

"The implementation of information technology solutions may contribute to the development of democracy and economy. Estonia focuses on information technology assistance to the eastern European partners of the European Union and has established good co-operation with Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova," said President Toomas Hendrik Ilves at a fringe event dedicated to e-governance and transparent public services, which was jointly organised by Estonia, Georgia, the Republic of Korea and the UN Development Programme within the opening week of the 71st UN General Assembly.

President Ilves spoke about the importance of human rights, corruption, a state based on the rule of law and good governance practice as well as information technology solutions for the purpose of achieving sustainable solutions. Prime Minister of the Republic of Georgia, Giorgi Kvirikashvili, and a representative of the UN Development Programme, Helen Clark, also gave a presentation at the event.

"Estonia's experiences have shown that political commitment is the basis for building up a successful digital society. This should primarily be expressed in legislative support and represent a part of the general strengthening of a state based on the rule of law and democratic society," stated President Ilves. According to the President, e-governance solutions will contribute to the implementation of necessary reforms in the European Union's eastern European partners.

The Estonian Head of State also admitted that digital policy is not merely about technology, as technology alone will not solve all the development problems in any given country; it is only effective when combined with other necessary reforms.

According to President Ilves, Estonia is consistently sharing its experiences in implementing information technology for the common good of the development of open society and the economy.

"For example, our e-Governance Academy has led e-governance, e-democracy, national cyber security and open information society projects in more than 50 countries. Estonian government authorities have co-operated with dozens of countries, and the same is true of our enterprises," said President Ilves.

The meeting was inspired by last year's UN summit, where the sustainable development goals for the next 15 years were established; there are 17 goals, in total, and two of them are directly related to the development of information society.

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