

President Ilves spoke yesterday at the opening panel of the Lennart Meri Conference about the security of the Baltic Sea and trans-Atlantic space in general. He emphasised that the international security situation has utterly changed following Russia's aggression against Ukraine, and new solutions must be found to ensure security.

"For Europe's response to be credible, we must, among other things, deal seriously with corruption in business and make money laundering impossible in Europe," President Ilves said. He also recalled that while some European countries worry about the effect that the sanctions may have on their economies, we must also consider the price of not responding, including the economic price. "For example the acceptance of millions of refugees from a conquered Ukraine would have a considerable economic impact on Europe," the Head of State added.

Apart from President Ilves, Carl Haglund, the Finnish Minister of Defence, Douglas Lute, the Ambassador of the United States of America at NATO and Uffe Ellemann-Jensen, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs, took part in the opening panel, which focused on security in the Baltic Sea region.

The Lennart Meri Conference began yesterday in Tallinn and continued until Sunday. This time, the key issue of the conference, organised by the International Centre for Defence Studies, was security in the Baltic Sea region, as well as the international security situation in general.

Last night, President Ilves hosted the guests of the conference at a dinner in the Glass Hall of the Song Festival Grounds. He will also give a presentation on Sunday at a panel dedicated to cyber defence, with the President of the Cyber Defence Council, Holl Lute, F-Secure Mikko Hyppönen and the Swedish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Carl Bildt. Anyone interested in the conference can watch the real-time broadcast of the event at <http://lmc.icds.ee> .

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