

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2018

Joint Statement—A Declaration To Celebrate 100 Years of Independence of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania and Renewed Partnership

April 3, 2018

The United States of America, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Latvia, and the Republic of Lithuania,

Commemorating the centennial anniversary of independence of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in 2018,

Marking the beginning of diplomatic relations between the United States of America and Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania on July 28, 1922,

Recalling the consistent recognition by the United States of America of the independence of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania including through the Welles Declaration of July 23, 1940,

Recalling the commitments made by the United States of America and Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania under the Charter of Partnership Among the United States of America and the Republic of Estonia, Republic of Latvia, and Republic of Lithuania of January 16, 1998,

Acknowledging the tremendous progress achieved by Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in political stability, economic growth, and security cooperation and the contributions of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to European and international security and advancement of democratic values through their memberships in NATO and the European Union,

Desiring to create a blueprint for expanding and strengthening cooperation between the United States of America and Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania,

Affirm the following principles and ideals to guide the further development of mutually beneficial relations:

Principles of Partnership

The United States of America and Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania share the view that peace, security and prosperity depend on strong sovereign nations that respect their citizens at home and cooperate to promote peace abroad. The partnership between the United States of America and Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania is based on our joint dedication to the principles of democracy, individual liberty, and the rule of law. We remain firmly committed to the principles of national sovereignty, the sanctity of borders, and the inviolable territorial integrity of all European nations.

Security Cooperation

The United States of America and Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania share a continued commitment to European security, and pledge to deepen our collaboration to confront forces threatening our common values, security interests, and shared vision. NATO, under the strong leadership of the United States, is the fundamental bedrock of transatlantic ties and the cornerstone of collective security. Together, we will continue to improve NATO's ability to provide strong deterrence and defense. The United States of America and Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania reaffirm their ironclad commitment to Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania will continue to modernize their armed forces to enhance interoperability with the United States and other NATO Allies, but also to build territorial

defense capabilities in fulfillment of their Article 3 obligations. Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania will work to further enhance regional infrastructure to support additional U.S. and NATO rotational deployments and exercises in the region. The United States of America commends Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania for meeting their Wales Summit commitments on defense spending and taking a leadership role in the Alliance on burden sharing. The United States of America, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania will continue to support NATO activities in addressing hybrid threats, including through the NATO Centers of Excellence in the Baltic States.

In addition to cooperation within the NATO Alliance, the United States of America and Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania value their longstanding bilateral and regional security relationships, as exemplified inter alia by the State Partnership Programs begun in 1993 between Estonia and the Maryland National Guard, Latvia and the Michigan National Guard, and Lithuania and the Pennsylvania National Guard. The United States of America and Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania value their cooperation on the common fight against transnational terrorism, and pledge to strengthen cooperation in counterterrorism and cybersecurity, as well as in the fields of strategic communications, border security, and nuclear, safety, security and nonproliferation.

The United States of America intends to continue periodic deployment of forces to the Baltic States to strengthen deterrence and to catalyze the efforts of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania to develop their national defense. The United States is determined to help Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania to improve their military readiness and capabilities through sustained security assistance. We continue to explore new ideas and opportunities, including air defense, bilaterally and in NATO, to enhance deterrence across the region.

Economic Cooperation

The United States of America and Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania share a common interest in fair and reciprocal trade and investment among partners that provide economic benefits to all concerned. We will strengthen our cooperation to promote the rule of law and improve the security of financial markets. Working together, we will unlock the economic potential of citizens and businesses by promoting technological innovation and access to capital. We will encourage the exchange of investments, goods, and services between the United States of America and Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania and will intensify the exchange of trade missions and business forums to support our economic growth.

The United States of America and Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania will partner to strengthen cooperation to enhance energy security and independence through diversification of sources, supplies and routes, to include U.S. exports of liquefied natural gas and other state-of-the art energy technologies. We will seek to bolster the individual and collective resilience of our critical infrastructure, including energy, through the development and enhancement of existing cross-border transmission routes, increased integration of regional energy markets, and continuous improvement of our cybersecurity capabilities. We will also continue to strengthen cooperation in the security and defense industries, to include procurement of each others' technologies and equipment.

People to People Contacts

The United States of America and Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania share a desire to continue to increase and expand ties between and among communities and states. We celebrate the contributions of citizens of the Baltic States and Americans of Baltic heritage in the fields of politics, economics, culture and the arts, science and sports, and commit to

continuing to encourage student and youth exchanges, scholarship programs, cooperation among universities, innovation and research, and support for tourism and private sector economic partnerships. The United States of America and Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania will continue to work together to support the development of independent, professionally strong and objective media and journalism, to promote critical thinking, media and information literacy.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Categories: Joint Statements : Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, independence, 100th anniversary.

Subjects: Europe : Baltic States :: Energy cooperation with U.S.; Europe : Baltic States :: Independence, 100th anniversary; Europe : Baltic States :: Relations with U.S.; Europe : Baltic States :: Security cooperation with U.S.; Europe : Baltic States :: Trade with U.S.; Holidays and special observances : Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, independence, 100th anniversary; North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

DCPD Number: DCPD201800213.