and partnership between the two countries.

The meeting centred on Chiune Sugihara, former Japanese consul, who resided in Lithuania during World War II and issued visas to Jews fleeing Nazi repression, thus saving their lives.

The Japanese Prime Minister emphasised that Sugihara had united the Lithuanians and Japanese, and expressed hope that the historical documents of the diplomat would be inscribed on UNESCO's Memory of the World Register in 2017. The idea has already received the approval of Japan's National Commission for UNESCO.

In her turn, the Speaker of the Seimas ensured that Lithuania would support that ambition. "Lithuania supports this initiative. The heroic achievement of Chiune Sugihara has to be remembered, commemorated and promoted as humanity triumph, even in the face of mortal danger. I am happy that our nations share common values," said Loreta Graužinienė.

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Speaker of the Seimas sent gifts to Japanese children who suffered from the earthquake

During her official visit in Japan, Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, sent Lithuanian linen and wooden toys as gifts from Lithuania to residents of Tohoku region and their children, who suffered from a powerful earthquake in 2011. The gifts will be handed over on 11 March, the day of the 5th anniversary of the tragedy, by Hiroko Kawahara, the founder and President of the organisation Earth Identity Project.

In her letter attached to the gifts the Speaker of the Seimas has written: "Friendship is the strongest link between people. Being friends means enjoying the beautiful moments together, and in a more complicated time it implies outliving it together and supporting each other.

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Speaker of the Seimas, Loreta Graužinienė: I invite the EU to clearly state its position on the unsafe Astravyets Nuclear Power Plant currently under construction in Belarus, next to Lithuania



On 22 February 2016, at the meeting with Maroš Šefčovič, Vice-President of the European Commission for Energy Union, Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, voiced her concerns related to Astravyets Nuclear Power Plant that is currently under construction in Belarus, next to Lithuania. The Speaker argued that the construction was carried out with no regard for international environmental and nuclear safety requirements and recommendations, and that it posed threats to the environment not only in Lithuania but the whole Europe as well.

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Chair of the Committee on European Affairs: “Astravyets necessitates the trilateral cooperation in Brussels”

Gediminas Kirkilas, Deputy Speaker of the Seimas and Chair of the Committee on European Affairs, proposed that a trilateral format of cooperation between the European Commission, Lithuania and Belarus is established to contribute to the safety and transparency of the Nuclear Power Plant that is being built close to the Lithuanian border in Astravyets, Belarus.

The proposal was submitted by Mr Kirkilas at the meeting between himself and Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, on the one part, and Maroš Šefčovič, Vice-President of the European Commission, on the other, in the Lithuanian Seimas on 22 February 2016.

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Legal Affairs and Security Committee of the Baltic Assembly held a meeting at the Seimas on migration crisis-related issues



On 5 February 2016, the Legal Affairs and Security Committee of the Baltic Assembly held a meeting at the Seimas, where Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian Parliament Members addressed the issues of refugees, organised crime and terrorism as well as closer cooperation among border guard services.

In his welcome address Mr Jānis Ādamsons, MP from Latvia, Chair of the BA Legal Affairs and Security Committee, emphasized that the Baltic States have to be united in addressing refugee-related issues: “We should harmonise our regulatory framework and coordinate activities of our law enforcement institutions. This would enable us to get prepared for the settlement of refugees, undertake thorough preventive measures and subsequently combat possible manifestations of crime and terrorism.

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PARLIAMENTARY BUSINESS

Committee on European Affairs supported the “green card” initiative



At its meeting on 10 February 2016, the Committee on European Affairs of the Seimas discussed the “green card” on corporate social responsibility (CSR) proposed by the National Assembly of France.

The letter on CSR by the National Assembly of the French Republic notes that undertakings cannot be confined to profit-making, while ignoring human rights as well as the social and environmental impact of their activities. The regulation on CSR in the EU legislation is fragmented and individual Member States have differing legislation on the subject. The French National Assembly proposes requesting the European Commission to submit a legislative proposal regarding the implementation of the CSR principles. The legislation would apply to undertakings with a head office in an EU Member State, irrespective of the sector. Where necessary, a threshold can be determined to exempt the smallest companies from the regulation.

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EVENTS

Speaker of the Seimas: The army must first of all be proud of its soldiers



On 22 February 2016, in the historical Hall of the Act of 11 March, Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, welcomed the participants of the solemn commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the Training Regiment.

The Speaker of the Seimas expressed her gratitude to all those who contributed to the origins of the Armed Forces of the Independent State of Lithuania. Lithuania would not only have its regular army, but would also be proud of it. Be proud not solely of its weapons and equipment or other technical figures. But above all, be proud of its soldiers, their competence and, most importantly, of their inherent values and their motivation to be on guard to protect the State,” said Loreta Graužinienė.

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Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas: “Free and progressive scientific ideas have prospered and always will in the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences”



On 23 February 2016, Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, attended a solemn general meeting of members of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences to mark the 75th anniversary of the Academy. In her welcome address the Speaker of the Seimas was delighted to note that free and progressive scientific ideas have been generated in the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences since its very foundation to this day.

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PHOTOS



*Gediminas Kirkilas, Deputy Speaker of the Seimas, received Dan Adrian Balanescu, Romanian Ambassador in Lithuania.
3 February 2016*



*Staff members of the National Council of the Slovak Republic visited the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania. Meeting with Loreta Raulinaitytė, Director of the Information and Communication Department, Coordinator of the Parliamentary Dimension of the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the EU.
3 February 2016*



Commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the general plebiscite of the Lithuanian population. 9 February 2016



Loreta Graūžinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, welcomed the participants of the international conference Social Europe: Present and Future. 10 February 2016



Vydas Gedvilas, First Deputy Speaker of the Seimas, paid tribute to the memory of signatories to the Act of Independence of 16 February 1918. 16 February 2016



The Seimas hosted the ecumenical event to pay tribute to those who perished in Maidan Square, Kyiv, on 18 - 20 February 2014, in Vilnius on 13 January 1991 and in Medininkai on 31 July 1991. MP Egidijus Vareikis (standing). 19 February 2016



The Seimas Committee on European Affairs and the Seimas European Club hold the debate Could the Schengen Agreement be saved? 19 February 2016



Vydas Gedvilas, First Deputy Speaker of the Seimas, met with US Ambassador Deborah Ann McCarthy. 23 February 2016

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

TEXT

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