

The President of the Republic participated today in the church service and ceremony commemorating the 90th anniversary of the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church.

“The separation of church and state provides great freedom for the church,” said the Head of State in his address.

“The freedom not to coordinate their decisions and the freedom not to be the mouthpiece of some ruler or the extension of the state, a phenomenon, which unfortunately is not alien to some countries even today. The freedom to speak out against unethical dictates of the state, as did pastor Harald Tammur, who fought against two dictatorial occupational powers, against Nazi and Communist heathenism and was imprisoned during both periods. He did not win immediately, only after decades. But he won.”

The President said that the church could more actively participate in discussions about the society’s moral and ethical issues.

“The word of a church that is not tied to the state has more weight and is more trustworthy. As a psychologist I know that words touch people’s hearts and shape them most powerfully. The tool of the church is the word.

However, words are tools when they are used. A tool that hangs in the shed is just an object.”

After the ceremony, the President of the Republic met with Rev. Dr. Samuel Kobia, the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches.

Full version of the speech can be found [here](#) .

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