DECLARATION
of the Council of the
Movement of Struggle for
Freedom of Lithuania,
16 February 1949
“Give your Homeland what you must”

Partisans’ slogan
The soviet occupation of Lithuania which lasted for almost fifty years began in 1944. The same year witnessed the beginning of a partisan war against the occupant. The commanders of the partisan formations which took part in the war adopted a declaration on 16 February 1949 where they spelled out the main political aspirations of the partisans, their purport and substance. This is probably the most significant document in the almost decade-long guerrilla war against the soviet occupation in Lithuania which emphasises the aspiration inherent in the partisans’ political struggle, the restoration of an independent state, proves the existence of the universal organised resistance of Lithuanian society to the soviet occupation, and denies the soviet interpretation of the Lithuanian partisan war claiming that the fight for Lithuanian independence was “class struggle” or the struggle of “individual criminals”.

It is a unique legal act in the after-war context – there was not a single other document of a European nation containing such an outspoken declaration of the goals, aspirations and values of resistance to totalitarianism in the aftermath of World War II; that is why the Declaration can, beyond doubt, be considered a politically significant victory of Lithuanian partisans and proof that the Lithuanian nation never abandoned the idea of its own state even under the brutal soviet occupation, fought for it and remained part of Western political civilisation in its cultural and geopolitical orientation that declares supremacy of the rule of law over coercion.

The Declaration expressed the will of the nation under partisan war conditions therefore its text is concise and laconic as well as comprehensive and meaningful, underpinned by the key values of Western political culture: self-determination of nations, democracy, human rights, dignity, Christian Faith, and social sensitivity. The document validated the Lithuanian partisan movement across the country and the partisan leaders were granted the status of the Provisional Council of the Lithuanian Nation that represented the whole resisting nation. The Declaration set out the features of the political system of the future state, stipulated responsibilities of its major political institutions, and emphasised the significance of justice, national identity development, religion, social care, and economic reforms.

Lithuanian partisans’ hopes for Western countries’ support in maintaining the pre-World War II status quo in Europe, in the Declaration, rested on the Atlantic Charter and the US President Harry Truman’s 12-point political programme expressly noting US support to the nations oppressed by external aggressors. The occupied Lithuanian nation also expressed its will to become a member of Western organisations – first and foremost, of the United Nations Organisation founded after World War II, and later maybe of the process of European
integration. The politicians, who launched European integration in the 1950ies, were also guided by the principles enshrined in the Atlantic Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is noteworthy that the soviet and Nazi occupations were treated equally negatively in the Declaration, the way they are seen in today’s trajectories of European remembrance of Nazi and communist crimes.

The Declaration was signed at the meeting of the Lithuanian partisan commanders in Minaičių Village (Radviliškio District) on 16 February 1949. It was signed by eight partisan commanders, thus all partisan units were represented, in the bunker of the commander of Prisikėlimo (Engl. Resurrection) District: Jonas Žemaitis-Vytautas, Aleksandras Grybinas-Faustas, Vytautas Gužas-Kardas, Juozas Šibaila-Merainis, Bronius Liesis-Naktis, Leonardas Grigonis-Užpalis, Adolfas Ramanauskas-Vanagas, and Petras Bartkus-Žadgaila. The date of the signature of the Declaration, 16th of February, and the term used in the text, the Provisional Council of the Nation, imply a symbolic link with the Lithuania of 1918, whose forefathers, the Signatories, signed the Act of Independence, and whose children, the Lithuanian after-war partisans, aspired at restoring it.

The Seimas of the restored Republic of Lithuania recognised the significance of the Declaration to the continuity of the Lithuanian state and passed the law on its status within the legal system of the Republic of Lithuania. In historical and legal terms, the Declaration is a piece of legislation which stipulates the continuity of the Lithuanian state under occupation, is a programme document on the restoration of the state, lays out the constitutional foundations of the Lithuanian state to be restored which reflect the main principles of Western political culture in the occupied Lithuania and in the Lithuania of the future.
Declaration of the Council of the Movement of Struggle for Freedom of Lithuania, 16 February 1949

Central and Eastern Europe during the Cold War

- USSR
- Baltic States occupied by the USSR
- States, Members of the Warsaw Pact

Meeting of Vyčio District and Kęstučio District partisans. [1949]

[Image of a group of partisans]

[Map of Central and Eastern Europe]
Declaration of the Council of the Movement of Struggle for Freedom of Lithuania

Lietuvos Leisvos Novos Sąjūdžio Tarybos

Deklaracija

Lietuvos Leisvos Novos Sąjūdžio Taryba, atstovaujama visą Lietuvos teritorijos esminiai visuomenės sąlygos vadovas vadovaujamos Karinio visuomenės grupuotės, būtent:

a/ Rietų Lietuvos Sritį, savo sudėtyje turinčiąlainės ir
Tauro apygardas;

b/ Suny Lietuvos Sritį, savo sudėtyje turinčią Alginantos, Di-
džionio Kovos, Vyriausio ir Vytauto apygardas;

a/ Vaikų Lietuvos Sritį, savo sudėtyje turinčią Rūstačio, Pri-
sikimą ir Linačių apygardas;

tai yra, reikšdama lietuvių tautos valią, pakartodama Vyriausiojo
Lietuvos Atstatymo Komiteto 1949.VI.10. Deklaracijos, HDPS
1947.V.29. mutarimui ir HDPS Deklaracijos Nr.2 paskelbtus pad
agrindinio principus bei juos papildydama mutarimui, pristatės
1949.II.10. HDPS Prezidiumo ir HDPS Karo Tarybos Jungtinimui pos
ėdyto, įkelia:

1. LLKS Taryba, rekomendavo HDPS Prezidiumo ir HDPS Karo Tarybos
Jungtiniam posėdy po 1949.II.10. mutarimui, apskaitojus metų
yra sukakusias tautos politinius organus, vadovaujant politinei ir
karinei tautos iššūkisvimonai;

2. LLKS Tarybos ir jo Prezidiumo būtina yra Lietuvo;

3. Valstybinė Lietuvos santvarka - demokratinė respublika;

4. Mūsų vietinės Lietuvos valdžia priklauso tautai;

5. Lietuvos valdžia vyksta per inicijavus, demokratiniai,
visuomeninės, lygiosios, aplacia ir rinkimai ir viršūnės Seimis
6. mokė apsaugos pažeidžios lijudinkant demokratinės
Lietuvos Seimui, juatvokų liečiamajų galimų turi Laiskinojauto
Tarybę;

7. Laimingą Tautos Tarybą sudarai visą visuomenės sąlygos
vadovybėje Lietuvos ir sudaryta gimtojiškių sričių, apygardų, rinkini;

8. Atstovauti, Lietuvos nepriklausomybė, lijudinkant Seimui,
Lietuvos nepriklausoms Prezidento pareigas einant LLKS Tarybos
Prezidiumo irmininkams;

9. Laiskinojauto Lietuvos Verjaunybė sudaroma LLKS Tarybos Prezidu-
mo irmininkelęs savavadas. Verjaunybė atsidėstų prieš Laiskinojaut
Tarybą;

10. Lietuvos, reikalauja įstieojų ir Lietuvos atstatymo darbui ko-
ordinuojama LLKS Tarybos Prezidiumas turi LLKS Atstovų Delegatų
kuri, bendradarbiavus su Vaikų valdyste, sudarytina tautos
valdymą, suformuojama Komisija bei delegacijos gulti į at-
stovauti Lietuvos reikalai ir Lietuvos Seimui, kuri suformuojama
LLKS Tarybos, Prezidiumo irmininkas;

11. Laiskinojauto Delegatūros narai 15 savo terpo laisvės
LLKS Atstovų Delegatūros irmininko, kuris skaitomas LLKS
Tarybos Prezidiumo irmininkas Pavaduotoj;

12. Laiskinojauto Delegatūros narai laikomai lygiateisais LLKS
Tarybos narais.

13. Šią Deklaracijai vykdyti nuostatus leidžia LLKS Taryba.

14. Lietuvos valstybės atstatymas, ligi Seimo bus priimta ir
paskelbta smogaus laisvės ir demokratijos siekimus atitinkant valstybės konstituciją, vykdomas pagal šiojo Deklaracijos paskelbta nuostatus ir 1922 m. Lietuvos Konstitucijos dvainą.

10. Atstatyboji Lietuvos valstybė garantuoja lygias teisės vienam Lietuvos piliečiui, neprasikaltusiai Lietuvijų tautos interesams.


12. Amnestija, būdavo labai įkūšiškia, okupacijos metu išdavų tvirnumą bendradarbiavimu su karo, savo veiksmais ar įtaisų pakeiktiną tautos išsilavinimą kovai, susijusiu išdavystės ar karoje, yra atsakingi prieš Lietuvos Teismą.

13. Konstitucijos teiginiai religijos įstatas ugdant tautos moralę ir palankant jos atsparumą sunkiausiui laisvės kovų laikotarpiui.

14. Socialinė globa nėra vien atskirų piliečių ar organizacijų reikalas, bet vienas pirmųjų valstybės uždavinų, pateikiant globą valstybės telkia išsilavinimą kovos suškistėjusias asmenines ir jų šeimoms.

15. Socialinių problemų regioninės išspręsime ir krašto aplinkos saugumo ir kultūrinio skilio atstatymas prašymo, nes jos visiškai panašios į nepriklausomą gyvenimo pradžią. Lietuvos Taryba, slaudžiusioje vienybėje su kovojančiais tauta, kvepalusi visuose valstiuose, gyvenančiu tuomet įvairią, o kai jie riboja, paliaubai įsteigti, skiriamas jaširiantį aktyvūs tautos išsilavinimą darbą.

16. Lietuvos Taryba, priėmė pareigas prie kintų tautų patogumą sustatyti pasaulio teisės, garantus ir laisvės pažiūrėti nuo tautos, beveikinčių pilietinių ir gyvenimą skirtingas tėvai, išgirstant, kad krikščioniškų moralės santūros ir paskolų struktūrą atstatyti, negyvenančių Lietuvos Tarybos Pirmojo Tarybos narės, Vytės, Antano, Katašos, Jono, Vlado, Zolajgiliaus,
DECLARATION
OF THE COUNCIL OF THE MOVEMENT OF STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM OF LITHUANIA

The Council of the Movement of Struggle for Freedom of Lithuania, representing all the military public formations on the territory of Lithuania led by a united leadership, namely:

a) the Region of Southern Lithuania which includes Dainavos District and Tauro District,

b) the Region of Eastern Lithuania which includes Algimanto District, Didžiosios Kovos District, Vyčio District, and Vytauto District,

c) the Region of Western Lithuania which includes Kęstučio District, Priskėlimo District and Žemaičių District, that is to say, expressing the will of the Lithuanian nation, reiterating the fundamental principles stipulated in the 10/06/1946 Declaration of the Supreme Committee for the Restoration of Lithuania, the 28/05/1947 resolutions of the UDRM [United Democratic Resistance Movement] and Declaration No 2 of the UDRM, and supplementing them with the resolutions adopted at the joint meeting of the UDRM Presidium and the UDRM Military Council on 10/02/1949, declares:

1. The Council of the MSFL [Movement of Struggle for Freedom of Lithuania], guided by the resolutions of the 10/02/1949 joint meeting of the UDRM Presidium and the UDRM Military Council, shall be the supreme political body of the nation in charge of political and military struggle for the liberation of the nation during the occupation period.

2. The headquarters of the Council of the MSFL and its Presidium shall be in Lithuania.

3. The form of government in Lithuania shall be a democratic republic.

4. Sovereign power in Lithuania shall belong to the nation.

5. Governance of Lithuania shall be exercised by the Seimas, elected in free, democratic, universal, and equal elections by secret ballot, and by the Government to be formed.

6. Legislative power shall be vested in the Provisional Council of the Nation from the end of the occupation until a democratic Seimas of Lithuania is convened.

7. The Provisional Council of the Nation shall consist of representatives of all the regions, districts, units, higher schools, cultural, religious organisations and movements, and political parties enjoying support by the nation, fighting under the united leadership in Lithuania and abroad by adhering to the principle of proportional representation.

8. After Lithuania's Independence is restored, before the Seimas is convened, the Chairman of the Presidium of the MSFL Council shall hold office of the President of the Republic of Lithuania.

9. The Provisional Government of Lithuania shall be formed on the instructions of the Chairman of the Presidium of the MSFL Council. The Government shall be accountable to the Provisional Council of the Nation.

10. The Presidium of the MSFL Council shall have the MSFL Delegation Abroad for the coordination of activities of Lithuanians abroad and the restoration of Lithuania, which in cooperation with representatives of Lithuania accredited to Western countries shall set up commissions and delegations to defend and represent Lithuanian issues in the United Nations Organisation, at various conferences and other international institutions.

11. The MSFL Delegation Abroad shall elect among its members the Chairman of the MSFL Delegation Abroad, who shall be considered the Deputy Chairman of the Presidium of the MSFL Council.

12. Members of the MSFL Delegation Abroad shall be considered full and equal members of the MSFL Council.

13. The MSFL Council shall issue regulations on the implementation of this Declaration.

14. Before the Seimas adopts and promulgates a State Constitution that is in conformity with aspirations for human freedom and democracy, the restoration of the state of Lithuania shall be carried out in accordance with the provisions stipulated in this Declaration and in the spirit of the 1922 Constitution of Lithuania.

15. The restored state of Lithuania shall guarantee equal rights to all citizens of Lithuania, who have not committed any crimes against the interests of the Lithuanian nation.

16. As dictatorial and in essence contradictory to the principal aspiration of the Lithuanian nation and the core provision of the Constitution – independence of Lithuania, the Communist Party shall not be considered a legal party.

17. Persons, having betrayed their Homeland during the Bolshevik or German occupation by collaborating with the enemy, having undermined the struggle for the liberation of the nation by their actions or influence, having been stained by treason or blood, shall be responsible before the Court of Lithuania.

18. The positive impact of religion on developing the morality of the nation and maintaining its resilience during the most difficult period in its struggles for freedom shall be asserted.

19. Social care shall not be a matter of individual citizens or organisations only, but it shall be one of the priority tasks of the state. Particular care shall be provided by the state to those who have fallen victim in struggles for freedom and to their families.

20. Rational solution of social problems and economic reconstruction of the country shall relate to agricultural, urban and industrial reforms which shall be undertaken at the very beginning of independent life.

21. The MSFL Council, in strong unity with the struggling nation, invites all Lithuanians of good will residing in their Homeland and outside its borders, to forget differences in their convictions and actively engage in the liberation of the nation.

22. Contributing to efforts by other nations to create permanent peace underpinned by justice and freedom, based on full implementation of the principles of a genuine democracy stemming from understanding Christian morality and declared in the Atlantic Charter, Four Freedoms, President Truman's 12 Points, the Declaration of Human Rights and other declarations of justice and freedom, the MSFL Council appeals to the whole democratic world for assistance in implementing its goals.

Occupied Lithuania
16/02/1949

Chairman of the Presidium of the MSFL Council
Vytautas

Members of the MSFL Council
Faustas
Kardas
Naktis
Užpalis
Vanagas
Zadgaila
Partisans of Algimanto and Vytauto Districts and their supporters. Summer of 1948.

Partisans on their way to the commanders’ meeting. [December 1948]

Partisans of Antanas Jagėla-Ąžuolas’ squad, Vyčio District.
Partisan Albinas Milčiukas-Tigras with his mother. [1947–1948]

Partisans from Žaliosios Unit, Vyčio District. [Not later than 1951]

Jonas Petras Aleščikas-Rymantas, Head of the Formation Department, Staff of Tauro District, and Kazys Greblikas-Sakalas, Commander of Vytautas Unit. [1947–1948]
Partisans of Antanas Jagėla-Ąžuolas’ squad, Vyčio District.