

"We both know how complicated it is to arrive in Europe. We both know that Europe is not just a geographical concept. Europe means countries that share common values. Europe means democracy, rule of law, freedom of speech, transparency and accepting responsibility for our Europe and its neighbourhood," President Toomas Hendrik Ilves said at a formal dinner honouring Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Emine Erdoğan. "Turkey can count on Estonia being a good friend, who provides support, and dares, if necessary, to provide advice."

According to the Estonian head of state, Turkey is our valued ally in NATO -- an ally with whom we share a common vision regarding NATO's fundamental tasks, as well as how to meet its future challenges and an ally who is actively participating in the NATO Cyber Defence Centre located in Tallinn.

"I see how the cooperation between our countries is becoming increasingly intertwined. We both make conspicuous contributions to the European Union's neighbourhood – in Georgia, Ukraine and Moldova." President Ilves acknowledged.

He encouraged Estonian and Turkey businesspeople to cooperate more closely and added, "Let's devote our time to encouraging more Turks to find their way to Estonia -- as tourists, entrepreneurs and students. We expect this will be facilitated by visa-free travel between the European Union and Turkey, which I hope, will soon become a reality as the result of our united efforts. Let us also work for more Estonians finding their way beyond Antalya to the depths of cultural richness of Turkey."

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