

Address by the President of Latvia, Egils Levits, at the concert marking the Proclamation of the Republic of Latvia at the Latvian National Theatre

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[Egils Levits](#)



Dear people of Latvia!

Excellencies!

Ladies and Gentlemen!

When the Latvian state was founded 104 years ago in a Riga destroyed by war and occupied by a foreign army, it was not at all easy to see the future.

The country's founders needed the courage of imagination and foresight because back in 1918 they were tasked with founding a state that must last forever.

In the thought of the state, the future is always present.

A state represents a creation forged by the people's will and sustained by the people. Each generation has its challenges in history. Each generation is responsible for a very small part of the state's long lifespan.

This is a time for the strengthening and reinvigoration of Latvia and Europe. Our generation is responsible for consolidating and safeguarding the values of the Western world.

80 years ago, Latvia and other new democracies were wiped off the map by authoritarian imperialism. Western democracies watched helplessly. There is a generation, which includes those present here in this room, who witnessed this tragic chapter of history.

The West has learned these pivotal lessons. We now understand that we cannot allow commercial gains or trade access to create critical dependencies on autocratic regimes. We know that we cannot allow adversaries to exploit inherent democratic freedoms to undermine democracy itself. We know that we cannot take democracy for granted and that it must be protected, if necessary – with weapons.

The Western world is not powerless today. We are already helping and will continue to help Ukraine. Russia will be held accountable for its crimes. There is no doubt about it – Ukraine is fighting for our Western democratic values.

The poet and politician Rainis once said, “Our nation can and will exist for thousands of years if it reaches for the highest goals of humanity.”

We grow and develop to reflect the time we live in. Great goals unite us and give us the strength to endure trials and difficulties.

Our generation takes responsibility for an educated, prosperous, united and strong Latvia.

Future Latvia and future Europe are this generation's responsibility. For everyone in their own country and all nations together. This is crucial for our existence.

Our ideas must be bold, our thoughts ambitious. That's what the founding fathers of Latvia had.

Let us continue Latvia in love.

God bless Latvia!



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