



The New Zealand Embassy presents its compliments to the Embassy of the Republic of Latvia and has the honour to inform the Embassy of the following statement issued by the Minister of External Relations and Trade, Hon Don McKinnon, on 19 December 1991.

NEW ZEALAND ESTABLISHES DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH BALTIC STATES

"The Government has established diplomatic relations with the Baltic States of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia," the Minister of External Relations and Trade, Hon Don McKinnon said today. Mr McKinnon said that New Zealand's Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Gerald McGhie, has been accredited to the three states and was expected to make his first visits in January.

"The political shape of Central and Eastern Europe has changed dramatically over the past twelve months. The people of the Baltic States have finally won back their sovereignty. We in New Zealand greatly admire the courage and determination of the Baltic peoples in their struggle for independence," the Minister said.

Mr McKinnon added that the Government would be looking at ways to forge closer links between New Zealand and Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. The Minister said that one of Ambassador McGhie's top priorities would be to discuss New Zealand's future trade and political relations with the leaders of the three states.

Jaunzēlandes vēstniecības Krievijas Federācijā nota par ārlietu un tirdzniecības ministra Donalda Makkinona 19.12.1991. paziņojumu par diplomātisko attiecību nodibināšanu ar Baltijas valstīm
Apliecināta kopija. Angļu val.

Note from the Embassy of New Zealand in the Russian Federation on the statement of 19.12.1991 by the Minister of External Relations and Trade, Donald McKinnon, regarding the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Baltic States
Attested copy.

"There are common grounds already between New Zealand and the three Baltic states. As relatively small countries, we all tend to see the world from a similar perspective. That is a good foundation for thickening up the political relationship. Extensive economic and trade links will take time to develop, and that is a challenge which New Zealand's Government and private sector will need to tackle as a team," the Minister commented.

Mr McKinnon referred to the recent decision by the OECD Group of 24 to include Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia in its programme of technical and economic assistance to Eastern Europe. "New Zealand, as a member of the G24, is pleased with this decision. The programme will be a platform on which New Zealand can play its part in encouraging economic development in the Baltic states, and can play a role in underpinning closer economic relations between the Baltic states and New Zealand," the Minister concluded.

The New Zealand Embassy avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Embassy of the Republic of Latvia the assurances of its highest consideration.

New Zealand Embassy
MOSCOW

20 January 1992



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