

Yesterday in Kadriorg, President Toomas Hendrik Ilves received Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus, who arrived on a state visit to Estonia. The discussions at the meeting focused primarily on cooperation between the Baltic countries on issues related to energy security, the European Union Neighborhood Policy, and Baltic Sea strategy. The Heads of State also spoke about developments in Georgia and Ukraine.

Speaking of energy security, the Estonian Head of State stressed that electricity import from third countries is one of the primary dangers for the European Union's domestic market and its energy security. "A solution to the problem of reliable supply can only be found with honest cooperation between the member states in order to create new energy connections and guarantee independence from unstable energy suppliers," the Head of State noted.

"Energy is a key point in Baltic Sea strategy," President Ilves stated at the meeting. According to the President, the Baltic Sea Region is among the areas of the European Union with the greatest economic potential, and in addition to the current forms and activities of cooperation, the Heads of State saw promise in the free movement of services and labor.

The European Union Neighborhood Policy was also discussed at the meeting, and Presidents Ilves and Adamkus stated that Europe's current neighborhood policy has justified itself and it must be developed further.

"I think it is important that each partner state be approached individually," the Estonian Head of State noted. "The countries that are more successful and are able to reform faster should be allowed to move forward faster. This is important from the viewpoint of preserving the integrity of the neighborhood policy." The Estonian Head of State also stressed the need to take the interests of all 27 member states into account in relations between the European Union and Russia.

Presidents Ilves and Adamkus also spoke about Georgia and Ukraine.

"Georgia and Ukraine, as well as other countries that have chosen the path to democracy must not be left alone, but should be supported in their aspirations to promote freedom and market

economies,” the Estonian Head of State stressed, adding that third countries should not have even an indirect veto on decisions regarding NATO enlargement.

According to President Ilves, the door to the European Union must be left open for Ukraine and the new agreement between the European Union and Ukraine must not become a substitute for the possible future membership of Ukraine, but rather a step in the direction of that membership.

The Lithuanian Head of State expressed his support for the joint declaration adopted by President Ilves and Polish President Lech Kaczyński in March, which calls for the governments of the European states to discuss the possibility of creating an international commission to investigate Communism’s crimes against humanity and violations of human rights.

“Being acquainted with and understanding each other’s history is an important precondition for the European Union’s domestic solidarity,” said President Ilves. According to the President, heretofore, one part of Europe has not been familiar with the history of the other. “It is very important that we act wisely and with unanimity in performing this familiarization so as not to deter those to whom we want to introduce our history.”

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