

MEDIA RELEASE



SENATOR ROBERT HILL

COALITION SUPPORTS LITHUANIA'S DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

"Today's declaration of independence by the Parliament of Lithuania marks an end to over fifty years of political subordination. The Coalition welcomes today's announcement and is happy to reaffirm its support for an independent Lithuania," the Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator Robert Hill said today.

"The pages of history were indelibly stained by the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact that led to the formal annexation of the Baltic States by the Soviet Union. Those covertly negotiated Protocols which overthrew three independent governments were illegal and remain illegal.

"The clear message of today's declaration is that no State can survive for long without popular legitimacy and that it is a natural human drive to seek political participation. The declaration from the democratically elected Parliament of Lithuania represents the voice of its people and must be heeded.

"The Coalition never recognised the Baltic States' forced incorporation into the Soviet Union. Indeed it was Andrew Peacock who as Foreign Minister reversed the Labor Government's decision to give de jure recognition to that illegal incorporation.

"We now urge the Soviet Union to accept the declaration of independence.

"Lithuanians in Australia have never given up hope that today's new dawn would come. The Coalition is proud to identify with this final act of national freedom and assertion of autonomy", said Senator Hill.

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