

It has been a pleasure and honor to host this multilateral meeting of President Obama, President Grybuskaite and President Beržins here in Tallinn today – a day before the NATO Summit. American engagement in our region's security runs deep. Twenty years ago Russian troops left the Baltic states. Ten years ago we joined NATO. We reached these historic milestones thanks to US support and leadership.

Our defense and security cooperation is extremely close. We appreciate the immediate steps that the US has taken to demonstrate solidarity with our three countries, Poland and Romania. In the past months, we have seen an increased US air, ground and naval presence in our region as well as an enhancement of scheduled exercises.

We share a common vision and goals for the upcoming NATO Summit. We face a completely new security situation in Europe and we are pleased that this is reflected in many of the Summit's documents. We expect the Summit to adopt the Readiness Action Plan that will guide Allied nations for years to come through a set of practical steps and measures of reassurance and deterrence. We expect it to provide a solid framework for allies to contribute to stronger NATO presence on its Eastern border. Maintaining a persistent presence in this region should include, among other things, increasing the readiness of the Multinational Corps Northeast in Poland and giving it more responsibilities for matters of collective defence. This would help facilitate NATO's rapid reaction in our entire region and bolster security on NATO's periphery.

A good part of our discussion today also focused on Ukraine. We need to think about what more can be done to support Ukraine. Estonia has doubled its humanitarian and development assistance and is looking for ways to do more. But we also shouldn't forget about the other so-called Eastern Partnership countries. Countries like Georgia and Moldova shouldn't be left on their own. They must have the right to make their own decisions about their security arrangements and alliances. Continued USA support for these countries and engagement in the region is extremely important.

We also believe in maintaining a strong transatlantic link in other areas such as cyber and energy security. Over the past year, our cooperation on cyber issues has strengthened and now covers many areas on both the civilian and military levels. I keep no tally of cyber attacks, hacks and espionage, but it is quite clear that cyber security has become a concern for all of us to a degree we have never seen before - a domain of warfare in the same way as land, sea and air.

President Ilves' press statement after the multilateral meeting

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There is no doubt that the security landscape here in Europe changed this year, and not for the better. How it will look in a year is difficult to predict. But I can confidently predict that whatever the future does hold, the Baltic countries and the US are working together globally to promote our common values – democracy, human rights, rule of law and internet freedom.

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