

The President, Toomas Hendrik Ilves, took part in the opening panel of the Halifax International Security Forum where he spoke about the threats that the crisis in Ukraine and Russia's aggression pose for the values common to liberal democracy, such as free elections, a state based on the rule of law and human rights.

"Many things that Europe often takes for granted are under threat today," told the Estonian Head of State. He emphasised that it is important to acquire a better understanding of the situation and oppose the propaganda from the Kremlin, which serves to create a parallel reality that is at odds with democratic values.

The second address by President Ilves focused on the role of the Internet in global economic development and security.

Apart from giving presentations at the security forum, the Estonian Head of State had bilateral meetings with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada, John Baird, and the Defence Minister, Rob Nicholson, as well as the former Minister of Defence, the initiator of the Halifax forum and current Minister of Justice, Peter MacKay. President Ilves acknowledged Canada for adopting a clear and bold position regarding the security of Europe, and he stated that the opinions of Canada and Estonia are very similar in relation to the crisis in Ukraine. He thanked Canada for its participation in ensuring air security in the Baltic states and praised the co-operation between our countries within the framework of the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence in Tallinn.

The Estonian Head of State also met with senators of the United States of America, John McCain and Ted Cruz, and the Head of the US National Security Agency (NSA), Admiral Michael Rogers, the Deputy Secretary-General of NATO, Alexander Vershbow and the former Prime Minister and Minister of Defence of Israel, Ehud Barak.

The Halifax International Security Forum took place for a fifth time and brought together high-level security experts from approximately sixty countries. The situations in various sources of conflict and the global security situation in general were discussed over two days.

Website of the Halifax security conference can be found at <http://halifaxtheforum.org/> .

Office of the President
Public Relations Department
Phone +372 631 6229