

Republic of Latvia

President Notification No. 8

Adopted 23 March 2020

## **Basic Principles of Activity of State Constitutional Bodies in an Emergency Situation**

This is to announce that the President of Latvia and the heads of the State constitutional bodies implementing the legislative power, executive power, and judicial power – the Chairperson of the *Saeima*, Prime Minister, President of the Constitutional Court, and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court – have acknowledged in a joint session that the basic principles of State activities to manage the emergency situation are as follows:

1. Due to the pandemic of COVID-19, an emergency situation has been declared in the State since 12 March 2020, and such situation has an impact on everyday lives of the State, society, and each person. The Constitution states that the existence and sustainability of the State, society, and each person within a democratic system of the State must be protected in any circumstances, also in emergency situations.
2. All State constitutional bodies, all State authorities, institutions, and public officials shall implement their competences and perform their duties so as to perform their functions and tasks as much as possible within the scope of this common purpose of the State.
3. All State authorities and public officials shall ensure enhanced coordination of their activities and cooperation with each other. Legal formalism and departmentalism impede the implementation of objectives of the Constitution, in particular in case of an emergency situation.
4. Where required, the form of activity of State constitutional bodies, authorities, institutions, and public officials shall be adapted to the circumstances posed by the emergency situation. It shall also include remote working regime, restriction of people-to-people contacts, extended activity in electronic environment, and other measures that would, as far as possible, ensure the performance of their functions and tasks.
5. The competences and procedures of State constitutional bodies shall be implemented so as to ensure that their functions and tasks are performed as effectively as possible during the emergency situation. In case of absolute necessity modifications to and derogations from the normal procedures might be required.
6. Emergency situation management shall be the task of the Cabinet. Other State constitutional bodies shall, within the system of checks and balances determined by the democratic system of our State and by protecting the basic principles of the Constitution, implement their competence and procedures so as to ensure the emergency situation management.
7. In order to ensure uniform, systemic, and clear practical operation of all the involved authorities in the State during this emergency situation, the Cabinet shall establish system for the operational management of the emergency situation.

8. The *Saeima* shall continue to perform its legislative activities and implement parliamentary control of the work of the Cabinet, using, where appropriate, the options available for ensuring remote organisation of the work of the *Saeima*.

9. Every inhabitant has an obligation to fulfil all the regulations issued in relation to the emergency situation. Every inhabitant is also invited to follow any recommendations made by State authorities and public officials for managing the emergency situation and, as far as possible, to take care of themselves, their relatives, and the common good of the society, to participate responsibly and to promote the management of the emergency situation.

President

Egils Levits