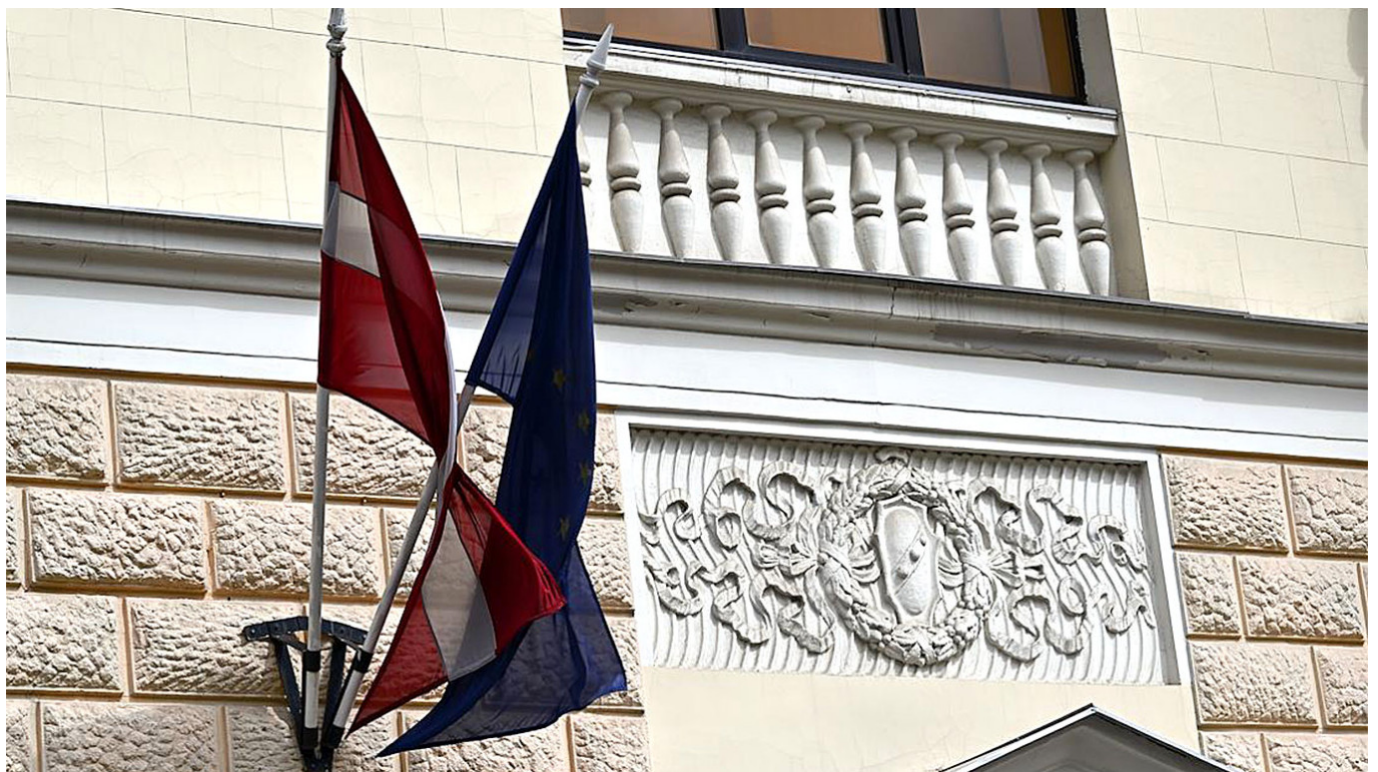


Latvian Parliament Declares Russia 'State Sponsor of Terrorism'

By [AFP](#)

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Latvian Embassy in Moscow. **Aleksandr Miridonov / Kommersant**

Latvian MPs on Thursday declared Russia a "state sponsor of terrorism" whose actions in Ukraine constitute "targeted genocide against the Ukrainian people".

The statement MPs adopted said the parliament "recognizes Russia as a state sponsor of terrorism, and calls on other like-minded countries to express the same view".

Voting by 67 in favor and none against or abstaining in Latvia's unicameral legislature, MPs said they considered "Russia's violence against civilians committed in pursuit of political aims as terrorism".

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba hailed the vote as a "timely move".

"Ukraine encourages other states and organizations to follow suit," he said on Twitter.

Russian foreign ministry spokeswoman condemned the vote as "primal xenophobia", adding, "It is necessary to call the ideologues nothing but neo-Nazis."

The Latvian parliament statement also condemned the use of cluster munitions by Russian forces, saying they were intended "to sow fear and indiscriminately kill civilians".

Russia "uses suffering and intimidation as tools in its attempts to demoralize the Ukrainian people and armed forces and paralyze the functioning of the state in order to occupy Ukraine," it said.

The parliament also urged the European Union to stop issuing tourist visas for Russian and Belarusian citizens and to cut down on entry visas in general.

It said Russia's invasion was carried out "with the support and involvement of the Belarusian regime" and called on the international community to impose on Belarus the same sanctions adopted against Russia.

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