



The world needs peace and climate justice - NOW! 80 years after World War II

We invite you to a conference in Vilnius/Lithuania on April 24-27, 2025 as a participant in the International Observer Group for Peace and Climate Justice. Here and in the surrounding countries, immense human suffering took place during World War II. Now history is repeating itself for refugees from Ukraine, Belarus and Russia who are affected by war and oppression today. It is also repeating itself now as climate change increasingly like a vicious war brings extreme weather events and the subsequent loss and damage and then migration, hardship, and victimization of the most vulnerable and weakest. Together we want to call for peace on earth and peace with the earth.

We demand an end to wars and the threat of nuclear weapons! We demand cooperation across all borders to address the causes and consequences of global warming of the climate with extreme weather effects in its wake.

We want you to come in person or send a greeting to our conference so that together we can show that the emperors who demand more weapons and do nothing about the climate threat are naked. What we need now is to build trust between people by working together for constructive solutions that make the planet habitable for future generations.

We want you to bring your experiences, your struggles, your organizations and your energy and share them with us. Together we can share sorrow and hope between equal people and demand equal rights for all. Stories that build peaceful coexistence and show ways to create common security and transform military spending into protection,

food and care for all people and our common planet. The devastating experiences of the world wars and fascism created the United Nations and indivisible human, social and civil rights. A beginning was made that has since also become central to cooperation on environmental issues, climate and biodiversity. Issues that are important to all people on earth.

Lack of trust and double standards are now eroding this tool for peaceful relations between nations.. That is why we call for a renewed commitment to peace and the climate and oppose the selective use of rules of conduct between states and people. We call for ways to revive regional and global agreements, including the UN Climate, Peace, Social and Economic Initiatives, the Helsinki Accords, the 1990 Paris Declaration and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). But above all, we want to create grassroots diplomacy across all borders and build trust between movements that support equal rights for all and respect for all living beings and nature.

Therefore, we now call on all people's movements, faith communities and people around the world: Make the celebration of the end of the Second World War and peace a springboard for a new human era where solidarity, humanity and care for all living things take precedence over money and power for a few. Peace and climate justice are necessary to save the future of our children and grandchildren!

Join us in Vilnius from 24-27 April to kick off the May Peace Celebration!

Peace on Earth – Peace with the Earth



Preliminary program – The World needs Peace and Climate Justice NOW!

The program is designed to integrate the diverse experiences of all participants. It provides dedicated time for meaningful introductions, allowing attendees to share their unique perspectives and stories from the Baltic Sea region, Northern Europe, and beyond. The agenda also includes insights from representatives of other regions and international organizations, fostering a rich exchange of knowledge and ideas.

Arrival 23 or April 24

April 24 | Vilnius

- Visits to various organizations and institutions
- Participation in a "Kapustnik" (informal artistic gathering)
- Travel to the conference venue in Visaginas
- Evening: Information session and welcome gathering

April 25 | Conference – Day 1

9:00 – 10:00 | Morning Session – Getting to Know Each Other and the Region

Welcome speeches

Introduction and networking

Exploring Lithuania and its Eastern neighbors

The first day will focus on case studies addressing peacebuilding—both on Earth and with Earth. We begin by exploring Lithuania and the challenges faced by its people, followed by personal stories from Ukrainian, Belarusian, and Russian refugees now living in the country.

This part of the program may also include interactive information tables, where participants can learn about Lithuanian traditions as well as cultural elements from neighboring Eastern European countries.

To foster cultural exchange, participants from all regions are encouraged to bring a song, a traditional dish, or a story from their homeland to share with others.

10:00 – 11:00 | Group Discussions – Finding Constructive Solutions for Peace on Earth and Peace with Earth
Participants engage in facilitated discussions to share perspectives on key issues related to peacebuilding and environmental sustainability.

Each group selects a rapporteur to summarize their insights.

11:00 – 13:00 | Lunch Break

13:00 – 16:00 | Afternoon Session

Report and Conference Statement

Rapporteurs present the key outcomes from the group discussions.

A draft proposal for a conference statement is introduced.

An editorial team is elected to collect feedback, refine the statement, and develop an action plan.

Key Themes: Building Peace and Protecting Human Rights

This session will explore constructive solutions for conflict resolution and human rights protection, with a focus on:

The Åland and Slesvig/Schleswig models as examples of minority rights protection and sustainable peace.

Current threats to human rights across the region and strategies for solidarity and mutual protection.

Peace with Earth: Environmental Cooperation and Climate Justice

Workshops will address pressing environmental concerns, including:

- The urgency of climate action and climate justice
- Saving the Baltic Sea – strategies for restoration and pollution prevention
- Stopping nuclear threats – lessons from the successful campaign against Sweden's Barsebäck nuclear reactor near Copenhagen
- Resisting land grabbing – the impact of IKEA and Western corporate land acquisitions in Eastern Europe
- Regenerative agriculture – sustainable farming solutions for ecological resilience
- Militarization as an environmental threat – addressing the impact of military expansion on ecosystems

The session will conclude with a report from the workshops and a summary of key takeaways.

16:30 | Keynote Speech

Challenges for the Peace and Climate Justice Movement

Speakers: Jaan Cortobius & Olga Karach

A thought-provoking discussion on the pressing challenges facing the peace and climate justice movement, exploring strategic approaches for advocacy, activism, and policy influence.

18:00 | Dinner

Evening Program | Peace Culture Night

A vibrant and interactive evening celebrating peace and cultural exchange through:

- Theatre performances
- Film screenings
- Interactive games
- Surprise activities
- A space for creativity, connection, and inspiration!

April 26 | Conference – Day 2

9:00 – 10:00 | Morning Session

- Symbolic Celebration – Honoring our coming together at the conference.
- Keynote Speech:

Defending Welfare and Climate Transition – No to RearmEurope

A critical reflection on the intersection of peace, social justice, and environmental sustainability in an era of increasing militarization.

- Messages to the Conference – Statements and reflections from participants.

10:00 – 11:30 | Parallel Workshops

- Exploring Proposals for Future Cooperation

Appeal for Peace and Climate Justice Now! & Action Calendar

80th-anniversary commemorations: May 8–9 (Victory Day), Hiroshima & Nagasaki (Aug 6 & 9), End of WWII (Sept 2), UN Day (Oct 24)

Peace and Climate Justice Call – Peace on Earth and Peace with Earth

Reinventing Peace and Human Rights – Towards Helsinki+50 (Aug 1)

Baltic Sea Cooperation Against Nuclear Power

Defending the Rights of Rural Communities Against Corporate Capture

Social and Ecological Spending, Not Militarization

East-West Climate Education Across Northern Europe

11:30 – 13:00 | Lunch Break

A time for networking, deepening connections, and initiating collaborations.

13:00 – 15:00 | Afternoon Session

- Keynote Speech:

Peace with Earth and Peace on Earth – Stop WWII

Examining today's global tensions and the urgent need for diplomacy, conflict prevention, and sustainable solutions.

- Panel Discussion:

The Role of Scapegoats and Enemy Images – Then and Now

A historical reflection on WWII and how enemy images are constructed in modern conflicts.

Strategies for people-to-people connections in times of war as a foundation for peace.

- Dialogue with EU Parliament Members

Addressing pathways to peace in Europe and globally – political solutions, policy frameworks, and advocacy strategies.

15:30 – 16:30 | Reports & Draft Statement

Summaries from the morning workshops.

Presentation of a draft statement and action plan based on conference discussions.

16:30 – 17:30 | Final Plenary

Adoption of the conference statement and next steps.

18:00 | Dinner

19:30 | Cultural Evening

An inspiring closing night filled with music, art, and performances celebrating peace and unity.

Excursions to the decommissioned Ignalina nuclear power plant can be arranged.

April 27 | Final Day

08:00 – 09:00 | Breakfast

- Travel to Vilnius
- Peace walk
- Further Program in Vilnius

Commemorating the Chernobyl disaster (April 26, 1986)

Reflections on nuclear risks, environmental justice, and lessons from history

Departures on April 27 or April 28

Optional activities in Vilnius for those staying longer may include discussions, site visits, or informal gatherings.

Initiators:

International Centre for Civil Initiatives "Our House" baserat i Vilnius/Міжнародны цэнтр грамадзянскіх ініцыятыў "Наш Дом":
<https://news.house>

Network for Peace and Climate Justice
Sweden/ Nätverket fred och klimaträttvisa:
<https://www.artisterforfred.se/nätverket-fred-klimat>





Fill in this form to help us organizing the event practically: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfFDjQzK9nAKVijIOEDfkX-BAG9w0UldJiRrff_KEnVIUmw_Xw/viewform

Contact address: vilniuskonferens@gmail.com

Below: Vilnius inner city 2016, photo Tord Björk

Conference fee and accomodation

Prices for the stay in Lithuania including food in Vilnius and accomodation in Visaginas 24-27 April is for staying in 3-8 bed room 300 Euro, 2 bed room 350 euro and 1 bed room 400 including conference fee and travel between Vilnius and Visaginas. To be payed in advance before 15 April to:

Account Holder: Vsj Tarptautinis pilietiniu iniciatyvu centras Musu namai
SWIFT (BIC): CBSBLT26
euro, usd, SEK
IBAN: LT307180300007700754

Participants from Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Estonia and Latvia can apply for full support for their travel and costs for the conference from: <https://norden.lt/en/programme/nordic-organisations-and-institutions-mobility-programme-noim/> Apply as soon as possible. We can send proposals for how to formulate the application.

