

At today's meeting with Milan Roćen, the Foreign Minister of Montenegro, President Toomas Hendrik Ilves confirmed the support of the Estonian Head of State for Montenegro's European aspirations.

"The relations between our countries are good in every way, but there is room for closer association. We feel it is necessary to increase mutual relations at all levels and to create contacts between various officials, as well as between parliamentary representatives," President Ilves said, recalling that Estonia was the first country to conclude diplomatic relations with Montenegro and expressed his readiness to visit Montenegro.

President Ilves recognized that economic relations between Estonia and Montenegro are very modest, and for their development, it is important to achieve direct contacts between the Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Montenegro Mid- and Small-Sized Business Association, and it is also important to exchange information about opportunities for the development of the investment and tourism sector.

"Estonia supports the reforms that have been carried out in Montenegro and strives to contribute to them as much as possible," President Ilves affirmed.

Thus, Estonia has organized seminars for the officials of the Montenegro Ministry of Finance and the board guards as well as information policy training; the members of the Montenegro defense forces are awaited to participate in BALTDEFCOL; twelve people from Montenegro have been invited to e-courses in Estonia to share information technology experience.

"Estonia as a country that supports the enlargement of the European Union backs your endeavors toward the European Union in every possible way," President Ilves stressed to Foreign Minister Roćen, acknowledging Montenegro's reform results and encouraging them to carry out faster administrative reforms, to increase administrative capacities and the movement to a market economy.

Speaking about Montenegro's NATO aspirations, President Ilves said that Estonia supports making NATO partnership more flexible, in order to facilitate cooperation between all countries

that are connected to NATO by their values and interests.

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