

“Estonia is one of the most European-minded countries in the European Union, and the Community can rely on Estonia,” affirmed President Toomas Hendrik Ilves at yesterday’s meeting in Tallinn with European Commission President José Manuel Barroso, who in turn, noted that he values the new, enlarged Europe and progressiveness of the recently incorporated countries.

Speaking about the future of the European Union, the Estonian Head of State emphasized that he is gratified by the signing of the Lisbon Agreement.

“Now, it is in all our interests that the ratification process progress smoothly,” said President Ilves.

Speaking of the European Union’s integrated foreign policy, the Estonian Head of State and European Commission President said that the more unified the voice we are able to speak with, the stronger the European Union.

At the meeting, the enlargement and neighborhood policies of the Community were also discussed. According to President Ilves, the Community should differentiate to a greater degree between its neighbors, because the reforms to date and future aspiration of these countries differ, and in this way the candidate states, and those with European Union prospects, can be further motivated to do more homework.

“Moreover, the countries that have done more should see that, pursuant to their efforts, the European Union is also more conciliatory toward them,” stressed President Ilves.

The Estonian Head of State spoke at length about the Baltic Sea, which has essentially become an inland sea of the European Union and should now be included under the Community’s “domestic policies”.

“On the one hand, it is in our interests to strengthen the region by increasing cooperation with

the countries in the Baltic Sea Region, and thereby helping to increase the competitiveness of the entire European Union, and on the other hand, one of the main goals is to turn more attention to the environment problems resulting from the distinctive characteristics of the Baltic Sea,” said President Ilves.

Speaking about energy security, President Ilves emphasized that, upon achieving a well-functioning domestic market with the European energy market package, Estonia feels it is important to create control mechanisms for the import of electricity produced in third countries.

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