

# Kansas City Welcomes Latvian Defense Ministry State Secretary

*Jānis Garisons, second-ranking civilian at Latvia's Defense Ministry, will participate in a public program discussing NATO, Eastern Europe, and Russia.*

KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI, UNITED STATES, March 2, 2022

/EINPresswire.com/ -- Jānis Garisons, the second-ranking civilian at Latvia's Ministry of Defense, will participate in a moderated conversation and answer audience questions as part of a community program on the status of Eastern Europe on Monday, March 7, 2022. The Baltic state of Latvia, which restored independence in 1991 and joined NATO in 2004, has a front-row seat for developments in Russia and Eastern Europe and a vested interest in a peaceful, stable region.



International Relations Council logo

State Secretary Garisons will join [International Relations Council](#) (IRC) members in Kansas City for an in-person conversation covering recent events, Latvia's positions and engagements, possible outcomes, and the path forward for Eastern Europe and NATO. Dr. Mark Wilcox will moderate. This event falls on the same day that U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken will be in Riga, Latvia, to meet with the Latvian President, Prime Minister, and Foreign Minister.

Jānis Garisons is State Secretary of the Latvian Ministry of Defense, a civilian role he has held since 2015. His service with the Ministry began in 2005, before which he served in a variety of roles with the Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including in the NATO and EU Security Division and the Division for Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States. State Secretary Garisons received a Master of Strategic Studies degree from the U.S. Army War College and a Master of History degree from the University of Latvia.

Dr. Mark Wilcox is an Associate Professor in the Department of Joint, Interagency and Multinational Operations. He has been a member of the faculty at the Command and General Staff College since 2002, and has also served as a curriculum developer and staff group adviser. Mr. Wilcox's 25-year military career included service in strategic counterintelligence assignments. He also performed politico-military, diplomatic and policy duties as a Eurasian Foreign Area Officer. He holds a doctorate in Security Studies from Kansas State University, a Master's Degree in Soviet and East European Studies from the University of Kansas, and a Bachelor of Science degree in Foreign Service from Georgetown University. He is also an honor graduate of the United States Army Russian Institute in Garmisch, Germany.

Schedule Monday, March 7, 2022, [National WWI Museum & Memorial](#) (2 Memorial Dr, Kansas City, MO 64108)

5:30 p.m. Registration and networking

6:00 □ Moderated conversation, followed by audience Q&A

7:00 Program ends

The event is presented by the International Relations Council in partnership with the [German Marshall Fund of the United States](#) and the National WWI Museum & Memorial. The event on Monday evening is ticketed and open to the public. Walk-ins are welcome. Click here to register. For more information, please contact Matthew Hughes, executive director of the International Relations Council, at [mhughes@irckc.org](mailto:mhughes@irckc.org) or 816-897-6474.

#### About the IRC

The International Relations Council strengthens Kansas City's global perspective by maintaining an active dialogue around world events, global issues, and their impact on our community. As a nonpartisan, educational nonprofit organization, the IRC values informed civil discourse, accessibility, and substance as we work to sharpen our community's 21st-century global acumen. Learn more at [www.irckc.org](http://www.irckc.org).

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