

President Toomas Hendrik Ilves today paid a visit to Eston Kohver, the Estonian Internal Security Police official who was kidnapped from the territory of the Republic of Estonia, kept in prison in Russia for just over a year and returned home ten days ago.

"The morning of 26 September was definitely one of the happiest and most pleasant of my term as President after it was officially confirmed that you were back home," the Head of State told Eston Kohver. "I am sorry that it took so long, and I would like to thank you for maintaining your determination, bravery and loyalty in prison. I also thank your wife, Marlis, whose hope offered support to your family and next of kin."

According to President Ilves, the one and only goal of the Republic of Estonia was to help the kidnapped internal security police official get back home. "Keeping score on how much Estonia lost by this exchange or how much someone else gained is something I do not quite understand. We got our man back – a civil servant of the Republic of Estonia who is a father to four children is now back home with his family."

The Head of State stated that once the negotiations reached a stage where he had to decide on whether or not to pardon traitor Aleksei Dressen, he had no hesitation: "Pardoning is not forgiving and Dressen will remain a traitor. However, this exchange brought Eston Kohver back home, and this is the most important."

Eston Kohver is now facing a return to his regular life in Estonia. "I believe that things can only get better for you from now on," said President Ilves.

See also: [Declaration of the President, Toomas Hendrik Ilves, following the release of Eston Kohver](#)

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