

Joint Declaration

to mark Three Decades

of the Re-establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Iceland and Estonia, Latvia and
Lithuania

On the 26th of August 1991, Mr. Lennart Meri, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Estonia, Mr. Janis Jurkans, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Latvia, and Mr. Algirdas Saudargas, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania, met with Mr. Jon Baldvin Hannibalsson, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iceland in Höfði, Reykjavík, to sign Joint Declarations on the Re-establishment of diplomatic relations.

The Declarations represented the first act of recognition by another state of the restored independence of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, subsequently recognized by the international community.

Today, the Foreign Ministers of Estonia, Iceland, Latvia and Lithuania meet again in Reykjavik. Much has been accomplished in the last three decades of our relations. The countries are close allies within NATO – the strongest collective defence Alliance – and true partners in European political and economic cooperation, as well as in the international arena. They stand shoulder to shoulder in meeting today's grave security threats and challenges.

The Ministers affirm their strong condemnation of Russia's unprovoked, unjustified, and unlawful war in Ukraine, which is in clear violation of international law and the UN Charter. The Russian cruel aggression has had a catastrophic impact on Ukraine and caused not only tremendous suffering of its civilian population but also serious long-term geopolitical, economic and humanitarian consequences worldwide. The Ministers stressed their steadfast unity with the people of Ukraine and underscored their unwavering commitment to provide further support for Ukraine as it stands up to Russia's aggression and is on the frontline of fight for all of Europe and values we share.

Building on the establishment of diplomatic relations 100 years ago and their restoration in 1991, the close and fruitful relations that the three countries and Iceland enjoy, the Foreign Ministers, on this solemn occasion, reaffirm their political solidarity and their strong interest in further cultivating mutual friendship, fostering bilateral trade and connectivity, as well as, enhancing international cooperation.

The Ministers underline their unwavering commitment to multilateralism, rules-based international order, protection and promotion of human rights and democracy, and the rule of law. The countries have close cooperation at the regional and international level, in the United Nations, the OSCE, the Council of Europe and other international organizations. They underline the crucial importance of defence and security cooperation, as allies within NATO and staunch supporters of strong transatlantic bond, which remain the cornerstone of security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic Area. Mindful of a rapidly evolving security environment, in particular in the context of Russia's war on Ukraine, the Ministers remain committed to further enhancing their joint efforts to strengthen collective defence and deterrence, and to build resilience against cyber and hybrid threats, including disinformation and influence operations. Moreover, Finland

and Sweden joining NATO will enhance security and stability in the whole Nordic-Baltic region and strengthen the Alliance.

Estonia, Iceland, Latvia and Lithuania are close partners in Europe within the framework of the European Economic Area. The Ministers steadfastly support free trade and the important role of the WTO in advancing a resilient and strong rules-based multilateral trading system. They also welcome strong cooperation on economic and development issues at the OECD and further welcome growing contacts between businesses, startup communities and digital leaders in the countries. Vibrant cultural cooperation and extensive people-to-people contacts have great value in themselves but are also a crucial part of our common platform for future relations.

Addressing climate change is more important than ever and a priority in our cooperation. The Ministers are committed to work together to mitigate climate change, including through sustainable, green energy solutions, carbon capture and removal, other green technologies and nature-based solutions at home and globally. It is essential to diversify sources of energy supply, at the same time reducing the dependency on fossil resources.

The Ministers reaffirm their continued commitment to working together and aiming to build a more secure, innovative, and competitive Nordic-Baltic region, and in this context emphasise the need to further strengthening regional cooperation in the NB8 format, the Baltic Sea cooperation as well as cooperation in the Arctic.

Done at Höfði, Reykjavík

26th of August 2022

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Minister of Foreign Affairs of
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Edgars Rinkēvičs
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