

# Political Directors of Baltic, Nordic and US foreign ministries discuss consequences of Russia's war in Ukraine and its impact on the region's security

Published: 28.04.2023.

NB8

News



On 27-28 April 2023, Political Directors from the foreign services of the Baltic States, the Nordic countries and the United States of America gathered in Riga for their e-PINE (Enhanced Partnership in Northern Europe) meeting. The Political Directors discussed issues related to Russia's war on Ukraine, challenges posed by the war to the rules-based international order and transatlantic security, preparations for the meeting of NATO Heads of State and Government in Vilnius this coming July, and relations with China. An exchange of views was held on developments in the Eastern Neighbourhood, Central Asia and the Western Balkans, especially in the context of the consequences of the war in Ukraine. The officials also discussed the role of Belarus in Russia's war on Ukraine. Latvia was represented at the meeting by the Under Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Political Director Andžejs Viļumsons.

Speaking about the sanction policy, Andžejs Viļumsons highlighted the importance of close coordination to prevent the efforts to circumvent sanctions imposed on Russia and Belarus. He reiterated Latvia's position on the need to hold Russia accountable for the crime of aggression against Ukraine, including by setting up a special international tribunal.

The participants agreed on the need to continue military and other support to Ukraine. They expressed hope that Sweden would also become a member of NATO before the NATO summit in Vilnius.

## *Background information*

The e-PINE initiative was launched in 2003 in order to enhance the U.S. cooperation with the Baltic States and the Nordic region. Political Directors from Ministries of Foreign Affairs meet twice a year. The main fields of cooperation in the e-PINE format are security policy, relations with neighbouring countries and the development of economic relations.

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