

"The abduction of Estonian citizen Eston Kohver, an official of the Estonian Internal Security Service, on Estonian territory and his removal to a Moscow prison violates international law. Estonia and its allies will do everything they can to effect the return of Mr Kohver," President Toomas Hendrik Ilves confirmed at the meeting of the National Security Council convened by him today.

The members of the National Security Council were given an additional overview of events on 5 September, when Eston Kohver was in the line of duty and collecting information on cross-border corruption within the framework of an information collection plan in the vicinity of the Estonian-Russian border.

The safe return of Eston Kohver will require the concerted, comprehensive and constant co-operation of Estonian agencies. Part of these activities are everyday communications with our allies in the European Union and NATO, to whom Estonia is grateful for their support so far, it was noted at the session of the National Security Council.

The National Security Council also discussed developments in Ukraine, where President Ilves met with local political leaders last week and offered Estonia's support and experience in implementing the necessary political and economic reforms.

Speaking about the Ukrainian peace plan, President Ilves said that it can succeed if Russian troops leave the Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts and if Russia stops supporting armed separatists and closes the border on its side, which would stop the flow of new foreign fighters and weapons into the conflict area.

"We are seeing specific steps by Ukraine to end hostilities, but we lack confidence that Russia as one party of the conflict will do the same," the Estonian Head of State said.

The members of the National Security Council also discussed the effects of the decisions of the recent NATO summit on Estonian security and defence policies. President Ilves and Prime Minister Taavi Rõivas acknowledged all the officials, diplomats and servicemen who were involved in preparations for the summit's agenda. The decisions taken at the summit in Wales

were favourable for Estonia and a strong endorsement of our activities to date in organising national defence.

The head of state stressed that the presence of allies is key to our security and the task of the government and the defence forces is to ensure that the necessary infrastructure is in place to allow for the possibility of additional allied units.

The Director General of the Police and Border Guard, Elmar Vaher, gave an overview to the National Security Council of the current state of security equipment and staff on the border. It was commonly agreed that additional investments must be made in border guarding and protection.

The National Defence Council is an advisory body to the President of the Republic. The following are members of the council: the President of the Riigikogu, the Prime Minister, the Chairman of the Riigikogu National Defence Committee, the Chairman of the Riigikogu Foreign Affairs Committee, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Defence, the Minister of Finance, the Minister of the Interior, the Minister of Justice and the Commander of the Defence Forces.

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