

President Toomas Hendrik Ilves spoke yesterday at the high-level climate conference that took place at the UN headquarters, at the behest of the Portugal, the presiding country of the European Union, on behalf of the European Union.

“The European Union believes that the successive International and General Climate Agreement of 2012 should broadly promote technological innovation, using both “push” and “pull” policies to the optimal extent,” said the Estonian Head of State. “Our answer to climate change is based on technology. It is substantially important to establish an international economy based on low carbon consumption, and the transition to a lifestyle with such an ecological approach is an important part of energy efficiency.”

Speaking on behalf of the European Union, President Ilves said that the increased carbon market itself creates the “pull” to use existing technologies, but the need for broad-based policies that deal with the promotion and implementation of advanced technology is just as urgent. This requires state programs that support research and development activities, the establishment of strict standards, the development of standards that regulate the energy efficiency of products and processes, and the application of many other relevant measures.

“In order to improve the UN climate framework, the European Union definitely intends to expand its strategic partnerships and bilateral cooperation with third countries. We are directing special attention to collaboration, which is related to energy efficiency and renewable energy, as well as to using existing technologies, for instance, to environmentally friendly methods for catching and eliminating carbons,” said President Ilves. “The European Union stresses that a market-based approach, namely through private-sector investment in carbon markets, can and should be supported by state and international policies and measures. These would help to surmount market barriers, for instance by establishing standards and reducing risks, etc.”

President Ilves used the speech to the UN Climate Change Conference to confirm that Estonia’s experience shows that by implementing relevant economic and financial measures, it is possible to successfully disassociate economic development from environmental pollution. The Estonian Head of State said that the application of new and innovative technologies is especially noteworthy; for instance, the extensive renovation of Estonia’s oil shale plants, which has made it possible to significantly reduce fuel consumption, which in turn, has resulted in significantly smaller quantities of carbon dioxide waste.

“Nevertheless, we need to further reduce the quantities of waste. The promotion of the use of renewable energy sources, increased energy efficiency along with the implementation of measures to regulate demand are important and promising steps,” said President Ilves. “At the same time, we should focus on the implementation of cleaner technologies that already exist. We support the transfer of technology, which develops environmentally friendly energy production and consumption. It might be best to link development with investments in clean technologies.”

“However, in order to achieve something worth mentioning, it is necessary that governments, companies and people struggle together and in the same direction,” stressed the Estonian Head of State.

“In addition to reducing the amount of greenhouse gasses, it is vitally important to set limits and marginal rates for logging,” said President Ilves. The latter must be accompanied by broad forest renewal programs and the development of unused, but usable land into forests, environmentally friendly forestry, and the protection and preservation of traditional wetlands.

The Estonian Head of State posed the question, “Perhaps, we need a global institution, for instance the UN Environmental Organization, which could assume the work of existing UN environmental programs and deal with environmental issues?” He continued, “At this point, not only the protection of the climate is important, but also general environmental protection, including the simplification of introducing suitable technology and know-how in developing countries.”

According to President Ilves, Estonia hopes that the new international negotiations related to the climate pact will already achieve general political agreement by December 2009, because only in this case, will the governments be able to give industrial enterprises a concrete signal that the necessary decisions will be made on schedule.

“For the first time, humankind is trying to turn back the clock of climate change and this requires a great deal of serious work from us all. Estonia, for its part, is ready to commit itself to developing and maintaining a climate-friendly world,” said President Ilves.

Read the full speech [here](#) .

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