

**Statement by Prime Minister Laimdota Straujuma  
at the press conference following the Tripartite Social Summit  
19 March 2015, Brussels**

Dear participants,

Today's Tripartite Social Summit was very important for the Latvian Presidency. In the atmosphere of constructive cooperation, we exchanged views on investments for growth and creation of new high-quality jobs in Europe. The key words that we heard today were new jobs, social equality, structural reforms, and competitiveness. We – the governments, employers, employees, have to work together in order to connect these key words and deliver results in the most efficient way for the benefit of whole Europe.

I would like to take a couple of minutes and speak briefly of what has been achieved under the Latvian Presidency. Only three months have passed, and I am very happy to say that we have managed to agree on the proposal for the Regulation on the European Fund for Strategic Investments within 56 days, and I believe that the European Parliament will do its best to ensure that the Strategic Investment Fund is launched already in the first half of this year.

Today we will also talk about the Energy Union, as Mr Tusk pointed out, and the conceptual agreement on further progress of the European Energy Union has already been reached by ministers in March. The ministers have agreed on further development of the Energy Union. Then, under the title "Digital Europe" we have managed to strike an agreement on a single telecommunication market and also on new rules on roaming and open access to Internet. We have managed to move ahead with the package on data protection; we have arrived at an agreement on one-stop mechanism; we have also agreed on the Network Information System Directive. Of course, the Latvian Presidency started with very tragic events in Paris, and therefore we are very pleased that European countries managed to provide a comprehensive response to threat of terrorism.

In the informal meeting that was held in Rīga, we reached an agreement on the steps to be taken, by adopting the Riga Declaration on the fight against terrorism. The first implementation steps have been translated in concrete decisions in the Council meeting in March, and they will become effective already in mid-March. We have clearly shown our commitment to European values. Recently, there was a meeting in Paris of the ministers for education where the ministers talked about the steps to be taken in order to use the education system to prevent the threat of radicalization. Today in the European Council, we are going to talk about the Eastern Partnership Summit, which will be held in Rīga in May. I am very pleased that we have started work on preparation of the Eastern Partnership Summit, and I believe that each of the Eastern Partnership countries will see the perspective of further cooperation with the European Union.

Once again I would like to thank the social partners who took part in the discussion today, and you can believe that it is very important for the Latvian Presidency and the EU to listen to views of each and every citizen. Thank you!