

## Resolution of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania on cooperation on the EU Third Pillar Issues (20 November 1997)

**Caption:** On 20 November 1997, the Latvian, Estonian and Lithuanian Heads of Government adopt a joint resolution on the strengthening of their cooperation in the field of justice and home affairs (JHA).

**Source:** Resolution of the Heads of Government of the Republic of Latvia, the Republic of Estonia and the Republic of Lithuania on Cooperation on the EU Third Pillar Issues (20 November 1997). [ON-LINE]. [Riga]: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia, [23.05.2005]. Available on <http://www.mfa.gov.lv/en/news/press-releases/1997/nov/2034/?print=on>.

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## **Resolution of the Heads of Government of the Republic of Latvia, the Republic of Estonia and the Republic of Lithuania on Cooperation on the EU Third Pillar Issues (20 November 1997)**

We, the Heads of Government of the Republic of Latvia, the Republic of Estonia and the Republic of Lithuania met within the Baltic Council of Ministers on November 20, 1997, and, in the context of Baltic states common approach to European integration, discussed the necessity to strengthen practical co-operation on the EU Third Pillar issues.

We believe that extended co-operation within justice and home affairs among Baltic states having similar short and medium term priorities to be resolved in this field, will serve as a complementary impetus towards fulfilling the challenges in the field of EU Third Pillar.

Co-operation in this field is based on mutual interest for the Baltic states as well as for the EU. In this regard, we stress the need to find co-operative solutions in addressing common priorities of the Baltic states in the Third Pillar areas such as strengthening of the external borders control, fighting organised crime, illegal migration, drug trafficking, money laundering and improving asylum procedures.

Recognising the importance of the Resolutions of the Baltic Assembly's 10th and 11th sessions and the Joint Communiqué of the Presidents of the Baltic states signed on November 10, 1997, we are committed to make concrete steps to intensify co-operation on Third Pillar issues.

In the context of strengthening co-ordination of activities within the Third Pillar area we emphasise the importance of the Joint Nordic initiative supporting the efforts of Baltic states in the field of justice and home affairs.

To facilitate co-operation both in the framework of practical assistance initiatives and in order to enhance the overall trilateral performance we agree upon the necessity of creating a joint ad hoc Working Group on EU Third Pillar issues, consisting of the national representatives from the Committee on Justice and Legislation, Committee on Prevention and Control of Crime, Committee on Border Guarding, Committee on Customs and Committee on Migrations.

We note that the legal basis for co-operation has been developing. The Agreement on Co-operation among the Ministries of Interior of the Baltic states has been concluded. Further improvement of the legislative framework is necessary.

We stress that the priority of the co-operation on the Third Pillar issues is securing the Baltic states' Eastern borders, that foresees providing the necessary preconditions in each Baltic state.

On the co-operation on securing the Baltic states' Eastern borders we will continue the mutual harmonisation and implementation of unified rules and methods of border control based on the EU principles, develop the methods and systems of mutual exchange of information and co-ordinate the technology of border and customs control.

We point out that work at the joint project of the Baltic States Governmental Data Communication Network has to be continued.

In order to ensure effective implementation of regional projects it is necessary to improve considerably the co-operation between the Ministries of Interior of the Baltic States, as well as improve the work of the Committee on Prevention and Control of Crime of the Baltic Council of Ministers.

To improve co-operation on fighting illegal migration, the Committee of Migration issues of the Baltic Council of Ministers shall continue planning joint activities restricting illegal migration.

We underline the importance of fight against the drug trafficking. The Ministers of the Interior of the Baltic

states have established a group of officials in the framework of the Baltic Council of Ministers to co-ordinate the efforts in the fight against drug trafficking as well as have signed a co-operation protocol at a meeting on May 12, 1997. We stress our full support to activities of the group and encourage intensification of an joint efforts to this end.

Guntars Krasts  
Prime Minister  
Republic of Latvia

Mart Siimann  
Prime Minister  
Republic of Estonia

Gediminas Vagnorius  
Prime Minister  
Republic of Lithuania