

“The Defence League deserves serious recognition and support from all of us for their actions during civil crises and natural disasters, as well as a national defence organization,” said President Toomas Hendrik Ilves at the meeting of the Council of the Defence League today.

The Head of State recalled the role of the Defence League as auxiliary police in reining in the April rioting in Tallinn and East-Viru County, as well as the participation of the Defence League during the flooding in Pärnu and during many forest fires.

“We have repeatedly seen how the Defence League is able to take part in Estonia's security cover,” said President Ilves. “I am glad that during the last few months, I have heard that many people wish to join the Defence League.”

According to the Head of State, cooperation needs to be intensified between the Defence League and local governments in order to be prepared to prevent and hinder civil crises, and the joint activities of the police, border guards and units of the Defence League need to be effectively coordinated.

“Together, honorable council members, we must regularly make sure that the reputation and authority of the Defence League increases, and that people who are important to the society join the Defence League and—this is very important—that all the members of the Defence League are necessary to the country and have an activity that is appropriate for them,” said President Ilves.

At today's meeting of the Council of the Defence League, Major-General Ants Laaneots, the Commander of the Defence Forces, spoke about the short-term development plan for the Defence Forces, and Lieutenant Colonel Raivo Lumiste, Commander of the Defence League, spoke about the future of his organization, for which the keywords remain military capability, civil support and the will to defend.

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