



CONFERENCE DEDICATED TO THE 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BALTIC WAY

Join the Baltic Way!

6 September 2024 at 10:00-14:15

The Baltic Hall, Saeima of the Republic of Latvia, Jēkaba iela 6/8, Riga

Inscribed on UNESCO's Memory of the World Register, the Baltic Way was a campaign held on 23 August 1989—a human chain organised by the Lithuanian movement *Sąjūdis*, the Popular Front of Latvia, and the Popular Front of Estonia (*Rahvarinne*). About two million people of the Baltic States linked hands on the Vilnius-Riga-Tallinn motorway in a referendum of self-determination unlike any other in global history, taking a direct vote for the freedom and independence of their countries.

Back then, we wanted to remind the world that the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, signed in Moscow on 23 August 1939 on partitioning Europe into spheres of influence, was an international crime that had led to the USSR's ongoing occupation of the three Baltic States and control over Eastern Europe. We succeeded, and we left the "Russian world".

The purpose of the conference is to remind that we must keep standing, and not only on the Baltic Way, but also on the way of all democratic countries and peoples. Today, the Baltic Way has found new contexts and relevance. Over the past few years, the neo-fascist Russia has not only started to openly boast about the Hitler-Stalin Pact of 23 August 1939, but also revived it in the war and genocide against Ukraine.

The Baltic Way will no longer remain just a form of non-violent resistance. It must lead the free world into a decisive "full-scale" battle against evil. United for Ukraine and for Europe. 35 years ago, the Baltic Way proved that we can do it.

9:30 Arrival and registration, coffee

10:00 Conference opening

A video adventure. *My Baltic Way in the Album of the Century*

Opening remarks

Daiga Mieriņa, Speaker of the Saeima

Evika Siliņa, Prime Minister of Latvia

Velta Čebotarenoka, President of the 4 May Declaration Club

10:20 **Lecture *Morality and realism in international relations. The Baltic Way and other ways***

Guðni Th. Jóhannesson, President of the Republic of Iceland (2016-2024)

First panel: The Baltic Way then and now

Moderator: **Gundars Rēders**, journalist

Presentations

10:50 **The Baltic Way: A way of sustainable action**

Sandra Kalniete, Member of the European Parliament

11:05 **View from Bonn to the Baltic Way**

Michael Gahler, Member of the European Parliament

11:20 Discussion

Commentary:

Egils Levits, *President of Latvia (2019-2023), Special Representative of the Republic of Latvia in Matters of International Law and National Responsibility*

Gatis Krūmiņš, *Senior Researcher, Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences*

Participants:

Guðni Th. Jóhannesson, *President of the Republic of Iceland (2016-2024)*

Sandra Kalniete, *Member of the European Parliament*

Michael Gahler, *Member of the European Parliament*

12:20 Coffee break

Second panel: The legacy of the Baltic Way

Moderator: **Pauls Raudseps**, *journalist*

Presentations

13:00 **Decolonising Russia: Imaginary fears and actual guarantees for international security**

Refat Chubarov, *Chairman of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People*

13:15 **The Baltic Way and the collapse of the USSR: The international dimension**

Una Bergmane, *Researcher, Finnish Academy of Sciences, University of Helsinki*

13:30 Discussion

Commentary:

Dainis Īvāns, *Chair of the Popular Front of Latvia (1988-1990),*

First Vice-Chair of the Supreme Council (1990-1992)

Andris Teikmanis, *Chair of the People's Deputy Council of Riga (1989-1994),*
Member of the Supreme Council (1990-1993)

Participants:

Refat Chubarov, *Chairman of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People*

Una Bergmane, *Researcher, Finnish Academy of Sciences, University of Helsinki*

14:10 Conclusion of the Conference

Dainis Īvāns, *Chair of the Popular Front of Latvia (1988-1990),*

First Vice-Chair of the Supreme Council (1990-1992)

CONFERENCE ORGANISERS: Saeima of the Republic of Latvia, 4 May Declaration Club, and the Popular Front Museum Department of the National History Museum of Latvia
SUPPORTERS OF THE CONFERENCE: Chancery of the President of Latvia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Latvia, Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences, and Konrad Adenauer Foundation

The conference will be streamed online on the Saeima website www.saeima.lv, the Saeima Facebook account, and the 4 May Declaration Club website www.4majis.lv