

## United we stand

Feeling of solidarity is one of the cornerstones of patriotism. It gets the feelings associated with a unique, special features, which relate to the homeland and its people. Solidarity is a unifying opinion, feeling, purpose or interest among a group of people having unifying feelings and clear purpose or interest them. Soliarity play an important role in homeland history and certain historical events, which creates a certain sense of community. Solidarity gets its meaning only when the life forces - each in ones own environment - be actively involved in shaping the future that will bring peace and hope for all.

On 23 August 1939 foreign ministers of the USSR and Germany - Vyacheslav Molotov and Joachim von Ribbentrop, as ordered by their superiors Stalin and Hitler, signed a treaty which affected the fate of Europe and the entire world. This pact, and the secret clauses it contained, divided the spheres of influence of the USSR and Germany and led to World War II, and to the occupation of the three Baltic States - Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians however, are different in language, religion, life view but they all are united by belonging to Baltic. These nations love their country, they take care of the environment, and their property matters to them; moreover, they are pronounced individualists and tend to keep to themselves. However, if need arises, these nations are able to become united and achieve great things. Latvians, Lithuanians and EStonians were ready for the Singing Revolution and the Baltic Way, when in 1989 many hundred thousand people of Latvia, Lithuanian and Estonia, irrespective of their ethnicity and religious affiliation, went into the streets and nearly two million people joined hands to create a 600 km long human chain through the Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, creating a synergy in the drive for freedom that united the three countries and illustrating solidarity among the three nations.

The Baltic Way brought important changes to the history of the world. This was achieved through social unity and through the joint commitment and confidence manifested by every individual in pursuing the common goal. This impressive act of non-violent protest and solidarity whilst keeping sovereignty was a living example of the culture of peace, opening up access to information and leading to the acknowledgement of the secret treaty and its hideous consequences for the whole world. It increased the opportunity for the national self-determination of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and encouraged democratic movements throughout the Soviet Union. The three Baltic States succeeded in gaining their freedom in a peaceful way, creating a precedent that was, and hopefully will be, followed by a number of countries all over- the triumph of humanity over totalitarianism.

The Baltic Way was a phenomenon which showed how three small countries - the Baltic States, regardless of their unique individual national characteristics, created a cross-cultural spiritual synergy both internally and between the Baltic States in the name of a common goal - to overcome the consequences of World War II and to destroy the totalitarian regimes. The Baltic Way is a historic symbol that is alive in the collective memory, enriching the understanding of the sense and values of solidarity and freedom of expression.

