

President of Latvia thanks Canada for strengthening regional security in the Baltics

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On 14 June, President of Latvia Egils Levits, who is currently in Brussels to attend the NATO summit, met with Prime Minister of Canada Justin Pierre James Trudeau.

President of Latvia referred to the history of diplomatic relations between the two countries and thanked Canada for not recognising the incorporation of Latvia into the Soviet Union *de facto* and *de iure*, and becoming the first G-7 country to re-establish its diplomatic ties with Latvia on 26 August 1991.

On the subject of regional and collective security, President Levits thanked Canada for its significant contribution to security of the Baltic region and its defence coordination leadership within NATO enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) battle group Latvia. President underlined that Latvia would appreciate if Canada decided to continue to lead the eFP battle group Latvia as its framework country post 2023.

Heads of both states expressed their support to Crimean Platform, an international initiative for Ukraine, calling it a useful instrument for continuously reminding the world of Russian occupation of Crimea. Given the historic experience it has had, Latvia is fully aware of the importance of non-recognition of occupation by other states, Egils Levits added. Presidents of both countries agreed that Russia's attempts to destabilise the world must be counter-balanced by credible defence capabilities and political will to defend democratic values.

Presidents also talked about impact of climate change on security. Both sides echoed similar views about resilience and unity of NATO, as well as *NATO2030* development vision.

President of Latvia expressed Latvia's unwavering support for Canada's attempts to achieve the release of its citizens illegally

detained by Chinese authorities.

Egils Levits also took the opportunity to congratulate Canada on winning the 2021 Ice-Hockey World Championship which took place in Riga.

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