

In Kadriorg, President Toomas Hendrik Ilves met with the Ambassadors from Moldova and Belgium, who presented their credentials to the Head of State on Friday.

At the meeting with Veaceslav Dobinda, the Ambassador from Moldova, the Estonian Head of State expressed his gratification that Moldova has decided to open an embassy in Tallinn, which is a positive signal for the future strengthening of mutual relations and the intensification of cooperation.

“Considering the situation that has changed as a result of the events in Georgia, we think that it is more important than ever for the European Union to strengthen cooperation and intensify relations with its eastern neighbors, which also means Moldova,” President Ilves said.

“We hope that discussions regarding a new framework agreement between Moldova and the European Union will start as soon as possible.”

According to the Estonian Head of State, the door of the European Union should remain open to Moldova and the four fundamental freedoms of the Community should gradually be expanded to Moldova, although “at the same time, Moldova must recognize that progress is directly related to the successful implementation of their domestic reform process.”

President Ilves stressed that Estonia believes that the European Union must play a large role in searching for a solution to the Transnistria problem, and it is also necessary that the European Union increase its presence in Transnistria.

President Ilves recalled that Moldova is a country that is a priority recipient of Estonian developmental cooperation with whom Estonia is sharing its reform experiences, and where it trains officials at various levels and organizes practical projects, for example, in the fields of media, taxation policy and the environment. In addition, trilateral projects are also taking place in cooperation with Great Britain, Finland, and Sweden.

At the meeting between the Estonian Head of State and the Moldovan Ambassador, the opportunities for enlivening trade relations between the two countries and intensifying cultural contacts were also discussed.

At the meeting with Belgian Ambassador Nicolaas Buyck, President Ilves recognized that the relations between Estonia and Belgium, between the countries themselves as well as different regions, are good and there are no problems that need to be resolved.

President Ilves recalled the state visit of King Albert II to Estonia last June, calling it a historically significant event since it was the first time that a Belgian Head of State has visited Estonia.

President Ilves and Ambassador Buyck spoke at length about cooperation between Estonia and Belgium in the field of information technology, which includes, for example, the M-parking system purchased from Estonia that is currently used by almost 20 Belgium cities.

The ID card systems and digital signatures in Estonia and Belgium are similar and we are interested in the reciprocal recognition of digital signatures, President Ilves said. Estonia will soon start to recognize Belgium's digital signatures—initially only unilaterally; within the framework of the project to recognize the digital signatures of other European Union states, we are in the process of opening an entrepreneurial portal for owners of Belgian ID cards, to enable them to establish companies in Estonia and later administer them.

“Estonia is interested in concluding an agreement for the reciprocal recognition of digital signatures,” President Ilves said.

The Estonian Head of State acknowledged the wish of Ambassador Buyck to intensify trade relations between Belgium and Estonia.

The changed security situation in Europe following Russia's invasion of Georgia was also discussed at the meeting.

“The European Union must speak with a common voice in relations with Russia and the plan for peace between Georgia and Russia—the so-called Sarkozy plan—must be fulfilled in its entirety and without concessions,” President Ilves stressed.

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