

“The strength of our country is the people’s wish to voluntarily accomplish something,” President Toomas Hendrik Ilves said today in Kilingi-Nõmme at the inauguration of the memorial to the War of Independence that was restored mainly with donations from local residents.

“I am talking about a civil society, where people want to do something for their neighborhoods or country and do it,” the Head of State said. “We wanted our own state, we created our own state and defended it; in the same way, we erected this memorial here in Kilingi-Nõmme the first time, and also the second time.”

“We should recall that self-initiative—the voluntary assembly of people—is what totalitarian regimes fear the most,” President Ilves said.

He also recalled story of the Kolgaküla Community Hall, which burned down two years ago and was reopened last week, after being restored by the local people with the help of the local and national governments; as well as the 15 hundred Defense League volunteers, Young Eagles, and Home Daughters who, defying the rain, participated in the Victory Day parade in Tallinn yesterday.

“This is the Estonia that we want—our very own Estonia,” President Ilves said.

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