

"The events in Ukraine remind us that freedom is something that we should not take for granted. We have to work every day to retain our freedom here at home, with our allies in Europe and the trans-Atlantic axis. Estonia sees that Poland has a clearly distinguished role as an initiator of security-related co-operation in our region and the NATO summit, which is due to take place soon in Warsaw, is the best example of the implementation of this role," said the President, Toomas Hendrik Ilves, after his meeting with the President of Poland, Andrzej Duda.

According to President Ilves, the even more visible and effective presence of NATO as the defence alliance in its border countries is extremely important within the changed security situation. "Our allies have done a lot to enhance security within the Baltic-Polish space, such as the air security mission; the permanent presence of rotated infantry battalions is the next step that we all uniformly support," he added.

The Estonian Head of State admitted that it is important to ensure military capabilities that match the new challenges. "This will also mean conveying a clear message that as member states of the European Union and NATO we enjoy the best and most secure allies of the free world," he added.

According to President Toomas Hendrik Ilves, the visit to Estonia today by the President of Poland, Andrzej Duda, is symbolic. "First, for the reason that President Duda decided to make his first visit as a head of state to Estonia. This is further evidence of the effective and close relationships between the two countries that rely on our common, shared values," said the Head of State.

"Second, today we mark the lapsing of 76 years since the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact in Moscow. Both Estonia and Poland know and remember the terribly price that both nations had to pay for this secretly devised deal," added President Ilves.

The President of Poland, Andrzej Duda, will also meet in Tallinn with the Chairman of the Riigikogu, Eiki Nestor, and the Prime Minister, Taavi Rõivas, and he will make a visit to the Occupation Museum where the joint press conference of the presidents of Estonia and Poland will take place.

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