

Yesterday the National Defence Council that is convened by the President of the Republic took a unanimous position that the illegal surveillance activities and opinion control conducted by military intelligence officers in 2004–2006 is indefensible and dangerous in a democratic society.

The Public Prosecutor's Office who has investigated the activities of the military intelligence officers acknowledged in his directive that the surveillance activities were illegal, while recognizing that the people that conducted the surveillance were not aware of the illegality of their actions.

According to the National Defence Council, the people responsible for the illegal surveillance activities and those who conducted the illegal surveillance are not qualified to work in the defense forces of a democratic country.

"The lack of the elements of a crime does not abrogate moral responsibility and not knowing the law indicates incompetence," President Toomas Hendrik Ilves said.

The National Defence Council also stated that the Security Commission of the Government should consider generally strengthening the mechanisms for supervising the special services.

The National Defence Council also listened to an overview presented by Mati Raidma, the Chairman of the parliamentary National Defence Committee and Defence Minister Jaak Aaviksoo regarding the proceeding of the Defence Forces Organization Act in the Riigikogu.

The National Defence Council, which discusses issues important from a national defense standpoint and expresses opinions regarding them, is an advisory body of the President of the Republic. The membership of the Council includes the President of the Riigikogu, the Prime Minister, Chairmen of the Riigikogu's National Defence Committee and Foreign Affairs Committee, the Foreign Minister, Defence Minister, Finance Minister, Justice Minister and Commander of the Defence Forces.

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