

The White House announced today that a meeting between President Toomas Hendrik Ilves and United States President George W. Bush would take place on June 25th in Washington.

The visit of President Ilves to Washington, as well as the timing of the announcement, is a strong signal of US support for Estonia as a good NATO ally.

“The timing of this visit indicates clearly that Estonia’s earlier choices have been correct—membership in NATO and the European Union, participation in peacekeeping operations, and in both military and civil missions, as well as support and assistance to our European Union neighbors, the protection of democracy and freedom as Western values,” said President Ilves. “The expression, ‘if we help others, we will also receive help’ is not just a slogan or empty political rhetoric in NATO or the European Union. This mutually empathic policy operates in our interests, as is proven by the strong support for Estonia indicated by this meeting.”

President Ilves said that the June 25th meeting at the White House is a sequel to President Bush’s visit to Tallinn in November 2006, when the US Head of State expressed his recognition of Estonia’s success in the promotion of democracy and the economy, of Estonia’s role in the support of Europe’s new democracies, and of the bravery demonstrated by our soldiers in missions in the Balkans, Afghanistan and Iraq.

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