

Address by the President of Latvia, Egils Levits, at the 30th anniversary event of the American Chamber of Commerce in Latvia

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[Egils Levits](#)



Good evening, dear Ambassador,

Good evening, dear guests,

I am pleased to be here tonight and address such a distinguished audience.

Tonight, we celebrate the American Chamber of Commerce in Latvia. You have been an important partner in our economic life since 1993.

The ties that unite Latvia and the United States go back much longer than 30 years. It goes well beyond trade.

As you may know, our first Prime Minister Kārlis Ulmanis studied in the US. So did our current Prime Minister Krišjānis Kariņš. It seems to be a booster for political careers.

Politically, our relationship is rock solid. Diplomatic relations between our two countries were founded in 1922. The renewal of our independence on the basis of state continuity because of the politics of non-recognition of Soviet occupation by the United States.

Individual freedom, equality of opportunities, self-reliance and hard work for the promise of material success – these are the values Latvians understand and share with fellow Americans.

Our economic relationship, of course, is not just about buying and selling goods. It's about creating a sense of trust and community between our two nations and people.

Of course, the Latvian community in the United States since WW2, as well as the American citizens in Latvia have made a big contribution to our political, economic and cultural ties.

Many of us remember Ints Siliņš, a child of Latvian refugees, who became the first US ambassador in Latvia when we regained independence. So, too, let's remember Ojārs Kalniņš, another post-war refugee child who became Latvia's ambassador to the US back in 1993.

Those early days in the 90s were full of important events, including the visit of Bill and Hillary Clinton in 1994. Some of you here, I'm sure, were at President Clinton's meeting with the newly formed American Chamber of Commerce in Latvia.

In the 90's we had to establish Latvia's reputation as a trusted country and appealing destination for international investors. American Chamber of Commerce in Latvia provided an important network and platform for businesses that want to invest in Latvia.

Your members have been truly important drivers of a favourable business environment in Latvia. For that, we are very thankful. Your contribution is much appreciated.

There are many platforms where our interests intersect.

In security it is NATO. We appreciate the strong American military defence support to Latvia. Together as strong allies we will make sure that Ukraine wins this war started by Russia.

In transport, digital and energy it is the Three Seas Initiative where American Chamber of Commerce in Latvia was very visible at the Riga Summit last year.

Mr Ambassador,

Dear guests,

I firmly believe that the transatlantic links in the backbone of security and economic prosperity of both US and Europe.

Therefore, I cannot support some unclear concepts of "European autonomy", unless they are translated as strong and fair partnership.

In my view, the US and Europe should be partners and allies in all areas – in global politics, in security and maintaining peace in Europe and in other parts of the world, in economy and in technology.

Historically, Europe and North America share the same values – specifically Western values.

The most important of them are democracy, rule of law, human rights.

Together Europe and North America are building the so-called West.

In our global multipolar world, the West is still the most powerful global player.

We believe in our values and don't want to give them up.

Therefore, we should maintain this position in the world.

For this, the transatlantic partnership is crucial.

We, Latvians, as part of Europe, as member state of the European Union, understand this very well.

And therefore, I am proud that our European friends are calling Latvia a Pro-American country.

Partly, that is your merit, too. And I thank you for that.

Happy birthday, dear friends, at the American Chamber of Commerce in Latvia!



<https://www.president.lv/en/article/address-president-latvia-egils-levits-30th-anniversary-event-american-chamber-commerce-latvia>