

By Denali Tietjen

President of the Republic of Estonia Toomas Hendrik Ilves last night delivered a lecture on cyber security, modern transatlantic relations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

The president addressed a crowd of Tufts community members and distinguished guests during the lecture, titled "What Keeps Me Awake At Night," hosted by the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy.

Fletcher Dean James Stavridis (F '83, '84) introduced the president as an "extraordinary, important and vibrant European leader," referencing Ilves' expertise on cyber security and his success in bolstering Estonia's economy despite the Eurozone crisis.

Regarding cyber security, Ilves warned of the vulnerability that results from cyber warfare.

"You can paralyze a whole town or city by attacking their Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition system," Ilves said. "You can shut it down by turning all the [traffic] lights red or, if you want to be really nasty, turn them green."

Ilves argued that cyber warfare, with its ability to directly affect enemies' economies, is starting to render traditional warfare irrelevant.

"You don't have to attack a country with an army anymore," he said. "You can wipe out their financial records, and the country's suddenly broke."

He explained the paradox of cyber-vulnerability: The more sophisticated you are, he said, the

more vulnerable you become.

"You are vulnerable in the United States," Ilves said. "We are vulnerable in Estonia. Any country that relies on modern technology is vulnerable."

Perpetrators no longer target critical infrastructure in warfare, Ilves said, but target critical information infrastructure. He explained one of the most damaging effects of cyber attacks is that a country cannot respond since they do not know where the attack came from.

Ilves argued that nations must consider these factors as they examine war threats in the future.

"[Countries] need to rethink doctrines of defense because of the vulnerabilities we now face," he said. "We need international norms, agreements and standards as to how we manage cyber security."

As countries begin to address cyber security, one of the largest issues they face is the balance between security, privacy and Internet freedom, he explained. These topics, he said, must become international priorities.

"We need to refocus our attention to cyber security and our dependency on technology," he said.

The president then discussed the ways in which NATO has been addressing cyber warfare and security.

"The problem of NATO is that cyber security remains a paradigm of intelligence gathering and espionage," he said. "We need a higher level of ambition and interoperability."

NATO is not politically sustainable in its current operations, Ilves said, adding that 75 percent of the NATO budget is paid for by the United States. He urged other countries to rededicate themselves to NATO.

Weakening transatlantic relations and a growing U.S. isolationist sentiment also jeopardize security operations for protecting law, democracy and freedom, he said.

"The United States should not disengage from Europe," he said. "Europe [and the United States] share core values."

Original article on the Tufts Daily [webpage](#) .