

"Russia's growing military and foreign policy aggression is forcing us to turn more attention to developing and ensuring security within the bilateral, regional, European Union and NATO frameworks," said President Toomas Hendrik Ilves today at a meeting with Latvian, Lithuanian and Polish heads of state Andris Bērziņš, Dalia Grybauskaitė and Bronisław Komorowski at Kõue Manor near Tallinn. "Today's meeting has shown that we all – Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland – are prepared to act decisively and as one."

President Ilves said that Russia's continued actions in Ukraine rule out any normalisation in relations between the European Union and the Russian Federation. "From our meeting today it is clear that Estonia is on the same wavelength as its neighbours – the new security situation requires the European Union to be more resolute and united in its messages than ever before, which includes our four countries being more united than ever before at the regional level," he said.

The presidents confirmed the importance of dealing at both the regional and European Union levels with Russian propaganda attacks directed against our value system.

The Estonian head of state commended Lithuania on the speedy completion of the LNG terminal in Klaipėda, describing it as important to energy security in the Baltic region, as its sources of gas are becoming more diverse. He also said it was important that Estonia and Finland had simultaneously reached an agreement on the location of the regional LNG terminal and on the schedule for applying for co-financing from the European Union. Also agreed on was the deadline for the completion of the Balticconnector gas pipelines.

President Ilves said that the progress the Baltic States had made on the modern, high-speed Rail Baltic project, for which they have received support from both the north (Finland) and south (Poland), was a perfect example of cooperation in the region in the 21st century. "We have to do everything we can to guarantee that the funding application is submitted to the European Commission on time," he said.

The Estonian head of state also expressed his full support for Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine, which have chosen in favour of political and economic reforms and integration with the European Union. "The people in those countries must have the same freedom to decide over their future as we had," he said. "External pressure, accompanied by trade sanctions on the

Russian side, has no place in 21st-century Europe, which only recently marked the 25th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall," he said.

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