

President of Latvia: protection of our national democracy and values is an everyday task

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[Egils Levits](#)



On 20 January, which is the national Barricade Remembrance Day, President of Latvia Egils Levits attended flower-laying ceremonies at the Freedom Monument and commemorative stones of Bastejkalns.

'Today we remember the events and pay tribute to those who died during the 1991 January Barricades in Riga.

Barricades have a special place in the history of Latvian nation and were pivotal to our statehood. Barricades manifested our inner sense of freedom and long-suppressed thirst for justice. We dared to come together in one solidary force.

We were driven by conviction that Latvian nation can survive over time only if we have our own state. It is the only solution. We had our sights firmly fixed on breaking free again. We wanted to bring our state back. There was no doubt or fear of consequences. Our determination was firm.

Barricades confirmed our aspirations to the rest of the world, and, first and foremost, ourselves. Flames of Barricades were fuelled by painful experiences of totalitarian rule that several generations went through, combined with clear understanding that we will have to be ready to fight for our right to live in our country.

This is what our predecessors fought for. This is what united the participants of Barricades. Today they are defended by our army and National Guard. Our NATO membership is key to our sovereignty.

Protection of our national democracy and values is an everyday task, despite all temporary challenges and insecurities we are exposed to. We must continue to raise our moral standards to make them stronger.

Let us keep our nation's foundations and ideals strong. Foundations and ideals that people from all over Latvia came to defend in Riga 31 years ago, lighting fires all around the Old Town.

Let us not forget these events and be forever grateful to those who stood on the Barricades,' President Levits said in a special video message.

<https://www.president.lv/en/article/president-latvia-protection-our-national-democracy-and-values-everyday-task>