

“Estonian-German relations are excellent,” President Toomas Hendrik Ilves said to German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier in Kadriorg yesterday. “The emphasis has increasingly shifted from bilateral issues to Europe, and more broadly to international issues, while bilateral relations have focused increasingly on activating cooperation with the German States, as well as on economic and cultural cooperation.”

Speaking about the European Union, the Estonian Head of State declared that reform of the Community’s fundamental agreement was unavoidable in order to guarantee the ability of the Union to react to future challenges, many of which will reach beyond the borders of the European Union.

“We are glad that the Council achieved a compromise despite the complicated starting position,” said President Ilves.

The European Union and Estonia’s relations with Russia were also discussed at the meeting.

“It is important for the European Union to have a direct and frank dialogue with Russia and that there be solidarity within the Community,” emphasized President Ilves. “Estonia for its part is trying to restore normal diplomatic relations with Moscow, and we wish to move forward with several agreements that would be of practical use for the residents of both countries.”

Speaking about cyber defence, President Ilves recalled that Estonia established a Cooperative Cyber Defence Center in Tallinn last year and wants NATO to officially accredit it as a Center of Excellence for Cyber Defence in 2008.

“I am glad that Germany was the first country to promise to join Estonia in this project,” said President Ilves, also recalling the support given to the project by United States President George W. Bush at their meeting in June.

According to President Ilves, Estonia’s goal is to assess whether the current legal regulations of

the European Union are sufficient to guarantee the security of the information society and to fight cybercrime, and thereafter, to decide what additional steps are necessary.

“Estonia feels it is important to deal with information and web security at the European Union level and to develop uniform policies in this field,” the Estonian Head of State noted. “Estonia seeks to organize the European Union’s regulations, organizational structure, and cooperation processes for electronic communications in order to guarantee the security of the information society’s infrastructure against attack.”

President Ilves and Foreign Minister Steinmeier also spoke about energy problems, including the Russian-German gas pipeline.

“The Nord Stream’s concept of an alternative location for the gas pipeline in Estonian waters is too preliminary for a proper opinion to be expressed; we need to wait for the environmental studies,” said the Estonian Head of State. “However, it is clear that the special condition and status of the Baltic Sea cannot be compared to any other maritime area where gas pipelines have been built to date.”

The situation in Georgia and Moldova whose progress on the road to Europe are supported by both Estonia and Germany was also discussed at the meeting.

“In the case of Georgia and Moldova, it is important to help them free themselves from the torment of frozen conflicts, which will require international support for their territorial integrity,” said President Ilves.

The Estonian Head of State and the German Foreign Minister also spoke about developments in Afghanistan, where the military of both countries are serving in the NATO mission.

“However, it is clear that here one cannot hope only for a military solution,” said President Ilves, adding that the Estonian Ministries of Defence and Foreign Affairs have sent them officials to Afghanistan. “Yes, we need men and weapons to protect the local population, but we also need civil projects so the local residents can start to believe in the possibility of a better life.”

**President Ilves met with the German Foreign Minister**

Friday, 13 July 2007 19:20

---

Office of the President  
Public Relations Department  
Phone +372 631 6229