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**The Jim Kent Show on Radio 100,7 with Delano**

Every Thursday from 5pm to 8pm

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LUXEMBOURG IN ENGLISH

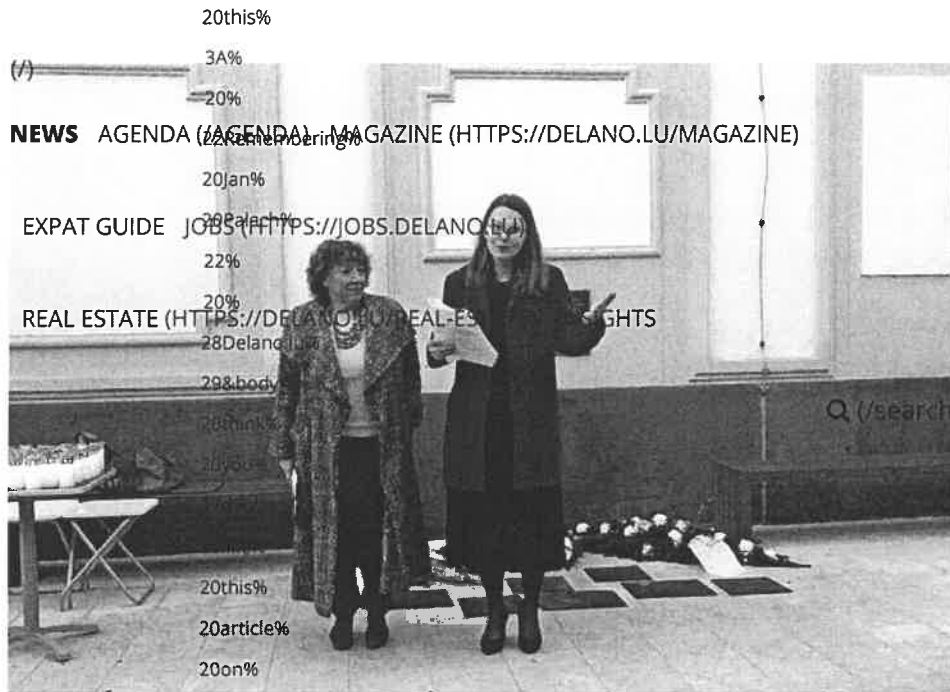
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## REMEMBERING JAN PALACH

NEWS (/NEWS) • CURRENT AFFAIRS (/CURRENT-AFFAIRS) • 17.01.2020 • NATALIE A. GERHARDSTEIN

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Colette Mart and Kateřina Sternbergová gave speeches at the commemoration ceremony Photos: Delano

**The ministry of foreign affairs of the Czech Republic held a commemoration on the Jan Palach square on Thursday evening to honour one of their national heroes.**

Palach was a student whose self-immolation in 1969 served as a protest not just against Soviet troops' occupation of then-Czechoslovakia but also what ministry advisor Kateřina Sternbergová in her speech called "the silent creeping of the so-called political normalisation under the watchful eye of Moscow following thereafter".

The Jan Palach square in Luxembourg was already given its name in 1969 and underwent refurbishment in 1985 and again in 2015-16. Located in the corner of the Place d'Armes, the square today serves as a "sort of Mecca or speaker's corner for us and for many others," Sterbergová added.

"Palach was a young, idealistic student who dreamed of personal freedom and freedom of expression for his country, who sensed things were shifting in Prague and elsewhere, who wanted to help his country find the path towards democracy," Colette Mart, member of the City of Luxembourg council, added.



Attendees at the commemoration ceremony were invited to place a candle in remembrance of Palach

Sternbergová reminded the public that while 2019 marked 30 years since the start of the fall of the iron curtain, 2020 will mark 75 years since the end of World War II. There were plenty of challenges ahead, from climate change and digitalisation, migration, finance and beyond, she said.

“We are going--unfortunately--to lose a member, the UK breaking off [from] the Union, one of the world’s largest political and economic bodies, established to carve lasting peace from the wreckage of the war. Brexit we regret. It still sends resonating shockwaves throughout Europe.”

### New ambassador

After a candlelight vigil for Palach, guests headed to a reception at the Czech Embassy, where they heard about upcoming plans. It is expected that by February, the new ambassador, Vladimír Bártl, will be in Luxembourg. The [Czech presidency \(https://www.eu2022.cz/homepage/\)](https://www.eu2022.cz/homepage/) of the EU Council will also kick off in July 2022.

KATEŘINA STERNBERGOVÁ (/D/CATEGORY/KATERINA-STERNBERGOVA/155386) • COLETTE MART (/D/CATEGORY/COLETTE-MART/1593) • JAN PALACH (/D/CATEGORY/JAN-PALACH/155387) • MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC (/D/CATEGORY/MINISTRY-FOREIGN-AFFAIRS-CZECH-REPUBLIC/155388) • CITY OF LUXEMBOURG (/D/CATEGORY/CITY-LUXEMBOURG/57760) • CZECH REPUBLIC (/D/CATEGORY/CZECH-REPUBLIC/81864) • LUXEMBOURG (/D/CATEGORY/LUXEMBOURG/51946)

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