

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh arrived in Estonia on a state visit today and were greeted by the President of the Republic of Estonia and Mrs. Evelin Ilves at Kadriorg.

The festive welcoming ceremony held in front of the President's Office was followed by the official meeting where gifts and decorations were exchanged. Queen Elizabeth II awarded the President of the Republic with the insignia of the Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath, the Head of Estonian State bestowed the Collar of the Order of the Cross of Terra Mariana on Her Majesty. The Head of Estonian State presented the Queen with the wall-tapestry "Maritime country" by Anu Raud. In the President's Office also a photo session was held and Queen Elizabeth II signed the visitors' book.

In the evening Her Majesty and His Royal Highness will attend a concert and reception at KUMU hosted by the British Ambassador. The President of the Republic and his spouse will host the State Banquet in honour of Queen Elizabeth II and The Duke of Edinburgh.

On October 20, a commemoration ceremony will be held at the memorial plaque to the British Royal Navy on the wall of the Estonian Maritime Museum. At 11 a.m. Queen Elizabeth II and The Duke of Edinburgh will meet Estonian people in the Town Hall Square where a concert entitled "Estonia Sings" will take place.

The State Visit will conclude in the Tallinn Old Harbour with a military tribute dedicated to the Estonian-British historical and contemporary defence related cooperation. This will be followed by a farewell ceremony.

This is the first visit of the British Head of State to Estonia. The visit underlines the existence of longstanding and close relations between the United Kingdom and the Republic of Estonia, a cornerstone of which was laid already in the days of the War of Independence when we fought together. The relations between our two countries cover a variety of different fields, including our cooperation within the framework of NATO and the European Union.

The President of the Republic greeted Queen Elizabeth II

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