

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **The Prime Minister: Latvia supports close cooperation with the European Parliament to achieve the presidency's objectives**

Rīga/Strasbourg, January 14, 2015. On Wednesday, January 14, at the Plenary Session of the European Parliament, Prime Minister of the Republic of Latvia Laimdota Straujuma introduced the Members of the Parliament with the priorities of Latvia's Presidency of the Council of the European Union - competitive Europe, digital Europe, and internationally engaged Europe. L.Straujuma drew particular attention to current issues of Europe's security and domestic policy affairs. Despite the acts of violence in France, she called for strengthening the intercultural dialogue and an increasing respect and trust among the nations. "In the democratic world, we stand for the values of harmony, for freedom of self-expression and peaceful coexistence of different cultures and religions," said the Prime Minister.

L.Straujuma called on all EU institutions - the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission – to work together to promote growth and jobs in the European Union, to improve the internal market through the opportunities provided by digital solutions, as well as to provide a uniform and sustainable response to the global challenges - terrorism, Russia's aggression in Ukraine and the problem of migration.

During the meeting with President of the European Parliament Martin Schulz, L.Straujuma called on the European Parliament to reconsider its opinion and to agree on the Passenger Name Record system that will contribute to the identification of the suspects.

L.Straujuma and M.Schulz also agreed that the proposal of the European Commission of January 13 on the establishment of the European Fund for Strategic Investments will be examined under an expedited procedure, in close cooperation between the Council and the European Parliament to ensure that it is possible to make a decision on the establishment of the Fund during Latvia's Presidency.

Participating in the Women's Forum of the European Parliament, L.Straujuma acknowledged that Latvia has historically been among the first countries in the field of gender equality, including granting the voting right to women. At present, women's involvement in the social, political and economic life of Latvia, including the management level, can serve as a model for other countries. According to the Prime Minister, it has been achieved without positive discrimination and special regulation because the ideas of equality have long been rooted in our nation's global vision.

Speech by the Prime Minister at the Plenary Session of the European Parliament: <http://ej.uz/dfkq>

**Caption for the visual:** <http://ej.uz/kvrp>

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