

Václav Havel event

“Living in Truth
and Freedom
– Do We Still
Want That?”

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Background

In January 1977, ie exactly 40 years ago, Charter 77, a petition co-authored by the playwright Václav Havel and signed by a group of courageous citizens in Czechoslovakia demanding the communist regime to implement human rights provisions of the Helsinki accords and other relevant documents was published. The regime retaliated by prosecuting and imprisoning the signatories.

Charter 77 Foundation was established in Sweden in 1978, to support the prosecuted. Václav Havel led the nation to freedom in the Velvet Revolution in 1989: the dissident, whose demand was "living in truth", became a president, whose official motto is "Truth prevails".

The Charter 77 inspired many similar movements worldwide, from China to Belarus. But are the ideas of Charter 77 still valid today, when polls show that young Europeans don't value freedom and democracy as their parents did, and when some experts label our times as post-truth era?

Programme

- 11.00–11.10 Introduction by **Mr. Urban Ahlin**, Speaker of the Riksdag
- 11.10–11.20 **Michael Žantovský** (Czechia), Director of Václav Havel Library in Prague – Václav Havel and his legacy
- 11.20–11.30 **František Janouch** (Sweden/Czechia), chairman of the Board of the Charta 77 Foundation – Charter 77 and the role of Sweden
- 11.30–11.40 **Jiří Šitler**, Ambassador of the Czech Republic – the role of human rights in the foreign policy
- 11.40–11.50 **Annika Ben David** (Sweden), Ambassador for human rights (Swedish MFA) – the role of human rights in the foreign policy
- 11.50 –12.00 **Sabe Soe** (Burma/Czechia), Director of Burma Center Prague
- 12.00–12.45 Discussion with the panellists, moderated by **Mr. Finn Bengtsson (M)** and **Mr. Peter Jeppsson (S)**, Members of the Swedish-Czech parliamentary network group of the Riksdag
- Ca 12.45– A light meal in the Grand Gallery
- In connection with the seminar there will be live music by the Swedish group Charta 77.

The seminar is arranged by the Swedish-Czech parliamentary network group of the Riksdag in cooperation with the Czech Embassy.