

# Address by the President of Latvia, Egils Levits, at the Bucha Summit

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[Foreign policy](#)

[Egils Levits](#)



Dear President Zelenskyy,

Dear Colleagues,

Friends,

In the Latvian language, the word 'Bucha' means 'kiss'.

But sadly, one year ago, Bucha took on a new, very different meaning.

It is now a tragic symbol of Russia's war against Ukraine.

It was the first place where the atrocious war crimes committed by the Russians were uncovered.

Last April I saw in Kyiv Oblast with my own eyes the devastation caused by Russia's attack.

I saw the wrecked buildings, the burnt cars, the fallen bridges, the looted shops, the shelled churches.

However, I knew, the damage inflicted was even greater in terms of human cost.

Death, injury, torture, rape.

Peaceful civilians forced to flee their homes. In Europe, in the year 2023.

The people of Ukraine have shown incredible resilience.

Latvians truly admire the bravery of Ukrainians in the fight for their lives, for their freedom, for democracy, for the security of all Europe.

Russia must immediately cease its military aggression and withdraw its forces from Ukraine.

Latvia joins the Bucha Declaration.

Today at the Bucha Summit, we support Ukrainian efforts to seek accountability for the crimes under international law committed on the territory of Ukraine.

Latvia welcomes the decision of the International Criminal Court to issue arrest warrants for Vladimir Putin and Maria Lvova-Belova.

It is an important step towards demanding accountability from every individual responsible for war crimes, crimes committed in Ukraine.

Latvia also calls for the establishment of an *ad hoc* international tribunal, ideally under the auspices of the United Nations, to ensure Russia's accountability for the crime of aggression against Ukraine.

Latvia will support Ukraine for as long as it takes.

Ukraine must win this war, so that we all have a lasting and just peace.

*Slava Ukraini!*

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