

In Tallinn President Toomas Hendrik Ilves met with Georgian Prime Minister Lado Gurgenedze on 29 March. One of the main topics at the meeting was the forthcoming NATO Summit in Bucharest.

"I hope that Georgia will be given a Membership Action Program or MAP at the Bucharest Summit," the Estonian Head of State said to the Georgian Prime Minister. He also said that receiving a MAP does not automatically mean NATO membership, and a country must make an effort to achieve the MAP objectives.

President Ilves affirmed that the Membership Action Program would be a good stimulus for Georgia to promote democracy, civil society and market economy reforms.

President Ilves and Prime Minister Gurgenedze also discussed the European Neighborhood Policy, which they both felt needs to be extended in the easterly direction. At the meeting, it was acknowledged that the clarification of Europe's energy security issues and keeping them on the agenda continues to be important within the framework of developing an eastwardly directed Neighborhood Policy.

Prime Minister Gurgenedze familiarized President Ilves with the proposals made by Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili yesterday for the resolution of the Abkhazia conflict.

Speaking about Georgia's domestic policies, the Estonian Head of State emphasized the need to guarantee the compliance of the upcoming parliamentary elections with international standards by being free and fair. For the smooth execution of the elections.

Estonian representatives are also advising the Georgia's Central Election Commission.

The Estonian Head of State recognized the strides that have been made in Georgia's economic development, saying that the success of the country can only be based on economic success. "Estonia's experience has demonstrated that a professional officialdom that is independent of

political winds was especially important to the success of our reforms," said President Ilves. He said that Estonia supports the anticipated development of an entrepreneurial environment in Georgia, which Estonia is ready to support through developmental cooperation projects.

The need for the further development of mutual cultural cooperation between the countries and relationship between people were also discussed at the meeting.

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