

On January 12th, President Toomas Hendrik Ilves and Evelin Ilves will travel on an official visit to Baku at the invitation of Azerbaijani Head of State Ilham Aliyev.

“The relations between our two countries are businesslike, pragmatic and forward-looking,” President Ilves said to Azerbaijani journalists before the visit. “We have similar views about energy security as one of the most important challenges of the 21st century and Estonia understands very well Azerbaijan’s strategic importance as an energy supplier. We are both interested in a stable and peaceful South Caucasus and we are ready to contribute to the achievement of permanent peace and well-being in the region.”

The visit of the Estonian Head of State to Azerbaijan, which will take place a month after the Eastern Partnership initiative in the European Commission, is part of the mutual convergence policy for the European Union and the Community’s eastern neighbors.

“Estonia can be a good partner for Azerbaijan and promoter of convergence with the European Union,” President Ilves stressed, adding that differences in the countries, as well as their customs and historical experiences, must be taken into account. “Along with economic ties, five keywords are important. Democracy, rule of law, transparency, as well as freedom of speech and thought—these are attributes that Estonia has always considered to be important.”

According to the Estonian Head of State, great opportunities are seen in both Tallinn and Baku for the promotion of economic ties between Estonia and Azerbaijan. On the visit, President Ilves will be accompanied by Juhan Parts, Minister of Economics Affairs and Communications, and a twenty-member business delegation. A joint information technology forum will also take place in Baku with the participation of the two Presidents, where Estonian IT companies will introduce the possibilities of the X-Road project, among other things.

“We are interested in smooth and business-like cooperation without excessive bureaucratic limitations for Estonian investors with partners in Azerbaijan,” President Ilves stressed.

President Ilves and Evelin Ilves will return to Estonia on January 15th.

President Ilves will go on a visit to Azerbaijan

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