

Address by the President of Latvia Edgars Rinkēvičs at the charity concert in support of Ukraine 'Together with Ukraine!'

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Mr. Ambassador!

Madam Speaker of the Saeima!

Dear guests!

Dear people of Latvia!

All friends and supporters of Ukraine!

It has been two years since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Two years have passed since the onset of this act of pure evil. This war has been driven by an attempt to destroy Ukraine, a country that wants nothing from Russia except independence. There is nothing greater, nothing more precious than independence, just like the value of human life. Both Ukrainians and Latvians understand this.

Today we commemorate all those who have fallen in Ukraine's struggle for freedom, including one of our own, Corporal Vitālijs Smirnovs. Last October, he made the ultimate sacrifice for Ukraine, as well as for Latvia and the whole of Europe. His sacrifice was not in vain. Neither were the sacrifices made by our forefathers in the War of Independence, the Second World War, or the Third Awakening. Our fathers and our grandfathers cared deeply about living in a free, independent country, and they fought, so their descendants could live in one too. We must carry on this spirit – working to safeguard our and Ukrainian freedom!

There will come a time when many stories are told about this time, detailing what everyone was thinking, and believing. However, this is not the time for storytelling. Today we must focus and strengthen our efforts, so that when the time comes for memories and stories, we will not feel shame or regret.

I would like to express my gratitude to all those working tirelessly to support and protect Ukraine. Your selflessness and dedication place you on the right side of history. My commitment remains undeterred – to continue supporting Ukraine until victory is achieved. Because defending justice and humanity is never a luxury.

May the spirit of tonight's songs give strength to us all, especially our Ukrainian friends!

Glory to Ukraine!

Long live Latvia!



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