

President Toomas Hendrik Ilves, who is on a working visit to the United States, met today with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, with whom he discussed the results of the NATO Summit in Bucharest and the progress of the military missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as developments in Georgia and Russia, and issues related to energy and cybersecurity.

President Ilves and Secretary Rice stated that the results of the NATO Summit can be considered to be generally positive, whereas the Estonian Head of State expressed his satisfaction that Ukraine and Georgia were given definite prospects for accession.

“Estonia considers Georgia an advisory friend,” President Ilves noted. “Our role is to share our reform experiences on the path to democracy and I am happy to recognize the advances that Georgia has made to date.”

Speaking of the mission in Iraq, President Ilves stressed the need for continuing bilateral cooperation in military operations. “A significantly more serious debate can be expected in our parliament as well as in the society as whole this time in respect to the extension of Estonia’s mission in Iraq, therefore, we are waiting for a clear vision from the United States regarding the future of Estonian participation in Iraq,” President Ilves said.

Speaking about the operation in Afghanistan, Secretary Rice thanked Estonia for its distinguished contribution. President Ilves stressed that NATO cannot be the loser in Afghanistan, and therefore, he felt that the unity expressed at the Bucharest Summit regarding the issue of Afghanistan was important. Both the Secretary of State and the President recognized the need to apply more extensive civil measures in Afghanistan.

“Estonia is working actively to make sure that Afghanistan remains a central foreign policy issue for the European Union,” President Ilves added.

A short discussion was held on the developments in Russia. Secretary Rice expressed the hope that the upcoming power change will be accompanied by positive developments in domestic policy. According to President Ilves, the relations between Russia and the European Union must be based on the common interests of all 27 member states and not send signals about fissures

in the Community's positions.

In respect to the topic of energy security raised at the meeting, both sides stated that this is a common concern for the United States and the European Union, and therefore, it must be an inseparable part of strategic energy cooperation.

The Estonian Head of State also provided Secretary Rice with an overview of the current state of the development of the NATO cybersecurity center, and thanked the United States for its active participation. President Ilves stressed that cross-border cyberattacks and cyber-terrorism are a harsh reality, and combating them will require a strong and uniform legislative base for NATO and the European Union.

Within the framework of the Estonian Head of State's visit to Washington, D.C., meetings with Deputy Secretary of Defence Dan Fried and U.S. Vice-President Richard B. Cheney are also on the agenda for today. Later this evening President Ilves will open the formal reception organized by the U.S.-Baltic Foundation.

[Video: President Ilves met with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice](#)

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