

President of Latvia: multilateralism is key to lasting global peace

Published: 22.03.2023.

Foreign policy

Egils Levits



On 22 March, George Vella, President of the Republic of Malta, and Mrs Miriam Vella arrived in Latvia for an official visit. After the meeting at the Riga Castle, presidents of Latvia and Malta gave statements to media.

Statement by the President of Latvia Egils Levits, following the meeting with President of Malta George Vella

This is the first bilateral visit of Maltese president to Latvia since 2006.

Your predecessor, Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, visited Latvia in 2018 to take part in the meeting between heads of state of European Union (EU) parliamentary republics, the so-called 'Arraiolos group'.

Last October, I attended the Arraiolos group meeting in Malta. It was a very fruitful meeting, which focused on the common EU agenda and lead us to a better understanding of current challenges.

Latvia and Malta have built good bilateral relations. We are two like-minded countries. We both belong to the EU. Malta is a neutral country outside NATO, but we interact well within the framework of the UN.

Malta is currently a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council. During its presidency of the UN Security Council, Malta showed great leadership and successfully coordinated debates on deeply significant issues. We value the contribution of Malta to Security Council work very highly and hope that our candidature for UN Security Council in 2025 will be accepted.

Today's meeting with President Vella focused on the common EU agenda. Our positions in the Union are remarkably close.

We discussed the situation in Ukraine and concluded that the victory of Ukraine is the only outcome of this war. We condemn Russian aggression against Ukraine. NATO member states continue to provide military support. Malta is also offering its support and has taken in refugees from Ukraine.

We agreed on the need to create an *ad hoc* international tribunal. Latvia is actively advocating for such a step in the UN.

We also discussed migration. Illegal migration is a big challenge, especially for southern countries such as Malta. We concluded that illegal migration must stop, and legal channels for migration must be provided by countries that support such steps.

We must reinforce the EU's external borders. That is why Latvia contributes to the work of Malta-based EU Agency for Asylum and European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex).

President Vella and I agreed that it is necessary to enhance dialogue with the so-called Global South. Malta is located next to the African continent and has come under severe migratory pressure.

We must aspire to convince Global South that multilateralism is key to lasting global peace. Dialogue must be intensified. And Malta, considering its direct involvement, will be instrumental in shaping dialogue on behalf of the EU the same way we shape EU dialogue on deterrence against Russian aggression.

Our countries are essential for EU's analytical capacity.



<https://www.president.lv/en/article/president-latvia-multilateralism-key-lasting-global-peace>