Edgars Rinkēvičs and the President of the UN General Assembly discuss the fight against disinformation, vaccination, and developments at the Latvia-Belarus border

On 24 September 2021, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Latvia, Edgars Rinkēvičs, met with the President of the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), Minister of Foreign Affairs of Maldives, Abdulla Shahid. The officials discussed the fight against disinformation, issues related to ensuring the availability of vaccines, the climate change processes, and the situation at the border between Latvia and Belarus.

During the meeting, the Latvian Foreign Minister reaffirmed Latvia’s strong support for multilateralism and the role of the UN in facing current challenges, including the pandemic, climate change and attempts to question the principles of international law. Edgars Rinkēvičs welcomed the vision and priorities set by the new UNGA President.

Being a small member state, Latvia in its work in the UN framework highlights the areas of its expertise, for instance, fighting disinformation, media freedom and equality-related issues, the Latvian Foreign Minister said. In this context, Edgars Rinkēvičs noted Latvia’s contribution to the drafting of the first resolution on media and information literacy approved by the UNGA 75th session. Latvia will continue bringing the topic of disinformation to the fore at the present UNGA session as well, the Minister confirmed.

As he briefed Abdullah Shahid about the state of play in the region, Edgars Rinkēvičs drew attention to the situation that has developed at the Latvian-Belarusian border. The Minister underlined that the Belarusian side was instrumentalising third country migrants to enforce its own interests and to create tension at the border between the two countries. Edgars Rinkēvičs called on the competent UN agencies to give attention to this matter by exerting pressure on Belarus for it to cease destructive actions that involve the facilitation of illegal migration.