

In reply to the question „How to interpret the current situation in Georgia?” from the Baltic News Service today, President Toomas Hendrik Ilves said the following:

“I welcome the lifting of state of emergency in Georgia.

I hope that last week, both the Georgian authorities and the opposition had time to consider the consequences of inadequate communication in domestic policy.

Thus I am glad that negotiations led by Speaker of the Parliament Nino Buryanadze have started between the government politicians and representatives of the opposition; these should facilitate the stabilisation of domestic situation in Georgia.

It is my belief that the presidential election campaign in Georgia, as well as the elections in 5 January next year, will prove to be truly democratic.

I presume that as a democratic country, Georgia has unconditional respect for freedom of press and freedom of speech as fundamental freedoms essential to the rule of law.

It is my genuine hope that Georgia will continue the democratic reforms that Estonia has always supported. I confirm that Estonia is prepared to support Georgia’s democratic reforms also in the future and help Georgia to conduct them.

As to foreign policy, there is no doubt: for Georgia, staying on course towards democracy and following democratic principles is the strongest guarantee on her chosen path to European and Trans-Atlantic organisations.

Hereby I stress that no country – however big – must interfere with decisions affecting Georgia’s future and future choices. These decisions are solely for Georgia and the people of Georgia to

make.

Respecting the principles of the rule of law and European values, and being mindful of democratic freedoms and rights, Georgia can be certain that she is never alone. There are always friends and allies by her side, ready to support, help and encourage.”

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