

“The position of Chancellor of Justice combines two very important roles: his work is to make sure that the activities of the public authority follow constitutional provisions and concepts, and on the other hand, he is the intermediary between the state and individual citizens,” President Toomas Hendrik Ilves said, as he opened the international “Chancellor of Justice in Estonia and Europe: Continuity and Future” seminar in Tallinn.

“Impartiality, professionalism, steadfastly standing for the protection of people’s rights—this is how democratic Europe characterizes a chancellor-of-justice-ombudsman. I am pleased that Estonia’s institution of Chancellor of Justice performs these assignments consistently, excellently, and in a European manner,” the Head of State said.

“The Chancellor of Justice cannot and should not be a comfortable and taciturn state official,” President Ilves stressed. “His direct responsibility is to raise questions about the activities of the parliament, government, president and other authorities, if their actions or inactions are unconstitutional, or if the state treats a single individual or individual unfairly.”

It is no secret that conflict is hidden in the dualistic role of the Chancellor of Justice as the guardian of the Constitution and an ombudsman, the Head of State admitted, while adding, “To simultaneously be a critic of the parliament and a confidant often requires maneuvering on the boundary between politics and justice. To find the proper balance—this is undoubtedly a great challenge for every Chancellor of Justice.”

According to President Ilves, the activities of the Chancellor of Justice must not encapsulate in time, not stand still. Thus, for instance, making decisions regarding constitutionality require today’s Chancellor of Justice to exercise every greater value-based consideration; the effective protection of people’s rights presumes the integrated analysis of problematic spheres; also the infringement of fundamental rights related to giving the safeguarding of the security of the state and safety of the society along with other traditional state functions into private hands require elevated attention by the Chancellor of Justice.

“I thank Allar Jõks and acknowledge the work he has done. During the last seven years, the Chancellor of Justice made many complicated things simple for people. He demonstrated that resolutions that are born easily in the offices of officials may have onerous consequences for citizens,” the Head of State said. “In my opinion, Allar Jõks has done much as Chancellor of

Justice to bring the state and the citizens closer together.”

According to President Ilves, he sees Indrek Teder, the fourth Chancellor of Justice of the Republic of Estonia who will assume office next week and in whose regard expectations are great and trustworthiness credit is high, fulfilling his mission just as forcefully.

The Head of State also acknowledged the contribution to the development of the institution made by Eerik-Juhan Truuväli, the first Chancellor of Justice after the restoration of Estonian independence.

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