

The Foreign Ministers of Latvia and Australia agree on the strengthening of cooperation

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News



On 8 August 2022, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Latvia, Edgars Rinkēvičs, met with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia, Penny Wong. The Ministers discussed bilateral cooperation, relations between the European Union and Australia, and latest international developments.

Edgars Rinkēvičs expressed his satisfaction with the opening of a Latvian Embassy in Canberra, which will have an essential role to play in the strengthening the political and economic dialogue with Australia and other Indo-Pacific countries.

The Ministers greatly appreciated the close cooperation between Latvia and Australia based on a shared understanding of the strengthening of democracy, human rights and a rules-based international order. The officials condemned in the strongest terms Russia's brutal and unprovoked aggression against Ukraine, which seriously undermines security and stability on a global scale. Edgars Rinkēvičs thanked Australia for its current military and financial support for Ukraine and for joining sanctions against Russia. The Minister noted that Ukraine needed support from the international community in its reconstruction process, and Latvia was prepared to bring its contribution.

The augmenting geopolitical challenges call for a close coordination between like-minded countries both in international organisations and in the strengthening of the EU-Australian and NATO-Australian dialogue. Australia is a significant partner for NATO in Oceania; therefore, we welcome its participation in the NATO summit in Madrid and the decision to join the NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence in Riga, Edgars Rinkēvičs said. The Ministers underlined the importance of cooperation between democratic countries and the need to protect common values in the face of alternative interpretations of international law by authoritarian regimes. Latvia and Australia have already established successful partnership in the field of combatting disinformation: they are working together in the Alliance for Multilateralism and actively engaged in furthering the *United Nations Resolution on Global Media and Information Literacy Week*

Upon the opening of the Embassy we are also interested in deepening economic cooperation, considerable contribution to which is to be brought both by the EU's Free Trade Agreement with Australia and the planned negotiations for the agreement between Latvia and Australia on the avoidance of double taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion, Edgars Rinkēvičs emphasised.

The bilateral relations between Latvia and Australia and directions for further cooperation are set out in a Joint Statement that was issued following the meeting.

Photo: Nathan Fultin, DFAT Media

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