

The National Defence Council that today convened at Kadriorg unanimously supported the proposal of President Toomas Hendrik Ilves to present to the Riigikogu Major General Ants Laaneots as the candidate for the new Commander of the Defence Forces.

“He is one of the re-creators of the Estonian Defence Forces who can be characterised by a strong sense of mission, determination, leadership experience and understanding of civilian control of the military,” President Ilves said.

Also representatives of all factions of the Riigikogu with whom the Head of State had previously met preferred Major General Ants Laaneots as the candidate for the Commander of the Defence Forces.

At the National Defence Council’s meeting the President of the Republic when addressing Chairman of the Riigikogu Toomas Varek thanked the parliament for good cooperation and for quick processing of Vice Admiral Tarmo Kõuts’ resignation letter. The Riigikogu released the Commander of the Defence Forces from office on November 14.

“We all had to act quickly in order to lead national defence into more stable period and I would like to thank the legislators for their support,” President Ilves said. “I hope that such understanding in national defence matters would continue between us also in the future.”

Before the National Defence Council’s meeting the Head of State gave a lunch to Tarmo Kõuts who had been released from office as Commander of Defence Forces. “He has led the Defence Forces for six years, it has been a serious job, the Defence Forces have improved increasingly and I thank him for it,” President Ilves said.