

Last night, President Toomas Hendrik Ilves met with Finno-Ugric writers visiting Estonia within the framework of the Kindred Peoples Week. The Head of State discussed the situation of the Finno-Ugric languages, the complexity of providing native language education in Russia, and the necessity of publishing Finno-Ugric literature with the writers. Estonian support for kindred peoples was also discussed.

The meeting was attended by Moksha Vassili Krigin, Komis Niina Obrezkova and Aljona Jeltsova, Udmurt writers Pjotr Zahharov, Larissa Mardanova, Mush Nadii, Larissa Orekhova and Arzami Otšei, and Arvo Valton, the Chairman of the Board of the Finno-Ugric Writers' Association.

“Estonia’s experiences are similar to those of the Finno-Ugric people of Russia, and therefore, it is easy for us to understand your needs and aims,” said the Head of State. President Ilves stressed that Estonia has a moral obligation to support its kindred peoples and added that Estonia must assist in the publication of Finno-Ugric literature and in the development of study opportunities for the kindred peoples in Estonia.

According to Arzami Otšei, Estonia’s support for its eastern kindred peoples is very important and Estonia is regarded as a role model by the kindred peoples.

The participants at the meeting feel that the continuation of the Kindred Peoples Program is important, along with the invigoration of contacts between writers and young people, and the introduction of the literature of Finno-Ugric literature in Estonia.

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