

MEDIA RELEASE

Prime Minister of Latvia and the President of France unanimously agree: conditions of the Minsk ceasefire need to be fully implemented

Paris, April 27, 2015. Today in Paris, Prime Minister of Latvia Laimdota Straujuma met President of France, François Hollande and discussed bilateral economic cooperation, the current issues of the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union (hereinafter – the Latvian Presidency), the geopolitical situation in Europe and elsewhere in the world.

The President of France expressed gratitude to L.Straujuma for participation in the commemorative event held yesterday to mark the 70th anniversary of liberalization of the Natzweiler-Struthof concentration camp to which also the President of the European Council, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, the President of the European Parliament were invited. "You represented your country and the whole of Europe, and I appreciate it very much," said F.Hollande.

"I highly appreciate your invitation to this event where we met the camp's survivors and their descendants. It is important to remind the young people about the tragic crimes of World War II and the totalitarian regimes because it is the only way to ensure long life for democratic values in Europe," said L.Straujuma. L.Straujuma informed that on May 8, this year, she will visit the Salaspils Memorial to commemorate the tragic events in Latvia during totalitarian regimes in World War II.

At the meeting, discussing the key issues of the Latvian Presidency, the President of France highly praised the progress of the Presidency. "I really appreciate the way you personally and the whole Presidency's team coordinate work in the first half-year of this Presidency, by focusing on the current issues on the agenda of Europe, including migration".

Much attention was devoted to the internal and external security issues. The activities of the Latvian Presidency relating to the internal and migration affairs were discussed. The two parties discussed the issues of migration in Europe, the situation in North Africa and at the eastern borders of the EU, and shared the opinion that much attention should be devoted to the normalization of the situation in Libya and in the region as a whole. Remembering the acts of violence in France at the beginning of the Latvian Presidency, the Prime Minister drew attention to the common tasks in the fields of internal affairs and defence. "Europe's internal and external security go hand in hand, we will have to face a complex job, how to deal with today's challenges in these areas", added L.Straujuma.

L.Straujuma highly appreciated the participation of France in NATO's air policing in the Baltic States: "In this geopolitical situation, we highly value NATO's presence in Latvia and in other Baltic countries".

The two parties also discussed the current situation in Ukraine and agreed that the Minsk ceasefire conditions need to be fully implemented, and the EU will not depart from it. L.Straujuma informed that today she is leaving for a conference in Kiev, the capital city of Ukraine, about the EU's support to Ukraine in its reform process.

The Eastern Partnership Summit to be held on May 21-22, in Rīga, was also discussed, emphasizing that each of the six Eastern Partnership countries has had its own progress in implementing the reforms and each country has to be evaluated based on accomplishments, demonstrating the seriousness of the European Union's long-term relationship with the Eastern Partnership countries. L.Straujuma expressed gratitude for F.Hollande's confirmation to attend the Summit in Rīga.

Addressing the final phase of adoption of the Strategic Investment Plan for Europe or Juncker Plan when it has to be approved by the European Parliament, L.Straujuma expressed confidence that it will be done during the Latvian presidency until the middle of this year.



Latvian Presidency
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At the meeting, L.Straujuma and F.Hollande expressed the hope that the bilateral economic co-operation will be further implemented through growing number of new projects. There are 160 French companies currently operating in Latvia; however there is potential for further expansion of cooperation in various fields.

Photos available here:

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