

Speech delivered by the CEO of UOK, Mrs. Camilla Andersson, on the occasion of the inauguration of the exhibition "War After War" by Lithuanian President valdas Adamkus and Sweden's Minister Of Education Jan Björklund, at Stockholm's City Hall, November 14, 2007.

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Mr. President,  
Your Excellencies Ambassadors,  
Ministers,  
Mr. Mayor,  
Ladies and Gentlemen;

First of all I would like to express how happy I am to be able to welcome our Lithuanian friends, who come here to Sweden as our valued guests from a free, independent and democratic Lithuania, member of NATO and the European Union.

This event would have been an impossible dream less than 20 years ago.

I'd like to thank our partners for helping us realizing these projects; the information campaign on Communist crimes against humanity in the schools of Stockholm, this exhibition, War After War, and the seminar on Communist Crimes tomorrow.

I would like to thank the Embassy of Lithuania, The Lithuanian Ministry Of Culture, The Genocide Resistance and Research Centre in Vilnius, The Polish Institute, the Estonian Institute, the Embassy of Latvia, The City Of Stockholm, and the History Teacher's Association of Stockholm.

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The cruel and tragic historical events which led to the Communist occupation of Lithuania, and our other neighbouring countries across the Baltic Sea, must be known by the younger generation.

We must learn the lessons of history. Millions of people have been murdered or had their lives destroyed by Communism. Yet the stories of these people have not been widely heard.

These stories are a crucial, yet little known, part of regional, European, and World history.

History is there to teach us about the roots and causes of today's reality, and it enables us to prepare for possible hard choices of the future -and hopefully it helps us avoid committing similar mistakes again as we did in the past.

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Totalitarianism, under its various guises, is not going away anytime soon.  
It is a constant threat to freedom and democracy.

Totalitarianism gains ground more easily if the guardians of peace, freedom and democracy are complacent and ignorant.

Let us not be complacent.  
Let us not be ignorant.

Let us provide our children and the younger generation with the knowledge they need, so they will be able to understand history, understand their neighbours, and be better equipped to identify totalitarian threats to their freedom.

Let us also strengthen our cooperation with our traditional, trusted friends across the Baltic.

Freedom is best protected by friends, working together.

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I hope this exhibition, this Presidential visit, and our seminar tomorrow about Communism's crimes against humanity in our neighbouring countries and Lithuania's struggle for freedom, will provide some steps along this way.

Thank you.

And to our Lithuanian friends and guests I would like to say a warm:

Sveiki atvykę!