

Today, at the concert and political meeting dedicated to the 20th anniversary of the Hirve Park demonstration, President Toomas Hendrik Ilves said that two events that determined the fate of Estonia and the Estonian people are being commemorated today. "The first event, the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, swept our country, and almost our people, from the Earth. The second event initiated the restoration of our nation," said the Estonian Head of State.

"It was here that Estonia's road back to freedom and an equitable, legitimate world started. It was here that a process was started that the illegitimacy of the entire Soviet Union could not withstand."

President Ilves expressed regret that even today one still witnesses the denigration of everything that Estonia, and the other people that suffered under Communism, had to endure.

"This would not disturb me as much if the denigrators were neutral bystanders," said President Ilves. "But why do former members of the Soviet Communist Party, including the leading figures of the Party, constantly justify or denigrate the suffering caused to others by the Communists? This is just unbelievable."

According to the Estonian Head of State, the people that gathered in Hirve Park wanted to restore our association with the cultural space of the West, along with the freedom of speech that is its basis.

"The events of recent years have convinced me that Estonia, as well as the other European countries that have suffered from crimes against humanity, need a memorial to the victims," said President Ilves. "A recent sociological study showed that these crimes affect more than 60 percent of Estonians. When such a large part of our citizenry has suffered under Communism, we cannot allow this to be forgotten, we cannot allow this to be denigrated."

In his speech, President Ilves called on everyone to think about how to respectfully and fittingly commemorate the thousands of Estonian citizens who suffered due to the criminal activities of the Communists.

“Expressly citizens, because we should know that non-Estonian, and especially Russian, citizens of Estonia were hated most by the Soviet Union,” stressed the Estonian Head of State.

“We have a positive response to those that deny and denigrate the crimes committed in the past—a fitting memorial for those who suffered for no reason at the hands of the murderous regimes of the 20th century,” President Ilves said in conclusion.

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