

President of Latvia urges to honour the memory of members of national resistance movement

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Published: 09.03.2020.



On 17 March, President of Latvia will host a forum titled 'Collective memory of Latvian national resistance movement' in the Riga Castle to pay special tribute to members of the national resistance movement. President and other prominent public figures will also attend a number of other commemorative events.

17 March is a symbolic date. It became a remembrance day because in 1944, on 17 March, Latvian Central Council led by Professor Konstantīns Čakste completed collecting signatures for memorandum demanding de facto restoration of independent Latvia on behalf of the Latvian people. Memorandum also insisted on de iure continuity of the state of Latvia and its constitution. President of Latvia Egils Levits has already urged Saeima to designate this day as an official national resistance movement remembrance day.

Egils Levits believes that as Latvia enters into the second century of its statehood, it is important to bring the memories of patriotic Latvians who resisted the occupation back, revive the collective memory of resistance movement and honour the national heroes who kept the dream of Latvian nation about own state and freedom alive throughout all those years of occupation.

According to the President Levits, national resistance movement remembrance day will be a strong reminder of what it took to maintain the continuity of Latvia's statehood throughout both periods of totalitarian occupation and how important it is to continue to protect the independence and democracy of Latvia today.

Conference hosted by the President of Latvia Egils Levits in the Riga Castle on 17 March will bring together experts of history and different museums, members of the national resistance movement and those who preserve the public memory of national

resistance movement. Forum will be live streamed on President's [YouTube channel](#).

President of Latvia Egils Levits plans to attend the following events honouring the memory of national resistance movement on 17 March:

8:30–9:15 – Memorial service honouring the members of national resistance movement at St. Mary Magdalene's Church, Riga, 2 Klosterā Street

16:00–18:00 – Visit to National Partisans' Bunker in Īle

18:00–18:30 – Public candlelight vigil at the Freedom Monument

Academic student society Austrums, University of Latvia Faculty of Law and Latvian central Council Memorial Fund is also starting a new tradition this year with annual open lecture on democracy based on ideas of Professor Konstantīns Čakste. The first Konstantīns Čakste open lecture on democracy titled 'Challenges to Latvian democracy then and now' will be given by Chair of the Constitution Court Professor Ineta Ziemeļe, PhD, on 17 March at 16:00 in the Aula Parva of the University of Latvia. Lecture will be open to the general public.

Agenda of the forum 'Collective memory of Latvian national resistance movement' co-organised by Chancery of the President of Latvia and University of Latvia Institute of History

10:00 – Opening of the forum: speech of the President of Latvia Egils Levits

10:10–11:30 – Memory of national resistance movement across the regions of Latvia:

Zemgale: Īle Bunker and memory of national partisans in Zemgale (Normunds Jērumis, archaeologist, researcher of University of Latvia Institute of History)

Kurzeme: National resistance movement museum in Viesturi, Renda (Andrejs Keizars, founder of the museum)

Vidzeme: historic exhibition 'Flames of conscience' in Cēsis (Elīna Kalniņa, curator of exhibition 'Flames of conscience')

Latgale: battles fought by national partisans in Northern Latgale; preservation of historical memory in Viļaka district (Rita Gruševa, Director of Viļaka district museum)

Selonia: Indāns-Grāvelsons national partisans and fight against occupation of Selonia (Haralds Bruņinieks, historian)

12:00–12:20 – National resistance movement in Latvia: history and memories (Dr. hist. Uldis Neiburgs, researcher of University of Latvia Institute of History)

12:20–13:20 – Discussion on future areas of research and preservation of memory of national resistance movement moderated by Dr. sc. com. Mārtiņš Kaprāns, researcher of University of Latvia Institute of Philosophy and Sociology

13:20–13:40 – Closing of the forum: closing remarks by President of Latvia Egils Levits

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