

Editor: Dario Cavegn

President Toomas Hendrik Ilves doesn't support the government's campaign for a temporary seat on the United Nations Security Council. Ilves has been critical of the idea for years, as the right of veto of the council's five permanent members would make it very unlikely that Estonia could put through its own objectives.

Earlier this week Prime Minister Taavi Rõivas (Reform) said that it was one of Estonia's biggest foreign policy goals to get a temporary seat on the UN Security Council following the country's presidency of the Council of the European Union.

Ilves reiterated his doubts in an interview with ETV's "Aktuaalne Kaamera" on Friday. He said that he didn't see this as a challenge, and that considering the right of veto of the council's permanent members, he didn't see how Estonia could achieve anything there.

The president pointed out that there were more important aims for Estonia's foreign policy, especially in times as turbulent as these, when it was important to make sure Estonia and its interests weren't passed over in NATO as well as the EU.

Asked about Estonia's position on the proposed changes to the Dublin Regulation, Ilves said that perhaps it was time to think a little more broadly. Considering how refugees had begun to pass the Russian border to Finland after Italy and Greece had been overwhelmed by the large numbers of people arriving, perhaps there would be a time when Estonia would find itself in a similar situation.

The government is against any proposal that could lead to the automatic redistribution of asylum seekers across the European Union. As the Dublin Regulation currently states, it is the responsibility of the country where an asylum seeker first applies for asylum to provide support and process their application.

If the flow of migrants should change and people cross over from Russia, Estonia could find itself in a similar situation to that of Italy and Greece - and in such a case, a regulation to redistribute arrivals across the union would work in its favor.

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