

## UPF Moscow, Russia's super-marathon between Russia, Estonia and Latvia

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Moscow, Russia -- A super-marathon between Russia, Estonia and Latvia was held to build bridges of peace among the peoples of the Baltic region.

The "Peace Road of the Northern Capital Cities" super-marathon started in the Russian former capital of St. Petersburg on June 30, 2019. It passed through the Estonian capital, Tallinn, before finishing in the Latvian capital, Riga, on July 4.

Four volunteers from Moscow went by car to St. Petersburg, where the ceremonial start of the running part of the project took place. The idea of the marathon runners found a response in the hearts of those who, on a Sunday afternoon, came to support them in the northern capital.

Before the start, the organizer of the marathon, UPF-Moscow Secretary General Dmitry Samko, expressed his vision: "We support the Baltic dialogue and believe that, thanks to such projects, international friendship develops and borders disappear on our way, due to the fact that there are such enthusiastic athletes who run for the idea -- or just run and the idea catches up with them. We want to sow good and eternal seeds so that our seeds will bear good fruit."

This already has become a good tradition in St. Petersburg, said Dmitry Samko. It is not the first time that residents of the northern capital have warmly met marathoners and escorted them on a long journey. It was from St. Petersburg in 2015 that the Peace Road project was launched eastward across Russia, and the participants in that motor rally reached the port city of Vladivostok in Russia's Far East. This time the marathoners headed west.

The participants overcame part of the distance to the border with Estonia using several cars with Peace

Road flags and symbols, and some of them ran the relay along with runners from St. Petersburg. Three participants ran from the Estonian border city of Narva to Tallinn -- a distance of 170 kilometers (over 105 miles) for two days in hot and windy weather. On our way we met many people who were interested in the action and made "selfie" photos with the runners.



From Tallinn to Riga, the participants ran through the seaside city of Pärnu, where a symbolic race through the historic center of the city took place. An interesting meeting took place on the border between Estonia and Latvia between the runners and the Estonian Ambassador for Peace Reigo Tõnsberg, founder of the best children's football tournament in the Baltics, the Pärnu Summer Cup. This tournament has been held for many years under the motto "Play football for peace."

At the meeting, they discussed opportunities for cooperation and joint projects with a member of the Russian beach tennis team, who, together with Reigo Tõnsberg, had traveled from Riga to Pärnu to participate in an international tournament.

Whether we were in Narva, in Tallinn, or in Riga, there were warm meetings with local like-minded people who consider neighborliness and friendship between peoples very important.

There is no doubt that the participants of the marathon have made a good contribution of peacemaking and friendliness, forgiveness and kindness to the historical connection of Latvia, Estonia and Russia.